



**St. Anthony—Port au Choix  
Regional Council  
of the  
Rural Secretariat  
Executive Council  
Annual Activity Report 2011-12**



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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As Chairperson for the St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council, I hereby submit the Activity Report covering the period April 1, 2011-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.

In 2011-12 fiscal year, the council undertook significant work relating to the fishing industry. Many stakeholders were engaged to determine the most appropriate advice to send to government on the fishing industry. This industry is very important to the region and without the fishery continuing, this region will see major impacts and changes. We also submitted advice on transportation and forestry as these impact the region significantly as well.

During the last year, the council also fulfilled requests from the Provincial Government and the Provincial Council for input into initiatives (e.g., Fire and Emergency Services – Newfoundland and Labrador). 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.

The council was also pleased regarding the appointment of three new members. As the number of council members was low, these members brought new perspectives and ideas to the table as well as informing the ongoing processes as well. We look forward to more productive discussions in the future.

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,



Joan Simmonds  
Chair  
St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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# 1. OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

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The 2011 Census population for St. Anthony - Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region was 12,241. This represents a decline of 6.8 percent since 2006. Over the same period, the entire province experienced a population increase of 1.8 percent since 2006 (514,536 in 2011, up from 505,470).

The 2007 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in St. Anthony - Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region was \$21,300. For the province, personal income per capita was \$24,900. After tax personal income per capita, adjusted for inflation, was \$14,500 for St. Anthony - Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region in 2007. For the province it was \$16,400.

The 2007 self-reliance ratio for St. Anthony - Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region was 67.5 percent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance, Income Support Assistance, etc. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2006 was 79.4 percent.

The unemployment rate for May 2006 for people aged 15 and older was 36.5 percent. The provincial unemployment rate was 18.6 percent. The employment rate for the entire year 2005 for those aged 15 and older was 68.8 percent. The provincial employment rate for the same period was 63.3 percent.

The number of individuals in St. Anthony - Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region who received Income Support Assistance at some point in the year 2010 was 765. The 1991 figure was 1,840.

Census 2006 reported 38.9 percent of people 18 to 64 years of age in St. Anthony - Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region do not have a high school diploma compared to 25.1 percent of people in the entire province. About 61.1 percent of people in the region aged 18 to 64 had at least a High School diploma in 2006 compared to 74.9 percent in the province as a whole. Approximately 6.8 percent of people in the region aged 18 to 64 had a Bachelor's Degree or higher in 2006 compared to 13.3 percent in the province as a whole

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-2010, 51.0 percent (+/- 6.9 percent) of individuals age 12 and over in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent or very good. The provincial number in 2009-2010 was 60.1 percent (+/-1.6 percent). In 2009-2010, for Canada, 60.2 percent (+/-0.3 percent) of individuals age 12 and over rated their health status as very good to excellent.

Additional information, including gender-specific information and information for other levels of geography, can be found at [www.communityaccounts.ca](http://www.communityaccounts.ca) and [www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural](http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural).

## 2. REGIONAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW

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The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council is comprised of nine members; three 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 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 Rural Secretariat. The Rural Secretariat 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	St. Anthony
Joan Simmonds(Chair)	Conche
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>.*

## 3. MANDATE

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The St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council’s 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.

## 4. LINES OF BUSINESS

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The St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council supports the Rural Secretariat’s four lines of business:

**Citizen-based policy advice:** The Rural Secretariat supports nine citizen-based Regional Councils, and one stakeholder-based Provincial Council, to develop policy and decision-making advice for submission to government. Typically, councils, with the support of Rural Secretariat staff, hold public engagement sessions involving citizens and/or stakeholder group representatives, and conduct community-based research activities, to inform the development of advice documents.

**Collaboration:** The Rural Secretariat understands that collaboration is critical for sustainability in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. The Rural Secretariat works to support existing rural collaborative processes such as partnerships. Other times they work to help convene new regional collaborative processes such as networks or alliances. The broad goal is to help build a strengthened ‘culture of collaboration’ in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Research:** The Rural Secretariat collaborates with provincial partners on a number of formal research endeavors that help to improve understanding of the challenges facing, and opportunities available to, rural regions of this province. The Rural Secretariat also works directly with regional partners and councils on a host of community-based research initiatives – small regional-level data-gathering efforts that give those involved the information and knowledge they need to effectively advise the Provincial Government on regional and rural policy issues.

**Public dialogue and engagement:** In addition to supporting councils to conduct public engagement efforts, the Rural Secretariat is also available to assist other Provincial Government departments to design and deliver their own public engagement initiatives. The Rural Secretariat also periodically convenes special deliberative dialogue initiatives on themes deemed to be of particular importance to the rural sustainability of this province, often in partnership with rural stakeholder groups and other government departments.

