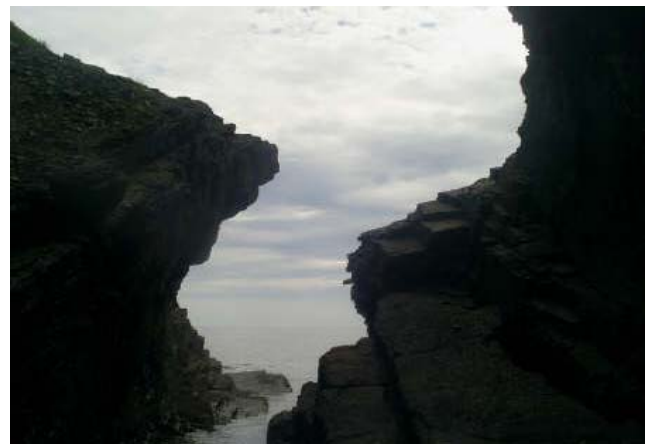


**St. Anthony –
Port au Choix
Regional Council
of the
Rural Secretariat
Executive Council**



**Activity Report
2008-09**

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Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council, I hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2008-09 fiscal year. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the Guidelines for Annual Activity Reports for Category 3 Government Entities, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results achieved.

Over the past year, we have achieved many tasks that we had set out for the council. We engaged in discussions with many stakeholders particularly in the areas of transportation and communications. The council, through these discussions, became more informed and were able to produce an advice document that we believed met the region's needs. We will continue work on the Retention of Skilled Labour and Natural Resources priority over the next two years and will hopefully be able to provide the Provincial Government with advice that will assist the region in moving forward.

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

Sincerely,



Richard May
Chair
St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

Table of Contents

1. Overview of the Region	3
2. Regional Council Overview	5
3. Mandate	6
4. Lines of Business	6
5. Values	7
6. Primary Clients	7
7. Vision	8
8. Mission	8
9. Report on Performance	8
10. Additional Highlights	14
11. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead	15
Appendix A: Strategic Directions	17
Appendix B: Organizational Structure	18
Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions	19
Appendix D: Mandate of Rural Secretariat and Regional Councils	20

1. Overview of the Region

The population of the St. Anthony – Port au Choix region is estimated to be 12,734 in 2009, or about 2.5 percent of the total provincial population. This share is expected to decrease to 2.3 percent over the next 15 years.

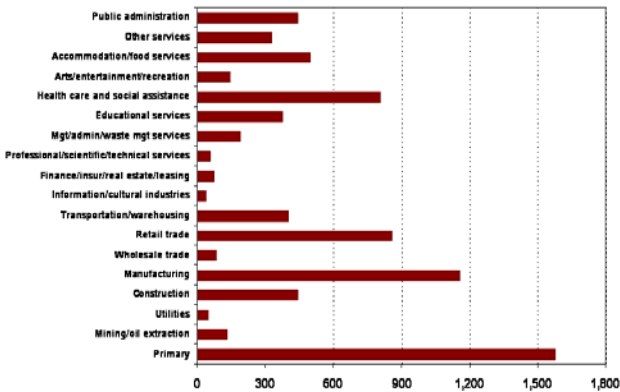
Employment in the St. Anthony-Port au Choix region is estimated at 7,705 according to Census 2006, or 2.9 percent of total provincial employment. Employment in the region decreased by almost 6.8 percent over the past five years, and by just under 1 percent over the past ten years.

Goods-producing industries, including primary activity, mining and oil extraction, construction, utilities and manufacturing accounted for 43.7 percent of employment in the region in 2006. This sector accounted for 26.8 percent of provincial employment. Industry level detail is provided in Chart 1.

Private sector services, excluding private education and health services, accounted for 34.9 percent of employment compared to 46.3 percent for the province as a whole.



**Chart 1
Employment by Industry, 2005**



Last, employment in public administration and services that are largely funded or delivered by the public sector, such as education, health care and social assistance, totalled 1,635 in 2005, or 21.2 percent of employment. This compares to 27.1 percent for the province as a whole.

