

Parks Canada, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Miawpukek First Nation, Qalipu First Nation, and the Town of Burgeo are working in partnership to assess the feasibility of establishing a national marine conservation area (NMCA) on the southwest coast of Newfoundland. An NMCA would contribute to increased protection of the natural and cultural values of the coastline and marine environment of the South Coast Fjords.

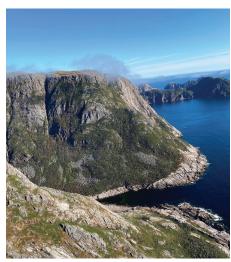
The South Coast Fjords Study Area is characterized by immense granite cliffs, deep glacially carved fjords, sand dunes and white sand beaches, productive coastal waters, estuaries and marshes and diverse marine ecosystems that are exceptional in their beauty and ecological importance. These waters are a key habitat and migration route for over 20 species of whales and dolphins. They are also home to a variety of marine species, such as porpoises, turtles, sharks, and other fishes, invertebrates, and seabirds, including many that are species at risk.

Parks Canada protects nationally significant examples of natural and cultural heritage and plays a role in administering these cornerstones of Canada's tourism industry. Parks Canada is committed to supporting tourism in communities across the country by providing visitors with meaningful high quality educational experiences and protecting these special places for future generations.

An NMCA in the South Coast Fjords would provide opportunities for visitors from Canada and around the world to experience the region's rich maritime culture through the sharing of these treasured places and the histories, cultures, and contributions of the Town of Burgeo, other coastal communities, and First Nations peoples.



Kayaking off Burgeo, overlooking Richard's Head © Julie Baggs



South Coast Fjords granite cliffs @ Parks Canada

The possible re-designation of Sandbanks Provincial Park as a national park is also being explored. The Sandbanks study area is 2.26 km<sup>2</sup>.

The South Coast Fjords NMCA and Sandbanks study areas include many archaeological sites of importance depicting such cultures as Maritime Archaic, Dorset, Pre-Inuit, recent Indigenous and European.

All partners share an interest in protecting the ecological and cultural integrity and diversity of the South Coast Fjords region. The strengthened protection of this special region would support the conservation of biodiversity, and the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. It would also support the culture, traditions, and well-being of coastal and First Nations communities who have long been stewards of these lands and waters.









## What is an NMCA?

National marine conservation areas (NMCAs) are established and managed by Parks Canada in collaboration with partners to protect and conserve significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural marine heritage.

The Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act is the guiding legislation. NMCAs are protected to achieve the following goals:

- Protect marine biodiversity to maintain or improve ecological sustainability
- 2. Conserve cultural heritage
- **3. Manage** use in an ecologically sustainable manner
- **4. Support** Indigenous leadership in marine conservation
- Contribute to the well-being of Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities
- **6. Facilitate** opportunities for meaningful visitor experiences
- **7. Enhance** awareness and understanding of NMCAs
- Advance effective collaboration between partners for management of the NMCA.

Oil, gas and mining are prohibited under the *Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act*.

Bottom trawling and pollution at sea\* are prohibited in Canada's marine protected areas. Indigenous traditional use continues in NMCAs.

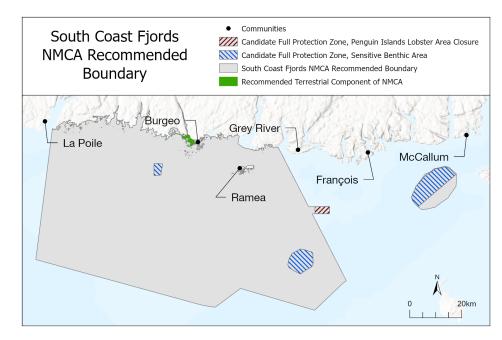
## **Benefits of an NMCA**

NMCAs offer an array of ecological, social, cultural and economic benefits to Indigenous and coastal communities, including opportunities to pursue cultural practices and sustainable livelihoods.

An NMCA would support current livelihoods including commercial fishing, local tourism, research and recreation. NMCAs protect the health of marine ecosystems, including local food sources, upon which Indigenous and coastal communities depend. NMCAs also contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation by enhancing and conserving carbon storage and enhancing ecosystem resilience.



Taking flight © Angelina Francis



The updated proposed South Coast Fjords NMCA boundary is approximately 6,538 km². Adjustments have been made to mitigate industry concerns while preserving features of natural and cultural significance. It does not include the fjords with existing aquaculture sites and the fjords proposed for aquaculture development were also removed.

The Steering Committee is recommending that three sensitive benthic areas and the waters around Penguin Islands be zoned as full protection zones. Full protection zones serve to protect special features,

## For more information:

parks.canada.ca/south-coast-fjords Email: fcs-scf@pc.gc.ca sensitive elements of the ecosystems, and representative characteristics of the marine region. Fishing, hunting, trapping, and gathering would not be allowed. Full protection zones would make up less than 5% of the NMCA.

The rest of the NMCA would support a range of activities, such as shipping, fishing, tourism, recreational activities, and other sustainable use activities that are compatible with the proposed NMCA conservation objectives. The NMCA boundary remains subject to change based on information and feedback received during the feasibility assessment process.