



Regional Councils & Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat Executive Council

Annual Activity Report 2012-13

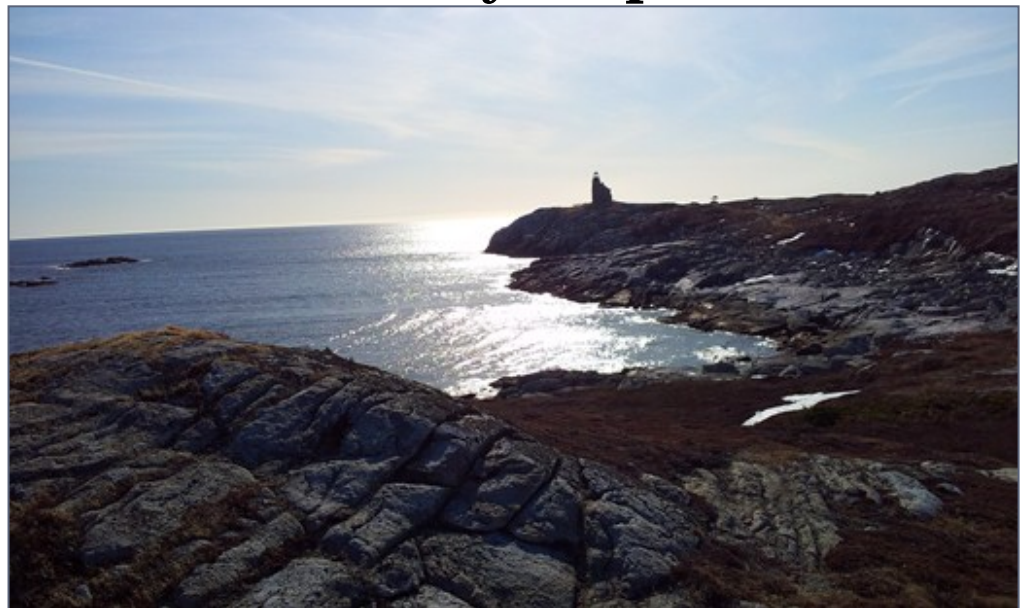


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1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the activities of 10 volunteer-based advisory councils (nine Regional Councils and one Provincial Council) supported by the Rural Secretariat, Office of Public Engagement (OPE). This document covers the period of April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013 and reports upon council commitments as described in the 2011-14 Activity Plan.

The Regional Councils and Provincial Council continue under the OPE to carry out their mandate of providing policy advice to government departments on important regional and provincial issues.

2. MANDATE

The Rural Secretariat Regional Councils' mandate is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities facing a region.
- To review key economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, EI usage, economic diversity, etc.) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- To identify policies and programs which either a) advance b) negatively impact or c) need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five-year period.
- To advance regional cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about the economic and social measures, and to encourage regional partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To serve as a sounding board in their region for new or proposed initiatives.
- To select an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat.

3. PRIMARY CLIENTS

The primary clients of the Regional Councils and the Provincial Council include the Office of Public Engagement, departments and agencies within the Provincial Government, among others.

The councils engage individuals, groups and organizations within the regions as they carry out their work.

4. VISION

The Regional Councils and Provincial Council support the vision of the Rural Secretariat:

Vibrant rural regions and communities where collaborative organizations and engaged and informed citizens work closely with governments to advance rural sustainability.

Through their work, the councils identify priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which consider economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

5. MISSION

The Regional Councils and the Provincial Council support the mission of the Rural Secretariat:

By March 31, 2017, the Rural Secretariat will have worked with regional and departmental partners to improve the sustainability prospects of rural communities and regions.

The Regional Councils and Provincial Council agree with the mission of the Rural Secretariat and strive to support it by providing advice to government on issues affecting the region. The councils engage citizens, conduct research and work with partners to ensure that the advice being provided will assist in improving the sustainability of rural communities and regions.

6. AVALON PENINSULA REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chairperson for the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council, I hereby submit the annual Activity Report for the 2012-13 fiscal year. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

The focus for the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council this past year has been to develop quality advice for the Provincial Government on an issue of significance related to regional sustainability. After much discussion and consideration and in order to meet this commitment, the council engaged in a community-based research process in an effort to enhance its knowledge of the subject area as well as provide information of significant relevance for the discussions and deliberations that followed.

The council partnered with Memorial University and engaged with government and community organizations to enrich the research process and provide sound evidence on which council developed this year's advice. The council is pleased to report this process led to the submission of a policy advice document focusing on immigration as an option for rural sustainability within the Avalon Region.

The Activity Report that follows clearly outlines the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council's process for its policy advice development resulting in the recommendations as submitted to the Department of Advanced Education and Skills and the Provincial Population Growth Strategy in March 2013.

The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will continue its collaborative approach to developing sound policy advice for the Provincial Government's consideration and looks forward to meeting its future commitment to Government through ongoing and collaborative research and deliberative dialogue.

Sincerely,



Des Linehan
Avalon Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

6.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council is comprised of 12 members – eight male and four female. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including eight members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met five times in 2011-12.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

The Office of Public Engagement also funds two regional planner positions in the region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the council and facilitate their meetings. The planners for the Avalon Peninsula region are Jamilee Fitzpatrick and Michelle Yetman. Their regional offices are located in Placentia (Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development) and Carbonear (College of the North Atlantic campus).

Regional Council members	Community
John Adams	Harbour Grace
Paul Connors	Mount Pearl
Lorelei Dean	Holyrood
Sheila Lee	Riverhead, St. Mary's Bay
Des Linehan	Placentia
Jay McGrath	Mount Pearl
Betty Moore	Clarke's Beach
Kerry Murray	Topsail
Maureen Sullivan	Calvert
Brendan White	Northern Bay
Dave Woodman	Harbour Main
Paul Canning	St. John's

For an updated listing of council members please visit: <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>

6.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In its 2011-14 Activity Plan Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. The activities and performance of the council with respect to this objective, as outlined below, are in keeping with the council's mandate as well as in support of the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective for each year of the plan.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council believes that immigration within the region is of significant importance to enhancing rural sustainability. The region and province as a whole are facing demographic challenges such as an aging population, low birth rate and out-migration. These challenges are negatively affecting the region's ability to meet the labour needs of this flourishing

economy. The council believes that immigration is a potential solution for its rural communities to attract newcomers, whether from other regions, provinces, or countries. Increasing immigration to the Avalon region and more importantly, retaining immigrants and newcomers, can help address these population challenges. It can also help to foster growth in the local economy and to strengthen the province's labour force, thus addressing concerns about labour shortages in some areas and occupations. Immigrants alone cannot solve the province's labour shortages, but they can be part of the solution. As a result, the council felt the timing was appropriate to develop and submit policy advice related to this significant issue for the Provincial Government's consideration as it moves forward in its support to communities within the region.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 the council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified	The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council received a presentation from the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism, Department of Advanced Education and Skills, in June 2012. After much deliberation the council agreed that rural immigration as an option for rural sustainability is an issue with significant potential and worthy of further exploration to be developed as its focus for advice for 2012-13.
Researched issue	<p>In the fall of 2012, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council partnered with Memorial University to conduct a community-based research initiative on rural immigration. The initiative focused primarily on a review of existing Canadian rural immigration literature and the identification and analysis of models utilized by rural communities to attract, recruit, retain and integrate immigrants. Literature was supplemented with immigration data provided through Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the NL Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism.</p> <p>Further consultations were held with members of the Regional Council in an effort to gain feedback and regional perspectives. The research initiative also received valuable contributions from an Advisory Committee consisting of representatives from the Avalon</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>Peninsula Regional Council, Rural Secretariat, Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism, and the Association for New Canadians.</p> <p>Four rural immigration models were analyzed by the research team based on specified criteria such as geography and demographics, which are applicable to rural and small town areas of the Avalon Peninsula region. The four models reviewed in the research were: Welcoming Community; WISR Model (Welcome – Invoke – Settle – Retrain); Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and the Model of Community Engagement for Sustainable Settlement.</p> <p>Within each model the research identified key features, key lessons and applicability to the Avalon Peninsula.</p>
<p>Consensus developed on advice to government</p>	<p>Based on the review of these models, coupled with insights from project partners and from the literature and statistical data examined, 14 recommendations were developed and agreed upon by the council. The recommendations were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 1: Municipalities and community/regional organizations, employers, government, and immigration service organizations should continue to explore and work towards the development of immigration model/initiative(s) suited to the specific realities of rural Newfoundland and Labrador and its varied regions. • Recommendation 2: Municipalities and community/regional organizations, government and employers are advised to link rural immigration strategies to labour market development plans and programs. Networks involving local employers, employment service providers and organized labour have an important role to play in such strategies.

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 3: Where possible, rural immigration strategies should include connections to post-secondary institutions. • Recommendation 4: The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council is advised to circulate the findings from this rural immigration research initiative to key stakeholders to share information, to create dialogue and the potential for joint action. • Recommendation 5: All those involved in immigration (all levels of government, community-based organizations, immigrant settlement services, employers, labour, etc.) need to explore mechanisms to enhance sharing of rural immigration information, including information on policies, programs, and practices on a regular basis and in multiple, accessible formats and venues. • Recommendation 6: Both provincial and federal levels of government should make funding available for processes that bring stakeholders together to develop strategic, comprehensive, and realistic immigration strategies. Each of the four models explored demonstrate the importance of process funding to the success of their initiatives. • Recommendation 7: Funding to implement rural immigration strategies is required. Expecting rural communities to self-finance rural immigration strategies is unrealistic given the financial and human resource reality present in most areas of the province. It would be shortsighted of local actors, however, to simply rely on federal and provincial governments to finance rural immigration strategies. Additional sources of financial support need to be brainstormed and considered. • Recommendation 8: Rural communities and all levels of government should target immigrants from locations that have a higher potential for enjoying the lifestyle, amenities, and culture offered by rural

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>Newfoundland and Labrador. Consideration should be paid to factors such as existing immigrants' experiences in small communities and potential connection to similar cultural communities and linguistic groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 9: Community organizations, employers, and governments are advised to recognize and act upon the opportunity to convert the growing number of temporary residents in the province into permanent residents. Temporary residents with experiences in the province may wish to explore opportunities to transition to permanent residency in rural communities. As a result, temporary residents need to be considered in all rural immigration strategies. • Recommendation 10: The rise of temporary residents in the province illustrates the need for government, employers, and organized labour to ensure that appropriate protection for temporary residents is in place. Mechanisms for ensuring this protection should be further explored. An illustration from Manitoba is the <i>Worker Recruitment and Protection Act</i>. • Recommendation 11: Government departments should continue to support the Provincial Nominee Program and review ways to maximize the benefits related to this Program. • Recommendation 12: The experiences of recent immigrants and of immigrant receiving communities need to be captured and assessed to enhance future immigration attraction, settlement, and retention activities. • Recommendation 13: Memorial University recently announced a new Public Engagement Framework, representing an opportunity for building a stronger rural immigration research focus among faculty and students. Building on initiatives such as

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>the Coordinating Committee on Newcomer Integration, key actors in immigration (including community, employer, labour and immigrant service organizations as well as related provincial and federal government departments) should connect to researchers at post-secondary institutions to encourage additional rural immigration research in the province.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 14: A current inventory of immigration research and initiatives, particularly relating to rural communities should be created, maintained and made widely available to the public and interested groups. The inventory could include research reports, presentations, working papers, and information about and outputs from past and current events.
Communicated advice to government	The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council submitted their advice which included the 14 recommendations above to the Department of Advanced Education and Skills and the Provincial Population Growth Strategy in March 2013.

