

## Dive Site Review

### Martinique Beach – Musquodoboit Harbour, Nova Scotia

#### Site Briefing (see attached pictures)

Martinique Beach is a sandy 5 kilometer stretch of exposed coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. It is a trunk dive in that you can park your vehicle, suit up out of your trunk and have a short walk to the water. If the ocean swell is small it is a good beginner dive site. There are close picnic tables and campfire pits so you can make a day of it.

The area that is most interesting to dive is an outcropping of rock between 'first' and 'second' beaches. On either side of the rocks the bottom is sandy and gently slopes away from the beach. The water deepens by approximately 5 feet for every 100 feet that you swim out. After 200 or 300 feet out, slowly the bottom changes to smooth rocks. Surge, currents and resulting visibility are generally good if the swell is small. Because the beach is close to Petpeswick Inlet, visibility can be reduced by the inlet's outflow at lower tide levels, especially in the warmer waters of August and September. Visibility will vary from a low of 15 or 20 feet (at worst) to as high as 50 feet. Water temperature varies from 0 degrees in the winter to as warm as 17 or 18 degrees in late summer.

Ocean life that a diver can expect to see will mostly be in or near the outcropping of rock. There one can see flounder, crab, and various species of small native fish. There is a small colony of harbour seals on a low-tide exposed rock island approximately 2 kilometers south west from the dive site (this colony could be a good dive site but would require a boat). The seals have been known to come close to the beach and, once in a blue moon, body surf in the breakers.

Hazards at Martinique are limited to times when significant wave action causes surge, undertows, perpendicular and lateral rip currents and the like. This site is not recommended unless the ocean swell is relatively flat (one half meter or less). Generally the best time would be a June morning dive just at or after ~~black~~ high tide.

#### After Dive Entertainment

There are no licensed establishments within 15 kilometers of Martinique beach. There are gas, food, bank, post office and other services in the town of Musquodoboit Harbour 8 kilometers from the beach (at the intersection of East Petpeswick Road and Highway 7). Approximately 2 kilometers from the beach you will find the Sunflower Café. There you will find excellent homemade foods including sinful cinnamon rolls and tasty homemade German ice cream served by the owner Willie.

If you are dying for a cold brew, traveling east on Highway 7 for 10 kilometers from the town Musquodoboit Harbour will get you to Captain Toddy's Pub. If you drive for 15 kilometers on Highway 7 towards Halifax from the Harbour, you will get to Porter's Lake Pub and Grill at (surprise, surprise) Porter's Lake.

## Location

- 1) Leave Dartmouth on Main Street heading east onto Highway 7.
- 2) When you get to Musquodoboit Harbour (approximately 40 kilometers), turn right (south) toward Martinique Beach (East Petpeswick Road).
- 3) After driving approximately 10 kilometers, you will come to Martinique Beach Provincial Park sign. Turn left.
- 4) Drive approximately 1 kilometer and look for the picnic site pictured in this document. Park.

Note – if you want a more scenic drive, take route 207 along the coast (adds approximately 15 kilometers).

## Special Notes

- 1) This is a no camping Provincial Park, so if you do plan to overnight, be prepared for the possibility of being asked to leave late into the evening.
- 2) This is a relatively clean, underutilized beach. At least help keep it clean.
- 3) There are washroom facilities and an outdoor tap to rinse your gear down when you are finished. You will drive past the tap as you drive in to the dive site.

