



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2022066

DATE: 18 October 2022.

RE: Amherst calls on Canada, N.S. and N.B. to protect the Isthmus of Chignecto

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Town of Amherst is calling on the Canadian, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick governments to take steps to protect the Isthmus of Chignecto from extreme weather events.

The call came in a motion passed by the Amherst town council on Monday, Oct. 17, 2022. It directed town staff and council members to continue lobbying the senior levels of government to “begin the necessary measurements recommended in the Chignecto Isthmus Climate Change Adaptation Comprehensive Engineering and Feasibility Study to preserve and the protect the Isthmus of Chignecto by the end of 2023.”

Their call comes less than two weeks after a local historian warned an extreme weather event could devastate the transportation links connecting Nova Scotia with the rest of North America.

Bill Casey made the comment during a symposium that examined the impacts of the Saxby Gale, which barreled over the Isthmus of Chignecto overnight on Oct. 4, 1869, breaching dikes and causing death and destruction to communities in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

“If a similar storm happened today, the railway and highway would be totally inundated. So would the wind farm. It would be a catastrophe,” Casey said during the symposium.

He also noted there have been several studies conducted, one of which indicated \$50-million worth of commercial goods cross the isthmus on a daily basis and another that proposed three solutions to protect the isthmus from rising sea levels and the ever-increasing number of extreme weather events.





Those solutions included raising the existing dikes at an estimated cost of just over \$200 million, building new dikes at just over \$189 million or raising the existing dikes and install steel sheet pile walls at select locations at a cost just over \$300 million.

The Amherst council noted neither the federal or two provincial governments have decided which solution they will pursue nor does there appear to be any discussion on moving the project forward among those senior levels of government.

“We need them to act,” Mayor David Kogon said. “Too much is at stake. Nova Scotia’s economy would be devastated if an extreme weather event cut this province off from the rest of North America. In addition, a major portion of Amherst, the Tantramar Marsh and Sackville, N.B., would be flooded.

“As Mr. Casey said at the symposium, ‘Seems to me its time we had a decision because if the rail line breaks it will be really hard to fix To me, it would be easier to do something now before it breaks.’”

-30-

Direct enquiries to:
Tom McCoag,
Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca

