

**Coast of Bays Coastal Planning Committee Meeting
Hermitage Town Hall
Hermitage, NL.
February 22, 2006**

Attendance:

Conrad Collier – Coast of Bays Corporation
Jeffery Roberts – Fishers Committees
Herb Dunphy – Municipalities
Kevin Lawrence – FFAW – Inshore Fishers
Craig Mercer – Newfoundland Salmonid Growers Association
Baxter House – Tourism
Bret Pilgrim – Coastal Planning Coordinator
Dave Mercer – Crown Lands – Ex-officio
Joan O’Brien – Department of Fisheries and Oceans – Ex-officio
Christa Ramsay – Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture – Ex-officio

Regrets:

Ross Hinks – Conne River Band Council
Pius Howse – Recreational Boaters & Cabin Owners
Steward May – Harbour Authorities
Eric Day – FFAW – Processors

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:10 with two items to add to the agenda – 1. Update on the quarry in Belleoram, 2. Mildred Skinner’s Letter of Resignation from the Coastal Planning Committee

The Chair noted that the minutes of our meetings are posted to the Coastal Planning Website at coast.coastofbays.nl.ca or by following the link on the Coast of Bays website home page.

1. The Chair (Conrad) brought **Mildred Skinner’s Letter of Resignation** to the attention of the committee. The letter expressed Mildred’s regret in not being able to continue to represent the Inshore Fishers on the committee due to her busy schedule. She felt it was unfair to the committee and to the sector she represents to be a committee member in name only.

Kevin Lawrence was highly recommended by Mildred to represent the Inshore Fishers on the committee. Kevin has accepted the position and now sits on the committee as the Inshore Fishers Representative.

2. The report from the **Coastal Planning Strategic Workshop** (Dec. 8th, 2005) was circulated to the committee. The report outlined the committee’s Vision Statement and objectives of the committee.

The Chair reviewed the objectives as outlined in the report:

- a. The need for consistent participation of all Committee members was stressed.
- b. Completion of an annual report by the Committee Chair & Coordinator, which would be implemented for this calendar year. It was decided that the committee would operate on a Calendar Year as opposed to the Fiscal Year.
- c. Development of A Management Plan – Bret is currently conducting research in preparation for the development of a Coastal Management Plan. An outline to the Coastal Management Plan will be developed by April 2006.
- d. Awareness and Visibility: It is important to ensure that the committee is made visible to the stakeholders of the region and continual efforts are made to update the region on the Committees activities, objectives, and role. This would be accomplished through continued implementation of the Coastal Planning Communication Strategy.
- e. Finalize the Coastal Planning Committees Terms of Reference

The *Vision Statement* for the Coastal Planning Committee was formally adopted.
Motion to Adopt the Vision – Herb Dunphy; Seconded by Jeffery Roberts

3. Terms of Reference

After reviewing the terms of reference the committee suggested two (2) revisions:

- a. The frequency of meetings would be changed from 6 meetings a year to 4 meetings a year. The committee wanted to avoid having meeting for the sake of having meetings.
- b. Changing the term “Integrated Coastal Zone Planning” to “Coastal Planning” to avoid the use of the word “zone”.

4. Review of Coastal Planning Committee representatives

It was brought to the Committees attention that the representative for the FFAW – Process (Mr. Eric Day) has yet to attend a meeting. The question presented to the committee was “does the committee hold the position or replace the current representative with an alternate?” After some discussion it was decided that the position would be held for now, and Mr. Day’s name continue to be shown as the FFAW-Processors representative.

5. Conrad provided an update on the **Coastal Planning and Marine Infrastructure** meeting in Belleoram on Jan. 19th, 2006. With approximately 30 people in attendance representing municipal councils, harbour authorities, fishers committees, businesses, the whole Fortune Bay North Shore from Pool’s Cove to Wreck Cove was well represented.

Bret began the meeting with a detailed presentation on the role of the Coastal Planning Committee and the various stakeholder representatives on the committee. There was a discussion on how the committee could be of benefit to the communities in the region.

