

# BONNE BAY

## A Treasure and a Resource



**Final Report on the Bonne Bay Public  
Gatherings and Workshop  
Woody Point and Norris Point  
October 27 – 29, 2009**

**Joan Cranston, Barb Neis and Anita Best**

**Community-University Research for Recovery Alliance (CURRA)  
Memorial University of Newfoundland**

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<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
List of Appendices	ii
1. Introduction	1
2. Background	3
3. Funding, Designing, and Implementing the BB Celebrations and Events	4
4. The Events	5
4.1. School Meetings	5
4.2. Public Meetings	7
4.3. The Workshop: “Bonne Bay – A Treasure and a Resource”	9
5. Workshop Breakout Group Summaries	10
5.1. Governance: Policy, Programs, Institutions	10
5.2. Ocean-Based and Shared Activities and Safety	10
5.3. Food Security	11
5.4. Fisheries and Tourism	11
6. Role of VOBB (Voice of Bonne Bay) Community Radio	12
7. Next Steps/Action Items	13
7.1. Food Security Initiatives	13
7.2. Fisheries – Tourism Initiatives	14
7.3. Multi-Use Planning Initiative	14
7.4. Virtual Museum Project	15
8. Workshop Evaluation	16
9. Conclusion	17

<b>List of Appendices</b>	<b>Page</b>
Appendix A - List of Steering Committee Members	19
Appendix B - Example of School Meeting Agenda	20
Appendix C - Example of Public Meeting Agenda	21
Appendix D - Agenda for the Workshop	23
Appendix E - Summary of Workshop Evaluation Form ratings	25

## **1. Introduction**

Bonne Bay is a small fjord located on the west coast of Newfoundland at the base of the Great Northern Peninsula. Several communities have a strong and enduring relationship with the Bonne Bay marine ecosystem. These communities include: Norris Point, Woody Point, Glenburnie, Birchy Head and Shoal Brook, Rocky Harbour, and Sally's Cove and Trout River located just outside the entrance to Bonne Bay. There is a strong inshore fishing tradition in the Bonne Bay area including fisheries for lobster, cod, herring, salmon and, more recently, snow crab. The Bay and associated watersheds have seen an important increase in tourism-related activities in the past few decades including recreational salmon and trout fishing, tour boats, kayaking, recreational cod fishing and a growing number of cruise ship visits. This growth in tourism activity has been fuelled not only by the beauty and cultural and ecological richness of the area but also by the fact that Bonne Bay is surrounded by Gros Morne National Park and home to the Bonne Bay Marine Station.



The Bonne Bay area is one of only a few rural growth areas in the province outside of the Avalon Peninsula. However, in recent years the fishing industry has experienced difficulties, especially the inshore fishery. This industry has traditionally been the backbone of rural Newfoundland, vital to its economy and to the sustainability of rural communities. It is very important to the tourism industry in the Bonne Bay area because of its cultural importance and interest and because it is one of the attractions that tourists expect to see when they come. Locally harvested fish and shellfish are often consumed not only by local people but also by visiting tourists.

The Bonne Bay Marine Station (BBMS) was established in Bonne Bay in 1969, and has offered a rich and expanding program of educational programming, public outreach and marine research in recent years, interacting with local fish harvesters and increasingly working in partnership with other local groups ([www.bonnebay.mun.ca/](http://www.bonnebay.mun.ca/)). Not all members of local communities are fully aware of the forty year history of the BBMS, of the research, resources and public outreach that happen from the station and, more importantly, about what that research has told us about this unique marine ecosystem and associated rich fishery heritage. The BBMS is a potentially very important resource for the Bonne Bay region as local people and their representatives grapple with both the opportunities and challenges confronting the region.

One relatively new program of work based at the BBMS is the Community-University Research for Recovery Alliance (CURRA). CURRA is a five-year program funded

primarily by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada with supplementary funding from Memorial University and several other organizations ([www.curra.ca](http://www.curra.ca)). In addition to multiple social and natural scientists and fine arts researchers, the CURRA also involves a broad range of community partners who have helped to design the research program and public outreach activities funded through the CURRA. It funds a part-time community coordinator, Anita Best, who works from the BBMS. The primary goals of the CURRA include working with local groups to support research that might help promote the recovery of fisheries and fishing communities on Newfoundland's west coast. It is helping to turn the BBMS into a stronger, more broadly interdisciplinary and more community-engaged institution by expanding the range of researchers engaged with the station through CURRA-funded research, trying to identify new research initiatives, and by trying to establish the organizational basis to support this new, broader BBMS in the longer term, after the 5-year CURRA program has ended.

In October, 2009, the CURRA used funding from the Newfoundland and Labrador Research Development Corporation and some other supporting agencies (see Acknowledgements) to support the organization of two public meetings, two school events and a one-day workshop involving researchers, community partners and representatives of local Bonne Bay communities.



The public meetings, school events and workshop were coordinated by Joan Cranston with input from a multi-stakeholder steering committee. They took place in Norris Point and Woody Point and provided an opportunity for the residents of the area (including high schools students) to learn about the marine research that has taken place here in the last 40 years, including what it has told us about this rich and unique area, and about the research that is on-going as part of the CURRA project. The workshop that took place in Norris Point following the meetings brought a diverse group of participants together with researchers to discuss the opportunities and challenges that exist in Bonne Bay, and the ways in which research can help to inform some of the discussions which must take place to ensure the sustainability of our “Treasure and Resource.”

This report describes these initiatives, reports on what was accomplished and some possible future directions identified in the workshop. It also summarizes the results from evaluation forms completed by participants in the Norris Point workshop. A list of steering committee members, sample meeting programmes, the final workshop programme, and an evaluation summary are attached as appendices to the report.