Within the broad public administration and related services group, health care and social assistance services employment totalled 810 and educational services totalled 380. Federal, provincial, municipal and aboriginal public administration, including defence

services, totalled 445. Industry level detail is provided in Chart 2.

There were 33.9 persons employed in public administration and related services in 2005 per 1,000 people resident in the region in 2005. This compares to 142.7 persons per every 1,000 residents for the province as a whole. Industry level detail is provided in Chart 3.

The profile of employment in the region is also changing. In 2005, 83.8 percent of employment was considered full-time (30 or more hours per week) and 23.1 percent of employment was considered full-year (50 or more weeks worked per year). By comparison, 80.1 percent of employment was considered full-time in 1995, and 24.5 percent was considered full-year.

The potential labour supply is declining at a faster rate than employment. The labour force population (ages 15-64) was estimated at 11,960 in 1995 and 9,380 in 2005, representing a decline of about 21.6 percent over the ten year period.

Chart 2
Public and Related Services Employment, 2005

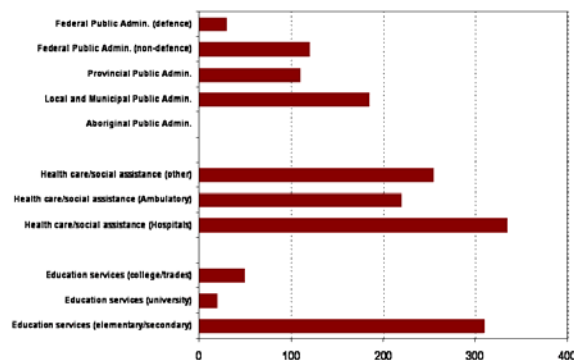
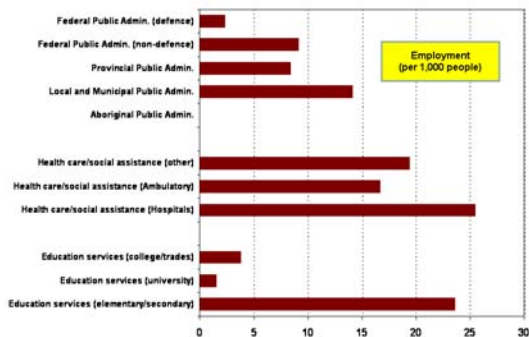


Chart 3
Per capita Public and Related Services Employment, 2005



The rapid decline of the labour supply relative to employment resulted in a lower unemployment rate and higher incomes, and indirectly resulted in lower reliance on income support.

The regional unemployment rate declined from about 38 percent in 1995 to 34.4 percent in 2005, and personal income per capita, after adjusting for inflation and personal taxes, grew by 23.2 percent.

Total incidence of income support, or the percentage of people that received income support at some point during the year, declined

from 13 percent in 1995 to 6.8 percent in 2005.

One of the key long term labour market challenges facing the region relates to how to meet employment demand as the labour supply ages and declines over the next decade. Today, about 36 percent of those ages 15-64 are ages 50-64. This is expected to increase to about 47 percent by 2020. Over the same period, the labour force age population is expected to decline by about 21 percent from about 8,800 to just under 7,000 persons.

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

2. Regional Council Overview

The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council is comprised of 12 members; four female and eight 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 4 times in 2008-09.

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. Below is a summary of the expenditures for the region including both planner and council costs:

	St. Anthony - Port au Choix Budget 2008-09	St. Anthony - Port au Choix Expenditures
Transportation & Communication	21,500.00	13,781.58
Supplies	2,500.00	902.26
Purchased Services	8,500.00	7,625.74
TOTAL	32,500.00	22,309.58

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 facilitate 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
Ed Broaders	Hawke's Bay
Ross Decker	Roddickton
Linda Dredge Toope	St. Barbe
Terry Hedderson	Griquet
Ted Lewis	Croque
Beverley May	Lower Cove
Richard May (Chair)	Plum Point
Vachon Noel	Port au Choix
Joan Simmonds	Conche
Gloria Toope	Plum Point
Loomis Way	Green Island Cove
John Simmonds	St. Anthony

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

3. Mandate

The Regional Council mandate is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities of a region.
- To review key regional 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 policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- To advance regional cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures, and to encourage regional partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To nominate an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat.

