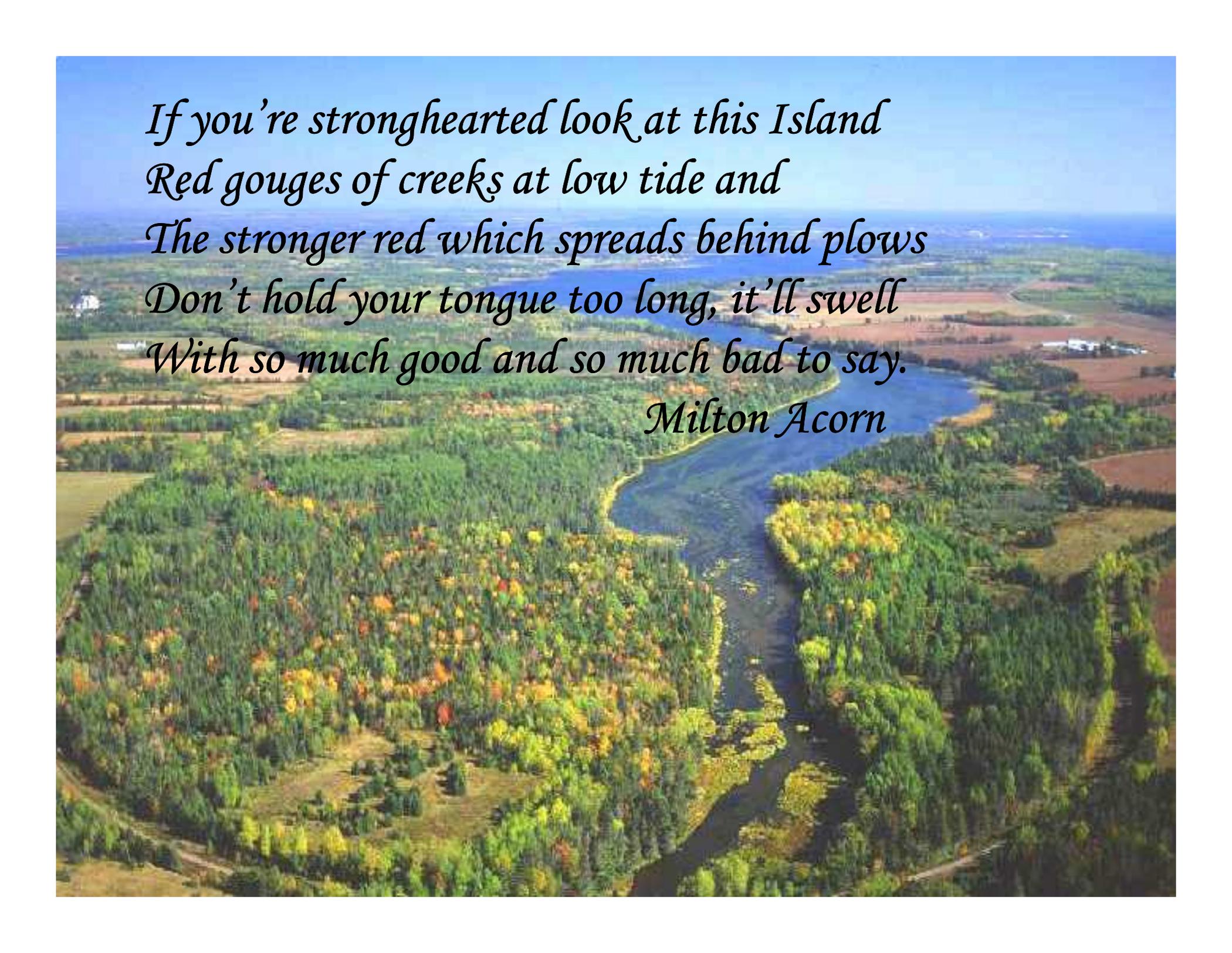
An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. A winding river or inlet flows through the center, bordered by green fields and some buildings. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is bright and scenic.