## **2. Background**

The CURRA program of research and community engagement has been operating from the BBMS for about two years. In 2007-9, the CURRA governance researchers and community partners focused attention and resources on St. Paul's where they carried out some research and hosted a public meeting and workshop on the St. Paul's area including opportunities and challenges associated with that area (see [www.curra.ca/past\\_events.htm](http://www.curra.ca/past_events.htm) for reports on this work with some potential relevance for Bonne Bay communities including a recent report on community sustainability).

In fall 2008, the governance researchers and community partners selected the Bonne Bay area as a major focus for their activities in 2009 and 2010. There were two important reasons to focus on Bonne Bay:

- 1) the BBMS was celebrating its fortieth anniversary in 2009 and celebration of this anniversary would provide a good opportunity to promote awareness of the Station and what had been learned about this rich, unique and fragile ecosystem as well as about local fisheries during its history; and,
- 2) the team had observed the often intense activity that takes place on and around the water in Bonne Bay. Based on these observations, team members thought the area might be missing some opportunities to combine resources across sectors like fisheries and tourism thereby enhancing the viability of both; and team members were concerned about some potential threats to the future resilience of the area that might be reduced through focused attention, discussion, research and effort.



### **3. Funding, designing and implementing the Bonne Bay events**

In the winter of 2009, Barb Neis (the principal investigator for the CURRA) and Bob Hooper (Director of the BBMS) applied to the provincial Research Development Corporation for some funds to support student research on community food security including fisheries and agriculture in the region, and to hold a series of public meetings and a workshop in Bonne Bay (BB) to explore the opportunities and threats for future sustainability. In the summer of 2009, Kristen Lowitt, a new doctoral student at Memorial, did some preliminary food security fieldwork in the Bonne Bay area (see [www.curra.ca/documents/CFS%20Assessment%20Report\\_%20Final\\_Oct%2009.pdf](http://www.curra.ca/documents/CFS%20Assessment%20Report_%20Final_Oct%2009.pdf)).

In fall 2009, the CURRA hired a local community coordinator, Joan Cranston, to act as the ‘person on the ground’ who would take the lead in organizing some Bonne Bay meetings and a workshop. Her responsibilities included community outreach, communications, planning and recruitment for the event, and helping to draft the final report on the events.

Working with Anita Best, the community coordinator for the CURRA as a whole, and with members of the governance component (Barb, Bob and Ratana Chuenpagdee, a Canada Research Chair in Natural Resource Sustainability and Community Development at Memorial and co-lead on the CURRA governance component), Joan assembled a multi-stakeholder and multi-community Steering Committee for the Bonne Bay activities. The Steering Committee included representatives from the CURRA, federal, provincial and all of the local municipal governments (DFO, DFA, Parks Canada), other agencies (the Red Ochre Board, FFAW), and industry representatives (fisheries, tourism, heritage) (see Appendix A for a list of steering committee members).

The mandate of the Steering Committee included:

1. ensuring that the public meetings and the workshop included input from the communities;
2. helping to identify potential presenters and participants;
3. encouraging members of each community to attend;
4. providing input into the design of the agenda;
5. participating in the events as leaders in their communities; and,
6. reviewing the final report to ensure that it reflected the outcomes of the process from a community perspective.

The Steering Committee met 3 times leading up to the BB events and once afterwards to review the draft final report. During the early meetings it was agreed that the Bonne Bay events would include two school meetings and two evening public meetings (one on each side of the Bay), as well as a one-day workshop in Norris Point. The events would have the following aims:

1. to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the BBMS by helping members of local communities learn more about the station and about what forty years’ worth of



research has taught us about what lives in the Bay and how it has changed over time;

2. to introduce the CURRA to the wider community and give CURRA researchers and students working in the BB area an opportunity to present their research findings to the community;
3. to promote discussion around the opportunities and potential risks in BB for the future of the BB ecosystem and surrounding communities; and,
4. explore strategies and opportunities to integrate marine/ecological diversity, research and products, including the intangible cultural heritage of fisheries, more effectively into public awareness and the wider economy.

Outcomes from the BB celebration and meetings would help to define strategic directions for local leaders and community members interested in promoting sustainability in the area and would help to inform CURRA research and outreach activities in the area in 2009-2010. They would also help to inform plans to diversify the research at the BBMS and strengthen its community outreach in the longer term.

The workshop was intended to encourage community representatives, representatives from government and researchers to work together to:

- explore issues that are important to the area;
- identify ways the BB marine ecosystem and local fisheries are currently central to the wider ecology and to local communities;
- identify opportunities and challenges for the future; and
- identify some doable strategies and actions for the near future to help promote these opportunities and reduce the challenges/threats to the health and prosperity of the area.

The Steering Committee chose the title for the meetings and workshop – “Bonne Bay – A Treasure and a Resource.” The Committee decided to include two “School Meetings” in the process as they felt that this would be a way to target presentations to youth, to engage them in the discussions, as well as to expose them to the science and research as viable career options. The coordinator invited the three schools in the area to send senior high school students to attend sessions in the afternoon before the public meetings.

#### **4. The Events**

##### **4.1. School Meetings** (see Appendix B for sample agenda)

The first School Meeting was held in Woody Point on Tuesday, October 27, 2009. It was well attended by 15 high school students from Trout River and 20 from Woody Point. They listened attentively to the presentations and participated in a ‘visioning exercise’ about the future of Bonne Bay. Verbal feedback from the teachers and from one parent

indicated that the students were engaged in the presentations and the discussions and felt that this was due to the fact that the session was geared towards them, and that they were not simply being lectured to. However, it was felt by some of the CURRA Steering committee members that there was not enough discussion among the students and that we needed to reorganize the school meeting in Norris Point to promote greater student engagement. A series of questions was developed to pose to the students in Norris Point BEFORE the presentations the next day (see below).