4. Lines of Business

The council supports the Rural Secretariat's two lines of business.

- **Partnership Development.** The Rural Secretariat engages citizens and coordinates the development of partnerships to focus on sustainable regional development and provide direct consideration of regional issues in the development of public policy.
- **Regional Impact Awareness and Action.** The Rural Secretariat conducts research and analysis, and provides informed advice on opportunities and challenges in all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.

5. Values

The core values explain the character of the organization. These values are paramount to the mandate and activities of the Council and are as follows:

Collaboration	Each person is committed to working together effectively.
Creativity	Each person seeks and supports new ideas and approaches.
Empowerment	Each person is responsible for participating in discussions, making informed decisions and taking personal responsibility for their contributions.
Inclusion	Each person acknowledges others' views and perspectives and has the right/opportunity to express their own.
Learning Culture	Each individual is recognized and valued for the skills that they bring and is encouraged to continue to learn.
Transparency	Each individual gives and shares open and objective advice based on sound information and principles.
Trust	Each person is open and supportive when participating in partnerships and follows through on requests and commitments.

6. Primary Clients

The primary clients of the 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

The St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat:

Sustainable regions with healthy, educated, prosperous people living in safe, inclusive communities.

Through its work, the council is identifying priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which considers economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

8. Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the council. It represents the key long-term objective that the council will be striving towards as they move forward. The priority focus areas support the strategic directions of the provincial government. The statement also identifies the indicators that will assist both the council and the public in monitoring and evaluating success. The council will report on its mission statement in its 2010-11 Annual Report.

The mission statement of the council is as follows:

By 2011, the council will have participated in an ongoing community engagement process that will demonstrate the value of two-way communication between the Provincial Government and citizens.

9. Report on Performance

In its 2008-11 Activity Plan the council identified two goals. This section outlines each of these goals, its measure and indicators, and describes activities undertaken by the Council to advance its achievement.

The activities and performance of the council with respect to each of the goals as outlined below, is in support of the provincial government's strategic directions for the Rural Secretariat (Appendix A). In particular, the council's performance allowed for the development of new partnerships with various stakeholders at the regional level, and provided a new regional forum to discuss citizens' perspectives on regional and rural sustainability. The council recognizes that these strategic directions are long term in nature and believes that its activities in 2008-09 and beyond will further support these directions.

9.1 Issue 1: Regional Collaboration

The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council felt that in order to meet the mandate of the council, four meetings a year would not be sufficient. The council decided to set up working groups based on the priorities they have identified as crucial to regional sustainability. These working groups would engage relevant stakeholders and groups as well as review documentation. These groups would research and develop the background information for the advice documents that council submits to government on each priority area.

Goal:

By March 31, 2011, the St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council will have established a mechanism for the development of collaborative regional partnerships to provide informed, current perspectives on matters of importance within the region.

2008-09 Objective:

By March 31, 2009 the St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council will have established collaborative regional working groups for identified priority areas.

Measure:

Working groups established

Indicator	Accomplishments 2008-09
Meetings held	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working Groups were established for each priority area comprised of members of the regional council and met throughout the year:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Transportation and Communication Working Group meetings were focused on identifying issues in these areas and looking at possible solution to these challenges. An advice document was produced and submitted to the council. The group met six times in 2008-09○ Retention of Skilled Labour Working Group meetings were focused on issues surrounding the retention and attraction of skilled labour and identifying possible solutions. The group met one time in 2008-09○ Natural Resources Working Group was initially focused on Natural Resources in general but has since become more focused by breaking it down into sectors. The first sector to be discussed is forestry. The group met three times in 2008-09

