

This park is green

How a former garbage dump became an ecosystem for sustainable enterprises and Nova Scotia's first eco-industrial park

"We're thinking about setting this pond up so kids can fish here," says David Daniels, motioning out his truck window. Kids fishing? Clear streams flowing with life? This is not your typical landfill.

Daniels is guiding a tour through the Kaizer Meadow Environmental Management Centre (www.kaizermeadow.ca) in Chester, N.S. The tree-lined green space, lit this day by sunlight, is a sophisticated waste-management facility, accepting 1,000 tonnes of garbage weekly from 14 Nova Scotia municipalities.



Daniels manages the five-year-old operation, which is supervised by a former gold-mining manager and staffed by a small group of employees dedicated to managing waste with consideration for the natural environment. This is the new generation of waste management in Nova Scotia, where improving the environment is



Bob Langdon (left) defines an eco-industrial park as a place where businesses work together. David Daniels believes future growth depends on finding partnerships with businesses that have long-term vision.

SANDOR FIZLI

both a priority and a business opportunity. Equipped with some of the best and newest in waste-management technology, to ease impact on the environment and even enhance it, Kaizer Meadow is positioned to lead Nova Scotia's green economy.

Opened in 2006, Kaizer Meadow was the first facility of its kind to use a

wastewater-treatment system that keeps effluent out of waterways by fully treating leachate, a liquid containing contaminants that drains from a landfill. The company's GPS-operated landfill compactor and a synthetic daily landfill cover, made in part of waste wood and paper, reduces the facility's waste footprint and soil require-

ments. Septic waste is treated using a leading-edge mobile de-watering system. All are waste materials that can be gathered for this purpose.

The 800-acre site (the landfill cell itself is a mere five acres) is situated near two major highways. When a Dartmouth-based manufacturer suggested moving part of

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its operations to Kaizer Meadow, says Daniels, it made sense to optimize the space. This means bringing in other green businesses that can have their waste issues managed in a “one-stop-shop approach.” Today roads are being laid and a new four-acre location is being cleared for Nova Scotia’s first eco-industrial park.

Rainbow Net and Rigging Ltd. (www.rainbownetrigging.com) supplies nets, draggers, and traps to the commercial fishing industry and offshore construction sector. In December it plans to move part of its operations to Kaizer Meadow. Everything about the environmental business partnership makes sense to Rainbow Net and Rigging owner Cecil Mitchell.

For 30 years, Mitchell’s company has demonstrated a commitment to “doing things the way they should be done, in a

green fashion.” He expects to grow his business by moving aquaculture repairs and services to Kaizer Meadow. In spite of the lagging economy, Mitchell foresees growing the company and quadrupling his employee numbers by being able to offer more services to customers such as product cleaning (currently it’s being sent out of province, causing many inconveniences and added expenses).

Kaizer’s environmental consultant, Bob Langdon, defines an eco-industrial park as a place where businesses work together and with the local community to reduce waste, share resources, and help achieve sustainable development. Reusing storm and wastewater is a prime example of how eco-park tenants can co-operate.

The eco-park is scheduled to open by year’s end in a location that’s less than an

hour away from Halifax. (More than 50% of Nova Scotia’s population lives within 100 kilometres.) Plans show the eco-park hosting a world-class training and research centre and offering courses on solid-waste management.

The goal of the project is to have a system of industries working together to minimize solid, water, and heat waste; reuse it where possible; and keep it out of groundwater. It’s an environmental motive that translates into a simple business formula: lost energy equals lost dollars. “Companies that aren’t taking the environment into consideration are going to be short-term companies,” says Langdon. “Being green and saying you’re green are two very different things.”

Langdon says that if the firms that have expressed interest sign on, the eco-park could generate 60 to 70 full-time jobs and about 20 part-time positions after the park is fully developed. It’s an example, he adds, of how the economy and environment are linked.

Darrell Hiltz, the CAO of the Municipality of the District of Chester, sees environmental business potential in Kaizer Meadow. He envisions its growth as a logical step toward meeting provincial environmental goals. “We have to be out front and keep thinking of ways to further the idea,” he says.

Future growth of the eco-park depends on finding partnerships with more businesses that have a long-term vision and a focus on sustainability, says David Daniels. Potential projects under review, according to the province, include a cleaning, testing, and repair service for aquaculture nets; a landfill cover manufacturer for the Atlantic Canadian and European markets; a firm developing technology to treat landfill gases; an environment research training centre; and a renewable energy facility. Says Daniels: “We’re just not sure how big this animal is going to be.”

— **AIMEE LOREFICE MAINS**

SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

One of the goals of Nova Scotia’s Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA) is to reduce per capita waste disposal to 300 kilograms per person per year by 2015. Bob Langdon with Kaizer Meadow Environmental Management Centre says this will require a considerable effort by Nova Scotians and will be “easier to do when people know they are supported by state-of-the-art waste-management facilities.”

Economic and Rural Development Minister Percy Paris says Kaizer Meadow demonstrates the positive impacts local businesses are having on the economy through environmental management and protection. The development of the Kaizer Meadow Eco Park is “a story about small-town innovation and world-class competitiveness.” Paris says strong local leadership, investment, and a spirit of innovation are the keys to its success.

The project will help Nova Scotia meet renewal energy targets in the EGSPA: 18.5% of electricity must be from renewables by 2013; greenhouse gas reductions need to fall 10% below 1990 levels by 2020 (about 20% below current levels); and at least 25% of the province’s electricity must be generated from renewable energy sources by 2020.

To help meet these targets, all firms in the eco-park will go beyond just complying with environmental standards and actually contribute to improving the environment. Langdon calls it “the only park dedicated to firms in the environmental sector and those involved with supporting sustainable economic development.”

Nova Scotia’s Economic and Rural Development department invested \$75,000 in Kaizer Meadow in 2008. The contribution was for a feasibility study on remanufacturing items from the waste stream. — **A.L.M.**