The students in the Woody Point meeting were given the opportunity to express how they felt about living in the area by filling out a ballot telling us what they love about Bonne Bay. They expressed appreciation for the scenery and geology, the wildlife, the people and the communities and the way of life (the peacefulness) of the area. Some of those from Trout River said that they love the fact “that it is close to Trout River.” This is indicative of the strong sense of community that exists in Trout River. Although it is only a short distance away from Woody Point in geographical terms, historically, before the construction of the paved road, the communities were very distinct and separate. This is changing somewhat as travel gets easier, but the communities still have very distinct identities. In the future, it will be important to host events in Trout River as well as in Woody Point if the Trout River residents are to be truly engaged in the process.

The second school meeting was held in Norris Point on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 at the BBMS. It was well attended by 37 senior high students from Gros Morne Academy in Rocky Harbour. The meeting coordinator, Joan Cranston, facilitated a discussion with the students at the start of the session focussed on the following questions:

1. What do you love most about Bonne Bay?
2. How many different types of fish can you name?
3. How many different types of boats can you name?
4. How many types of food can you grow here?
5. How many types of jobs are available here?

The discussion was very lively and the students came up with many concepts and ideas that had not occurred to the organizers. They enjoyed the presentations and participated in a “visioning/ planning exercise” at the end of the meeting that yielded some interesting responses. When asked if they wanted to live in Bonne Bay as adults they expressed concerns about the lack of meaningful employment in the area (although they had listed some 20 or 30 types of jobs that are available in their communities). They seemed to feel that they had to work in Alberta in order to make a living, although they all wanted to be able to come “home” to visit. When asked who would continue to live in Bonne Bay, they replied that their children would live here.

There were some interesting student responses to the query, “Tell us What You Love Most about Bonne Bay”:

- “skate-boarding at the marine biology station and jumping off the wharf into clean water”
- “the fresh air (you don’t smell smoke like in Corner Brook)”

- “It is said that our view is better then traveling to Bahamas”;
- the fish, the water, the scenery, “everything”, the freedom, the people, the culture, the way of life (“the way we live by making our own food”).

#### 4.2. Public Meetings (see Appendix C for sample agenda)

The first public meeting was held in Woody Point on Tuesday October 27, 2009. About 30 people attended the meeting in the Heritage Theatre on a very cold Tuesday night. The H1N1 flu was a factor in limiting numbers as well as a very busy herring fishery. The contribution of the steering committee members to getting the word out about the meeting was invaluable.

Meeting participants were very interested in Bob Hooper’s presentation on research that had been conducted in Bonne Bay over the past 40 years. Bob’s presentation focused on the seaweeds and shellfish in BB and on some of the changes he had observed over 40 years. Some lively discussion was provoked; one individual seemed to think that “the scientists” wanted to close the bay to fishermen. He was not easily convinced otherwise. Others in the audience were very interested in the marine information that was presented, and seemed to be interested in having the opportunity to learn more.

Joe Wroblewski talked about the fishes of Bonne Bay, the local stock of redfish, research on whether there might be a local cod stock and about the Bay’s importance as a nursery area for many species of fish (see [www.curra.ca/documents/Currie%20et%20al%20CURRA%20Report%20Sept09.pdf](http://www.curra.ca/documents/Currie%20et%20al%20CURRA%20Report%20Sept09.pdf) for more information on the fishes of Bonne Bay). Mandy Ryan of the FFAW talked about some local stewardship initiatives led by fishermen. Kristen Lowitt presented her preliminary research findings on Community Food Security in Bonne Bay ([www.curra.ca/documents/CFS%20Assessment%20Report\\_%20Final\\_Oct%2009.pdf](http://www.curra.ca/documents/CFS%20Assessment%20Report_%20Final_Oct%2009.pdf)).

Overall the meeting was successful in terms of presenting some research findings to the community and getting them to think about the relevance of some of the research for answering questions that they might have about issues in Bonne Bay and the fishery. However, due to the number and length of the presentations, time for discussion was somewhat limited. People did have the chance for some individual discussions afterwards as refreshments were served (coffee and muffins; courtesy of the Lighthouse Restaurant). Charlie Payne provided entertainment on his accordion, accompanied by Anita Best.



Those who attended were asked to fill out ballots indicating what they loved most about Bonne Bay. Responses expressed the following themes:

1. sense of community, friendly people, closeness of family, freedom for the children growing up, “it’s home;”
2. “the ability to make a living on your own terms;”
3. “good place for a garden;”

4. the scenery, mountains, fresh air, the water and the wildlife, “whales in the bay, moose in the back garden;”
5. overall sense of contentment with the way of life; peace and tranquility; “What is there **not** to love?”
6. “Everything!”

A second public meeting was held on Wednesday October 28, 2009 at the BBMS in Norris Point. The meeting was very well attended with over 60 people from Norris Point and Rocky Harbour filling the seats in the theatre. The logistics of drawing people out to the meeting were easier as the coordinator was living in Norris Point.



There were lots of posters put up and word of mouth was also a very effective way of spreading the word. Because the BBMS is located in Norris Point it has a fairly strong presence in the community, and although many members of the public had not been in the station before, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations provided them with the excuse that they had been looking for.

Bob Hooper’s presentation was very well received and prompted a few questions from fishermen who were interested in learning more. They had not had the opportunity before to see how research could answer some of the questions that they had about the marine environment where they earn their living.

In this meeting, a local fisherman, Frank Piercey, gave a powerful presentation on the state of the fishery from the point of view of an active harvester. He used an historical perspective to highlight some of the points that he was making; in some ways, things had not improved much since the time when his great-grandfather was fishing in Bonne Bay many years ago.



Anita Best told people about local efforts to establish a virtual museum for the West Coast as a means to help preserve our Intangible Cultural Heritage (songs, stories, local knowledge and recipes (see the section below on the Virtual Museum). Mandy Ryan and Kristen Lowitt gave their presentations as well.