Indicator	Accomplishments 2008-09
Meetings held (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other stakeholders were engaged on an as needed basis to inform the process and to exchange information relevant to the topic area. Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development, Department of Transportation and Works, Viking Trail Tourism Association, Regional Economic Development Boards, North Of Fifty Thirty Association, Joint Council, Aliant, Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Youth Retention and Attraction, Harris Centre, and the Department of Natural Resources
Information exchange occurring in each working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed existing documents (Transportation and Works 2008-11 Strategic Plan and 2006-08 Strategic Plans, Fixed Link between Labrador and Newfoundland Pre-feasibility Study Final Report 2005, National Highway System, Vessel Replacement Strategy Consultation Document, Skill Task Force Report 2006, Labour Market Indicators and Trends 2007, Western School District Strategic Plan, Department of Education Strategic Plan 2006-08, Reducing Poverty Action Plan 2006, Policy on Multiculturalism 2008, Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment Strategic Plan 2006-08, Community Schools Documentation (Clarenville-Bonavista Region), Island Wood Supply Analysis 2006, Department of Natural Resources Strategic Plan 2006-08, Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Strategic Plan 2006-08 and 2008-2011, Newfoundland Forest Sector Strategy 2008, Northern Peninsula Fisheries Task Force Report 2006) Engaged regional and provincial groups and exchanged information regarding each priority area.(Please refer to section above) Council participated in with Knowledge Transfer Session on Transportation organized by the Harris Centre. Council members listened to presentations from Researchers at MUN and Deputy Minister of Transportation and Works. Council Members then engaged in facilitated conversations on economic, social and environmental impacts of transportation development.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2008-09
Information exchange occurring in each working group (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized and held regional focus group session on Transportation and Communication. The working group identified participants and developed questions to engage participants. Information exchange occurred with an update of the work of the regional council and a dialogue on the transportation and communication issues and possible solutions.

Based on these accomplishments, Council will work toward the following measure and indicators for it 2009-10 Objective.

2009-10 Objective:

By March 31, 2010 the St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council, based on input received from the working groups, will have developed position papers on regional priorities.

2009-10 Measure:

- Position papers developed outlining the background and context for regional priorities

2009-10 Indicators:

- Meetings held
- Information exchange occurring in each working group
- Position papers developed

9.2 Issue 2: Advancement of Regional Priorities

The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council believes that in order to achieve sustainability in the region, there were three priority areas that needed to be considered. Transportation and communication was looked at as being critical to the sustainability of the region because of the need to access goods and services as well as export products. Also as a region, we are rich in natural resources but these resources are not being utilized to their full potential or for the increased benefit for the region. The council also felt that in order to become sustainable, the skilled labour population must be able to be retained in the future. The council will be working on these priority areas and will be submitting advice to government regarding these issues.

Goal:

By March 31, 2011, the St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council will have developed an informed regional perspective and provided input to the provincial government in identified priority areas.

2008-09 Objective:

By March 31, 2009 the St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council will have developed a position paper on transportation and communication infrastructure and services.

Measure:

Position paper developed

Indicator	Accomplishments 2008-09
Policy issues that advance, negatively impact or need to be developed are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The council reviewed current documentation on Transportation and Communication issues (please refer to the previous issue)• The council engaged in discussion through meetings, focus group session and a Transportation forum on the issues affecting the region with regard to Transportation and Communication• The council, through its review, identified that there needs to be more long term planning with regards to transportation infrastructure development in the region. The council determined the completion of an impact study on the road opening in Labrador should be undertaken.• The council looked at all modes of transportation (roads, water and air). It was recognised that government is advancing with improvements to Route 430 but more needs to be done with regard to bringing it up to the National Highway Standard. Regional Ports need to be identified in order to positively impact economic growth. With the identification of regional ports, infrastructure investment will be more focused and allow for ports to be developed to a standard that will allow for of shipping products in a much more economical way. Thereby, increasing opportunities in the region with much less transportation costs. With regard to air, the council recognised that it is under federal jurisdiction but requested the provincial government engage in discussions with the federal government to assist in upgrading the facilities.• The council sees a benefit in the provinces plan to transport energy through the peninsula and with the increasing demand for lower energy costs for businesses and residents, the province should be able to reduce costs in order for it to be more viable to live and do business in the region. As costs are rising for fuel and transportation, it is critical the region is able to take advantage of any development in the region.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2008-09
<p>Policy issues that advance, negatively impact or need to be developed are identified (Continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council realizes that communications is key for the advancement of any region in the province. In order to attract business or have access to education, regions must broadband and cellular service. The council supports the initiatives of the province to enhance communications, but believes the province must seek new and innovative ways to ensure the entire population will have access to up to date communications.
<p>Engagement with provincial government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the Transportation Forum held in partnership with two other Regional Councils (Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour and Labrador) and the Harris Centre, the Deputy Minister of Transportation and Works attended and engaged in discussion at that time. Groups such as the College of the North Atlantic, Deer Lake Airport Authority, Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development, Memorial University, and Regional Economic Development Boards participated as well. • Representatives from the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development, Viking Trail Tourism Association, Joint Council, North of Fifty Thirty Association, and Regional Economic Development Boards were engaged in the focus group session that was held in the region. • Representative from the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development provided information to the council on the proposed Broadband initiative.
<p>Position papers developed and communicated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The position paper on Transportation and Communication was completed and submitted to Government. • The council communicated the document by sending to all other regional councils, provincial council, and MHAs for the region, Trevor Taylor and Wallace Young.

