

*Northern Pen October 15/02*

## Plan adopted to enhance rare plants

A plan aimed at ensuring the recovery and survival of two rare plants on the Northern Peninsula is now in place.

The National Recovery Plan for Long's Braya and Fernald's Braya was announced last week by Julie Bettney, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

"This plan represents one step in the process of recovery," she said. "We are committed to working with the recovery team, local residents and other stakeholders to ensure that these species not only survive, but recover to a point where they are no longer considered to be at risk of extinction."

Long's Braya and Fernald's Braya are plants which are unique to the coastal limestone barrens of the Northern Peninsula in the area from Port au Choix to Burnt Cape near Raleigh. Long's Braya is known to exist in only five locations, while Fernald's Braya is

restricted to 14 sites on the peninsula.

Ms. Bettney, who was on the peninsula last week to sign stewardship agreements at Straits Elementary, said a team on the Northern Peninsula worked hard to develop the recovery plan.

"This is something that government cannot do alone. We are working with communities, researchers, stakeholders and other government departments to ensure these two plant species continue to survive," she explained.

The plan emphasizes the relationship between the survival of these unique species and the conservation of their rare habitat — the coastal limestone barrens. This habitat is also home to many other rare plant species, including the endangered barrens willow, for which a recovery strategy is currently being prepared.

In 1997, the Committee on

the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) designated Long's Braya as endangered and Fernald's Braya as threatened. Both species have since been given legal protection under the province's Endangered Species Act.

Five years ago, the provincial government appointed a recovery team, consisting of researchers, botanists, resource managers and local residents, in order to address conservation of the two braya species.

Partners working on the project included the World Wildlife Fund, the Canadian Wildlife Service, Memorial University, MUN Botanical Garden, the provincial departments of Tourism, Culture and Recreation and Forest Resources and Agrifoods, Parks Canada, Agriculture Canada, Forestry Canada, the Conservation Corps and the Town of Flowers Cove.



Researchers, scientists, resource managers and local people who have been working to preserve the habitat of Fernald's Braya and Long's Braya gathered at Flowers Cove last week for the signing of stewardship agreements. They are: Front (l-r) — Dulcie House, Janelle Hancock, Louise Hermantz, Nathalie Djan-Chekar and Millie Spence; back — Michael Burzynski, Doug Ballam, Wilf Nicholls, Joe Brazil and Gerry Yetman.