## 5. VALUES

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The core values explain the character of the organization. The core values of the Rural Secretariat are as follows:

**Collaboration:** We are committed to building a culture of collaboration within Newfoundland and Labrador and beyond

<b>Creativity/innovation:</b>	We strive to transcend traditional ideas, rules, and patterns, and to work together to create new ideas, relationships, and approaches
<b>Inclusion:</b>	We acknowledge difference and cherish the views and perspectives of all. We take steps to ensure all have an opportunity to express their views
<b>Learning culture:</b>	We accept that we have a lot to learn and relish the opportunity to learn more
<b>Participation/engagement:</b>	We believe citizen/stakeholder/community engagement is essential to the development of good public policy
<b>Teamwork:</b>	We provide support to one another, work co-operatively, respect differing views and strive to make our work environments safe and enjoyable
<b>Honesty:</b>	We are open and honest in all our dealings and maintain the highest integrity at all times
<b>Excellence:</b>	We strive for excellence and quality in everything we do

## 6. PRIMARY CLIENTS

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The primary clients of the St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council include the Rural Secretariat, the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat, and departments and agencies within the Provincial Government, among others.

The council will also engage individuals, groups and organizations within the region as it carries out its work.

## 7. VISION

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The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council supports 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 its work, the council is identifying priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which considers economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.



## 8. MISSION

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The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council supports 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 St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council agrees with the mission of the Rural Secretariat and strives to support it by providing advice to the Provincial Government on issues affecting the region. The council engages citizens, conducts research and works with partners to ensure that the advice being provided assists in improving the sustainability of rural communities and regions.

## 9. REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

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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 2011-12, the council focused its efforts on the fishery. This industry is crucial to the sustainability of the region and is currently facing many challenges.

### 9.1 Issue: Provide Advice to Government

The St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council believes that the fishery is crucial to long-term sustainability of the region. The fishery is the biggest economic driver and employer in the region. With over 1,300 fish harvesters and more than 600 fish plant workers, the region is the one of the most fishery dependent in the province. As with any industry, it has many challenges and also many differing views among the user groups. As a council tasked with providing advice on this region, it is critical that the voices of those involved in the fishery are heard and understood. Therefore, the council engaged the fisherpeople directly involved in the industry to determine what they see as the future of the fishery in the region, including challenges, opportunities and potential new directions.

In order to provide the best advice possible, the council set up a steering committee that oversaw a community-based research project. This project included engaging industry in several forms. This in turn informed the advice that the council submitted to the Provincial Government.



**Objective:** By March 31, 2012 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"> <li>The council identified fishery as a very important industry to the region which is consistently faced with challenges.</li> </ul>
Researched issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council set up a steering committee to oversee the research project.</li> <li>In the previous fiscal year, 2010-11, the council undertook focus group sessions that informed the development of a survey by a researcher from Memorial University in August 2011. This survey was completed on behalf of the council in partnership with the steering committee.</li> <li>This survey was administered to fisherpeople from October - December 2011. The survey was conducted face-to-face as well as by telephone. A total of 175 surveys were completed.</li> <li>A preliminary report was drafted and presented at the Fisheries Forum in February 2012. There were approximately 65 participants at the forum representing fish harvesters, processors, plant workers, community groups, academia and government. The Regional Partnership Planner assisted in organizing the forum and designed a session to get feedback on the survey that was administered.</li> <li>At that time, participants were asked to prioritize issues and identify solutions and actions to move forward.</li> <li>A report was prepared on this session as well. Copies of the report can be obtained from the Regional Partnership Planner.</li> </ul>
Consensus developed on advice to Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council met in March 2012 to review the research that was conducted as well as the results of the Fisheries Forum. After reviewing all of the documentation, it was clear that there were many differing views on the future of the fishery.</li> </ul>

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council did agree on two recommendations that they felt should be submitted to government.</li> </ul>
Communicated advice to Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In March 2012, a letter was developed outlining advice to government and submitted to the Minister of the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture.</li> <li>A copy was also sent to the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat.</li> </ul>

**Discussion of Results:** The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council met the indicators outlined for 2011-12 thereby accomplishing its objective.

## 10. ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to the points raised in Section 9, four additional highlights and accomplishments are worthy of mention. These are consistent with the Provincial Government’s strategic directions for the Rural Secretariat and the Regional Council’s mandate, and will serve to inform the work of the council.