Based on their experience in examining advancement of regional priorities, the council would like to clarify that they intend to submit a position paper on retention of skilled labour in 2009-10, and a position paper on natural resources in 2010-11. The following objective for 2009-10 indicates it

would submit papers on these remaining priority issues, but wishes to slightly alter their planned work based upon experience to date. However, despite this slight change in work schedule, the integrity of the planned objective will remain intact.

Based on the 2008-09 accomplishments, it will work toward the following measure and indicators for it 2009-10 Objective.

2009-10 Objective:

By March 31, 2010 the St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council will have engaged community partners, stakeholders and interest groups and developed position papers for other identified priority issues.

2009-10 Measure:

- Community partners, stakeholders and interest groups engaged and advice document on retention of skilled labour developed.

2009-10 Indicators:

- Engagement with community partners, stakeholders, interest groups and provincial government
- Position paper developed and communicated to government

10. Additional Highlights

The St. Anthony - Port au Choix Regional Council is seeking to broaden public dialogue on long-term opportunities and challenges facing the region. It aims to provide input and advice to the provincial government on these opportunities and challenges. This is a long-term process that will require ongoing collaboration with citizens, stakeholders and interests in the region.

The council feels that its performance in 2008-09 has allowed it to make advancements in this process. It is providing an open and transparent means for rural perceptions, realities, opportunities, challenges and potential solutions to be discussed, debated and deliberated. It has brought together citizens, stakeholders and interests from differing backgrounds with differing priorities and perspectives, differing bases of information and knowledge, and differing expectations. It has built confidence, leadership and trust, and it has broadened public awareness of issues.

In addition to the points raised in Section 9, three additional highlights are worthy of mention. These are consistent with the Rural Secretariat's strategic directions and mandate, and will serve to inform the work of the council in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

One Regional Council member attended a learning event hosted by the Rural Secretariat on October 15, 2008. Building on the annual Dialogue Day events from 2004 to 2007, this event was facilitated by Dr. Rupert Downey of the University of Victoria and focused on community-based

research. This learning event was followed by the *Knowledge in Motion '08* conference hosted by the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Development of Memorial University. This conference focused on the importance of linking university research to community development needs and priorities and how to translate knowledge to inform public policy and decision making.

The Regional Council continued its community engagement process. The focus of community engagement shifted in 2008-09 from previous years. In 2008-09 there was increased emphasis on engagement with established stakeholders and organized groups in the areas of Transportation, Communication, Natural Resources and Labour as well as regional volunteerism.

The council also provided a brief position paper on the Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy outlining points of consideration the council felt were necessary while the development of this strategy was ongoing.

11. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

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. The council 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 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 provide advice to government to advance efforts to provide such supports.

