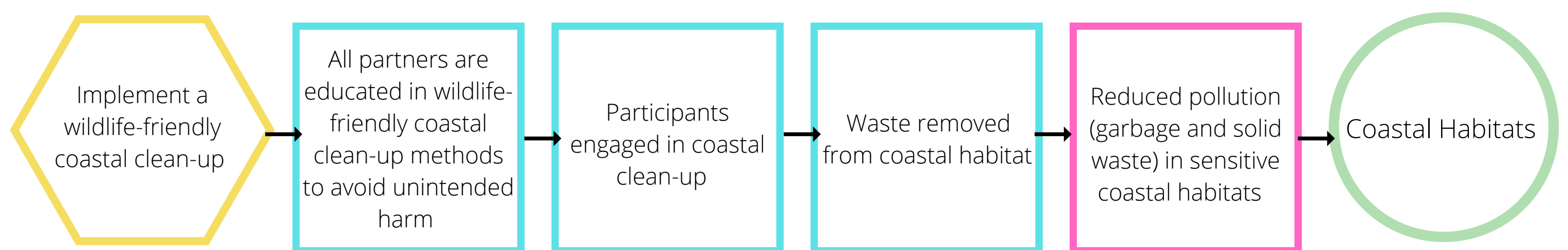


# Organizing a 'Wildlife-Friendly' Coastal Clean-Up New Brunswick

Coastal clean-ups are beneficial activities that help reduce threats from marine debris on coastal habitats and wildlife. Coastal clean-ups also help engage community members in conservation work. Clean-up events are also a great opportunity to raise public awareness about pressures associated with coastal pollution, such as use of plastics and waste management. However, it is important to keep in mind that the clean-up activities do not cause added harm to the wildlife and habitats.

Here is an example logic model for how a coastal clean-up can be wildlife-friendly while reducing threats associated with garbage and solid waste on beaches:



To support the delivery of meaningful coastal clean-up events, Nature NB and the Healthy Coasts NB team have put together the following guidelines for hosting safe, wildlife-friendly coastal clean-ups.

Other resources: [The Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up](#) and [Ocean Conservancy](#).

## **Protecting Wildlife and Sensitive Habitats During Coastal Clean-Ups**

Timing your clean-up event carefully will ensure participants' activities avoid unintended harm or disturbance to sensitive species and habitats that clean-ups aim to protect.

Some of these include:

### **Being aware of and respecting sensitive habitats**

- If the site includes critical habitat for species at risk are known to occur, ensure activities will not disturb or destroy individual species or biophysical elements of critical habitat (e.g., removing driftwood or seaweed from beaches). Critical habitat is identified for several species at risk in coastal NB in the appendices of the following recovery plans: [Piping Plover](#), [Maritime Ringlet](#), [Beach Pinweed](#) and [Gulf of St. Lawrence Aster](#).
- Do a walk through before your event to determine what birds, sensitive plants, or other species may be using the area. Be sure to avoid these areas during the clean-up. You can also check [ebird.org](#), [inaturalist.ca](#), or contact the [Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre](#) for species occurrence information.
- Avoid walking near or on eroding cliffs to reduce impacts of erosion and to protect possible Bank Swallow nesting habitat.
- Use care when removing debris from sand dunes and other sensitive habitat – best practice is not to venture into sand dune or salt marsh habitat during bird nesting periods, and to only use existing trails when doing so. Avoid making new trails or pathways through or over dunes, especially if they are vegetated.
- Invite local contractors trained and knowledgeable on the process for collecting, tracking and properly disposing of lobster traps on beaches in the Maritimes.
- Avoid use of vehicles at coastal sites whenever possible. Wheelbarrows, boats, barges, sleds can all be used for removal of debris. Helicopters would be an option in difficult to access areas of high priority. Some clean-up removal efforts may require vehicle to remove them. Permits from Provincial or Municipal Government enforcement agencies may be required\*.

\*Any works located along the beach, on Crown lands below the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM), require prior review and approval from the Department of Energy and Resource Development. Such applications should be directed to the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development or the local Regional Service Commission. Applications for works landward of the OHWM should be directed to the local Regional Service Commission, municipality, or the Department of Environment & Local Government.