# Community Accounts

## A pilot project for PEI

Quality of Island Life Cooperative November 2006

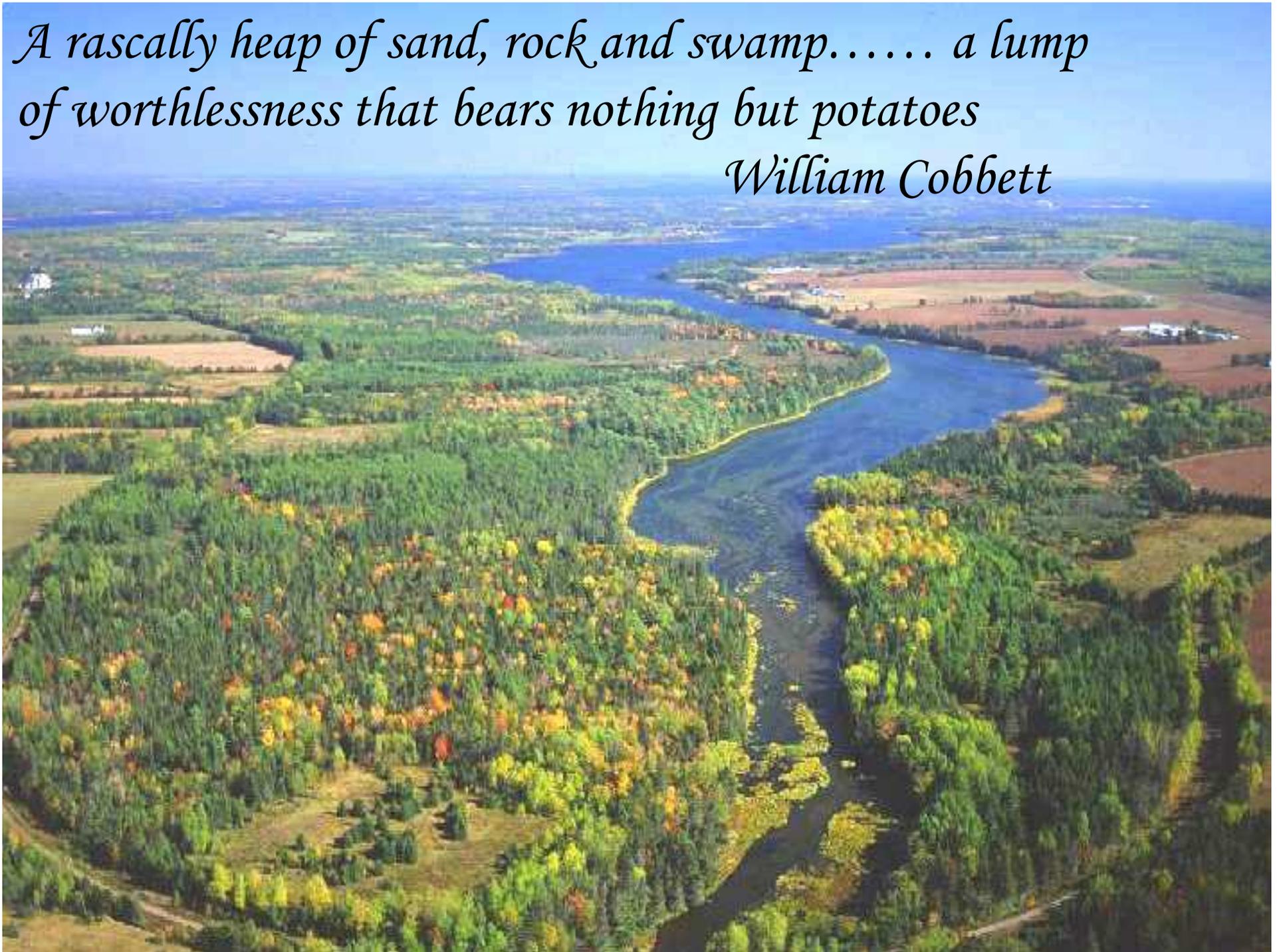
An aerial photograph of a river winding through a forest. The trees are in various stages of autumn, showing shades of green, yellow, and orange. The river is a deep blue color, and the sky is a clear, bright blue. The overall scene is a beautiful landscape view.