Again people were asked to fill out ballots telling what they loved most about Bonne Bay. Their comments were similar to those expressed in Woody Point. They loved:

1. “Bob Hooper”; ‘kayaking with Bob;”
2. “the fish”, “the organisms and the fish from both the arctic and the tropics in one bay;”

3. the lifestyle - a place to work and a place to “play” (snowshoe, ski, kayak, canoe, hike, run, swim, have a gourmet meal, see a play, talk to a neighbour, an elder, etc.)”
4. the culture;
5. “it is home, friendly people, sense of community, safety, peacefulness, relatively undeveloped;”
6. the “beauty of the scenery, the diversity of wildlife;”
7. the “untapped potential.”

#### **4.3. The Workshop: “Bonne Bay – A Treasure and a Resource”** (see Appendix D for the Workshop agenda)



The purpose of the workshop was to start a conversation among multiple stakeholder groups about opportunities and challenges for the future sustainability of Bonne Bay and its surrounding communities. The main focus was on marine-related activities. A diverse group of stakeholder representatives participated in the workshop including fish harvesters, fish plant workers and plant owners, municipal representatives, tourism operators (tours guides, hotel and restaurant owners), people with an interest in food security issues and heritage preservation, people with an interest in primary health and health and safety, senior citizens, youth, educators, Parks Canada employees and managers, government officials (DFO, DFA and INTRD), funding agencies (ACOA), economic development agencies (i.e. RED Boards and the Rural Secretariat), and researchers. While some invited guests were unable to attend due to other commitments or to sickness, we ended up with a good cross-section of stakeholders.

The morning session took place at the community hall, and consisted of two panel presentations including one entitled *Tourism, Fisheries and Food Security: Current Synergies and Future Opportunities* and a second entitled *Challenges and Resources for Future Sustainability*. This second panel dealt with safety challenges on multi-use wharves, health and demographics issues, and introduced the audience to the ICZM mapping process.

Refreshments and lunch were provided by a local restaurant and featured a variety of local foods. There were two presentations during lunch: one on the history of the ferry service on Bonne Bay; the other on a successful protest organized by fishermen in Norris Point and Woody Point against herring seiners in Bonne Bay in 1902. Both presentations demonstrated the connections that have existed historically in the bay, and the advantages of working together for the common good.

The afternoon sessions were held at the BBMS. Participants joined one of four break-out groups: fisheries and tourism; food security; ocean and shore-based activities and safety; and policy, programs, institutions and governance. The discussions were lively and informed, building on the information provided in the morning sessions as well as on local knowledge and the expertise and passion of the participants. Brief summaries of issues raised in the groups are provided below.

## **5. Breakout Group Discussion Summaries**

### **5.1. Governance: Policy, Programs, Institutions**

The discussion focused on how collective decisions are made and how groups work together. The decision-making process has changed in recent years, but not necessarily for the better. Decision-making has to reflect local values, and may be more effective in some instances when it occurs “from the ground up.” Formal and informal changes to the decision-making process are necessary, and education is a key factor in ensuring that the right decisions are made and that the process is relevant and inclusive. Research can also provide answers to some of the questions raised, especially with regard to effective, alternative methods of governance that may exist elsewhere.



### **5.2. Ocean-based and Shared Activities and Safety**

This group discussed various threats to the local marine ecosystem (environmental hazards such as oil spills, unsustainable harvesting methods/ destruction of habitat and practices/ over-fishing, etc.), the potential effects of these threats, and who might be affected in the event of an incident (residents, resource users and harvesters, tourism operators). They also discussed management systems and institutions (Harbour Authorities, Occupational Health and Safety Groups, Emergency Response Groups, etc.) that could play a role in mitigating these threats. It was agreed that because there are so many different groups who rely on the resources of Bonne Bay, there is an urgent need for coordination of activities, especially with new user groups emerging such as those encouraging the expansion of cruise ship stopovers in the Bay.

There is a need to bring all of the stakeholders together (municipalities, government departments, health authorities, fishermen, tourism operators, recreational users and others) to develop a Multi-use Plan for Bonne Bay. The plan would deal with emergency response planning and the use of marine infrastructure.

The development of a “Code of Conduct” for all users of the bay was identified as a priority. “Research” was seen as an important tool to inform this process and to answer questions related to “best practices.” Education and knowledge transfer between stakeholders were also seen as essential to this process. This group wanted to see a

“nimble and inclusive way” for people in Bonne Bay to make collective, collaborative decisions about the use of the Bay. They wanted to “change what needed to be changed” and to “preserve the value of things that needed to be preserved.”

### **5.3. Food Security**



This group talked about the barriers and challenges to food security in Bonne Bay, but also about the opportunities. They discussed barriers to gardening (lack of time, available land, knowledge and information), the benefits in terms of physical health, social health and community capacity-building. They talked about opportunities for development (community gardens, greenhouses, root cellars, community

kitchens, and knowledge transfer through workshops). There are other opportunities to be exploited such as experiential/culinary tourism development. There are challenges such as human resources and funding, but there are provincial resources such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Food Security Network that can be helpful. Research with regard to organic farming methods and short-season production methods was seen as useful to this process.

This group also discussed the role of the local fishery in food security. Although some species may be endangered globally, they are not necessarily endangered locally and could be harvested using sustainable methods. It was identified that some of the harvesting practices currently in use (fishing “down the food chain”, fishing spawning capelin, over-fishing of herring and mackerel) are not sustainable and should be stopped if recovery of the fishery is to be successful. Environmental change and ecosystem imbalance were seen as potential threats to food security. Research was seen as essential to an informed discussion around these issues.

### **5.4. Fisheries and Tourism Session**

This session was very well-attended reflecting the centrality of this issue to the future of Bonne Bay. There is some urgency as there are currently many challenges facing the fishery, especially the inshore fishery. The point was made that the eco-system includes plants, animals, fish, habitats, people and the communities in which they live. All are inter-dependent. A sustainable fishery is an essential element of the tourism experience in Bonne Bay, and tourism is an important part of a sustainable economy in this area. The industries are co-dependent and can also enhance the viability of each other. Tourism provides a strong local market for fish and an opportunity to add value to the product that is harvested and sold in order to get a better price. Restaurant operators are willing to pay a higher price to get a high quality product on their tables.