- The council submitted a letter to the Department of Transportation and Works in December 2011 after reviewing the 2011 Progressive Conservative Blue Book. Prior to this submission, the council submitted an advice document (2008) which outlined seven recommendations including a long-term transportation plan. The council is encouraged by government's efforts with regard to a provincial transportation strategy and has requested the opportunity to have input into the development of the strategy.
- In response to the Forestry Advice the council submitted in 2010-11, the council received letters from the Forestry and Agri-foods Agency of the Department of Natural Resources. The council felt it necessary to reiterate the importance of two recommendations they made in the advice document and therefore submitted two letters to the forestry division stating their concerns.
- Three new members were appointed to the council in December 2011 which was well received by the existing council members. These new members added value to the current work and provided a new perspective. This will assist the council greatly in their future work.

- The new and existing council members attended Renewal 2012 in January for all regional councils throughout the province. During this meeting, the council, along with other regional councils, was engaged in discussions on fire and emergency services regarding the implementation of a province-wide 911 service as well as priorities for provincial council. They provided feedback on both of these issues.

## 11. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

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As the nature of the work of the Council is broad-based and long-term in nature, the challenges and opportunities faced by the Council remain 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 the Provincial 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 the Provincial 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 clearly and effectively 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 the Provincial Government and fosters collaboration.

# APPENDIX A: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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## 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:

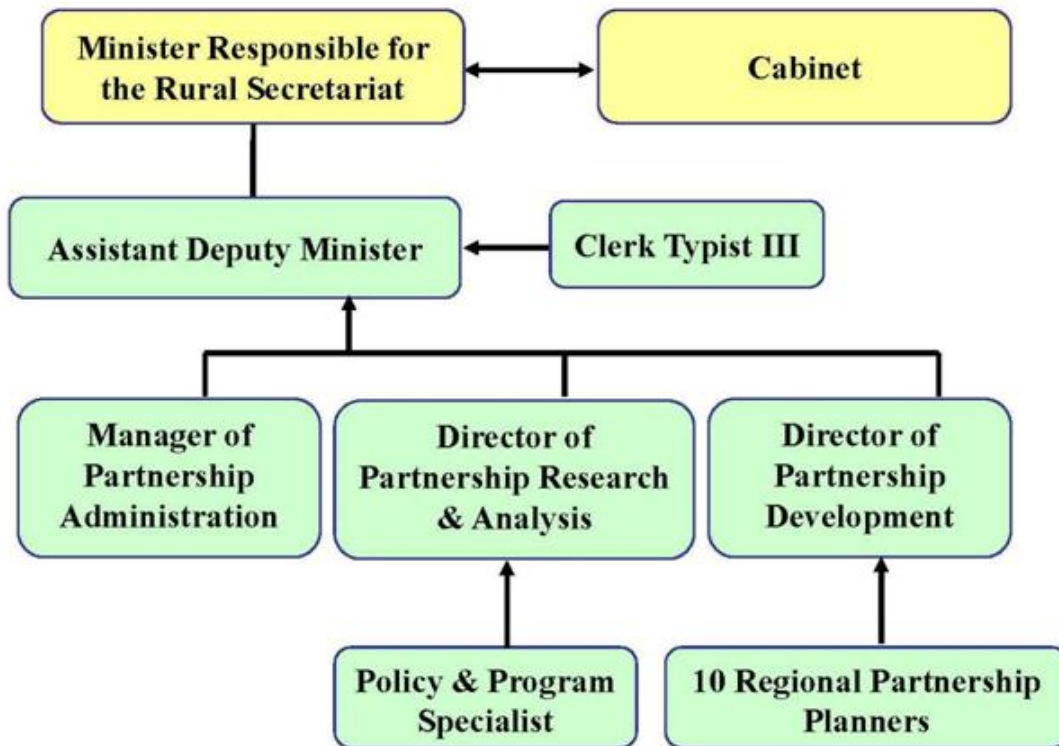
- Citizen-based policy advice
- Public dialogue and engagement
- Collaboration
- Research

