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Oceanside community concerned about environmental damage, beach access after former Halifax mayor begins building project

EAGLE HEAD, Queens County, Nova Scotia - Residents in a small Nova Scotia community near Liverpool are alarmed that a treasured beach, beaver habitat and wetlands are at risk as a new housing development breaks ground and disturbs sensitive oceanside ecology.

“The devastation is extreme,” says Eagle Head resident Cathie Mourre, who grew up in the area. “The sea grass is gone. The sand is being moved about and trucked away. The ponds are being infilled. The wildlife is being displaced. And the beach is forever changed. We are fighting the good fight, but so far we have no government agencies that have stepped up.”

The development, on land recently purchased by former Halifax mayor Peter Kelly, has angered local residents as sensitive wildlife habitats and wetlands have been disturbed, and beaver dams have been destroyed.

Residents are also upset that Kelly has blocked their traditional access to the beloved Eagle Head Beach, which has been used by local residents and visitors for more than a century.

A group called Protecting Eagle Head Beach is demanding answers from provincial government officials. Some residents are scheduled to meet this week with local MLA Kim Masland, who is also Nova Scotia’s Public Works minister.

“Residents have enjoyed access to this land for well over a century and they want to continue that access,” said Peter Leslie, who was born in Eagle Head, and still lives nearby. “We’re extremely concerned about threats to the local wildlife habitat in the ponds and the wetlands. We’re also concerned about the long-term stability of the beach area and surrounding environment.”

The grassroots group Protecting Eagle Head Beach counts hundreds of concerned Queens County residents among its members.

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