Discussion of Results:

The council has met its objective of providing advice to the Provincial Government. The council identified the issue of rural immigration as an option for rural sustainability and they conducted research to assist them in developing their advice. Through discussions and deliberations, the council came to a consensus on the advice that it was to submit to government for consideration. The council submitted this advice in March 2013 to the Department of Advanced Education and Skills.

7. CLARENVILLE - BONAVISTA REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chairperson for the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council, I hereby submit the Activity Report for the 2012-13 fiscal year. The period of time covered by this report extends from April 1, 2011 through to March 31, 2012. On behalf of the council, and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

During the past year, the council focused on its commitments as contained in the first year of the 2011-14 Activity Plan document.

Throughout the process, the council continued to engage government and community stakeholders. Consequently, it proved to be very busy and rewarding year with the council developing new understandings of the issues we hoped to address. During the year, council met five times to discuss issues relating to the fishery, affordable housing, regional economic development, support for the voluntary sector and the need to protect our cultural heritage and identity. Additionally, the council followed, with great interest, the collaboration work that has been taking place in the Isthmus of Avalon region in relation to the Hebron project.

The council engaged many partners including government, academia and community stakeholders to support the council's continued efforts to understand the issues and submit well-informed policy advice to the Provincial Government. These conversations helped the council in formulating its perspectives and in building a knowledge base as we seek to refine our policy advice.

In closing, I, on behalf of the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council, want to express our sincere thanks to the Provincial Government for its interest in our work and we look forward to continuing our collective efforts to support the sustainability of this diverse region.

Sincerely,



Janet Fay Matthews
Chair
Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

7.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

Currently, the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council is comprised of 10 members; six female and four male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including nine members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met four times in 2011-12.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

The Office of Public Engagement also funds a Regional Partnership Planner position in the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and facilitates the work of the council. The planner for the Clarenville - Bonavista region is Colin Holloway. The nature of this position requires that he travel extensively throughout the region and the province. Mr. Holloway's office is located at the Bonavista campus of the College of the North Atlantic.

Regional Council members	Community
Janet Fay Matthews (Chairperson)	Arnold's Cove
Lisa Browne*	Clarenville
Marilyn Coles-Hayley	Elliston
Darryl Johnson	Port Union
Shelly Blackmore	Port Union
Don Mifflin	Bonavista
Violet Parsons	Bloomfield
Barry Pearce	Port Rexton
Edith Samson	Port Union
Mervin Wiseman (Provincial Council Representative)	North Harbour

*Resigned late in the fiscal year.

For an updated listing of Council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>

7.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In its 2011-14 Activity Plan, the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council identified one objective: *to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region*. The activities and performance of the council with respect to this objective for 2012-13, as outlined below, are in keeping with the council's mandate, as well as support the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). To ensure that the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing its advice to Government it will make use of any one of a number of tools to assist in its work as it deems appropriate. In keeping with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government, these tools include, but are not limited to, research activities and citizen engagement which provide input into council's policy advice document submissions.

The Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council will report on the same objective for each year in the 2011-14 planning cycle.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

Regional Councils have been asked to examine their regions from an environmental, economic, social and cultural perspective with a goal of enhancing the region's future sustainability. Commencing in the winter of 2012, the council discussed and identified important policy matters that members thought should be addressed and further explored under each of the four perspectives noted above.

Specifically, the council discussed a range of issues including, but not limited to, the fishery, homelessness and affordable housing, impacts of the devolution of the Labour Market Development Agreement, regional economic development, and the integrated community sustainability planning process. Following a lengthy deliberation process, the council settled on two key areas which members felt required additional analysis before submitting advice to the Provincial Government: the devolution of the Labour Market Development Agreement and the Integrated Community Sustainability Planning process.

To assist the council in its understanding of the issues impacting communities and government as a result of the devolution of the Labour Market Development Agreement, consultations were held with the Departments of Advanced Education and Skills and Innovation, Business and Rural Development as well as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

To further its understanding of the complex issues impacting municipalities in the Clarenville - Bonavista region, the council engaged the support of the Provincial Rural Secretariat Office to complete an analysis of existing studies of the region which have been completed by other municipal councils, individuals and regional economic development organizations. The summary of this analysis assisted the council in its identification of key issues for advice as well as potential gaps in research. Following a review of the report, consultations occurred with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council recognizes that both issues are of critical importance to the sustainability of our region.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 Council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on one issue that relates to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified	Commencing in the winter of 2012, the council discussed and identified important policy matters that it thought should be addressed and further explored under each of the four regional sustainability pillars: social; economic; environmental; and cultural. Following a lengthy deliberation process, the council settled on two key areas which required additional analysis before advice could be submitted to the Provincial Government: (1) the devolution of the Labour Market Development Agreement;

Indicators	Accomplishments
	and (2) the Integrated Community Sustainability Planning process.
Researched issue	<p>Issue 1: To assist the council in its understanding of the issues impacting communities and government as a result of the devolution of the Labour Market Development Agreement, starting in the winter 2012, consultations were held with the Departments of Advanced Education and Skills and Innovation, Business and Rural Development as well as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. During these consultations, the Regional Director and Program Manager responsible for the delivery of the Labour Market Development Agreement in the Central Region attended a joint meeting with the council to discuss how the devolution process is impacting rural regions. Throughout the summer and early fall 2012, the council established a LMDDA working group which had a primary mandate to draft a policy advice document which contained key recommendations for improving the delivery of the Labour Market Development Agreement’s programs and services to rural regions.</p> <p>Issue 2: Commencing in April 2012, and following a review of key issues impacting the sustainability of the region, the council agreed to explore the impact of the Integrated Community Sustainability Planning process on municipalities. The council engaged the support of the Provincial Rural Secretariat Office to complete an analysis of existing studies of the region. These studies included key findings of previous community-based research projects on issues such as primary industries, regional readiness, social impacts of industrial development and regional economic development plans which have been completed by other municipal councils, individuals and economic development organizations. It also built on the council’s previous 2010 advice document entitled, “Community-based Leadership and Collaborative Practices in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador”. Following a review of the summary report, consultations occurred with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador.</p> <p>As a result of these meetings, the council learned that a comprehensive review of the ICSP process was already underway through Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador. Subsequently, the council responded favorably to a request by the Department of Municipal Affairs to provide advice on the Municipal Cooperation Model. During the February 2013</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>Regional Council meeting, the Manager of Integrated Community Sustainability Partnerships, Department of Municipal Affairs gave a presentation on the Municipal Cooperation Model.</p> <p>In its deliberation of the regional cooperation issue, the council has studied several examples of resource sharing and collaborative efforts within the Clarendville-Bonavista region. These examples include: the Municipality of Trinity Bay North; municipal governance efforts in Bloomfield; partnerships between Clarendville and the Milton-George's Brook LSD; exploratory efforts between Elliston and Bonavista; and resource sharing between Sunnyside, Come-By-Chance, Arnold's Cove and Southern Harbour.</p>
Agreed upon advice to government	<p>Issue 1: At the October 2012 Regional Council meeting, the draft letter containing 12 recommendations for improving the delivery of LMDA programs and services in rural regions was reviewed, revised and approved.</p> <p>Issue 2: Following the February 2013 Regional Council meeting, the draft letter containing five recommendations for improving the Municipal Cooperation Model was reviewed. It was revised and approved during a subsequent council meeting in March 2013.</p>
Communicated advice to government	<p>Issue 1: In late October 2012, an advice letter, entitled <i>Labour Market Development Agreement Policy and Program Recommendations</i>, was submitted to the Regional Director, Central Region, Department of Advanced Education and Skills. Several key areas for improvement were identified and included: eligible participants; multi-year funding; training and skills development, the in-take process; and effective communication.</p> <p>Issue 2: In March 2013, the council submitted an advice letter, entitled <i>Municipal Cooperation</i>, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The advice document highlights 12 recommendations for improving the Municipal Cooperation Model including these five key areas: effective and multi-pronged communication; re-designing the community needs assessment process; protecting community identity; developing a formal Twinning Program; and promoting best practice in municipal cooperation.</p>

Discussion of Results:

Issue 1: The Regional Council is aware of the tremendous undertaking to devolve the Labour Market Development Agreement from the Federal Government to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Time is needed to sort through the many details in an effort to provide enhanced service quality to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Notwithstanding this, the council also recognizes that there are ways to improve the delivery process by focusing efforts on stronger communication with local organizations, re-defining eligible costs, enhancing training and skill programs for participants and supporting small and medium-sized business growth.

In the coming year, the council will continue to seek opportunities to engage in dialogue with the Department of Advanced Education and Skills as we collectively seek to advise on additional ways to improve the delivery of LMDA programs and services to the region.

Issue 2: The council understands and supports the need for improved cooperation among communities. Populations in rural regions are declining and these decreases are having an impact upon the number and type of individuals who volunteer as councilors. Furthermore, tax bases are shrinking amid the requirement for a broader range of services. In their efforts to provide more and better services, municipal councils are finding it difficult to provide even basic services within their resource allocation. The Regional Council recognizes this approach cannot continue; municipal councils need to find an effective and efficient model which is based upon good principles of shared service delivery.

In the review of cooperation examples listed above, Regional Council has identified that some of the challenges associated with obtaining success have resulted from a lack of consistency in the application of the present Community Cooperation Model. While the council recognizes that communities are at varying stages when they seek support from the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore options for sharing resources, there is a need to have a consistent and transparency model which is openly communicated to all stakeholders.