## Emergency Plan

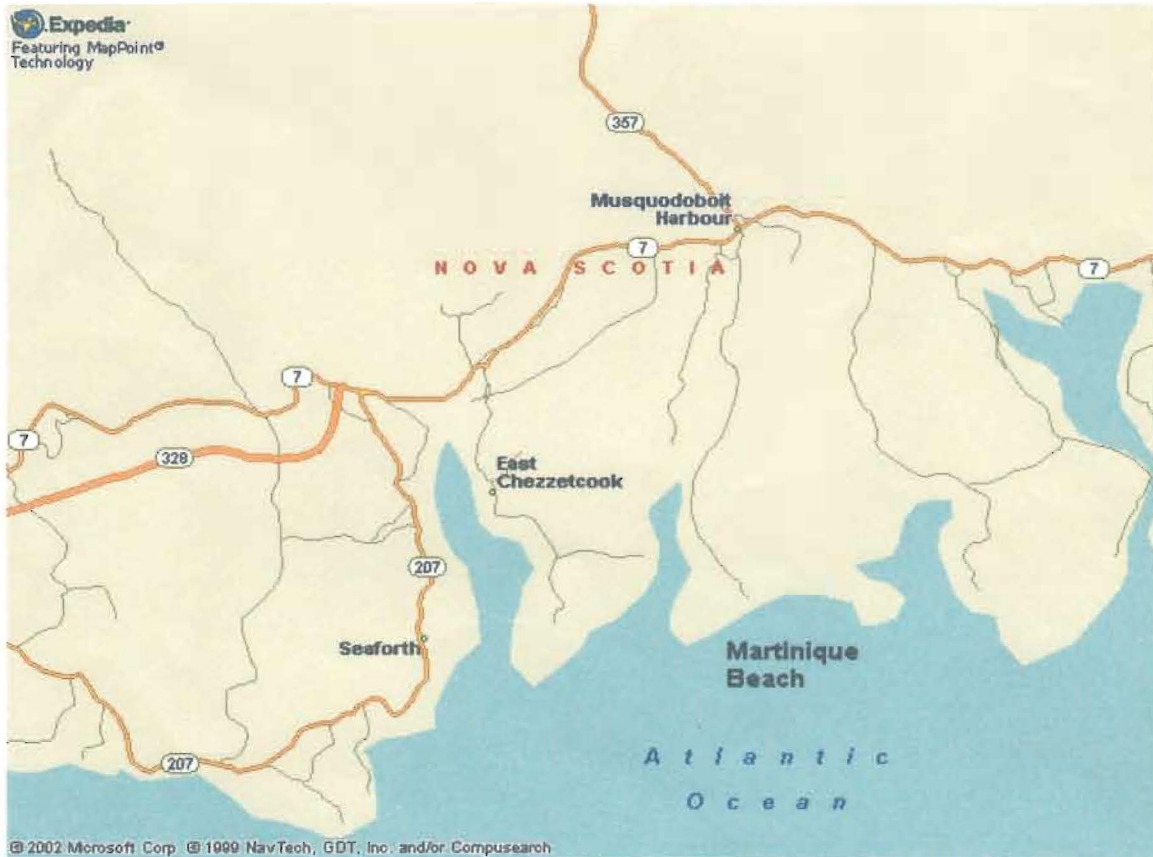
In the unlikely event of an emergency, it is advisable to exit the water anywhere along the beach. Please familiarize yourself with the following emergency situations and their recommended responses:

- 1) If a diver is in a *low-air* or *out-of-air* situation, proceed to the surface immediately using the standard emergency surfacing techniques for the situation... ascend slowly looking up and around. Surface swim to the closest part of the beach at a slow and steady pace. Remember that prevailing currents may slow attempts. If you find you are in a rip current going out and away from the beach, swim diagonally until you are out of it and then swim directly to the beach.
- 2) If *buddy separation* occurs, divers are recommended to search underwater for 1 (one) minute, then reach behind your head, turn off your air and head for the deepest water you can find. If your buddy diver does not appear shortly, ascend to the surface and swim slowly and steadily to the beach. Upon reaching shore and still no sign, **immediately obtain assistance** as outlined on next page.
- 3) In the improbable event that a diver is *injured* from marine life, return to shore immediately and seek medical assistance. If the injuries are considered serious, obtain assistance as outlined on next page.
- 4) In any event of a *near-drowning* incident or a *decompression illness (DCI)* or *lung injury*, obtain assistance as outlined on next page.

