



For Immediate Release

Kejimkujik Interpreters Hit the Beach for Fireside Chats

August 17, 2010 – White Point, Nova Scotia - Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic Site and White Point are providing guests with a glimpse of the natural treasures that surround them. Friday nights, Parks Canada representatives have been attending White Point's marshmallow roasts to discuss, for the most part, the flora, fauna, eco-systems and geography of Kejimkujik National Park Seaside, a 22 square kilometre coastal section of the park that can be reached via Port Joli off Highway 103, a short drive from White Point. The larger section of the park, the interior, covers 381 square kilometres of forest, streams and lakes. Both are part of the world famous UNESCO Southwest Nova Biosphere Region, which is internationally recognized as unique for its natural and cultural heritage, and man's historical and present day use of the area's natural resources.

Jenna Bent and Douglas Smith are both Assistant Researchers for the Parks Canada Species at Risk Stewardship Program. Jenna says the Kejimkujik outreach program has been well-received has resulted in increased numbers for their Seaside tours. "It's an opportunity to help people understand and learn more about the area. Overall, the experience is good and people listen and sometimes they'll come out the next day." The interactive hikes are held this summer each Wednesday and Saturday at 10 a.m.

White Point's Marketing and Product Development Manager, Donna Hatt agrees it has been an enjoyable experience for their guests. "It's a very proactive approach. Instead of waiting for visitors to come to the Park, the interpreters are bringing the park to where the people are gathering. This has been a creative way to introduce people to the unique attributes of Keji Seaside and White Point is proud to help make it happen." Other partnership events are planned for this fall.

The laid-back discussion centres on the park's natural attributes, including the coastal barrens, which are far from barren in life with beautiful orchids, songbirds, wild flowers, butterflies and so on. Douglas describes the white-sand St. Catherine's River Beach and the trail look-offs leading up to it. "It's one of the least disturbed beaches in southwestern Nova Scotia." Numerous seals are always a visitor favourite, he says, but the elusive piping plover is a rare gem.

The beach, one of the few breeding sites left in Nova Scotia, was home to three pairs and seven chicks of the endangered migratory shorebird in 2010. This brought them to the topic of volunteer activities organized by Kejimkujik and its partners. Examples range from protecting and collecting data on Blanding's turtle sites in the interior and piping plover beaches to the volunteer beach clean-up's. They readily admit outreach programs aimed at visitors to Nova Scotia will only provide limited numbers of volunteers. However, she says, all environmental efforts throughout the world help the world as a whole. "People take their experiences home to wherever they're from and hopefully it will benefit their area."

The Kejimikujik National Park Seaside fireside programs will continue to run on Friday nights at White Point until the end of summer. Next year represents the 100th Anniversary of Canada's National Parks system which was the first national parks service in the world. White Point continues to be champions of the Park and its experiences and offers packages that include Park Passes and Picnic Lunches running straight through the fall. For more information visit www.whitepoint.com.

- 30 -

Photo Attached:

Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site and White Point Beach Resort are partnering on a weekly basis to reach out to guests and explain the natural treasures awaiting them in the surrounding area. The talks are held at a marshmallow roast on White Point Beach. Jenna Bent and Douglas Smith (left) are Assistant Researchers for the Parks Canada Species At Risk Stewardship Program.

Taken by Mark Roberts

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