In the coming year, the council will continue to seek out new information about examples of regional cooperation in the region which will further inform its own education and possible advice to the Provincial Government.

8. BURIN PENINSULA REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chairperson for the Burin Peninsula Regional Council, I cordially submit the council's annual activity report for the 2012-13 fiscal year. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported. The content of this report provides an overview of the council's activities this past year in respect to the commitments outlined in the 2011-14 Activity Plan.

This past year has been both interesting and rewarding for the Regional Council as we concluded our community-based research project in partnership with Memorial University's Department of Geography in the area of demographics. The council learned a great deal about the current and future demographic challenges facing the region and had the opportunity to meet with stakeholders in the region to discuss how we should address them. Also this year we were pleased to have our local MHAs join us for several meetings to discuss local issues which we plan to continue in the new fiscal year.

Having submitted our advice document to government on the demographic challenges facing the Burin Peninsula and completed our commitments as outlined in the second year of our 2011-14 Activity Plan, we are now looking forward yet another year of continuing to provide sound advice to the Provincial Government on issues related to regional sustainability.

Sincerely,



Dominic Lundrigan
Chairperson
Burin Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

8.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Burin Peninsula Regional Council is currently comprised of 10 members; five male and five female. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including a diverse mix of experience and backgrounds. The council met eight times in 2012-13.

Regional Council members	Community
David Babb	Grand Bank
Trina Appleby	Torbay (Burin)
Jack Cumben	Grand Bank
Dominic Lundrigan (Chair)	Burin
Irene Hurley	Spanish Room
Fred Douglas	Burin
Shirlene Edwards	Lawn
Mary McCarthy	Marystown
Harold Murphy (Provincial Council Rep)	Parker's Cove
Susan Bursej	Marystown

For an updated list of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>

The Office of Public Engagement funds a regional planner position in the region, who, among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and facilitates its work. The planner for the Burin Peninsula region is Greg Dominaux. His office is located at the Burin campus of the College of the North Atlantic.

8.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In its 2011-14 Activity Plan, the council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. In the three years covered by the plan, the Regional Council will be focusing its work and providing advice to the Provincial Government on issues related to regional sustainability. To ensure that the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing its advice to government it will make use of any one of a number of tools to assist in its work as it deems appropriate. In keeping with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government (Appendix A), these tools include, but are not limited to, research activities and citizen engagement which provide input into council's policy advice document submissions.

In maintaining the required flexibility to effectively complete its work, the council will be reporting on the same objective for the three years of the plan.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

As is the case with most areas of rural Newfoundland and Labrador, the Burin Peninsula and its communities are struggling to deal with its changing demographics. The population has declined sharply over the past 20 years; it's aging and there are fewer youth and young families living here. Our towns, community-based organizations and employers have no choice but to adapt and deal with these changes. These changes are impacting the region's labour supply, volunteer pool and services within the

communities. With this in mind, the Regional Council chose to work on the issue of demographic challenges facing the Burin Peninsula this past year.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 the council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The members of the Burin Peninsula Regional Council discussed and identified the issue of demographic challenges facing the Burin Peninsula. This topic was chosen as it builds on existing work of the council completed in 2011-12.
Researched issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council partnered with Dr. Alvin Simms, a professor in Department of Geography at Memorial University. Dr. Simms completed the research in 2011-12 (For more information please see <i>Burin Peninsula Regional Council Activity Report 2011-12</i> at http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/publications/Burin2011-12.pdf). The council received a final draft of Dr. Simms' report, entitled <i>Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region: A Demographic Analysis</i>, in November 2012.
Issue deliberated by council and advice developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Council met seven times over the year to discuss and deliberate the issue of demographic challenges on the Burin Peninsula The council's deliberations also included a public engagement exercise to gather the thoughts and opinions of other key stakeholders in the region. The Regional Council hosted a dialogue session with the Burin Peninsula Joint Council (a regional body made up of municipalities and local service districts in the region) and the Burin Peninsula Chamber of Commerce. Session participants received an overview of the results of the research completed by Dr. Alvin Simms and then participated in a discussion on the challenges resulting from the demographic changes in the region. Participants also discussed what actions need to be taken to address these challenges to help ensure the sustainability of the Burin Peninsula's population. A total of 25 participants from around the region attended the session.

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All information gathered through the research project and the exercise was used by the council in their deliberations for the creation of their advice document to government. The document was completed in March 2013.
Communicated advice to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On March 29, 2013 the Regional Council officially submitted its advice document to government. The document was submitted to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Honourable Keith Hutchings - Minister of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development and Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement. ○ Honourable Darin King – Minister of Justice and MHA for District of Grand Bank ○ Honourable Clyde Jackman – Minister of Education and MHA for District of Burin – Placentia West ○ Calvin Peach – MHA for District of Bellevue ○ Ross Reid – Deputy Minister, Provincial Population Growth Strategy ○ Bruce Gilbert – Assistant Deputy Minister, Office of Public Engagement • Arrangements have also been made to have Ross Reid meet with the council to discuss the document in May 2013.

Discussion of Results:

In conducting its work over the past year, the Regional Council learned a great deal about the demography of the Burin Peninsula. Through its efforts this past year, the council believes they have put together a thorough overview of the demographic challenges facing the region and some sound advice on how to address them. All of these key challenges and recommendations were included in the council’s advice submission to government.

Despite these challenges the council is confident that the Burin Peninsula will grow stronger and thrive into the future. This region has faced many obstacles and challenges in the past with determination and resilience and its citizens always overcome them. The Burin Peninsula Regional Council believes that with government providing the proper support to the region and its citizens we can develop a way forward.

9. GANDER – NEW-WES-VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As chairperson for the Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council, I hereby submit the 2012-13 Annual Activity Report for the timeframe April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

Council remains committed to the objectives identified in our 2011-14 Activity Plan as they are key to the of sustainability for our region. We continue to be engaged in and support many valuable citizen-based policy advice, collaboration, research, and public dialogue and engagement initiatives. The resulting regional/sector capacity development plays a catalytic role in fostering bottom-up processes of community engagement and development with regional stakeholders.

Changing with the dynamic of our region, we remain committed to refining our vision to address our on-going and ever changing needs, while continuing to develop upon the long-term vision and goals that have been and that will continue to be identified. We remain committed to the process and strategy of engaging the community and its sector representation in a process aimed at enhancing sector capacity and using community-based research (CBR) as a support tool. Focusing on a solution-based approach to the issues identified, council has been able and will continue to articulate relevant advice documents to government.

It is with continued vigor that we, the Gander- New-Wes-Valley Regional Council, will continue to review and discuss our regional weaknesses and opportunities in relation to our economic, social, environmental, and cultural landscapes. As such we will continue to explore and refine these determinants of our region's health. Council continues to look forward to this challenge, being a part of this solution-based approach to regional growth and sustainability.

Best Regards,



Nadine Decker, Chairperson
Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

9.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council is comprised of 11 members; three female and eight male. The council met four times in 2011-12.

Regional Council members	Community
Nadine Decker (Chairperson)	Fogo Island
Victor Cassell	Cottlesville
Edythe Goodridge	Salvage
Rick Lackey	Twillingate
David Regular	Summerford
James Snow	Lewisporte
Donald J. Winsor	Eastport
Stanley Sparkes	Glovertown
Dermot Chafe	Gander
Arthur Bull	Gander
Hazel Bishop	Gander

For an updated listing of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>

The Office of Public Engagement funds a Regional Partnership Planner position in the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and facilitates the work of the council. The Planner for the Gander - New-Wes-Valley region is Tanya Noble. Her office is located in the Municipality of New-Wes-Valley.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

9.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In the 2011-14 Activity Plan, the council's objective was to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. In the three years covered by the plan, the council will focus on issues or topics related to the region's sustainability. To ensure we are properly informed and adequately prepared to advise government on these important matters we will make use of a number of tools to assist us. In keeping with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government (Appendix A), these tools include, but are not limited to, research activities, collaboration and citizen engagement.

In maintaining the required flexibility to effectively complete our work, the council will report on the same objective for each year of the 2011-14 planning cycle.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

Councils have been asked to examine their regions from an environmental, economic, social and cultural perspective with a goal of enhancing regional sustainability. During the winter of 2012, the council discussed and identified important policy matters that members thought should be addressed/explored

under each of the four pillars. The council used Turning Point technology and response pad voting to narrow their priorities and agree on areas or topics that required attention in the upcoming years. Since its inception in 2005, the council has acknowledged the significant role local governance structures play in the development and management of necessary infrastructure and services. We have also noted the challenges. Years later and after a new compliment of council members to our table, the topic of strong local governance mechanisms to support our communities is still an important concern to the council. It is an essential component for strengthening this region.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on an issue(s) that relates to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue Identified	During the winter of 2012, council members identified and discussed a number of issues related to regional sustainability. The council then voted on these issues and the issue that rose to the top was: strengthening local governance structures within the region.
Researched issue	The council reviewed and researched the structures that currently exist within the region. Communities throughout the region are governed by a mixture of incorporated municipalities (34), local service districts (31) and organized committees that provide specific functions or services related to local governance structures, such as snow clearing, recreational services and so on. In October 2012, the council engaged Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) and other regional stakeholders to identify current challenges and discuss what could be done overcome these challenges. Topics reviewed include the “Benchmarking” study that is currently ongoing; the online tool, Regional Economic Capacity Index (RECI); and the MNL Revenue Study completed by Dr. Wade Locke. The results of this regional review and the engagement sessions formed the basis of the document, <i>Strengthening Local Governance</i> .

Indicators	Accomplishments
Determined advice to submit to government	Throughout the winter and during the March 2013 Regional Council meeting, council members drafted, revised and completed a document entitled <i>Strengthening Local Governance</i> .
Communicated advice to government	In March 2013, an advice letter and the document <i>Strengthening Local Governance</i> were submitted to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Discussion of Results:

In exploring ways to strengthen local governance we have considered the current structures that exist within the region. In October 2012, the council hosted a dialogue session with some regional stakeholders on the topic of strengthening our local governance structures. Some of the stakeholders included Kittiwake Economic Development Corporation, Gander and Area Chamber of Commerce, incorporated municipalities within the region, unincorporated local service districts and local community committee members. We also engaged the President of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) and discussed some of their past and current work, particularly the “Benchmarking” study. What was evident from the discussion was the belief that having strong and competent local governance mechanisms is vital to strengthening the sustainability of the smaller communities and sub-regions within the larger Gander-New-Wes-Valley Region.

