

PRESS RELEASE:

SOUTHWEST NOVA SCOTIA RECOGNIZED AS A PRIME LOCATION TO DEVELOP BIOECONOMY PROJECTS

February 1, 2024



The BDO Zone Initiative has issued a BDO Zone 'A' rating for Southwest Nova Scotia for 550,000 green metric tons per year of sawmill residuals and by-product wood fibre from the forest sector.

The [Greenspring Bioinnovation Hub](#), [Town of Bridgewater](#), [Municipality of Chester](#), [Municipality of the District of Lunenburg](#), [Region of Queens Municipality](#) and [Ecostrat](#) are pleased to announce the issuance of an 'A' rated Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone in Southwest Nova Scotia. The 'A' rating reflects the sustainable availability of 550,000 green metric tons per year of sawmill residuals and by-product wood fibre from the forest sector as well as strong feedstock supply chains, modern transportation networks, and multiple commercial parks looking to host new businesses.

Southwest Nova Scotia stands as an economic powerhouse, anchored in advanced manufacturing, forestry, agriculture and fishing. Home to globally renowned universities, and the Nova Scotia Community College, the region nurtures a skilled workforce with a rich history of resource management.

The Forest Sector is key to the fabric of Southwest Nova Scotia. The region is home to thousands of private woodlot owners, the province's largest sawmill, as well as 400,000 ha of Crown land under Ecological Forest Management.

However, the decline of the Pulp and Paper industry has created challenges for the region. In addition to the loss of hundreds of well-paying jobs, the resulting contraction in markets for sawmill residuals and by-product wood fibre has hurt the region, the forest sector, and, in particular, woodlot owners.

The bioeconomy is a source of potential solutions. While in its infancy, forest bioeconomy businesses globally are developing a range of low-carbon bioproducts that are substitutes for petrochemical-based

materials. Local Nova Scotia examples include Maskwiomin, which produces birch bark extract-infused skincare creams, and AlterBiota which produces biographene from wood for use in cement applications.

As bioeconomy businesses begin to bring their innovations to market, they require locations to grow that have the right combination of feedstock supply, workforce, host sites, and partners. The *Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone Initiative* assesses these factors and certifies 'regional readiness' for bioeconomy projects in a region or 'Zone'. In 2023, a BDO Zone ratings analysis was conducted for Southwest Nova Scotia, resulting in an investment-grade 'A' rating. This inaugurated it as the first BDO Zone rating of its kind in Atlantic Canada.

"Beyond traditional products like lumber and paper, there is lots of potential for Nova Scotia's forestry sector to use sustainably harvested wood fibre to create new wood-based products like biofuels, wood pellets and briquettes, and much more," said **Tory Rushton, Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables, Nova Scotia**. "We have excellent conditions in southwestern Nova Scotia and other parts of the province, and I have confidence in the sector's ability to innovate and drive new economic opportunities in our rural communities."

"The Southwest Nova Scotia BDO Zone is an outstanding collaboration by a number of partners in the region that signals to bioeconomy investors around the world that Nova Scotia is an excellent location to establish and grow their businesses. We are excited to utilize the Zone to help foster new innovative businesses and career opportunities built upon the use of by-product wood fibre and sawmill residuals from the local forest industry in low carbon, bio-based products", said **Rod Badcock, Executive Director of the Greenspring Bioinnovation Hub**.

The BDO Zone encompasses a 150 km radius, centered around Caledonia, NS, and includes four strategically located sites within 150 km of the Port of Halifax, ideal for bio-project development. The Zone is anchored by excellent infrastructure with several industrial parks, validated interest from local wood fibre generator Freeman Lumber to support new bio-based projects, a large mechanized contractor base, strong access to ocean transport, along with world-class ecological forestry practices on Crown land, ensuring sustainable wood supply.

Jordan Solomon, Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative added, "As Nova Scotia's first rating for wood fibre, the BDO Zone actively reinforces the province's commitment to establishing a prominent presence in the worldwide shift towards low-carbon bio-based projects."

To see the full BDO Zone Rating please click [here](#), or visit www.bdozone.org.

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About Southwest Nova Scotia

Southwest Nova Scotia features robust infrastructure with high-speed internet, a power network transitioning toward renewables, and abundant water supply. Nova Scotia's strong transportation network spans 1,200 km of the National Highway System, with well-connected rail anchored by the Canadian National Railway, offering competitive solutions and on-dock rail options. Halifax's strategic port facilities and the Halifax Stanfield International Airport provide a significant geographical advantage, boasting the nearest full-service container port and the closest international airport with direct flights to Europe among all North American cities.

Strategic investments, such as \$426 million from the New Building Canada Fund (2014-2023) and a \$58 million federal investment in 2023/24, have bolstered environmental sustainability, public transit networks, water/sewage systems, commercial accessibility and bio-based project supply chains.

Southwest Nova Scotia is also home to 400,000 ha of crown land under Ecological Forest Management where forest practices focus on maintaining, enhancing, or restoring the ecological functions in an ecosystem in which biodiversity is the most important consideration.