Technologies such as cod-pot harvesting may be beneficial. Marketing can enhance the value – “Bonne Bay Fresh,” potentially linking restaurants on a “Taste Trail” that includes local fish products. There are many issues and challenges to be faced. For instance, the price of fish is based on global market prices which tend to be low. If local markets are strong and more fish can be marketed and consumed locally, then this may result in a better price for fish harvesters. Better prices are essential if we are to maintain



a viable inshore fishery. There may also be opportunities for experiential tourism; fishermen as “out-fitters” can offer tourists the opportunity to catch fish; fish plants also have opportunities to be part of this process. Fish markets provide a way to market fresh fish to tourists and local residents and to promote increased local consumption of locally harvested products. There are opportunities to add value to the product as well. Research can inform this discussion with regard to under-utilized species and non-traditional markets, as well as ways to enhance local markets and increase local consumption of fish. Perhaps most important is the need for the fishery and tourism industries to work together to reduce mutual threats and promote possibilities. The industries face some of the same challenges (short seasons, global markets) and can learn from each others’ experiences. Communication is essential. Stewardship of shared resources is also essential to sustainability.

The breakout groups reported back to the main group at the end of the day and a discussion was held on next steps that could be taken. It was agreed that the issues raised were relevant to the future sustainability of Bonne Bay, and there was a certain sense of urgency around some of the issues. It was agreed that the workshop was a very useful process to identify issues and to bring stakeholders together to identify possible solutions, but that there **must** be follow-up. Questions were raised as to who would continue the work that was started; possible avenues were identified and these are discussed in the *Next Steps/Action Items* section of this report (Section 7 below).

## **6. Role of VOBB (Voice of Bonne Bay Community Radio)**

The Voice of Bonne Bay community radio station is a local radio station owned and operated by a group of volunteers in Norris Point. The station is located at the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Center (formerly the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital). It first started operating during the second annual Trails, Tales and Tunes Festival in 2008, with the support of the local CURRA coordinator and Ryakuga Radio. It was an instant success; the community had found its voice. Local people listened to it all day long and came to rely on it as a source of information with regard to what was happening in the community. When the station shut down after the festival, they asked “What will we do without our radio?” The station operated again during the festival in May 2009. With the



support of the CURRA project, a temporary licence was obtained to allow the station to operate during the week of the public meetings and workshop.

With the support of Ivan Emke and his students, Ryakuga radio and the College of the North Atlantic in Stephenville, the school sessions and the public meetings were recorded and broadcast in the Bonne Bay area (due to technical restrictions, mainly to Norris Point and parts of Rocky Harbour and Woody Point). This was important in preserving the proceedings for future reference, and also allowed many people who were unable to physically attend the sessions for a variety of reasons to be able to hear what was going on, and be informed of the issues. Fishermen in particular, who were not able to attend due the active herring fishery, listened to Bob Hooper's presentation and spoke to him afterwards about what they had heard.



One of the major issues arising from the workshop was how to continue the “conversation” that had started around issues affecting the future of Bonne Bay. Community radio is one way to do that. It is “nimble and inclusive”, locally controlled and operated, and therefore reflective of local values. Knowledge translation and education are also essential to the process that was started with the meetings and the workshop. Again, community radio is an ideal means to facilitate this process.

The good news is that although the station has only operated on a temporary basis up to the present, the committee received notice shortly after the meetings that they were successful in obtaining Canadian Radio and Television Commission approval for a permanent radio station licence. Now they will begin the process of applying for the necessary funding to establish a permanent radio station to serve the Bonne Bay area. There is an opportunity for research here to study the role of community radio as a catalyst for community development and sustainability.

## **7. Next steps/Action Items**

There were several clearly defined priorities and action items identified at the workshop. Identified action items were as follows:

### **7.1. Food Security Initiatives**

Informal food security networks exist in Bonne Bay. It would be useful to “formalize” these groups to some extent to allow them to act and react to issues with a unified voice, as well as to maximize limited volunteer resources. It would be very helpful for these groups to continue to work closely with Kristen Lowitt as she pursues her research objectives. Her research can inform their initiatives, and their local knowledge can help to

inform her research. There is a need to work together to develop policy suggestions to support “best practices” in food security initiatives with regard to the fishery, community gardens, farmers markets and accessibility of healthy, affordable food choices.

## **7.2. Fisheries – Tourism Initiatives**

There was a strong emphasis on the need for the two industries to cooperate and work together to maximize their resources. This was seen as being potentially beneficial to both groups. A starting point could be to facilitate a meeting between fish harvesters, restaurant owners, and processors to discuss ways to get a high quality product from ocean to plate, and ensure a better return to the harvesters for their efforts. The meeting could incorporate presentations by Phil Walsh on cod-pot technology and how it is being used by the Fogo Island fishermen’s cooperative to market fresh fish to a restaurant in St. John’s, a presentation by Sam Elliott of SABRI on their salt cod cooperative and other initiatives. Government officials from DFO and DFA could also be invited to facilitate the discussion and answer questions that may arise with regard to regulations and recent interest in finding ways to promote local sale of fish. The participation of researchers (Kristen Lowitt with regard to food security and Ahmed Khan another CURRA doctoral student doing research on the “cod chain”) would also be very helpful.

This is a complex issue and it is vitally important to move slowly and involve as many harvesters and restaurant owners as possible. Therefore timing is critical. The meeting would have to be scheduled for a time when the harvesters are not busy and during the off-season for restaurants (January to March). In order to get participation from harvesters it would be helpful to meet them in their own environment where they are more comfortable speaking their mind. The FFAW has expressed interest in being involved as this type of initiative may serve to promote stewardship of the resource. It may also be useful to invite someone with a background in marketing this type of initiative (Don Black from Nova Scotia Farmers’ Market Cooperative).