In the coming year, the council intends to further examine these issues by engaging local governance mechanisms within the Gander-New-Wes-Valley Region. More information is required to examine the fiscal and leadership capacity of local governance mechanisms within the region.

The council believes that citizens and organizations require a local governance structure that provides them with quality services and infrastructure in a fiscally efficient and responsible manner; a structure where individuals can provide input and make plans for the future. A new approach to local, and consequentially regional governance is needed that will instill a sense of pride, fairness and trust among citizens; one that will inspire innovation and attract qualified leaders.

10. GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR – BAIE VERTE – HARBOUR BRETON REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chairperson for the Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council, and in accordance with the Provincial Government's commitment to accountability, I hereby submit the annual Activity Report for the 2012-2013 fiscal year, April 1 to March 31. My signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

This past year council focused on its commitments as outlined in the *Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte-Harbour Breton Regional Council Activity Plan 2011 - 2014*. In complying with the objective to provide advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability; the Regional Council selected land use planning.

Land use planning (LUP) is critical when striving to maximize economic, social and ecological benefits from our natural resources while balancing competing demands on these resources. Council's intent was to confirm anecdotal reports and better understand the land use conflicts and potential conflicts in Central Newfoundland. The Regional Council, in partnership with Memorial University and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, investigated the issue through literature reviews, public engagements, on-line surveys, key informant interviews, and case studies. The findings were submitted in an advice document to the Provincial Government.

In addition, the council considered other issues affecting regional sustainability and submitted two additional pieces of advice. The council urged the Provincial Government to explore options to maintain collaborative efforts and continue to direct professional expertise to rural communities following the closure of Regional Economic Development Boards. In the second case, the council recognized and applauded the support government provides education; however encouraged government to find innovative solutions that provide efficiencies and quality to exist without amalgamating school boards.

We are committed to continuing our dialogue with government and community. In particular, utilizing community engagement and community-based research to better understand the regional perspective and enhance our ability to provide quality advice. We look forward to influencing and effecting a positive change in Central West.

Sincerely,



Debbie Armstrong, Chair
Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

10.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council is comprised of 12 members; six female and six male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including 11 members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met five times in 2012-13.

Regional Council members	Community
Deborah Armstrong (Chairperson)	Pleasantview
Tracey Comeau	Seal Cove
Jerry Dean	Botwood
Ruth Down-Robinson	Grand Falls-Windsor
Colin Forward (Vice-Chairperson)	Baie Verte
Phoebe Foster	Miawpukek Mi'kamawey Mami'omi (Conne River)
Jamie Kendell	St. Alban's
Hubert Langdon	English Harbour West
Steward May	Belleoram
Don Stewart	Harbour Breton
Joan Strickland	St. Alban's
Bernice Walker	Norris Arm

*For an updated listing of council members please visit: <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

The Office of Public Engagement also funds a regional planner position in the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and facilitates the work of council. The planner for the Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton region is Linda Brett. Her office is located in Springdale.

10.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In the 2011-14 Activity Plan, the council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. This objective was developed in consideration of the council's mandate and financial resources along with the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). In light of these strategic directions the council provided citizen- based policy advice by utilizing community-based research, and often other collaborative tools, to gather, form and validate information and knowledge contained in their submissions.

The council will report on the same objective for each year in the 2011-14 planning cycle.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

The Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte- Harbour Breton Regional Council believes that land use planning is critical to long term sustainability.

In 2010, the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council identified two priorities: community engagement (CE) and land use planning (LUP). In early 2011, the council initiated research to identify innovative approaches to community engagement that may be conducted in the future. A multi-year project was proposed, with best practices identified in CE research to subsequently be utilized in initiating research on land use issues and planning.

Land use planning was of interest for three reasons;

1. LUP is considered crucial when allocating land to maximize economic and social benefits. The Canadian Institute of Planners in *Planning Is* state that planning is “the scientific, aesthetic, and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities.”
2. In 2010, the Rural Secretariat Provincial Council arranged a provincial land use planning citizen engagement event that aimed to deliberate on the current status and generate ideas on improving LUP.
3. There was no apparent subsequent research, yet the council heard anecdotal reports of land use conflicts within the Central West region and; thereby, wanted to identify and better understand these on-going conflicts and potential land use planning.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the council’s desire to have issues identified in a comprehensive manner and on a timely basis, the next three accomplishments were competed ahead of schedule. • Council members used the following criteria funnel to determine regional sustainability issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has potential to positively impact regional sustainability. ○ Will broadly impact residents across the region. ○ Has major consequences if not investigated. ○ Is within provincial government’s jurisdiction.

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will strongly impact a particular group within a select geographic area. ○ Is a timely issue. ○ Is not being dealt with by other organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During the March 11 and 12, 2011 council meeting, members identified effective community engagement as an issue for investigation in 2011 – 2012 and land use planning in 2012-2013. <p>Regional sustainability issues identified were: land use planning, regionalism, community engagement, retention and recruitment of skills, accessing labour, transportation, and food security. After significant debate, members voted on the issues for investigation for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On June 1 and 2, 2011, in consultation with Dr. Kelly Vodden, Memorial University Department of Geography, the council and researcher agreed to a multi-year project to investigate community engagement during the first year and subsequently employing lessons learned from that research to study land use planning in the subsequent year.
Researched issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The initial piece of research, a literature scan of regional documents, reports and files on Newfoundland and Labrador land use conflicts and concerns, was conducted as part of the community engagement study in 2011-2012. ● August 2012, Dr. Vodden with her team of researchers, project advisory team and assistance from council members initiated research on current and potential issues surrounding land use planning in Central Newfoundland. Also, the researchers would be seeking residents and stakeholders to prioritize these issues and

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>offer potential solution or resolution of issues identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From September to December, students from the 3350 Geography class at Memorial University reviewed 10 cases studies on five land use issues identified from the earlier literature scan. These students wrote reports, created Power Point presentations, and presented their findings to council members, fellow classmates and project researchers. Videos were made of each presentation for distribution and web publishing. • Key informant interviews were held with representatives from government, municipal leaders, industry, special interest groups and residents. • An online survey was widely distributed through emails, Facebook, Twitter, and project webpage. • Four public engagement sessions were hosted across the region in February and March targeting municipal leaders and those less easy to engage, youth. • Data collected from these five sources were compiled to address LUP issues in Central Newfoundland.
<p>Consensus developed on advice to government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the council reviewed the researchers' presentation on their findings along with the Geography students' case studies, the Regional Council suggested options for policy advice during the March 1 and 2, 2013 meeting. In a subsequent teleconference these suggestions were refined and a consensus reached on the advice to submit to government. • Policy options identified as advice for consideration by government covered current and potential LUP issues generally and within the following specific sectors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forestry ○ Agriculture ○ Mining ○ Cottage and residential

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aquaculture ○ Waterfront land ○ Crown lands ○ Tourism and recreation ○ Environment and conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examples of advice offered for consideration are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Provincial Government should consider supporting sub-regional land use planning efforts where municipalities have also indicated their commitment to participate in land use planning. ○ The Province of NL should consider creating a land registry system that is widely accessible to citizens (through online access), that is interactive, accurate and current.
Communicated advice to Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The council submitted an advisory letter on LUP supported by the document, <i>Understanding Land Use in the Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte-Harbour Breton Region</i>, to the Ministers of Environment and Conservation; Innovation, Business and Rural Development; Natural Resources; Municipal Affairs; Fisheries and Aquaculture; and Tourism, Culture and Recreation; as well as forwarding copying of these documents to the MHAs for Fortune Bay -Cape La Hune; Baie Verte – Springdale; Green Bay South; Exploits; and Grand Falls-Windsor. ● The advice letter invited each Minister, or a senior member of their staff, to meet for further discussion of these findings and the council’s advice.

Discussion of Results:

Successful land use planning is a key tool for governments, businesses and industry to plan for long-term usage of land and natural resources. It allows government to plan for growth and to make decisions regarding allocation of land for future growth, conservation, aesthetics and quality of life. The lack of land use planning can negatively affect the attractiveness, economic opportunities and sustainability of communities and regions.

Through the above mentioned research the members of the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council has identified current and potential land use conflicts and has provided options that the Provincial Government can consider to help resolve some of these issues. The council encourages government to consider the recommendations in this advice as a means to strengthening regional sustainability. Council members are pleased with the research and their ability to share this information with appropriate government departments.

1 1. CORNER BROOK – ROCKY HARBOUR REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Acting Chairperson for the Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Regional Council, I hereby submit the activity report for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

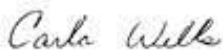
I consider that this Regional Council has had a successful year in establishing and delivering our goals for advice related to the issues in our region. We have managed to achieve our objective for this year as outlined in the 2011-14 Activity Plan and have submitted policy advice to the Provincial Government on areas which we believe are of importance to the region.

With regard to policy advice, the council chose Access to Health Services as our area of focus for 2012-13. Access to health services is a priority area of interest for Regional Council members because of its potential impact on many communities in our region. This is increasing in significance as a result of the changing demographics and aging population, particularly in many of our rural communities. In this reporting year, the council, in partnership with the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council, chose to carry out a large-scale research project and engagement, related to this topic. Given the scale and depth of the project, it is anticipated that this will result in several advice documents being submitted over multiple reporting years in this strategic planning cycle.

In addition to this focus area on health, the council has been active in submitting advice related to proposed fracking activities on the West Coast. They have also participated in relevant regional and provincial engagements and workshops related to regional priorities and issues.

As a council, we look forward to having further dialogue with both government and citizens in our regions on many important issues over the coming year.

Sincerely,



Carla Wells
Acting Chair, Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

11.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council is comprised of nine members; five female and four male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including six members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met five times in 2012-13.

Regional Council members	Community
Bertha Brophy	Daniel's Harbour
Joan Cranston	Norris Point
Don Downer	Corner Brook
Joseph Loder	Summerside
Colleen Kennedy (Chair)	Rocky Harbour
Cyril Kirby	Deer Lake
Arch Mitchell	Benoits Cove
Regina Rumbolt	Parsons Pond
Carla Wells (Acting Chair)	Corner Brook

**For an updated listing of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>*

The Office of Public Engagement also funds a regional planner position in the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and facilitates the work of the council. The planner for the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour region is Marion McCahon. The regional office is located within the Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development Office in the Millbrook Mall, Corner Brook.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

11.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In the 2011-2014 Activity Plan, the council identified one objective – to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. This objective considers the council's mandate and financial resources as well as the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). The identified measures and indicators will be used to monitor progress in delivery of the objective. The council will report on the same objective for each year in the 2011-14 planning cycle.

