

## 2005 West Light Road Repair By Zander Brosky

Modern roads are feats of sophisticated engineering. It takes monstrous amounts of money, legions of workers, heavy equipment and hundreds of hours to complete even a short stretch of road. But what if you're fixing a road on an isolated Island? What if 180km of desolate ocean separated you from the mainland? What if your road passes through an exceedingly delicate ecosystem?



The worn out road was the main winter road. This road allows easy transport of equipment and supplies from the north beach to the west light during the winter. In the summer the beach is used as a road and landing strip, but in the winter high water makes the beach impassible to ATVs and trucks. This makes the road an essential winter link between the main station and the west light. The Conservation Committee of Sable Trust said a working road is essential for conservation on the island. Since the last repairs in 1997, the ever-shifting Sable sands had marred the road, causing the alarming waves to form, making it ideal for skateboarding but treacherous for ATVs.

Building or repairing a road has a large impact on its local ecosystem. The impact from road works on the fragile ecosystem of Sable could be mammoth. To curtail the strain on Sable's ecosystem Environment Canada conducted a painstaking environmental review. A review team studied the proposal for months, searching for any plant or animal that might be affected by the project. By early June 2005 the construction team finished construction and the station crew once again has a first-rate road to travel on. The road repairs were the first restoration project funded by the Trust though Trust members hope it will be the first of many.

*Zander is a student at St. Patrick's High School in Halifax who completed a workterm with the Trust.*