Conrad then reviewed the priorities for the Fortune Bay North Shore as identified in the Coast of Bays Marine Infrastructure Report followed by a discussion of various aspects of the report that were of interest to the audience.

In the open floor discussion that ensued, the abandoned mussel aquaculture sites was brought up as a concern among fish harvesters. The meeting lasted approximately two hours.

Baxter indicated that the town of Harbour Breton was pursuing funding for mussel site clean up.

Conrad concluded the discussion by indicating that Bret and himself want to hold similar type meetings in the Hermitage area, Hr. Breton, and Bay d'Espoir.

6. Joan O'Brien (DFO) provided updates on:

a. Coastal Planning Boundary

The work to delineate a coastal planning boundary was contracted out to Mr. Danny Ings (MUN) through DFO. Danny was on the south coast to meet with Conrad and Bret to discuss the boundary. The project to outline a boundary is guided by a set of criteria provided by DFO and these include ecological and physical considerations, human activities, existing governance, etc.

Once complete, it was suggested that Mr. Ings present the report to the committee. The report will outline several recommendations for an appropriate boundary. The committee will be responsible for deciding a boundary after all facts, details, and recommendations are presented.

Deadline for the report is March 31st, 2006.

b. MEQ (Marine Environmental Quality) Studies

Laura Park from DFO was in St. Alban's to collect samples from the processing plant's effluent as part of an Atlantic Provinces study. The results are not yet compiled.

While here, Laura also did preliminary work on the locations of sawmills that once existed in St. Alban's (St. Alban's Barasway). The preliminary work was followed-up by Lee Jamison (Graduate student from Dalhousie) and DFO.

A draft report is currently under review and will be made available once finalized. This report will provide information on the findings, as well as options and recommendations.

Morrisville was also investigated and it was identified that the issues here stem from domestic raw sewage outfalls onto the tidal flats.

Dave Mercer (Crown Lands) mentioned that Government Services should be contacted (Rick Conway – GFW office), because they deal with waste issues. The clean up of this site may require assistance from several departments (e.g. DFO, DFA, DNR, Environment, etc...).

c. **Ecological and Biological Significant Areas (EBSA)**

Not much more work has been done on the EBSA since it has been compiled. It requires more work and further local input. The goal, once complete, is to pass it along to DFO Science branch for validation.

At the next meeting the EBSA maps will be present and the committee, collectively, will spend time on analyzing and identifying other EBSA's.

*Note – include on next Coastal Planning Meeting Agenda.

7. Bret provided a summary/update on the **Nearshore Marine Monitoring Workshop** he attended in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. The workshop was coordinated by the Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN), a branch of Environment Canada, and is made up of linked organizations and individuals involved in ecological monitoring in Canada to better detect, describe, and report on ecological change, whether through natural causes or the result of development.

Bret suggested that as far as he can tell the only long-term monitoring to take place in the region is water quality sampling conducted by DFA specifically for the benefit of aquaculture. These samples are very site specific and not enough data is collected to represent the entire region. It was brought to the table that Environment Canada may be conducting some monitoring in closed shellfish areas (when was the water tested last? How often is sampling done?)

While many topics were brought up at the EMAN workshop, there was an emphasis placed on the importance of collecting baseline data prior to a development or action. Without baseline information, data collected in the future is simply meaningless because there is nothing to compare the data with.

Bret suggested key areas where monitoring could be implemented would be:

1. Any impact on lobster in the vicinity of aquaculture cages.
2. Monitoring abandoned aquaculture mussel sites before and after cleanup to trace the health of the environment and the impact of such site restoration projects.

It was brought to the committee's attention that Bret, while at this workshop obtained navigation charts for much of the South Coast of Newfoundland. He has also obtained the raw data from side-scanning in the Bay d'Espoir area and will be receiving digital soundings data to assist in the construction of 3D models of the area.