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

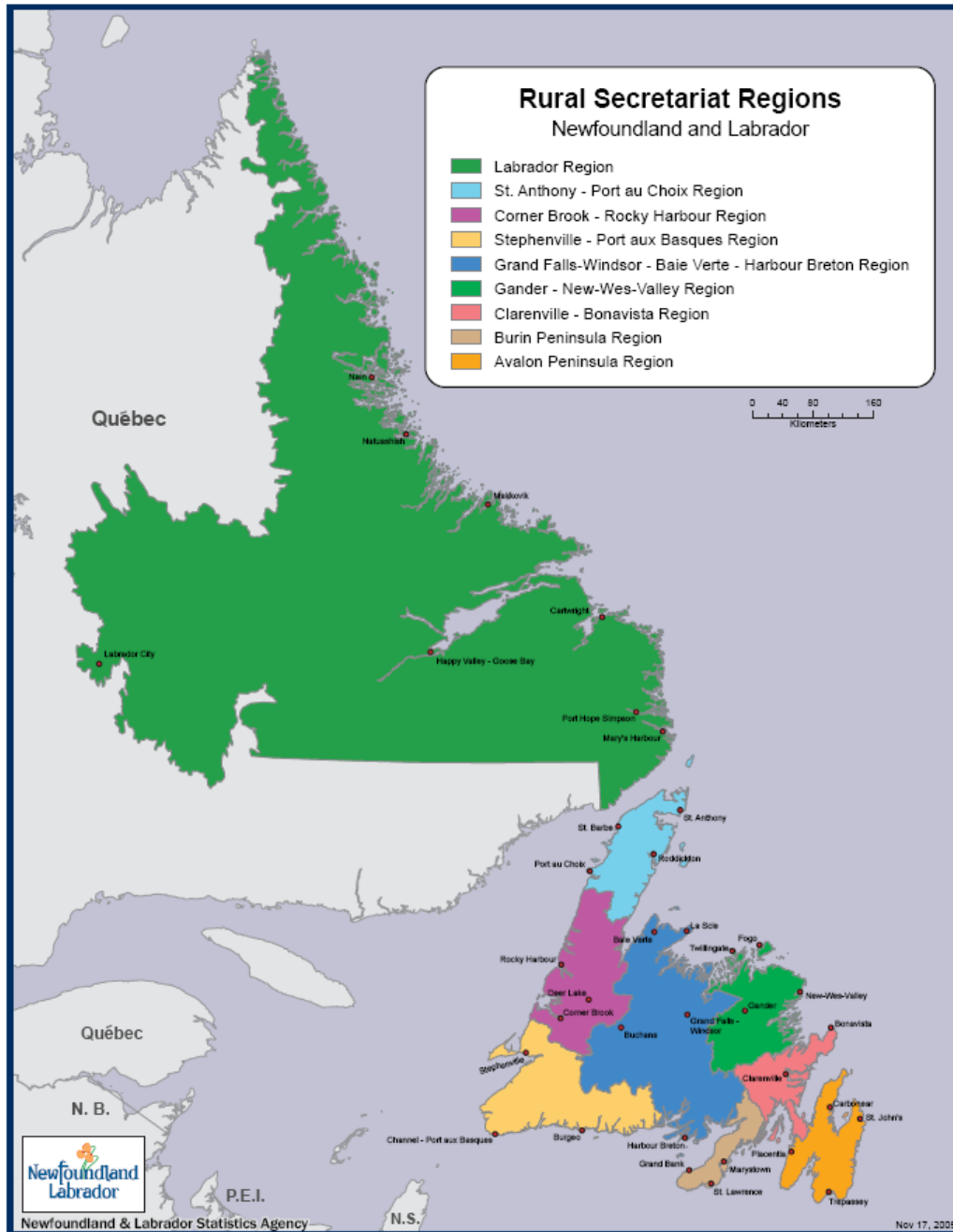
# APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

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## Rural Secretariat Organizational Chart



# APPENDIX C: MAP OF RURAL SECRETARIAT REGIONS





# APPENDIX D: MANDATES OF RURAL SECRETARIAT AND PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

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## **Mandate of the Rural Secretariat**

The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

- Promote the well-being of rural Newfoundland and Labrador through a comprehensive and coordinated approach aimed at integrating economic, social, cultural aspects of rural and regional development.
- Act as the focal point for government to work with local and regional partners to build strong and dynamic regions and communities.
- Ensure that rural concerns are considered throughout the Provincial Government and promoted at the federal level.
- Carry out research and analysis of economic and social issues affecting rural Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Help communities and regions identify and take advantage of growth opportunities.
- Promote awareness of provincial and federal programs and services regarding rural communities.

## **Mandate of the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat**

The Provincial Council's mandate is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities facing Province.
- To review key economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, Employment Income 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 a) advance, b) negatively impact or c) need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five year period.
- To advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about the economic and social measures, and to encourage 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 government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will effect Provincial and Regional sustainability.

PHOTO CREDITS:



Courtesy of Nina Mitchelmore



Courtesy of Nina Mitchelmore



Courtesy of Nina Mitchelmore



## Rural Secretariat

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