## Be aware of and respect sensitive wildlife

- [Migratory Bird Convention Act](#) should be followed when planning activities. The act describes the responsibility of Environment and Climate Change Canada to develop and implement policies and regulations to ensure the protection of migratory birds, their eggs and their nests.
- Avoid scheduling clean-up events during bird nesting season (mid-April - mid-August). If a clean-up does occur during this period, organizers may contact ECCC-CWS Atlantic to check if the potential clean-up site may have sensitive habitat or species.
- For sites with migratory shorebird aggregations, clean-ups could be held between 2-3 hours before and after high tide.
- Take precautions during shorebird migration season (mid-July - October) by conducting clean-up events at low tide to avoid potential disturbances to roosting birds (birds that congregate for rest or sleep).
- Leave pets home or keep pets on leashes to avoid disturbance or harm to wildlife.
- Care should be observed should event participants find injured wildlife. Ensure event participants do not approach and redirect participants away from the animal to reduce stress. Note the animal's species, and condition. Take photos if needed. Report any injured wildlife to a knowledgeable wildlife rehabilitation center such as the Atlantic Wildlife Institute ([atlanticwildlife.ca](http://atlanticwildlife.ca)) - (506) 364-1902 email: [info@atlanticwildlife.ca](mailto:info@atlanticwildlife.ca). If rehabilitation center cannot be reached, contact [local DNRED office](#). Follow instructions.
- Report oil spills, oiled wildlife and/or an unusual observation of otherwise impacted wildlife to the Canadian Coast Guard (1-800-565-1633) or the National Environmental Emergencies Centre (1-866-283-2333).
- Contact your local Natural Resources office to learn about any permits required for your event.
- At start of clean-up event, communicate best practices to volunteers to reduce possible negative human-wildlife interactions and review safety protocols.

## Other Safety Tips

- Plan a storm date for your event in case there is a thunderstorm, high winds or extreme heat, and the clean-up must be rescheduled; If lightning occurs during the event, be prepared to leave early and take shelter as needed.
- If high heat is forecasted, plan events earlier in the day.
- Be aware of tide times to prevent stranding. [www.tideschart.com/Canada/New-Brunswick/](http://www.tideschart.com/Canada/New-Brunswick/)
- Review what to do in case of a health emergency (heat exhaustion/stroke, extreme sunburn etc.) and ensure at least one of your organizers or volunteers have updated first aid certification.
- Ensure a first aid kit is always onsite with the group.
- Ensure event planning staff or volunteers are aware of how to get to hospital and there is a vehicle near the site.
- Determine cell reception of the site in advance. If there is no reception or if reception is poor, event planners may want to consider a back-up emergency communications tool such as a SPOT (Satellite Communications Device), especially in remote locations. [www.findmespot.com](http://www.findmespot.com)
- When visiting the site, look for natural or man-made safety hazards (rocky areas, variable tides, etc.) and point these out to volunteers during the event.
- Plan ahead for handling sharp items (glass). It is recommended to dispose of these items in a sturdy container that can be sealed, rather than a bag (e.g. empty laundry detergent bottle).
- Wear hunter orange during hunting seasons. Visit the [Department of Natural Resources & Energy Development website](#) for dates.
- Dress properly with appropriate gear including footwear (closed-toe, sturdy shoes or boots), work gloves and clothing layers, pants and long-sleeve shirts in areas with ticks.
- Ask participants to bring water and snacks (leaders bring extra for those who forget).
- Bring equipment including sunscreen, insect repellent, hand sanitizer cell phone, extra batteries, GPS, and compass as needed.
- Always let someone not attending know exactly where you are going to be (for emergency responders).
- Prepare and send a participant package to all registrants so that all information including directions, safety, equipment, tools, gear, food and water etc.

**For more information please visit our website at [www.naturenb.ca/healthy-coasts-nb](http://www.naturenb.ca/healthy-coasts-nb) or contact 506-459-4209 / [info@naturenb.ca](mailto:info@naturenb.ca).**