Regional communications

The council understands that a range of non-governmental organizations in rural areas provide advice to government on a range of policy matters. In large part, these organizations are focused

on particular agendas, needs and interests, such as and among others, regional economic development, environmental awareness and protection, social policy advancement and municipal governance. The challenge for the council 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 the council, 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: Regional Partnership Development

Outcome Statement: Stronger and more dynamic regions.

Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Regional Council in the areas of:

- Partnership Development
 - Within regions
 - Between government and regions
- Forum for informed discussion and priority identification that links economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional sustainability.

2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

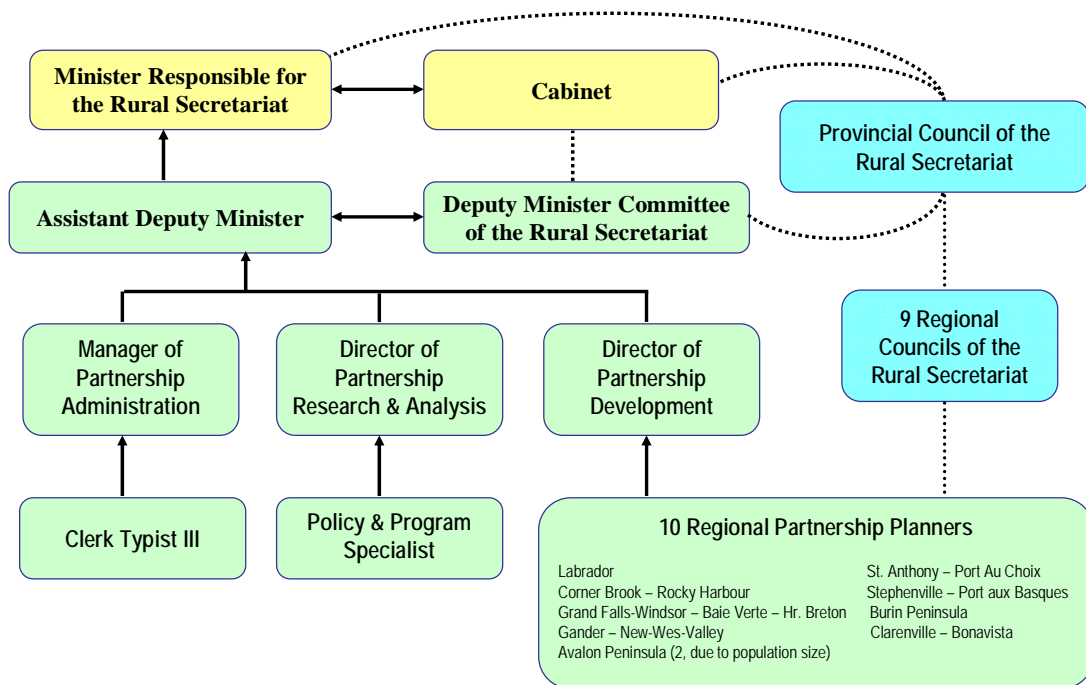
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Regional Council in the areas of:

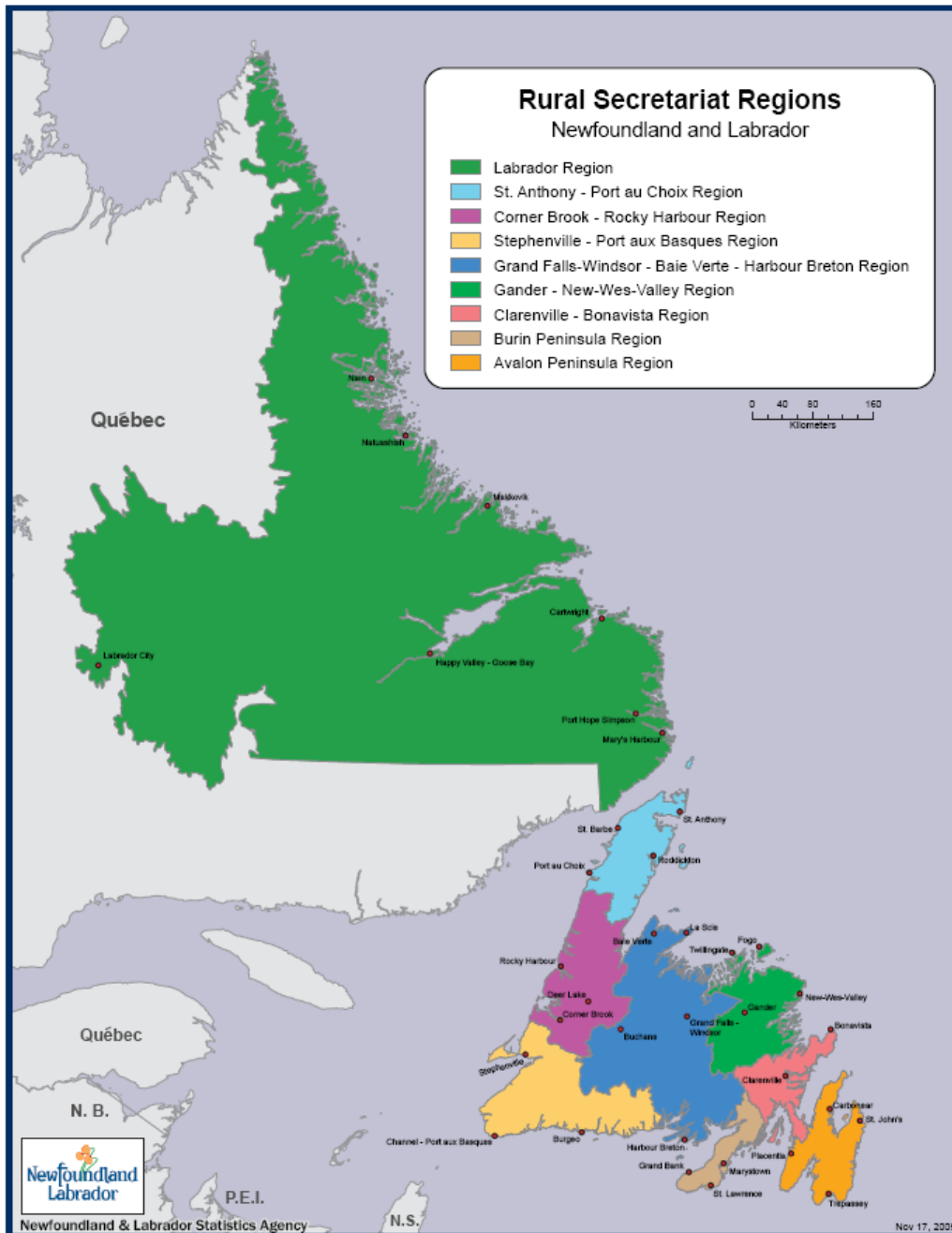
- Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy

Appendix B: Organizational Structure

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



Appendix D: Mandate of Rural Secretariat and Regional Councils

Mandate of the Rural Secretariat

The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

- Promote the well-being of all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador through a comprehensive and coordinated approach to economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of 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 regional concerns are considered throughout the provincial government and promoted at the federal level.
- Carry out research and analysis of economic and social issues affecting all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Help communities and regions identify and take advantage of growth opportunities.

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 the province.
- 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.
- Identify and advise government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five year period.
- Advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures, and to encourage government and community partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- Meet twice annually with the provincial Cabinet and deputy ministers to advance regional development priorities.
- Serve as an external sounding board for government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.

Photo Credit:



Photo Courtesy of: Nina Mitchelmore



Photo Courtesy of: Richard May

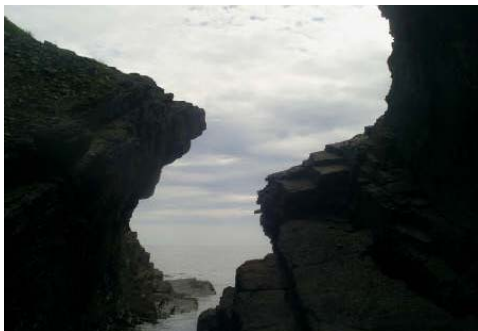


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