To ensure that the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing its advice to government, it will make use of any one of a number of tools to assist in its work as it deems appropriate. In keeping with the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A), these tools include, but are not limited to, research activities and collaboration which provide input into council's policy advice document submissions.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

The Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council has chosen Access to Health Services as a priority advice topic for this reporting year. This was identified as a result of the council’s concerns about the perceived lack of access to healthcare, particularly among residents of rural and remote communities in the region. However, the council also recognised that there are significant issues related to specialist medical care and access to doctors among many communities across the region. In addition, given the changing demographics and aging population in many of our rural communities, it was felt that this was a topic of great importance and that it was timely to provide advice on this to the Provincial Government.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council identified and refined their priority during several council meetings held on March 9 and 10, 2012 and May 11 and 12, 2012. They initially identified a list of potential topics and then developed and worked through an assessment matrix to determine which priority was the most important and timely to focus on. As a result, Access to Health Services was identified as this year’s priority.
Researched issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Council invited several speakers to present at their meetings on the latest research related to rural and regional health. These included: Dr. Adrian Tanner from Memorial University who met with the council on May 11, 2012 and Doreen Burry, Primary Health Care Manager with Western Health, who presented to them on December 14, 2012 In addition, council members also reviewed information from other councils who have carried out research in the area of rural health – this information was presented to the council at their meeting on May 11, 2012. The council worked in partnership with the Health Research Unit at Memorial University and the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council to develop and

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>deliver a research project on Regional Access to Health Services. This project included both a paper and on-line survey, which generated over 1,000 responses between the two regions, plus a series of ten kitchen table discussions (five per region), which were designed to provide a more in-depth understanding of the issues identified through the survey. Council members assisted with the design and distribution of the survey and also in hosting the kitchen table discussions in their own communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Victor Maddalena from the Health Research Unit met with the Regional Council on March 20, 2013 to present the initial research findings to them.
<p>Consensus developed on advice to government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Regional Council's meeting on December 14, 2012, they discussed and gained consensus on a letter to be submitted to the Department of Health and Community Services.
<p>Communicated advice to government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advice letter was submitted to the Department of Health and Community Services on March 7, 2013. This letter highlighted the council's research project on Regional Access to Health services and discussed the methodology and approach which was being utilized. It also highlighted concerns related to delays in the development of the proposed new Western Memorial Regional Hospital and reiterated the priority of the facility for the citizens of the region.

Discussion of Results: In light of the above accomplishments, the council has been able to meet its annual objective regarding providing advice and information on improving opportunities for access to health services in the Corner Brook- Rocky Harbour Region. Given the large number of responses to the research survey and kitchen table meetings, it is clear that this is significant priority for the residents of the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Region. The council looks forward to continued research and engagement on this priority area, in particular the identification and provision of advice regarding solutions to the health access barriers which have been highlighted by citizens of the region.

12. STEPHENVILLE – PORT AUX BASQUES REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR


As Co-chairs for the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council, and in accordance with the Provincial Government’s *Transparency and Accountability Act*, we hereby submit the Regional Council’s 2012-13 Activity Report. As Co-chairs, our signatures below are on behalf of the entire council, and are indicative of our accountability for the results reported.

Over the past year, the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council has been working on an extensive Community Based Research Project focusing on the issues, barriers and solutions to accessing health care in the region (this was done in tandem with the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council).

The Council has completed the first phase of this research, including the completion of over 500 surveys and five informal focus groups in the region, and a preliminary analysis and literature scan. This has provided the council with a strong understanding of the issues and barriers to accessing health care in the region, which have been articulated in an advice document for the Department of Health and Community Services, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

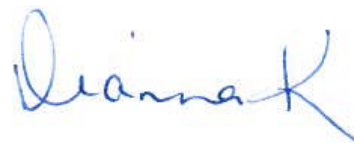
As we move forth with our work as Regional Council, we look forward to having further dialogue on rural sustainability, including the topic of health care with a particular focus on solutions to the identified challenges in the first phase of the council’s health research. The council’s overall goal is to help influence and effect positive change with respect to the sustainability of rural Newfoundland and Labrador, of which health and access to health services are essential components.

Sincerely,



Calvin White

and



Diana Kung

Co- Chairs, Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

12.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Stephenville - Port aux Basques Regional Council is comprised of eight members; four female and four male. In 2012-13, the council met four times.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

The Office of Public Engagement also funds a regional planner position, who among other duties, facilitates the work of the council and acts as an information resource. The planner for the Stephenville – Port aux Basques region is Kim Olson. Her office is located within the Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development in Stephenville.

Regional Council members	Community
Eric Legge	Cartyville
Calvin White	Flat Bay
Dianna Kung	Stephenville
Marlene Farrell	St. George's
Rosa Dollard*	Stephenville
Morley Greening*	McKay's
Walter Murphy	St. George's
Aneitha Sheaves*	Channel-Port aux Basques

*Resigned in 2012-13

For an updated listing of council members please visit http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regional_councils/council.html#spab

12.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In its 2011-14 Activity Plan, the council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region, developed in consideration of the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). In the three years covered by the plan, the Regional Council will focus their efforts on providing policy advice to the Provincial Government on issues related to regional sustainability. In light of the strategic directions of the Provincial Government, the council will utilize a combination of collaborative tools including, but not limited to, citizen engagement and community-based research to help form and corroborate their submissions.

The identified measures and indicators will be used to monitor progress. The council will report on the same objective for each year in the 2011-14 planning cycle.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

For the 2012-2013 fiscal year, the council has been working on a project examining issues, barriers and solutions to accessing health care in the region. This project was a collaboration between the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council and Memorial University's Health Research Unit. It has taken a three-tiered approach, combining surveys, informal focus groups (kitchen table discussions), and a literature review. In total 588 surveys were completed in the region, as well as five focus groups. The

council used information from this research report, in addition to meetings with the Memorial University’s Health Research Unit, and their knowledge and lived experience in the region to form policy advice submitted to the Provincial Government in March 2013.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council identified access to health care as a significant challenge to rural sustainability in the region, and as their priority focus area.
Researched issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Council invited Western Health’s Primary Health Care Manager (Danielle Shea) to provide a presentation at their meeting on May 23rd 2012. In addition, council members formed a steering committee for the project and on August 3rd, 2012, they had a joint meeting with the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Council who were also interested in working on the topic of health care. The council worked in partnership with the Health Research Unit at Memorial University and the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council to develop and deliver a research project on Regional Access to Health Services. This project was titled Issues, Barriers and Solutions to Accessing Health Care in Western Newfoundland. This project included a paper and on-line survey, which generated over 1,000 responses between both regions, as well as 10 informal focus groups (kitchen table discussions), five per region, which were designed to provide a more in-depth understanding of the issues identified in the survey. Council members assisted with the design and distribution of the survey and also in hosting the kitchen table discussions in their communities. Data collection was carried out from December 2012-March 2013. The research

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>design was developed by Dr. Victor Maddalena the principal investigator at Memorial University, but included input from the Regional Councils. In addition to this, feedback on the question design was gathered from both Western Health and the Department of Health and Community Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Victor Maddalena met with the Regional Council on March 20, 2013 to present the initial research findings.
Consensus developed on advice to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At their March 20 meeting, the council discussed the research findings from Dr. Maddalena and developed consensus on recommendations and advice to be submitted to the Department of Health and Community Services, based on preliminary findings from their research project.
Communicated advice to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On March 22, 2013, the council submitted an advice document to the Department of Health and Community Services. The recommendations in the document focused on (1) communication and (2) treatment and services in the region. Under the advice on communication, the council presented advice on telehealth and travel assistance programs, as well as ways to improve communication barriers between patient and health professionals. Under treatment and services in the region, the council provided advice related to the availability of nurse practitioners and also visiting specialists and doctors. In brief, the council suggested that improvement of communication on services such as telehealth and the Medical Travel Assistance Program, as well as patient-doctor communications would be tangible solutions to address some of the barriers to health care access in rural areas of the region. In addition to this, they suggested that increased use of nurse practitioners and visiting/traveling

Indicators	Accomplishments
	specialists would also provide concrete solutions to the issues and barriers faced in select parts of the region.

Discussion of Results:

The Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council identified access to health care as a significant challenge to rural sustainability in the region. The project was designed to identify issues, barriers and solutions to accessing health care in the region, and this was achieved by using a three-tiered approach combining a literature review, surveys, and kitchen table discussions.

Equitable access to health care is a social justice issue, and this research shows that factors such as gender, geography, economics, and lack of cultural competency can create barriers to access. Moreover, findings showcased a variety of health service access issues in western Newfoundland, particularly for individuals living in rural and remote communities.

The council has been able to meet its annual objective by providing advice on improving opportunities for access to health services in the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Region. The large number of survey responses and high degree of participation at the kitchen table discussions demonstrates the importance of this topic and its level of priority in the region. The council looks forward to continued research and engagement on this priority area, in particular the identification and provision of advice on solutions to health access issues in the region.

13. ST. ANTHONY – PORT AU CHOIX REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

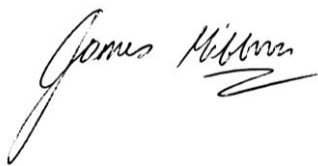
As Chairperson for the St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council, I hereby submit the Activity Report covering the period April 1, 2012-March 31, 2013. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

During the 2012-13 fiscal year, the council chose to submit advice to the Provincial Government on the issue long-term care in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix region. The population is aging and the region is facing many challenges associated with this, such as shortages of available beds, staff and skills. The council sent out a questionnaire to all the long-term care service providers in the region and most were returned. The information collective from the surveys was considered in our deliberations.

During the last year, the council also fulfilled requests from the Provincial Government including input into the Core Mandate Analysis and the Muskrat Falls Project. The council found these activities and opportunities very valuable and we look forward to many more opportunities and requests of this nature as we hope to be able to give a regional perspective as needed.

We look forward to the upcoming year, to continuing with this process and being able to provide advice to further contribute to the sustainability of the St. Anthony - Port au Choix region.

Sincerely,



James Gibbons
Chair
St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

13.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council is comprised of eight members; two female and six male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region. All members are from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met four times in 2012-13.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement. The Office of Public Engagement also funds a regional planner position in the region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the council and facilitates the work of the council. The planner for the St. Anthony-Port au Choix region is Nina Mitchelmore. Her office is located in Roddickton.

