

**LABRADOR-ISLAND TRANSMISSION LINK: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**Proposed Strait of Belle Isle Cable Crossings: Option(s) to be Considered in the EIS**  
*Update Provided by Nalcor Energy – April 14, 2011*

**Introduction**

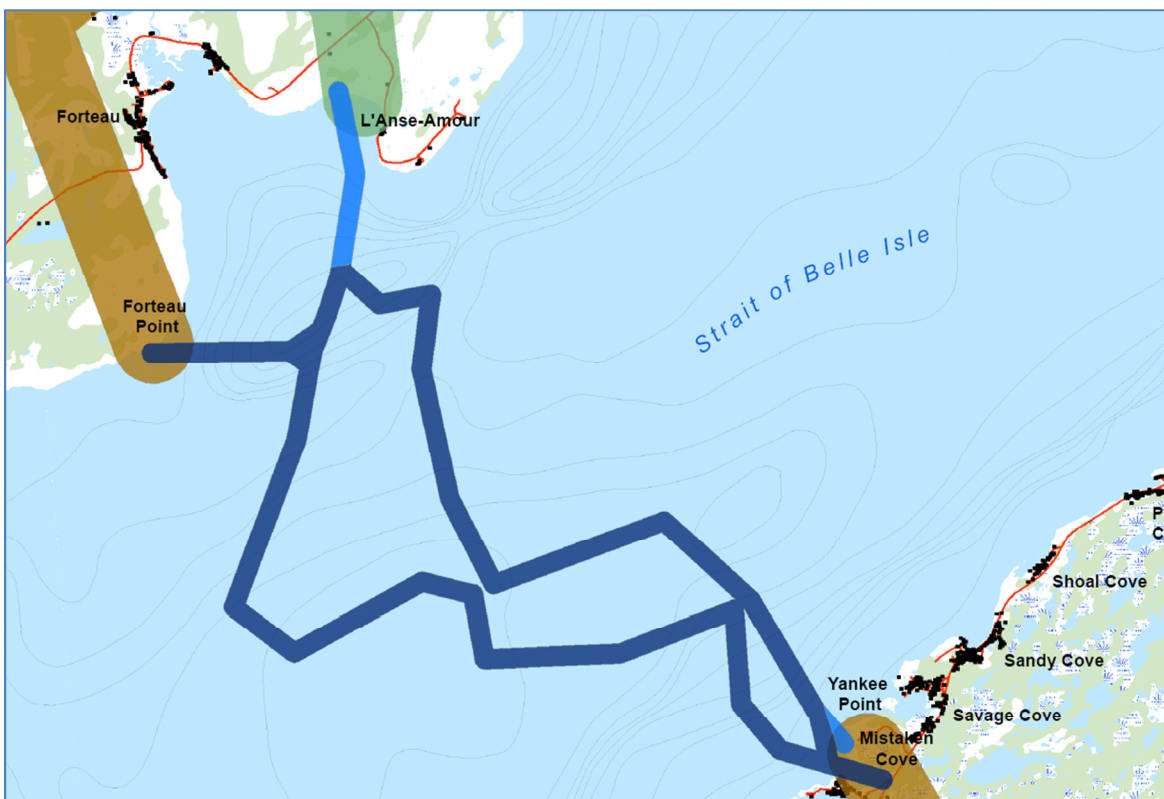
Nalcor Energy is proposing to develop the *Labrador – Island Transmission Link*, a High Voltage Direct Current (HVdc) transmission system extending from Central Labrador to the Island of Newfoundland’s Avalon Peninsula. The proposed Project includes the installation and operation of marine cables across the Strait of Belle Isle.

The environmental assessment (EA) process for the Project was initiated in January 2009 and is in progress. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared by Nalcor Energy, which will eventually be submitted for review by government departments, Aboriginal and stakeholder groups and the public.

**Strait of Belle Isle Cable Crossings: Initial Concepts and On-going Evaluation**

The Project concept for the proposed Strait of Belle Isle (SOBI) marine cables - as described in the January 2009 EA Registration submitted to initiate the EA process - saw the preliminary identification of potential cable landing sites at Forteau Point, Labrador and Mistaken Cove, Newfoundland (with alternatives at L'Anse Amour and Yankee Point in Labrador and on the Island, respectively). From there, multiple cables would be placed in two identified marine corridors across the Strait (See Figure 1: Proposed corridors are in dark blue, Alternative segments in light blue).

**Figure 1: Possible SOBI Cable Landing Sites and Corridors Identified in the EA Registration (January 2009)**



Since that time, Nalcor Energy has continued with its Project planning and engineering work, and in doing so, has proceeded to evaluate other possible design options and alternatives. This is common with any major development project, and is in keeping with the role and principle of EA as a planning tool and the legal requirement to consider and assess alternative means of carrying out a project through the EA process. The 2009 EA Registration document itself also states that Project planning and engineering would continue to identify and evaluate other potential cable crossing approaches, including possible landing sites. Any such consideration of further options for the SOBI cable sites and corridor(s) is therefore within the scope of the Project as registered for EA in 2009.

### **Strait of Belle Isle Cable Crossings: Additional Option(s) to be Considered in the EIS**

As an update, Nalcor Energy is continuing to focus on Forteau Point as the Labrador cable landing site, and the current intent is to bring this into the EIS as the proposed option. On the Newfoundland side, and in keeping with the above, the Proponent has also identified Shoal Cove as a possible landing site, which is located several kms northeast of Mistaken Cove (See Figure 2 below: The blue rectangles are general landing areas, within which specific work locations would eventually be sited).

If these site options were to be finalized, on-land horizontal directional drilling technology may be used to install the cables from these locations, out to and under the Strait for up to several kms. From there, the cables would be placed on the seabed and protected with rock berms. With this option, the cables would be placed within one marine corridor (rather than two) across the Strait (Figure 2 below). Note that this single corridor is essentially an amalgamation of the two marine corridors included in the 2009 EA Registration (see Figure 1), utilizing portions of each + a new short segment in to Shoal Cove. The on-land transmission corridor would also remain essentially the same, but be extended northeastward in some manner for several kms from Mistaken Cove to Shoal Cove (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Shoal Cove Cable Landing Site Option and Single Marine Corridor Also Being Evaluated by Nalcor Energy (2011)**



## Summary and Conclusion

The on-going process of Project planning and alternatives evaluation based on technical, economic and environmental considerations is typical of any development project, and indeed, is illustrative of the important role of EA as a planning tool.

The possibility of locating the Newfoundland cable landing site at Shoal Cove and following a single marine cable corridor across the SOBI has been discussed with various relevant government agencies, Aboriginal groups, stakeholders and others by Nalcor Energy over the past several months. This option is also within the scope of the original 2009 EA Registration, the environmental analyses completed to date, as well as the content and scope of the current (draft) EIS Guidelines issued by Governments earlier in 2011.

The eventual EIS itself will provide a description and assessment of the *proposed* Project - and in doing so, Nalcor Energy will be clear about the particular Project concept that it is seeking EA approval for, including the specific proposed SOBI cable landing sites and marine cable corridor(s).