*If you're stronghearted look at this Island  
Red gouges of creeks at low tide and  
The stronger red which spreads behind plows  
Don't hold your tongue too long, it'll swell  
With so much good and so much bad to say.*

*Milton Acorn*

*A rascally heap of sand, rock and swamp..... a lump  
of worthlessness that bears nothing but potatoes*

*William Cobbett*



# **Quality of Island Life Co-op**

## **Our Purpose**

- ❖ **Engaging people in conversations on what well-being and quality of life means to Islanders**
- ❖ **Turning data into tools people can use to understand how our Island is doing**
- ❖ **Planning where we want to go in the future**

# **Who are we?**

**We are a non-partisan, secular group hailing from all walks of Island life.**

**We have in common a deep appreciation for Prince Edward Island and a commitment to maintaining and improving the quality of life it affords.**

**We believe that by sharing this commitment we will attract many others to participate and begin a transformation in the way we see ourselves and measure our progress.**

# **Why measure Quality of Island Life ?**

**Aren't we drowning in statistics already ?**

**Are they really meaningful ?**

**How can we make better use of data ?**

**The Quality of Island Life co-operative believes that we must capture the less tangible qualities of Island life in a way that can be incorporated into community decision making.**

# Some of the current signs aren't encouraging

- Most of us have a lot more material possessions but there is also:
  - More stress, obesity, environmental illness
  - Insecurity, unemployment
  - Environmental quality decline
  - Resource depletion, forests, soil, fish
  - Global warming

*As Islanders we have an uneasy feeling that some of the essential qualities of Island life are not being counted. Could they be harnessed to help reverse these trends ?*

# From the Rock to the Sandbar Community Accounts

- N&L have established user-friendly system of community accounts which provides information on domains of well being at the community level
- QoIL Co-op is collaborating with N&L Community Accounts to develop a similar system for PEI



## Domains of Well-Being: A Web of Life



# PEI Community Accounts

## *the concept*

- Collect information through surveys on what constitutes quality of life
- Present this information to communities along with other statistics
- Empower communities to make informed decision making and to influence the policy development process

# **PEI Community Accounts**

## *pilot project 2006*

- Tyne Valley and surrounding communities
- Working with community leaders
- Developing a data base of photographs, history and existing statistics
- Collecting information and opinion from community members about quality of life

# **PEI Community Accounts**

*pilot project 2006-methodology  
in the words of our research assistant  
Stacey Enman*

- research on the history of the communities in and around Tyne Valley.
- wrote a research paper on the communities
- assembled available statistics for the various communities of Tyne Valley
- developed brochures and bulletins for public awareness
- developed a survey on quality of life parameters
- participant recruitment and consent forms
- administered survey by telephone, mail and personal interviews
- compiled survey data

# **PEI Community Accounts**

## *pilot project 2006 - the survey*

- What does the term Quality of Life mean to you?
- What do you value most about living in Tyne Valley ( Bideford, Lennox Is etc) ?
- Please explain how you think Tyne Valley and the surrounding communities changed for the better or worse in recent years?
- Also collected demographic information

# PEI Community Accounts

*pilot project 2006- comments on the survey*

- Most respondents were very willing to talk about their community and their quality of life
- Respondants from 17 years and up in three age categories, men and women
- Open-ended questions
- Responses were lumped into subject categories for data entry and analysis

# PEI Community Accounts

## *pilot project 2006- preliminary findings*

- Most important parameters are friendliness, closeness to family, community spirit, peace and quiet
- Economic considerations, jobs are not primary concerns
- Appearance of the community is important but other environmental issues were rarely raised.
- Health Services or potential lack of local access to them, a concern

# **PEI Community Accounts**

## *pilot project 2006*

The project has raised many more questions about quality of life issues than it has answered. It has raised awareness of statistical information and of the areas where statistics are less likely to be collected but which are very important to people in these communities.

# **PEI Community Accounts**

## **next steps**

# Acknowledgements

- Human Resources Canada, Youth Employment Strategy 2006 for assistance to hire a student research assistant
- Atlantic Canada Social Economy Research Network for a grant to assist with project expenses
- QoIL membership volunteers for project concept and supervision

**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and  
committed citizens can change the world**

**Indeed it is the only thing that ever has**

**Margaret Mead**