Regional Council Members	Community
Ross Decker	Roddickton
Terry Hedderson	St. Lunaire-Griquet
Ted Lewis	Roddickton
James Gibbons (Chair)	St. Anthony
Gloria Toope	Plum Point
Loomis Way	Green Island Cove
Judy Way	Savage Cove
John Lavers	Port Saunders

For an updated listing of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>.

13.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In its 2011-14 Activity Plan, the council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. The council will choose an issue that will be critical to the sustainability of the region for each year of the reporting period. In order to meet this objective and to better inform the advice council provides to the Provincial Government, the council will use tools such as citizen engagement and community-based research which supports the strategic directions (Appendix A) of the Provincial Government. The council will report on the same objective for each year in the 2011-14 planning cycle.

For the 2012-13, the council focused its efforts on the long-term care in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix region. This sector and the service they provide is crucial to the sustainability of the region and is currently facing many challenges.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

With the aging population that the region is currently facing and into the future, the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council has identified long-term care as a priority area for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The overall population of the region is projected to decrease by 11.7% from 2009 to 2025 but the percentage of seniors is projected to increase by 85.2% during the same timeframe. Hence the amount of people remaining in the labour force and the number of children will be significantly less. By 2025,

the baby boomers (people born between 1947-1966) will be of retirement age. There are approximately 2,700 seniors currently residing in the region. This number is projected to increase to approximately 4,300 by 2025.

During the past year, the council had many discussions on the topic as well they developed a questionnaire which was sent to all long-term care service providers in the region. This informed the advice document that was sent to government.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on an issue that relates to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council identified long-term care as their issue to work on. • They identified this issue because the population of the region is aging and there are many services and supports which are currently needed and will likely be needed in the future with regards to long-term care.
Researched issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A questionnaire was developed and sent to all long-term care service providers. • Six out of seven questionnaires were returned. • The responses were combined and presented to the council. • The long-term care strategy developed by the Department of Health and Community Services, entitled <i>Close to Home</i>, was reviewed and discussed by council.
Consensus developed on advice to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council met in February 2013 to review the research that was conducted. The council had further discussions on the topic and a list of recommendations was drafted and given to all members. All were in agreement with the recommendations listed below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The “Close to Home” Strategy covers many of the topics that the council has discussed over that last year. But many of the initiatives outlined do not indicate how the initiatives will be implemented or do not

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>have completion dates. Therefore, the council is recommending that the Department inform the public as to what is going to happen and when.</p> <p>2. Many of the priority directions outlined in the strategy focus on maximizing independent living. The council would agree with this focus. The following recommendations are items we think you should consider when implementing this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Care should be promoted as a viable option. Seniors tend to own their own homes and want to stay there as long as possible but are unable to because of lack of required supports. Increasing the number of hours available for home care could assist with this. • Respite and/or income may be needed when family members are taking care of elderly parents. As indicated in the strategy, families are smaller today and they are more mobile. The responsibility of elder care is tending more to fall to one individual as opposed to a number of family members. Income and respite for these individuals would certainly assist with some of the responsibility. • Isolation of seniors is an issue. Some options that may be explored to address this issue are assisted living arrangements, programs such as meals on wheels, programs offered during the day for seniors at community centers as well as others. <p>3. It is important to provide social and recreational activities to seniors but there should also be an emphasis placed on activities where seniors are contributing not only participating. This sense of “purpose for being” is very important to the overall well-being of anyone. Activities where seniors and youth can connect should be explored so that there can be a transfer of knowledge and skills. Activities such as mat hooking and storytelling are</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>just some examples, amongst many others, that could be considered.</p> <p>4. The council is aware that there are programs in place to support seniors to travel to and from medical facilities. With the increase in regionalization of services and with some deletion of specialized services, the support for travel is ever increasing. This is even more apparent when seniors do not have family members living in the area and have to rely on others for transportation. With no public transportation in the region, the council is recommending that viable transportation support and options be put in place for seniors requiring medical services.</p> <p>5. It was evident through the questionnaire of local service providers that staffing is and most likely will continue to be a challenge. With increasing numbers of seniors in the region and a declining workforce, measures must be put in place to ensure that jobs in the long term care sector are attractive to people. In order to accomplish this, wage increases as well as professional development must be explored particularly in the occupations of Personal Care Attendant and Licensed Practical Nurse. This will assist in recruitment and retention of workers in this field.</p>
Communicated advice to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In March 2013, a letter was developed outlining advice to government and submitted to the Minister of Health and Community Services. A copy was also sent to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement.

Discussion of Results: The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council met the indicators outlined for 2012-13, thereby accomplishing its objective.

14. LABRADOR REGIONAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR


As Chairperson for the Labrador Regional Council, I hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, please accept my signature as indicative of the council's accountability for our achievements reported here.

Over the past year, the council completed discussions on the issue of Muskrat Falls. This included engaging with Nalcor Energy to help facilitate our understanding of the Muskrat Falls project. This development, while having many positive aspects, comes with possible challenges as well. The council submitted advice outlining possible steps for mitigating some of the impacts created by large-scale development.

The Access to Health Care project was completed this past year and advice to government concerning how people in Labrador access health care and what supports they require was submitted to government. This document outlines 21 recommendations on how health care delivery can be strengthened in the region. We are very proud of this piece of work and encourage government to implement as many directions as possible. We understand some of the recommendations can only be met through partnership with the Federal Government as well as Nunatsiavut but we believe it is something to continuously strive for.

Through dialogue and partnerships we hope to provide advice to government in a relevant and timely manner. The council continues to support the advancement of sustainability in the region and Labrador Regional Council's mandate to be informed on the challenges and progressive in advancing communities to overcome them.

Sincerely,



Lori O'Brien
Chairperson
Labrador Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

14.1 REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Labrador Regional Council is comprised of nine members; four female and five male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including four members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The Labrador Regional Council met four times in 2012-13.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

The Office of Public Engagement also funds a regional planner position in the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and facilitates the work of the council. The planner for the Labrador region is Lisa Densmore. Her office is located in the office of the Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development at Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Regional Council members	Community
Carol Burden	Port Hope Simpson
Cora Edmunds	Postville
Eric Flynn	Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Hedley Ryland	L'Anse au Loup
Jonathan Jesseau	Labrador City
Leander Baikie	Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Lori O'Brien	L'Anse au Loup
Patsy Ralph	Labrador City
Robin Cooper	Happy Valley-Goose Bay

For an updated listing of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp> .

14.2 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In the 2011-2014 Activity Plan, the council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. This objective considers the council's mandate and financial resources as well as the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). The council will report on the same objective for each year in the 2011-14 planning cycle.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

Communities in Labrador have been experiencing challenges related to health, well-being and equal access to programs and services. Council chose to look at how large scale industrial developments in the region can create new opportunities while at the same time exacerbate existing challenges. The hydro and mining industries in the region can have both positive and negative impacts and the council wished to explore these impacts further and consider ways to mitigate negative impacts for the benefit of the region.

The Labrador Regional Council identified large-scale development as a priority issue and created an advice document to present to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. This undertaking had

three objectives: to inform the Provincial Government of the community impacts of this development, to lend an understanding of what it means for communities to go through large-scale development with many impacts and to shed light on what may help communities through the stages of this development.

Objective: By March 31, 2013, the council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on last year's research and the document, <i>Assessing current understandings of the impacts of large-scale industrial development in Labrador West and Isthmus regions and identification of future research needs and potential mitigation strategies</i> by Michelle Porter, the Labrador Regional Council identified large-scale development as the main policy advice issue for 2012-13.
Researched issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An engagement session involving council members and representatives from Nalcor Energy was held. Information gathered at this session was reviewed and helped inform the advice submitted to government.
Consensus developed on advice to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During Labrador Regional Council meetings, members discussed the potential impacts large-scale development could have on the region. They decided on six areas of support: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The council believes a Social Impact Assessment is essential to inform the process of supporting Labrador through this developmental stage. Economic development sensitive to local priorities focused on creating a sustainable community, providing direct community benefits, investing to generate interest revenues for community projects through avenues such as the Northern Strategic Plan; the council believes will provide the cross departmental partnering to

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>enhance a holistic response to the economic opportunities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Connecting Labradorians through sport and recreation and cultural heritage is an important aspect of health and well-being. 4. Access to services is vital while living and working in remote areas. These challenges are not new, however, we must come up with new ways of dealing with the high cost of travel and the increased need for health care. 5. Transportation plays a key role in access and it is the cost of transportation that is a barrier. Through improving ground and air transportation we can support citizens in need of treatment. The council believes up front cost sharing of medical transportation is crucial. 6. The council supports more subsidies in the region for such programs as: an increase in the isolated post allowance to encourage people to live and work in smaller centers; increased subsidized travel for low income people to receive health care and other services; and tax credits for families in isolated areas who pay high costs for food and electricity.
Communicated advice to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On January, 2, 2013, the Labrador Regional Council submitted a policy advice document, entitled “<i>Advice in Support of the Development of Muskrat Falls in the Labrador Region</i>”, to the Department of Natural Resources.

Discussion of Results:

The Regional Council is pleased with the research, discussions and advice submissions over the past year. They debated the topics, built consensus and submitted advice they hope is considered by government to improve the health and well-being of the people in Labrador. The policy advice documents submitted reflect major developments in the region and are seen as an opportunity for positive impact.

15. PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chairperson for the Provincial Council, I hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2012-13 fiscal year. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

In the past year, the Provincial Council submitted an advice document to the Provincial Government on developing a comprehensive food security policy for Newfoundland and Labrador. They conducted informal research on the topic to assist them in developing consensus on their advice.

The Provincial Council discussed the current state of food security within the province and whether or not a comprehensive food security policy is needed. Through careful consideration and dialogue, the Provincial Council believes that there is a need for a Comprehensive Food Security Policy. In formulating its advice, the council considered the potential impact of a Food Security Policy on the various stakeholders involved. The Provincial Council believes that the development of a Comprehensive Food Security Policy for the province needs to be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of residents within the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Provincial Council will continue to work on identifying key issues impacting rural sustainability within the province. Our process for information sharing, collaboration and citizen engagement will continue as we move forward in meeting the commitments to the Provincial Government in 2011-14 planning period.