## **7.3. Multi-use Planning Initiative**

This initiative involves bringing together the many stakeholders who currently rely on Bonne Bay and its resources to discuss coordination of activities in order to ensure sustainability. There are many challenges and threats inherent in having such a variety of users in the bay, although there are also opportunities. The stakeholders who would need to be involved include municipal representatives from all communities in Bonne Bay, Harbour Authorities, Waterfront Development Committees, Emergency Response groups (Coast Guard Auxiliaries, Bonne Bay Search and Rescue, Fire Departments, Western Health), tourism operators (boat tours, kayakers, restaurant owners, people involved with cruise ship visits, etc.), fishermen, recreational boat users, Parks Canada, representatives from government departments (DFO, DFA, Transportation, etc.), and researchers with expertise in this area (SafetyNet, Memorial’s Centre for Research in Workplace Health and Safety (see [www.safetynet.mun.ca](http://www.safetynet.mun.ca))). This group would take on the task of developing a multi-use plan for the bay, which would include a coordinated emergency response plan, as well as a “Code of Conduct” to guide those who rely on the Bay as a resource. It would probably need on-going coordination and support as many of those involved are

already over-burdened with volunteer duties. It is essential to remove barriers to participation in this group of stakeholders in order to ensure a high-quality, locally relevant plan.

The governance issue is integral to all of the above processes. Research can play a vital role in this process with regard to informing stakeholders about best practices, models from other jurisdictions, links to policy formation, etc.

Perhaps the one thing that was not so clearly expressed at the workshop was who would take the lead on some of the initiatives. Local volunteer resources are often limited and strained as many of the volunteers are involved in two or three committees and boards. However, this can also be seen as an advantage, as they are well-informed on a variety of topics and used to working together to maximize resources. Perhaps the best way to maximize the value of “local expertise” is to provide some administrative, coordinating support to allow the volunteers to focus on what they do best – brainstorm to develop local solutions to local problems and issues.

#### **7.4.Virtual Museum Project**

The Virtual Museum Project had its start with former CURRA Community Coordinator Fred Campbell. In January 2008 he attended a meeting of the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation, a volunteer community group that oversees the various activities in the old hospital - now the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre. The group was initiating an Oral History Project using small format video. He was asked to support that initiative with video training and suggestions for equipment. He suggested to the St. John's office that CURRA contact with the group would be useful on several fronts: it would be good for the CURRA to be viewed as providing support for community activities; to support the facilitation of self identity and pride of place would seem to be an integral component of the CURRA "recovery" process itself.



When Anita Best was hired a year later, she re-visited the project with a view to involving more than one community, and expanding the concept of heritage to include intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as well as artefacts. For an explanation of ICH, please visit the web site of the

Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador:  
<http://www.heritagefoundation.ca/ich.aspx>.

From discussions with various interested individuals (the Digital Archives Initiative at MUN, the provincial Museum and Archives organizations (MANL and ANLA) and heritage groups throughout the region) it became clear that a Virtual Exhibit representing a group of communities within the region interested most people. The Red Ochre

Regional Development Board was interested in developing this concept, as it fit well with some plans they had in place for the marketing of heritage locations on the great Northern Peninsula, and requested Sean St. George and Mark Lamswood to partner with the CURRA in the planning and development of this project. The Red Ochre Board has held talks with the other Regional Development Board on the Peninsula, the Nordic Board, who is also interested in joining the planning group.

Currently, the project is still in the planning stages. Some essential inventory work was done this summer by Parks Canada, identifying their holdings of oral history interviews and historical photographs of communities within the Gros Morne Park, region and within the Julia Walsh Centre in Norris Point. The SABRI Group in St. Anthony are also preparing an inventory of their oral history holdings. A steering committee will soon be called together to direct the Virtual Exhibit planning process, with a view to having a complete proposal ready for the fall of 2010. This proposal will be sent to various funding agencies, including Services Canada, ACOA and the Virtual Museum of Canada program.

The Red Ochre Board will be setting up a two-day session for heritage representatives on the Great Northern Peninsula early in the New Year. The Steering Committee will be formed at this meeting. The two-day session will include an artefacts-oriented training session by MANL staff, a primary documents-oriented training session by ANLA, digitizing workshops, and a Virtual Exhibit planning session for all participants to gain information about the Virtual Museum concept and to decide if and how their communities can participate. The planning group is currently composed of representatives from the Red Ochre Regional Board, the CURRA, Parks Canada, the municipalities of Woody Point, Cow Head and Daniel's Harbour, and will merge with the Virtual Exhibit Steering Committee when it is formed.

## **8. Workshop Evaluation**

Workshop participants were asked to fill out evaluation forms. Forty-seven people attended the workshop (including the researchers and the coordinators); twenty-two evaluation forms were completed and returned. A majority of those who completed the forms had attended the public meetings as well as the workshop. Most participants rated the meetings, the workshop and the presentations as good or excellent, especially the introductions and workshop objectives and the break-out sessions (see Appendix E for a summary of the results of the evaluation). They felt that they had a good opportunity to participate in discussions about the issues; that the information provided was useful; that the workshop was well-organized and facilitated; and that overall, it was a worthwhile exercise. This general enthusiasm was reflected in the comments that they wrote. They found the public meetings very interesting and informative, with a wide variety of topics covered, and they appreciated the opportunity to hear the concerns of fishermen. The information regarding marine research and the marine environment was particularly interesting. Most participants attended the workshop because they live and work in Bonne Bay and they are concerned about the future and their quality of life. The workshop provided an opportunity to express their concerns and to learn and understand more about

the issues in the region. In addition, community “leaders” became better informed about the concerns of the area and can now begin to network and collaborate with others to develop viable solutions. The workshop offered a good starting point for these collaborations; establishing a “Code of Conduct” will be useful in addressing some of the identified issues.

Priorities identified by participants for follow-up to move the process forward include:

- further discussions and meetings to keep stakeholders informed;
- formation of active committees to achieve identified goals; and,
- development of an action plan around specific objectives that were identified: a Code of Conduct, an Emergency Response Plan, food security initiatives, tourism and fishery initiatives, local decision-making processes.

