

# Cape Breton Island

## The Gaelic Heart of North America

### Ciad Mile Failte! (100,000 Welcomes!)

Cabot Strait

Legend

Elevation (Metres)

Value

High : 534.996

Low : 0.127827

Bathymetry (Metres)

Depth

50

51 - 100

101 - 150

151 - 250

251 - 400

401 - 450

Road Centerline

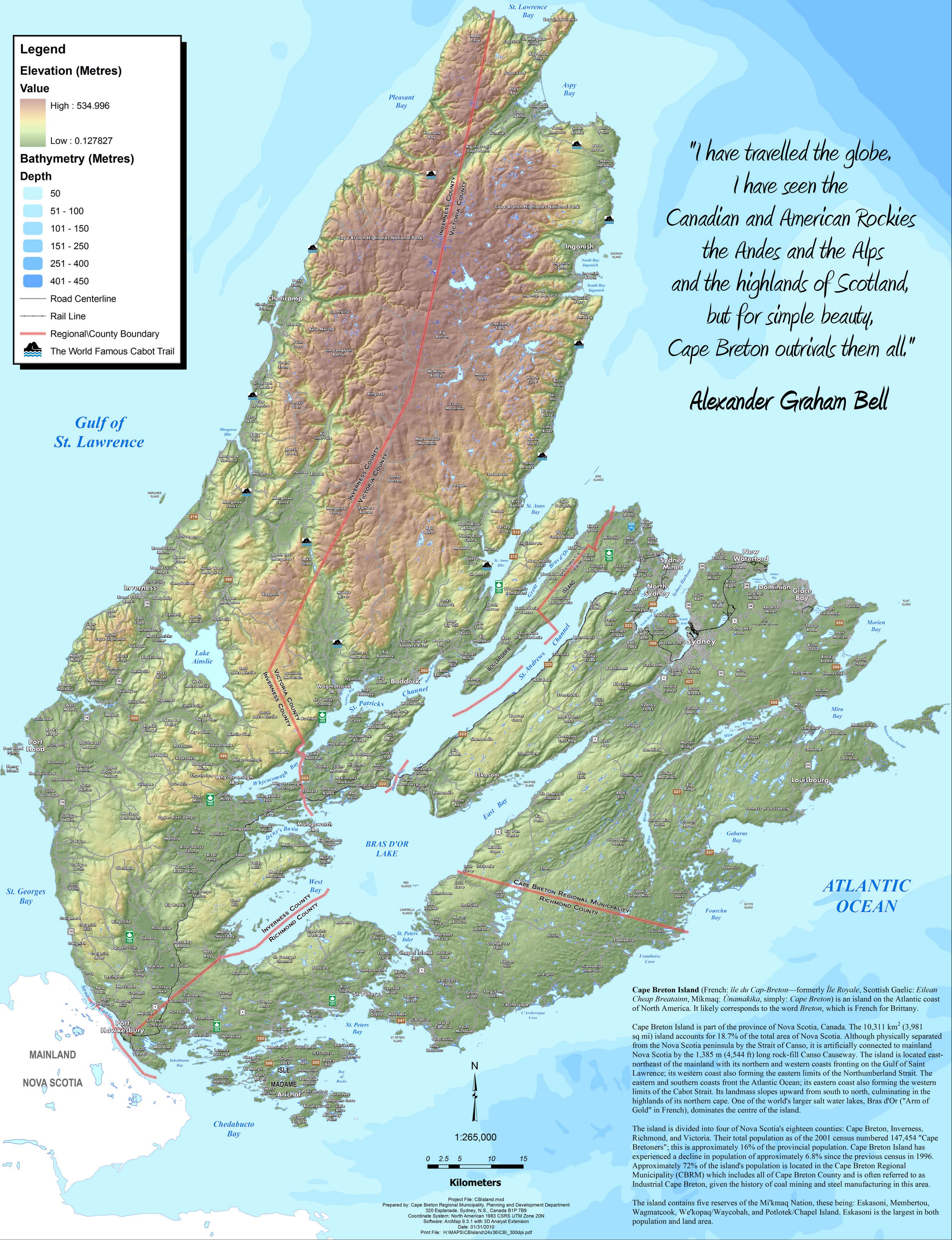
Rail Line

Regional/County Boundary

The World Famous Cabot Trail

"I have travelled the globe,  
I have seen the  
Canadian and American Rockies  
the Andes and the Alps  
and the highlands of Scotland,  
but for simple beauty,  
Cape Breton outrivals them all."

Alexander Graham Bell



Cape Breton Island (French: *île du Cap-Breton*—formerly *île Royale*, Scottish Gaelic: *Eilean Cheap Breatainn*, Mikmaq: *Unamakika*, simply: *Cape Breton*) is an island on the Atlantic coast of North America. It likely corresponds to the word *Breton*, which is French for Brittany.

Cape Breton Island is part of the province of Nova Scotia, Canada. The 10,311 km<sup>2</sup> (3,981 sq mi) island accounts for 18.7% of the total area of Nova Scotia. Although physically separated from the Nova Scotia peninsula by the Strait of Canso, it is artificially connected to mainland Nova Scotia by the 1,385 m (4,544 ft) long rock-fill Canso Causeway. The island is located east-northeast of the mainland with its northern and western coasts fronting on the Gulf of Saint Lawrence; its western coast also forming the eastern limits of the Northumberland Strait. The eastern and southern coasts front the Atlantic Ocean; its eastern coast also forming the western limits of the Cabot Strait. Its landmass slopes upward from south to north, culminating in the highlands of its northern cape. One of the world's larger salt water lakes, Bras d'Or ("Arm of Gold" in French), dominates the centre of the island.

The island is divided into four of Nova Scotia's eighteen counties: Cape Breton, Inverness, Richmond, and Victoria. Their total population as of the 2001 census numbered 147,454 "Cape Bretoners"; this is approximately 16% of the provincial population. Cape Breton Island has experienced a decline in population of approximately 6.8% since the previous census in 1996. Approximately 72% of the island's population is located in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) which includes all of Cape Breton County and is often referred to as Industrial Cape Breton, given the history of coal mining and steel manufacturing in this area.

The island contains five reserves of the Mi'kmaq Nation, these being: Eskasoni, Membertou, Wagmatcook, We'kopaq/Waycobah, and Potlotek/Chapel Island. Eskasoni is the largest in both population and land area.