



MacDONALD PHOTO  
it will be the last time — Brittany and Blake Rice got a seat in the sherriff's police Week display in Digby last Saturday.

# Thibault rejects proposed quarry

COMMUNITY'S SOCIAL VALUES THREATENED

BY ROBERT THIBAUT  
MP for West Nova

From speaking with my constituents, I am aware of local concerns regarding the proposed large quarry at White's Cove on Digby Neck. I would like to clarify my position on this important issue. I do not think it is an acceptable project for reasons discussed below. I would first like to discuss why I did not take such a public stand as minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

As minister, I was responsible for the creation, application and enforcement of federal legislation. In the case of the proposed quarry, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans was charged with ensuring compliance with such legislation as Canada's Fisheries Act, Oceans Act and Navigable Waters Protection Act.

The federal government had no jurisdiction over the quarry itself — only its possible impact on marine life and habitat. As a result, the department became involved only after application was made for a marine terminal, as this affected areas

under our responsibility.

As minister of fisheries, I requested a review panel of the project based on my concerns, and those of my department, about the potential damage such a project could have on the marine environment. As an independent body, the panel will review all the evidence (including the concerns of DFO) and determine the environmental implications of the proposed quarry, and make its recommendations to the minister of environment, based on science.

In addition to environmental issues, the joint federal-provincial review will also need to address the social and economic issues in determining whether this project should proceed.

As Member of Parliament for West Nova, I have serious concerns regarding the social and economic impact of this project. The potential loss of jobs due to direct and indirect impacts on fishing and ecotourism could have a severe impact on the Digby Neck and Islands communities. Lowering of the water table due to the quarry operation could affect local fish plants, as well

as homes in the surrounding area. Property values and the quiet enjoyment of property will almost certainly be affected.

This is not a have-not area of the province. Rather, it is a special area, steeped in heritage and tradition. The specific location of the proposed quarry, White's Cove, was a dynamic community in the 19th century and was home to several generations of six Hersey families, as well as at least four other families who were born, lived and died there. Archives reveal that approximately seventy people were permanent residents of White's Cove in the 1880s. The history of these residents formed the backdrop for Julia Sauer's Newberry Medal award-winning children's book 'Fog Magic', published in 1943. In addition, White's Cove was the summer residence of First Nations' people for many, many years.

The two fish plants in nearby Little River employ approximately 25 people. The 10 lobster licenses in the immediate vicinity of White's Cove employ about 35 people. In addition, the fishery includes sea urchins, herring and groundfish. These industries could be severely impacted by the marine terminal and quarry operations.

Digby Neck and Islands is an area of the province that is pristine and fragile.

Major efforts have been made to develop the infrastructure for ecotourists such as whale and seabird watching, shore tour operators, restaurants, motels, B&Bs, craft and gift shops. These businesses provide significant benefits for owners and residents as well as tourists.

Substantial progress has been made toward the goal of developing a Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre that will allow tourists, researchers and students to learn more about one of the marine wonders of the world. This is an example of the kind of sustainable development that meets the needs of this special place where the greatest need is for sustainable communities.

As the member representing the citizens of Digby Neck and Islands in Ottawa, I will make every effort possible to ensure that their voices are heard and their communities are protected from unwanted and inappropriate development of this nature.

## TEAM OF THE WEEK

Do you have a child that is a bowler, curler, skater, basketball or hockey player, or involved in any other sport? If you do, you would like to see your child's team featured as team of the week contact us at 245-4715.

This "Team of the Week" has been sponsored by:

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