Concerning future research and work in the region, suggestions included continued research that could play a role in informing the discussions and developing solutions related to local decision-making processes and governance, developing a “Code of Conduct,” maximizing the use of local resources (fisheries and tourism), and developing practices that focus on marine resource sustainability. Most felt that there should be better linkages between researchers and policy-makers.

Although the workshop was informative, many thought that the topics covered were very broad, and that a full day could have been spent on any one of the topics. Annual meetings were suggested to discuss the status of previous initiatives and to discuss new concerns and priorities. One person commented that “Bonne Bay has a real chance to thrive into the future if we do things right.”

## **9. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the meetings and the workshop were very successful in bringing together a diverse group of youth, community leaders, stakeholders and government officials to promote awareness of the Bonne Bay marine ecosystem and of local research, as well as to facilitate discussions around opportunities and challenges related to the future sustainability of Bonne Bay and its surrounding communities.

Bonne Bay is a unique and beautiful marine ecosystem where there is tremendous biodiversity and marine organisms that normally live from the arctic to areas much further south. It is an important nursery area and has some unique local stocks. It is also a fragile ecosystem that has changed over the past forty years and where escalating and increasingly complex activities could pose a serious threat to the health and sustainability of the Bay.

Bonne Bay is a key tourism resource due to its natural beauty and to its location in Gros Morne National Park. The communities around Bonne Bay have a long and rich economic, social and cultural heritage. They are diverse and vibrant but some sectors

currently face severe challenges. These are perhaps greatest for the inshore fishery in the area and, with high outmigration of youth, for the future. These challenges also present opportunities for stakeholders to work together to formulate creative solutions to address the issues. Tourism operators can work together with fish harvesters, processors and researchers, to create stronger local markets for high quality seafood products helping to ensure a decent standard of living for all.

Fish harvesters could work together with local food security groups to ensure access to affordable, locally-harvested fish products in the region. The many groups that rely on Bonne Bay as a resource could work together to formulate an emergency response plan, and coordinate access and use of the bay through the development of a “Code of Conduct” to reduce the risk of degradation of the Bay.



Research has an important role to play in this process. It can help to inform the discussions, highlight “best practices,” and can also be used to facilitate discussions. One of the more interesting elements to emerge from the meetings was the enhanced understanding of the potential role of research as a “catalyst for social change.”

## **Appendix A**

### **CURRA Bonne Bay Meeting Steering Committee Members September 17, 2009**

Barb Neis (Chair, CURRA Principal Investigator)  
Joan Cranston (BB Workshop Coordinator)  
Anita Best (CURRA Community Coordinator)  
Bob Hooper (Director, BBMS, CURRA Executive)  
Ratana Chuenpagdee (CURRA Governance Component co-lead)  
Joe Reid (Municipal Rep. Norris Point)  
Danny Major (Municipal Rep. Sally's Cove)  
Ken Thomas (Municipal Rep. Woody Point)  
Melissa Blanchard-Anderson (Municipal Rep. Glenburnie/ Birchy Head/ Shoal Brook)  
Roxanne Decker (Fishers Rep. Rocky Harbour)  
Mandy Ryan (FFAW)  
Conrad Mullins (DFO)  
Boyd Reid (DFO)  
Michaela Kent (Parks Canada)  
Monica Pittman (Municipal Rep. St. Paul's)  
Glenda Reid-Bavis (Heritage)  
Ivan Emke (Vice-Principal, Grenfell Community College, VOBB)  
Sean St. George (Executive Director, Red Ochre Board, CURRA Executive)  
Todd Wight (Tourism Rep. Rocky Harbour)  
Darlene Thomas (Tourism Rep. Woody Point)  
Blaine Crocker (Fishers Rep. Trout River)  
Todd Gallant (Municipal Rep. Trout River)

## **Appendix B Sample School Meeting Agenda**

### **CURRA – School Meeting, Woody Point, October 27, 2009**

**Venue:** Heritage Theatre, Woody Point

**Meeting Time:** 1:00 – 3:00 PM

**Participants:** 60 students (senior high students from Bonne Bay Academy in Woody Point and Jakeman All-Grade in Trout River)

### **Meeting Agenda**

#### **Welcome and Introduction**

-Barb Neis

#### **Presentations**

1. Bob Hooper – “Forty Years of Marine History of Bonne Bay” (15 minutes)
2. Joe Wroblewski – “The Fishes of Bonne Bay” (10 minutes)
3. Kristen Lowitt – “Food Security in Bonne Bay” (10 minutes)
4. Mandy Ryan, FFAW – Fisheries Stewardship (10 minutes)
5. Bob Hooper - Careers in science and research (10 minutes)

#### **Planning/Visioning Exercise**

Chair: Ratana Chuenpagdee

-Bonne Bay as a treasure and a resource Opportunities and Challenges for the future (30 minutes)

#### **Meet and Mingle**

- Opportunities for students to view the posters, meet the researchers, be interviewed on VOBB Community Radio

#### **CURRA Student Poster Session**

Jennifer Dawe – Wolf fish

Emile Colpron – Corals in Bonne Bay

Arnault Lebris – Bonne Bay’s cod

Michelle Caputo- Trout in Bonne Bay area

Kristen Lowitt – Food Security In Bonne Bay

Ahmed Khan – Northern Gulf Cod Fishery

**Community Radio** – role - recording and broadcasting the proceedings; interviewing the students.



**Appendix C**  
**Sample Public Meeting Agenda**

**Celebrate Bonne Bay Gathering, Woody Point, October 27, 2009**

**Venue:** Heritage Theatre, Woody Point

**Gathering Time:** 7:00 – 10:30 PM

Doors open at 7:00 pm (view posters, coffee and tea)

Presentations: 7:30-9:00 PM

Discussion/Q and A: 9:00-9:30 PM

Entertainment, refreshments and informal chats: 9:30 – 10:30 PM.