Sincerely,



Sheila Kelly-Blackmore
Chair
Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat

15.1 PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Provincial Council is comprised of 14 members; seven female and seven male. The Provincial Council is comprised of one representative from each of the nine Regional Councils and five provincial at-large members that bring a provincial perspective. If the regional representative is unable to attend the meetings of the Provincial Council, an alternate will attend to represent the region. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the province, including 10 members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met two times in 2012-13.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement.

Provincial Council members	Community
Chair	
Sheila Kelly-Blackmore	Sandy Cove
At-Large Members	
Donna Butt	Trinity
Penelope Rowe	St. John's
Tony Keats	Dover
Kara Snow	St. Anthony
Regional Representatives	
Deborah Armstrong (Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte-Harbour Breton) Alternate: Vacant	Grand Falls-Windsor
Lori O'Brien (Labrador) Alternate: Vacant	L'Anse au Loup
Nadine Decker (Gander-New-Wes-Valley) Alternate: David Regular	Fogo Island Summerford
Harold Murphy Alternate: Dominic Lundrigan	Parker's Cove Burin
Colleen Kennedy (Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour) Alternate: Don Downer	Rocky Harbour Corner Brook
Ted Lewis (St. Anthony-Port au Choix) Alternate: Gloria Toope	Croque Plum Point
Kerry Murray (Avalon Peninsula) Alternate: Maureen Sullivan	Conception Bay South Calvert
Calvin White (Stephenville-Port aux Basques) Alternate: Vacant	Flat Bay
Merv Wiseman (Clarenville-Bonavista) Alternate: Marilyn Coles-Hayley	North Harbour Elliston

*This list reflects membership as of March 31, 2013.

15.2 MANDATE

The Provincial Council's mandate is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities facing the province.
- To review key provincial economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, EI usage, economic diversity) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- To identify and advise the Provincial Government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- To advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures, and to encourage the Provincial Government and community partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To serve as an external sounding board for Provincial Government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.

15.3 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

In its 2011-14 Activity Plan, the Provincial Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. The activities and performance of the council with respect to this objective, as outlined below, are in support of the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). In keeping with the Provincial Government's strategic directions, these tools include but are not limited to research activity and citizen engagement which provide input into the council's policy advice submissions. The Provincial Council will be reporting on the same objective for each year of the plan.

Issue One: Provide Advice to Government

The Provincial Council believes that the linkage between rural society and the production of a sustainable food system is undeniably evident. Given the presence of a huge rural component in food production, especially as it relates to agriculture and fisheries, it is critically important to have a coherent and comprehensive food policy that entrenches the many facets of food security. Moreover, the level of policy and investment in this important public good may very well be a basic function and a defining measure of rural sustainability.

Food security is indeed a growing concern among nations and regions around the world. Projections of exponential population increases in the next decade and beyond, begs the question of where our food supply will come from and how it will be distributed on a global basis. Shifting demographics and the ensuing human resource components of food production are emerging issues that currently has no clear solution.

Objective: By March 31, 2013 the council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability

Measure: Provided advice

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue Identified	Over the course of their deliberations, Provincial Council members brought forward the issue of food security within the province.
Researched issue	<p>The Provincial Council conducted informal research on the characteristics of food security; global, national and provincial issues; food security and the dynamics of food production; policy and planning; and food security and policy restraints.</p> <p>The council looked at strategic actions that create good support and direction towards food security on a regional, national and international basis. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agencies, Canadian International Development Agency, and Health Canada are some of the agencies responsible for common themes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Safety and Quality • Business Risk Management • Environmental Sustainability • Science and Innovation • Food Security in Developing Countries and for Aboriginal People • Resource Management and Conservation <p>Through its research and deliberations, the identified some similarities with national approaches of a food security policy in Newfoundland and Labrador. This linkage is quite often rooted in federal/provincial/territorial agreements on both fisheries and agriculture. Likewise, there are institutional linkages along federal/provincial lines that constitute standard approaches to food policy operatives such as health, food safety, traceability, safety-nets, conservation, management and environment.</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Consensus developed on advice to the Provincial Government</p>	<p>The presentation of the research enhanced discussions at the Provincial Council table. Members deliberated the issue and came to a consensus on a recommendation to government, “Council recommends that the government develop a comprehensive food security policy for Newfoundland and Labrador through engaging residents and stakeholders in the province to develop such a policy.”</p> <p>In addition to developing a comprehensive food security policy, the Provincial Council suggested that the Provincial Government endorse the following guiding principles within a food security policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security must be a function of a comprehensive food policy for Newfoundland and Labrador. • Food security must have an integrated or lateral policy across all government departments. • Food policy must be strategically supported by private and public investment. • A comprehensive food policy must consider a broad set of elements, which includes primary and secondary agriculture, primary and secondary fishing, community based initiatives, health and nutrition, social economic variables, moral values, environmental and ecological sustainability, and cultural diversity. • Food sovereignty must be deemed a necessary component of food security. • Food sovereignty must include those measures that are within the scope of the United Nations definition of food sovereignty and such measures must include supply managed systems as per current statutory empowerment under federal/provincial/territorial regulatory regimes. • Food security must consider regional uniqueness and should strive for

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>harmonization with national food policy and programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security and arable land are mutually exclusive and as such must incorporate all necessary elements of good land use planning and protection. • Conservation and protection of food based resources must not be compromised in the pursuit of food production. • Food safety and quality must be a necessary component of food security. • Food production and overall food harvesting shall be done in a manner that incorporates safe practices and safe platforms. • Food security must incorporate the ecological practices of a green community activity and/or a commercial economic activity carried out by primary producers in the farming or fishing industry. • Food production carried out in the interest of overall food security must be considered an essential public good activity. • Economic profitability and/or economic sustainability must be a major consideration and must be supported by business risk management measures for those engaged in primary production of food. • Food security must be considered a fundamental right of nations as well as a fundamental right of citizens within nations and its respective regions.
Communicated advice to government	The Provincial Council submitted its advice to the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Health and Community Services in March 2013.

Discussion of Results:

The Provincial Council has met its objective of providing advice to government. The council identified the issue of the food security. The council conducted some informal research looking at global, national and provincial issues; food security and the dynamics of food production; policy and planning; and food security and policy restraints. In addition, the Provincial Council looked at current strategies related to food security. Through discussions and deliberations, the council came to a consensus on the advice that it was to submit to government for consideration. The Provincial Council submitted this advice in March 2013 to the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Health and Community Services.

16. ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to the points raised in Regional Councils' Report on Performance sections, a number of additional highlights and accomplishments are worthy of mention. These are consistent with the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A) and the Regional Councils' mandate.

Council	Highlights
Avalon Peninsula Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Public Engagement invited the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council to participate in a session focused on a review of government programs and services. Through a deliberative dialogue approach, the council gave consideration to the services, programs and initiatives currently affecting their region and provided feedback on ways to deliver services that would better meet the needs of the Avalon region. Feedback provided by Avalon Council was compiled with those of other regional councils and submitted to the Core Mandate Analysis team for inclusion in their review. • In February 2013, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council received a presentation from Gilbert Bennett, Vice President of the Lower Churchill Project, Nalcor. Council appreciated the Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development arranging this meeting on the Muskrat Falls Project. The Regional Council found the presentation and conversation that followed to be informative.
Clareville – Bonavista Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Public Engagement invited the Clareville-Bonavista Regional Council to participate in a session focused on a review of government programs and services. Through a deliberative dialogue approach, the council gave consideration to the services, programs and initiatives currently affecting their region and provided feedback on ways to deliver services that would better meet the needs of the region. Feedback provided by council members was compiled with those of other regional councils and submitted to the Core Mandate Analysis team for inclusion in their review. • Also in early summer 2012, the Regional Council through the assistance of the Regional Planner, Colin Holloway and a student, Hilary Williams, compiled a summary of research documents relating to the Clareville-Bonavista region. The Regional Council was interested in

	<p>understanding commonalities across past research which could inform its advice giving process to the Provincial Government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In October 2012, the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council received a presentation from Gilbert Bennett, Vice President of the Lower Churchill Project, Nalcor. The Regional Council found the presentation and conversation that followed to be informative; allowing them the opportunity to ask a wide range of questions. • In February 2013, the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council discussed and developed a response to the Grand Falls-Windsor-Harbour Breton's policy advice paper on <i>Developing Innovative Approaches for Community Engagement</i>. This response letter will be sent to the respective Regional Council as well as the Provincial Government early into the next fiscal year. • Also, in February 2013, the Regional Council, in partnership with three other Regional Councils, designed a series of Lunch and Learn Sessions on the Fishery. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, the project was postponed until a later date.
Burin Peninsula Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Council met with Ministers Hutchings, King and Jackman from the Provincial Government and representatives from Nalcor in October 2012 to discuss the Muskrat Falls project. Gilbert Bennett, VP of the Lower Chruhill Project provided the council with a presentation on the project which was followed by an opportunity to ask questions and provide input. • Twice during the past year the council met with the region's MHAs to discuss local issues and current events happening in the area. The council hopes to continue these periodic meetings with Ministers King and Jackman in the coming year.
Gander – New-Wes-Valley Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In February and March 2013, the council was involved in an initiative, <i>Central NL Citizens Engagement</i>, which included the design and delivery of 11 engagements throughout different communities in Central Newfoundland. An online engagement tool was also developed and will be open to Central Newfoundland citizens in May 2013. The purpose of this process was to work collaboratively with stakeholders in Central NL to learn how to better engage/involve citizens of the region in matters that affect them. Partners in this process included: Grand Fall-Windsor-Baie Verte-Harbour Breton

	<p>Regional Council; Rural Secretariat, Office of Public Engagement; College of the North Atlantic; Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University of Newfoundland; and Central Health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the past year, the council met with officials from Nalcor regarding Muskrat Falls and provided advice to the Rural Secretariat on Governments Core Mandate Analysis/Review.
<p>Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In September 2012, the Grand Falls – Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council, known as Central West Regional Council, met with Gilbert Bennett, Vice President of the Lower Churchill Project, Nalcor. Council appreciated the Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development arranging this meeting on the Muskrat Falls project. The Regional Council found the conversation to be informative and frank; allowing members to ask general and specific questions as well as providing a regional perspective on the project. • In 2011-2012, the council submitted the advisory document <i>Developing Innovative Approaches for Community Engagement</i> to government. Subsequent to that event, the council continued to interact and positively influence government and other stakeholders regarding community engagement. These events included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ June 2012, council representatives Debbie Armstrong and Hubert Langdon, researcher Dr. Kelly Vodden, and Regional Partnership Planner Linda Brett met collectively with representatives from Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Voluntary and Non-Profit Secretariat, Department of Education and others to discuss the community engagement research and recommendations. Government officials were open minded, asking probing questions on how to maximize the benefits of community engagement and identifying the challenges community engagement presents. ○ September 2012, Debbie Armstrong, Chairperson of Central West Regional Council and Linda Brett, Partnership Regional Planner, met with the Minister of Health and Community Services to discuss the community engagement document and its recommendations. Again an interest was demonstrated by all parties and a