Bio-based Project Development Opportunities

Kaizer Meadow Industrial Park: The park spans 150 acres and is situated within an hour's reach of the Port of Halifax, Halifax City Centre, and Halifax Stanfield International Airport. It is zoned for heavy industrial use, including waste-to-energy operations like landfill gas and biomass processing, and features notable occupants include Sustane Technologies, Full Circle Environmental Solutions, and the Municipality of Chester's renowned solid waste facility and environmental management center. Onsite amenities encompass high-speed internet and 3-phase power, available at \$20,000 per acre. The park offers seamless access to a skilled workforce, intermodal transportation infrastructure, and commercial markets in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and the surrounding working forests of Lunenburg, Queens, Annapolis, and Kings counties.

Port Mersey Commercial Park: Situated near Liverpool, NS, the park is conveniently located just a 35-minute drive from Bridgewater. Spanning 88 acres, the facility features a 550-foot active wharf, public access roads, and marine transportation infrastructure. Zoned for medium-sized industrial activities, it offers a robust power grid, ample industrial water supply, and direct access to highways, including the nearby 100 Series highway. The facility has undergone environmental assessments and provides essential utilities such as three-phase power, high-pressure steam, and fueling receivers. The presence of the Brooklyn Power facility and biotechnology companies has cultivated a skilled workforce familiar with bioproduct manufacturing and wood fibre supply chain management.

Freeman Lumber: Located in Greenfield, NS, Freeman Lumber is one of the oldest family-run sawmill businesses in North America. The facility features newly cleared lands specifically zoned for heavy industrial development and is equipped with essential infrastructure, including three-phase power, an on-site well, septic system, adaptable siltation systems, as well as feedstock handling and receiving facilities

with loaders and weigh scales. As the largest employer in Queen's County, Freeman Lumber maintains strong relationships with its 180+ journeymen, contractors, and business development specialists, along with regional forest processing facilities and logging contractors. This strategic location offers convenient access to industrial transport via the provincial series highway, complemented by surplus forestry inputs from lumber production and wood processing.

Bridgewater Business Park: Centrally located within Southwest Nova Scotia, Bridgewater serves as the South Shore's hub. The Bridgewater Business Park is expanding, adding 125 acres with direct access to the 100-series highway network, accessible via a new interchange (opening 2025). Just 100 kilometres (60 minutes) from Halifax, the expansion adds industrially zoned land, including light industrial and highway commercial sites, all town-serviced with high-speed internet. The park is home to the Michelin Tire Plant, currently undergoing a \$300 million expansion, and over 50 other diverse businesses, manufacturers, and offices. Bridgewater leverages its strategic location, offering a skilled labor market and a robust customer base, with the local population exceeding 60,000 residents within a 30-minute radius.

About the Greenspring Bioinnovation Hub

The Greenspring Bioinnovation Hub is a registered not-for-profit organization headquartered in Dartmouth, NS. They are committed to fostering the growth of Nova Scotia's low-carbon, bioeconomy by supporting the development of bio-based processing and manufacturing facilities in sectors such as Forestry, Agriculture, Oceans, and Municipal Solid Waste. This mission is rooted in the utilization of the province's abundant renewable resources and the promotion of collaboration among industry stakeholders.

For more information about the **Greenspring Bioinnovation Hub**, visit www.greenspringbio.ca. The BDO Zone Local Development Leader (LDL) is **Rod Badcock, Executive Director, Greenspring Bioinnovation Hub** (rod@greenspringbio.ca).

About *The BDO Zone Initiative*

The BDO Zone Initiative certifies regional readiness for bio-based manufacturing, creates global connections with project developers, and ignites an influx of clean energy opportunities.

A BDO Zone rating is an internationally recognized standards-based technical risk assessment of biomass feedstock, supply chain, and infrastructure risk with respect to the development potential of new biofuel, renewable chemical, biogas, and bioproduct plants. Investment grade ratings attract new bio-based manufacturing plants to the areas where they are most likely to succeed-- and create jobs.

For more information on the **BDO Zone Initiative**, please contact info@bdozone.org. To view all current and upcoming BDO Zone designations, visit www.bdozone.org or check out the BDO Zone [LinkedIn](#) page for all news and updates.

About Ecostrat

Ecostrat is the North American Leader in supplying biomass due diligence for biofuels, renewable chemicals, biogas, and bio-product project development and finance. Ecostrat led the USDOE/BETO funded project to develop the new investment [Standards and Ratings for Biomass Supply Chain Risk](#) which were subsequently used in the development of the [CSA W209:21 Biomass supply chain risk National Standard of Canada.](#)

Ecostrat's Advisory Group combines the BSCR Standards with powerful predictive analytics to understand and minimize supply chain risk. It's Biomass Supply Group has 25 years of experience in sourcing and supplying more than 5 million tons of biomass feedstock for bioenergy, biofuel, and biochemical projects across North America.

Jordan Solomon is Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative and President of Ecostrat. He can be reached at jordan.solomon@ecostrat.com. For more information about **Ecostrat**, visit the company's website at www.ecostrat.com or check out the Ecostrat [LinkedIn](#) page for all news and updates.