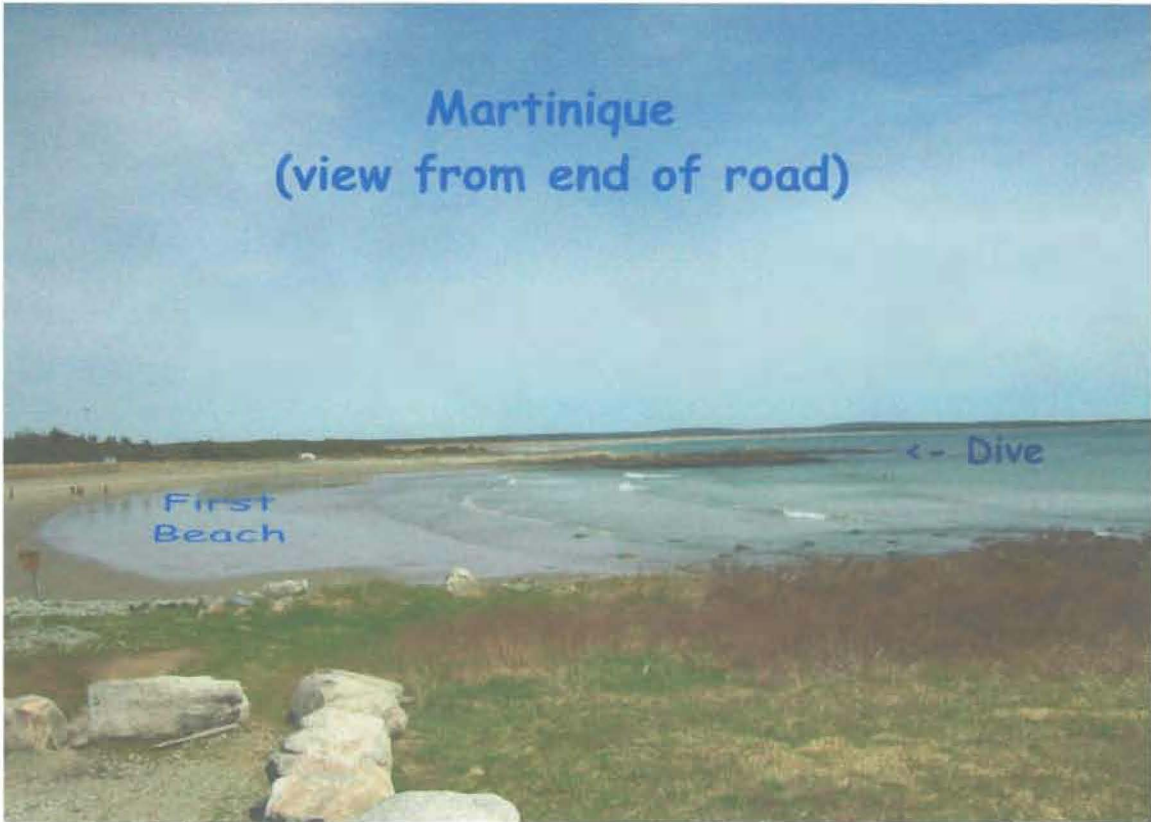
## Contacting Emergency Assistance

If assistance is required, use the following numbers in an emergency. If you do not have a cellular telephone with you, use one of the resident's phones at the beginning of the beach. Be sure to tell them that it is an emergency situation. For reference, there is a volunteer fire department and hospital in Musquodoboit Harbour (10 kilometers). The Twin Oaks Memorial Hospital in 'The Harbour' is staffed 24/7. If a doctor is not on site to assist you, one is on-call in the community. Either way, nursing staff can help with oxygen administration or other medical emergencies immediately.

Ambulance / Medical	Dial 911
RCMP / Police	Dial 911
Search and Rescue	Dial 911
Divers Alert Network (DAN)	(919) 684-8111 or (919) 684-4DAN (4326) (collect calls accepted)
Marine VHF	Channel 16
Recompression Facilities (QEII Hospital – Dixon Center)	473-7998
Other Emergencies (QEII Hospital)	473-2220



Martinique  
(view from end of road)



This is the spot