Craig gave examples of other species congregating around aquaculture sites such as Mackerel and Pollock.

There is also expansion of aquaculture to Facheux Bay and Hermitage Bay. These areas have been traditionally utilized as lobster fishing areas.

8. Conrad provided an update on a meeting with the **FBNS Fishers Committee Chairs** on Feb. 08, 2006. There was concern amongst fishers regarding the size of cod being caught in East Bay, Belle Bay which may be a spawning/juvenile habitat for cod. There was also concern that fishers from across the bay (Burin Peninsula) were harvesting cod in this region. Unless measures are taken to protect/conservate this region/stock, there may be drastic concerns regarding the health of the stock in the future.

Jeff and Kevin brought to the attention of the committee the existence of the "Small Fish Protocol" that could be used to address this issue. However, this protocol is not being followed or enforced.

On a motion by Kev Lawrence, Seconded by Herb Dunphy , the committee agreed to send a letter to DFO asking to enforce the Small Fish Protocol in the Belle Bay region with special attention from Dec 31st to April 1 each year.

1st Motion – Kevin Lawrence

2nd Motion – Herb Dunphy

Joan O'Brien is to check with Fishery Management Sector (DFO) to obtain information on the "Small Fish Protocol"

9. An **Issues Chart** highlighting some of the regions key issues identified in previous Coastal Planning reports was circulated. The committee was asked to prioritize these issues from most important to least important from the perspective of the sector that they represent and return the chart during the next committee meeting.

10. Stakeholder Issues/Concerns

- a. Kevin Lawrence (Inshore Fishers)
- The issues regarding the high percentage of small fish being caught in the Belle Bay area.
 - Running scallop gear through lobster ground.
 - High concentration of lobster pots in certain areas (McCallum). Jeff followed up by explaining that the McCallum area has a small area of lobster habitat (nature of the ground) with approximately 20 lobster fishers.
 - Concern of lobster licenses from other areas using the local coastal region to catch lobster. Fishers from Burgeo selling lobster licenses to locals. Can the region sustain an increase in lobster fishing effort?
- b. Craig Mercer (NSGA)
- Concerns of aquaculture processing capacity
 - The need for infrastructure for feed storage.
 - Concern for fish health (St. Alban's) – blood water from the processing operations entering water around cages.
 - Marine infrastructure in Hermitage – a lot of interaction between the ferry, fishery, aquaculture (over crowding).
 - Issues of cleanliness in and around processing plant wharf (St. Alban's) – could be a deterrent for buyers.
 - Buyers are become increasingly demanding for traceability of produce (e.g. history of fish – how it is handled, etc...)
- c. Herb Dunphy (Municipalities)
- Concern of bio-security of facilities in the Bay d'Espoir region.
 - There is a need for more facilities to address the above issues (Craig's issues).
 - The issues of raw sewage into bays (MEQ issues)
- d. Jeffery Roberts (Fishery Committees)
- Over crowding at the Hermitage wharf.
- e. Joan O'Brien (DFO)
- Address the term “integrated coastal zone planning” in the Terms of Reference - changed it to Coastal Planning. (see notes above on Terms of Reference).

Other

f. Belleoram Quarry

Conrad has been speaking with the proponents of the aggregate quarry near Belleoram. The project is undergoing an environmental assessment at the current time and the various components of the project are being put in place. This project, expected to start in 2007, will have a very positive economic impact on the region.

g. Request for Letter of Support

Jeffery Roberts requested a letter of support from the committee supporting a letter on behalf of the Fishers Committee to DFO requesting that the Crab (and other species) fishery opening earlier. Jeffery suggested that the early fishery would focus on a max. of 20% of overall TAC.

On a motion by Kev Lawrence, Seconded by Herb Dunphy, the committee agreed to write a letter of support providing that, in the opinion of DFO, there would be no adverse impact on stock recruitment.

Scheduling next meeting

Next meeting will be prior to mid April before the lobster season is to start.

On a motion by Craig Mercer, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.