Contest – What do you love most about the bay? Draw for door prizes.

**Refreshments:** Local foods; catered by The Lighthouse Restaurant, Woody Point

**Entertainment:** Charlie Payne, Anita Best

**Gathering Agenda**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Ken Thomas, Mayor, Woody Point

Marilyn Wight, Town Council, GBS

Gertie Hann, Mayor, Trout River

Barb Neis explains the origins of the gathering and provides an overview of the event

**Presentations**

- Bob Hooper – “Forty Years of Marine History of Bonne Bay”
- Joe Wroblewski – “The Fishes of Bonne Bay”
- Mandy Ryan – FFAW – Stewardship Initiatives
- Kristen Lowitt – “Food Security in Bonne Bay”
- Anita Best – Bonne Bay Virtual Museum

**Questions and Open Discussion**

- Chair: Ratana Chuenpagdee

- Bonne Bay – A Treasure and a Resource: Opportunities and Challenges for the Future

**Refreshments, entertainment, poster review and informal discussion (meet and greet)**

**CURRA Student Poster Session:**

Jennifer Dawe – Wolf fish in Bonne Bay

Emile Colpron – Corals in Bonne Bay

Arnault Lebris – Bonne Bay’s cod  
Michelle Caputo- Trout in Bonne Bay  
Kristen Lowitt – Food Security in Bonne Bay  
Ahmed Khan – Northern Gulf Cod Fishery

**Draw for door prizes**

**Meeting adjourns**

**Appendix D**  
**Bonne Bay Workshop Agenda**

**CURRA Workshop**  
**“Bonne Bay – A Treasure and a Resource”**  
**Thursday October 29, 2009**  
**9:30 am – 4:30 pm**  
**Norris Point Community Hall**

- 8:30-9:30      Registration
- 9.30 – 9.40    Welcome by the Mayors -- Joe Reid, Norris Point & Walt Nicholle, Rocky Harbour  
Introduction and workshop objectives -- Barb Neis, CURRA  
Thanks to the steering committee and sponsors -- Joanie Cranston & Anita Best
- 9.40 – 9.45    Feedback from the public meetings -- Ratana Chuenpagdee, CURRA

**\*Note: Sessions will be recorded and broadcast/webcast by VOBB Community Radio.**

- 9:45 – 11:00   Panel Presentation # 1  
**“Tourism, Fisheries and Food Security: Current synergies and future opportunities”**  
*Panellists:*  
1. Accommodations/ restaurant owner – Ken Thomas  
2. Adventure/ Experiential Tourism Representative – Sue Rendell  
3. Fisheries Stewardship in Bonne Bay –Mandy Ryan  
4. Parks Canada – Visitors and Ecosystem Connectivity – Tom Knight and Danny Major  
5. Food Security – Myrna Hynes and Joanie Cranston

11:00 – 11:15   Health Break

- 11:15 – 12:30   Panel Presentation # 2  
**“Challenges and Resources for Future Sustainability”**  
*Panellists:*  
1. Safety challenges on multi-use wharves - Ben Jackson, Safety Net Researcher  
2. Cruise ships – opportunities and challenges – Tony Howell, Deputy Mayor, Woody Point  
3. ICZM “Mapping Project” – Sean St. George, RED Ochre Economic Development Board

4. Health Issues – Determinants and Demographics – Melissa Blanchard-Anderson and Joan Cranston.

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch – Video presentation - Fisheries Stewardship Initiatives

**\*Note: The workshop will move to the Bonne Bay Marine Station for the afternoon breakout sessions and concluding plenary. This is a short distance from the Community Centre.**

1:45 – 3:15 Break-out sessions

3:15-3:30 Health Break

\*Cake will be served to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marine Biology Station\*

3:30 – 4:15 Report back/session summary and recommendations for follow-up

4:15 – 4:30 Wrap-up and evaluations – Barb Neis and Ratana Chuenpagdee  
Draw for door prizes

*Break-out session information:*

Group 1: Fisheries and tourism (Theatre)

Group 2: Food security (Library)

Group 3: Ocean- and shore-based activities and safety (Kitchen)

Group 4: Policy, programs, institutions and governance (Small lab)

Questions:

1. What is important about the whole Bonne Bay ecosystem, to whom and why? (20 min)
2. What are the threats and opportunities? (20 min)
3. How to work together to reduce the threats and to promote opportunities? (30 min)
4. Where do we go from here? (20 min)

## Appendix E Summary of Workshop Evaluations

### Ratings for the Workshop Topics

Based on a scale of 1 to 5  
(1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent)  
Please rate the topics that were discussed during the workshop presentations.

	1	2	3	4	5	*N/A
<b>Intro and workshop objectives</b>			1	7	13	1
<b>Feedback from public meetings</b>		2	2	10	6	2
<b>Tourism, Fisheries and Food Security Panel</b>			1	11	8	2
<b>Challenges and Resources for Future Sustainability Panel</b>	1		2	9	8	2
<b>Break Out Session</b>			1	6	13	2
<b>Wrap up and evaluation</b>				3	10	9
<b>Totals</b>	1	2	7	46	58	18

### Rating of other aspects of the Workshop

Based on a scale of 1 to 5  
(1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent),  
please rate the following aspects of the workshop

	1	2	3	4	5	*N/A
<b>Opportunities to participate in discussions</b>				6	11	5
<b>Balance of free time and structured time</b>		1	2	5	9	5
<b>Usefulness of the information</b>				7	10	5
<b>Organization</b>			1	6	10	5
<b>Facilitation</b>			1	4	12	5
<b>Overall use of the Workshop</b>				6	11	5
<b>Overall impression of the Workshop</b>				6	11	5
<b>Totals</b>		1	4	40	74	35

\*N/A denotes questions that were not rated.



CURRA  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7

<http://www.curra.ca/>  
<http://www.bonnebay.mun.ca/>