

Wooddale Land Development Advisory Authority

Annual Performance Report 2024-25



Chairperson's Message

The Honourable Lisa Dempster
Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
Petten Building
30 Strawberry Marsh Road
P. O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

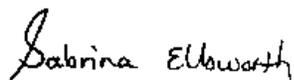
Dear Minister Dempster:

In accordance with the provisions of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for category three public bodies, I am pleased to submit the 2024-25 Annual Performance Report for the Wooddale Land Development Advisory Authority (the Authority) for the period April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

The Authority was successful in working towards the indicators of its objective for the reporting period, which is the second year of its associated 2023-26 Activity Plan. Progress towards the achievement of the commitments of Government related to the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (FFA) have been described in this report. Specifically, the work undertaken will assist in preserving valuable land for agriculture purposes, which will contribute to enhancing the capacity for Newfoundland and Labrador's to become more food self-sufficient.

My signature below is on behalf of the Authority and is indicative of the Authority's accountability for the results reported for 2024-25.

Respectfully submitted,



Sabrina Ellsworth, MSc. (Agriculture), P.Ag
Chairperson

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Overview

Section 3 of the **Wooddale Agriculture Development Area Regulations** (the Regulations) under the **Lands Act** (the Act) provides for the appointment of the Authority. The Authority reviews applications for development in the Wooddale Agriculture Development Area (Wooddale ADA), located near Bishop’s Falls, to ensure development within the area is planned and carried out in a manner that ensures the full potential of the area’s resources is reached.

Members of the Authority are appointed by the Minister of FFA (the Minister). Appointments are made using a merit-based process; however, gender balance is considered during the appointment process and efforts are made to ensure the Authority represents the population it serves. In accordance with the Regulations, the Authority must have at least five members, including a Chairperson and a Secretary. As of March 31, 2024, the Authority had six members from FFA, representing different areas of expertise.

The members of the Authority as of March 31, 2025, consisted of the following:

Name	Position	Representing
Sabrina Ellsworth	Chairperson	Director, Agriculture Production and Research, FFA
Austin Jayne	Secretary	Land Management Officer, FFA
Kayla Willis	Member	Land Management Specialist, FFA
Rodger Primmer	Member	Regional Lands Manager, Crown Lands, FFA
Vacant	Member	Agriculture Development Officer, FFA
Bradley White	Member	District Ecosystem Manager, Forest Services, FFA

All members are appointed by virtue of their position. The Authority receives extensive operational support from FFA. Departmental employees appointed to the Authority perform many day-to-day administrative functions and may consult other staff regarding individual applications where necessary. There are no operating expenses as all members are Government of Newfoundland and Labrador employees.

Mandate

The Authority was established to consider applications for land development activities in the Wooddale ADA as defined by the Act and as further described in subsection 3(3) and subsection 3(4) of the Regulations. A map of the Wooddale ADA is included below in Annex A. The Authority may approve and issue permits or notices of approval, refuse applications, cancel permits and exercise other powers necessary to assess land development applications under the Regulations.

For more detail on the Regulations, please refer to the House of Assembly website at:
<http://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/regulations/rc961080.htm>

Lines of Business

The Authority has no identified lines of business as it would be repetitive of its mandate to consider applications for land development activities in the Wooddale ADA.

Vision

The Authority contributes to the vision of FFA through assessment of applications for development activities in the Wooddale ADA. The vision of FFA is that of sustainable renewable resources that are responsibly developed for the social, cultural, ecological and economic well-being of the province.

Contact Information

For more information on the Authority, please contact us at the below:

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192 Wheeler's Road
Corner Brook, NL A2H 6J8
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This report is available in alternate formats. To request an alternate format, please contact us at the above.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Authority works in partnership with FFA and the farming community to support sustainable development within the Wooddale ADA. This partnership is of utmost importance in protecting agricultural land resources and supporting agricultural development and food self-sufficiency in the province. The Authority continued to partner with FFA during fiscal 2024-25 to work towards its mandate as described above.

Report on Performance

The Authority reviews applications for all proposed developments within the boundaries of the Wooddale ADA in accordance with the Regulations. Applications are reviewed by the Authority, which requires a quorum of three members, including the Chairperson and Secretary. All

applications are considered under the Regulations and are either approved or refused according to same. The applicant(s) are notified of the decision of the Authority. In the case of a refusal, the applicant may appeal in writing to the Minister within 30 days after the applicant is notified of the decision.

Regulating development in the Wooddale ADA ensures consistency with agricultural purposes. The activities of the Authority support the Provincial Government's commitment to increase food self-sufficiency in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The following objective and indicators, as outlined in the 2023-26 Activity Plan, guided the Authority in achieving its mandate. This is the second year of the 2023-26 planning period. As the focus of the Board will remain the same for the duration of the plan, the Board will report on the same objective and indicators in each of the three years. For more, please refer to the plan here:

<https://www.assembly.nl.ca/business/electronicdocuments/WLDAAActivityPlan2023-2026.pdf>

Applications to the Authority are normally for additional parcels of land or capital developments on existing holdings. During the reporting period, there were no applications submitted to the Authority.

Issue:

Development in the Wooddale Agricultural Development Area

Objective 2024-25

By March 31, 2024, the Authority will have ensured development activities in the Wooddale Agricultural Development Area are compliant with the Act and Regulations, thus supporting ongoing, sustainable agricultural development in the area.

Indicators

- Reviewed all applications and communicated decisions to applicants.
 - The Authority did not receive any applications during the 2024-25 fiscal year.
- Monitored development activities for compliance with Regulations.
 - During 2024-25, members of the Authority monitored development activities within the Wooddale ADA while carrying out regular departmental duties, checking to see there was no unapproved development within the area.
- Communicated requirements for development in the Wooddale Agricultural Development Area, as per the Regulations, to all landowners in the development area.

- In 2024-25, the requirements related to the Wooddale Agriculture Development Regulations were communicated to the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor via in-person discussions.
- In 2024-25, the Authority communicated requirements for development with program and FFA extension staff managers, noting that certain developments within the ADA would require approval by the Authority before particular projects could be considered and/or approved.

Opportunities and Challenges

While the Wooddale ADA is rather large, the amount of arable land – particularly land suitable for crop production – has been significantly utilized to a point where there are few options for farm in-field crop expansion. To address this challenge, FFA officials have discussed other opportunities for food production on non-arable land, such as greenhouse/climate-controlled production, with landowners in the area. As well, FFA has been working to identify suitable land adjacent to, but outside of the Wooddale ADA. Identifying new lands will allow existing farmers to expand and new entrants to enter the industry.

Financial Information

Audited statements are not required as the Authority is budgeted through FFA. There are no operating expenses as all members are Government of Newfoundland and Labrador employees.

Annex A: Wooddale Agriculture Development Area