	<p>general agreement of community engagement potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The research was distributed to regional authorities as well as all municipalities in the Central West Region. The accompanying letter offered to assist in designing community or public engagements using the lessons learned as outlined in the research. In September 2012, the council met with Shaun Majumder to discuss the Majumder Manor Project and ways to engage citizens. Subsequently the Regional Planner has been invited to design and implement public engagements for the Towns of Springdale and Botwood. ○ October 2012, the Provincial Government announced the new Office of Public Engagement, which was a variation of the first recommendation in the council’s advisory letter. <i>“The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador should consider adopting a provincial standard for Community Engagement. These standards should be adopted through an inclusive process. The government should consider naming the Rural Secretariat as the lead agency in support of this provincial standard. Therefore, the Minister responsible for the Rural Secretariat is the Minister responsible for public engagement. “</i> The council understands that policy is influenced by many factors and stakeholders but is pleased to see that their research was able to influence, or at least nudge, change in a positive way.
<p>Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On June 15, 2012 the Regional Council partnered with the CURRA project at Memorial University to host a Fisheries-Tourism forum in St John’s which presented the findings of their recent project on fisheries-tourism synergies and identified potential actions for moving forward these opportunities. ● Council members provided advice regarding the Provincial Government’s core mandate analysis. This advice focused on identifying ways they felt that programs and services being provided by the provincial government could be made more efficient and effective. This advice was submitted online by Regional Council members and combined with information from all

	<p>Regional Councils to form one final advice document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council met with representatives from Nalcor on September 17, 2012 to discuss the Muskrat Falls project. During this meeting, the council was given a presentation on the project and the opportunities and issues surrounding the development. The council then engaged in discussions with the group and had the opportunities to ask questions and provide advice. The council appreciated the opportunity to take part in this meeting and to provide their input on the project. • The council submitted two documents to the CNLOPB related to proposed fracking activities on the west coast of Newfoundland. These included recommendations related to the need for increased research on the risks and benefits of fracking, concern about the potential impact of fracking activities on the tourism industry on the west coast and the need for a regulatory framework to guide fracking in and around the province. • On October 12, 2012 the council met with Dr. Antony Card, VP of research for Memorial University, Grenfell Campus, to discuss recent and future developments at Grenfell Campus and their significance for the region.
<p>St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council provided advice into the core mandate analysis that assisted in identifying ways they felt that government could be more efficient. This was combined with the other regions of the province and was enter as one submission. • The council also met with representatives from the Provincial Government and Nalcor last September to discuss the Muskrat Falls project. During this meeting, the council was given a presentation on the project and the opportunities and issues surrounding the development. The council then engaged in discussions with the group and had the opportunities to ask questions and provide advice. It was felt that this was a worthwhile meeting and would like to do more of this in the future.
<p>Labrador Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to health care has been a long standing issue for Labradorian’s and continues to impact their health today. The research set out to compare how people living in Happy Valley-Goose Bay accessed services compared to people living on the north coast of Labrador. The scope of the research, in the form of a comparative study, lends an understanding to the

	<p>complex issues that arise when living in the north. The goal is to close the access to health care gap and make it comparable to people who live in larger centres.</p> <p>This research explored the factors that create challenges accessing health care services and strategies for overcoming such challenges as reflected in the experiences of health care administrators, providers, and community members in two distinct regions of Labrador: the five northern isolated communities within Nunatsiavut, the land claims region of the Labrador Inuit, and Happy Valley Goose Bay, a multi-cultural community in the Upper Lake Melville region of Labrador.</p> <p>The research question was: What factors influence access to health care services in two geographically and culturally diverse regions of Labrador?</p> <p>The study objectives were to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. identify factors that influence access to health care services in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Nunatsiavut communities; and2. determine strategies recommended by community members, health care providers and administrators in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Nunatsiavut communities to improve access to health care services in Labrador. <p>There were four themes the research identified; physical environment, political and socio-cultural environment, gender and continuity and comprehensiveness of care, under each of these are a total of 21 recommendations. The council is aware that partnerships are necessary to achieve the recommendations submitted and that there are overarching jurisdictions to consider but hopes government will advocate for those partnerships.</p>
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17. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

As the nature of the work of the councils is broad-based and long-term in nature, the challenges and opportunities faced by the councils remains fairly similar from year to year. It feels that these challenges and opportunities can be categorized along three themes.

Provision of Policy Advice to government

The council's mandate commits it to reaching consensus on the priorities for change in its region and to identifying policies and programs to encourage desired change. The challenge for council, given the range of issues, perspectives, interests and needs within its region, is to reach consensus on priorities for change and on policy advice to provide to the Provincial Government. The opportunity for council is to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body within the region that can both provide informed bottom-up policy advice to government as well as respond to top-down policy level requests from government that may impact on the region.

Regional collaboration

The council's mandate commits it to sharing information, advancing regional cooperation and to encouraging regional partners to more actively participate on matters that can advance regional sustainability. The challenge for council is to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body within the region that can advance collaboration. There are two opportunities for council. First, it can position itself as a broad-based and cross-sectoral advisory body that can lead, participate and/or support regional collaboration across a range of sectors, communities and interests. Second, as a broad-based advisory body, it can identify the various supports necessary to foster collaboration and be a conduit for advice to government to advance efforts.

Regional communications

The council understands that a range of non-governmental organizations in rural areas provide advice to the Provincial government on a range of policy matters. In large part, these organizations are focused on particular agendas, needs and interests, among others, regional economic development, environmental awareness and protection, social policy advancement and municipal governance. The challenge for it is to openly and positively communicate its mandate and role to other regional stakeholders and interests, and to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body that can assist other stakeholders. The opportunity for it, through new and strengthened relationships with regional stakeholders, is to ensure that a broad range of perspectives are considered as it identifies regional priorities, provides advice to government and fosters collaboration.

APPENDIX A: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Directions

1. Title: Rural Newfoundland and Labrador

Outcome Statement: A sustainable rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Rural Secretariat in the areas of:

- Citizen-based policy advice
- Public dialogue and engagement
- Collaboration
- Research

Focus Areas/Components of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:
	addressed in the council's activity plan
1. Citizen-based policy advice	X
2. Public dialogue and engagement	
3. Collaboration	
4. Research	X

APPENDIX B: MAP OF RURAL SECRETARIAT REGIONS

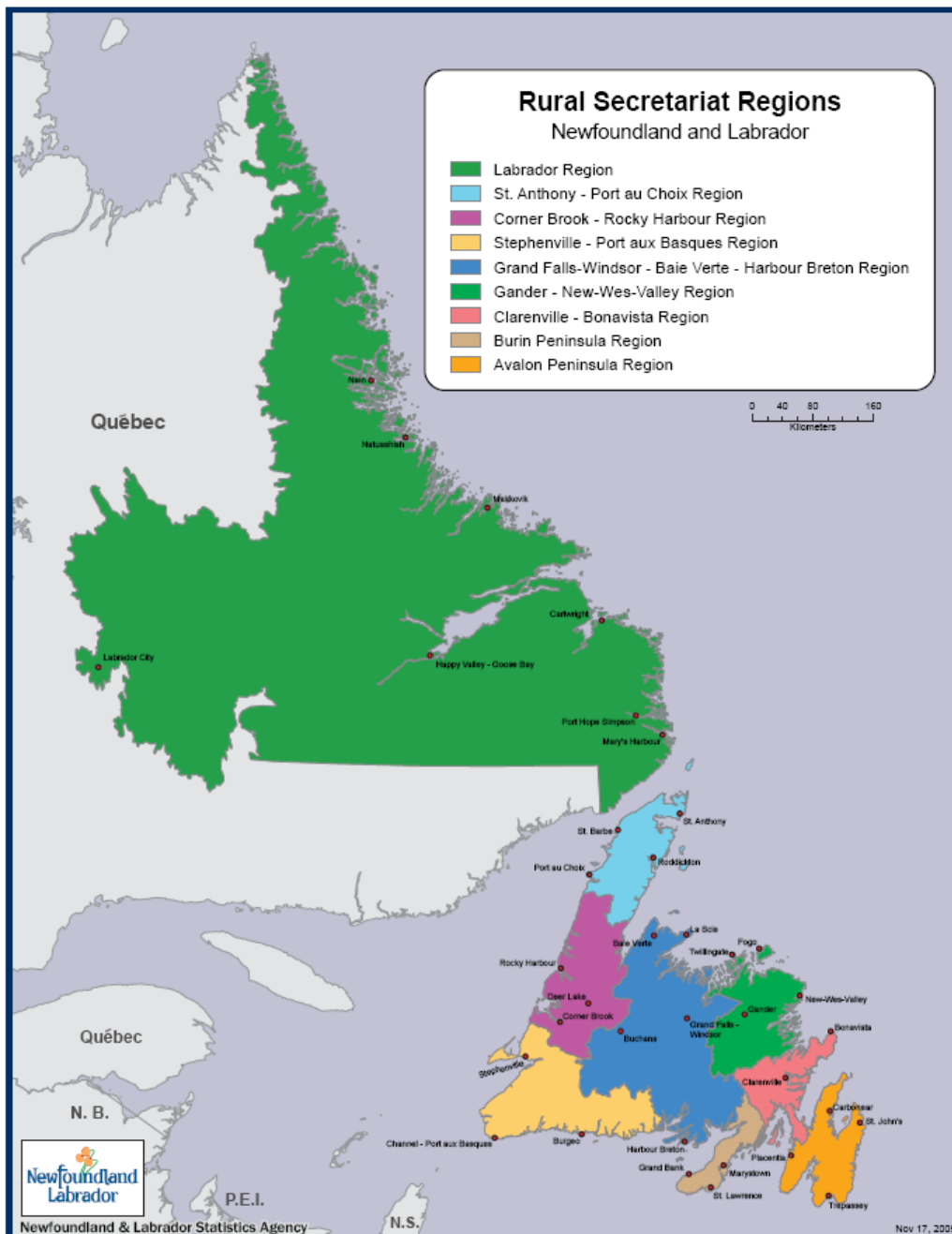


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