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April 29, 2002  
(Environment)

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*The following statement was issued today by Kevin Aylward, Minister of Environment. It was also read in the House of Assembly:*

Windmill Bight Golf Course

I am announcing that government will release the Windmill Bight Golf Course Project from further Environmental Assessment subject to the proponent providing an Environmental Protection Plan for approval before construction begins. The Environmental Protection Plan must demonstrate how the proponent will prevent or lessen the negative effects of the development on the environment during the design, construction and operations of the project. The proponent has committed, in the registration document, to implementing protection measures to preserve and conserve the natural features of the area as much as possible.

As a first step, the proponent will be required to submit a final project design in an attempt to provide an acceptable design that protects the natural features of the area. The EPP will also address any effects that could arise related to siltation, use of fertilizers and pesticides, sewage and waste disposal and fuel and other hazardous materials. In addition, the proponent will be required to implement an environmental effects monitoring program to detect any possible adverse environmental effects due to the project and take remedial measures to address impacts.

Prior to release of the project, government will amend the boundaries of Windmill Bight Provincial Park to accommodate the development of the Golf Course. This will require the removal of approximately 80 hectares from the existing park boundaries. Government will seek to add additional area to the park to ensure that the total size of the park remains the same. At this stage, the proponent plans to construct nine holes initially so government will only lease approximately 40 hectares. The other portion will be held by the crown.

The features being impacted by the project have been identified elsewhere in the region. The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation Julie Bettney has directed her officials to assess Cape Freels and Deadman's Bay for suitability as an ecological reserve under the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act. This process will include public consultation in the region.

We have weighed the public comments, considered the advice of all government departments and agencies and feel we have made a balanced decision.

2002 04 29 4:00 p.m.