Beat: Travel

Nova Scotia Highway Closed In Both Directions

Due To Protest Over Border Restrictions

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USPA NEWS - At 6 p.m. Tuesday, RCMP advised that Highway 104 is closed in both directions at Exit 7 near Thompson Station due to a protest of recent COVID-19 border restrictions. Traffic is being diverted through Exit 7. The RCMP is asking people to exercise caution in the area.

During today's COVID-19 media briefing, Premier Iain Rankin confirmed that the Atlantic Bubble that had been previously announced would go forward as of 8 a.m. Wednesday June 23rd. This would allow travellers from Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador to enter Nova Scotia without being required to self-isolate or complete the Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form. It was originally planned for New Brunswick to be included in the new bubble, however, due to New Brunswick allowing visitors from all parts of Canada to enter without self-isolation restrictions, those traveling into Nova Scotia from that province will still need to follow a modified self-isolation plan, depending on their vaccination status.

Here is how the modified self-isolation plan will work. People with two doses of COVID-19 vaccine have to get tested, then self-isolate until they get a negative result. Those with one dose must get two tests and can leave self-isolation after seven days if they come back negative. If an individual hasn't been vaccinated, they need to self-isolate for a full two weeks. The rules also apply to Nova Scotians returning home from New Brunswick.

Today's announcement has frustrated many people in Nova Scotia that have family in New Brunswick that they have not been able to visit for the last 6 months or longer.

Earlier on Tuesday prior to today's announcement, Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin the Progressive Conservative for MLA Nova Scotia's Cumberland North, said in a statement posted on Facebook, " If Premier Rankin announces today that residents of Cumberland will continue to be separated from their families living only 10 minutes away in New Brunswick, I think it’s time to collectively show this government what we think as a Border Community. I will need people to stand in unity with me. There is a press conference this afternoon at 3p.m. when the border details will be given. We are supposed to open as an Atlantic Bubble tomorrow morning but there is some speculation that Rankin has once again flip flopped on his decision."

After the official announcement shortly after 3 p.m., Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin went on to say, " Premier Rankin has once again flip flopped on the opening of the NS/NB Border. He has until 4 o’clock today to change these latest restrictions on the NS or the residents of Cumberland are shutting down the Trans Canada highway until the Nova Scotia New Brunswick border is open for our families. I will be joining other residents who have had enough, on the Trans Canada highway on this side of a Cobequid pass Exit 7 Thompson Station after 4 p.m. if the Premier does not change these latest restrictions.

The MLA for Cumberland North called the restrictions "a slap in the face for her constituents and to New Brunswickers."

When asked about the threat of a blockade at Tuesday's COVID-19 briefing, Premier Iain Rankin said, "My priority is protecting Nova Scotians as we reopen. It was my hope to have all of Atlantic open. I proposed the date of June 23rd and had agreement with two premiers," he went on to say,."I wasn't able to get that full agreement from one of the premiers. Because of that, I need to make sure we're focused on the needs of Nova Scotians. It's regrettable that we're in this position where we have to have a little bit more of a requirement from people coming in from New Brunswick, but that's needed right now and we hope we're in a better place in the weeks ahead."

Article online:

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