

## **Transition Year Activity Plan**

Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee

April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008



February 29, 2008

Honourable Kathy Dunderdale  
Minister of Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Building  
P.O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL  
A1B 4J6

Dear Minister:

In accordance with the provisions of the *Transparency and Accountability Act* for category 3 entities, I am pleased to submit the Performance-Based Activity Plan for the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee. This Activity Plan covers the period April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008. The subsequent plan will be from April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011.

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has a mandate to:

- (a) Ensure public awareness of government's agricultural land consolidation program;
- (b) Evaluate applications for land acquisition by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador under the agricultural land consolidation program based on established guidelines and policies; and
- (c) Facilitate and conclude negotiations for a land purchase and sale agreement for applications that meet program criteria.

I have reviewed all strategic directions from the Minister of Natural Resources applicable to the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency and have prepared this plan in accordance with the applicable subsection. Specifically, the plan commits to a role in ensuring that natural resource development in the province is sustainable.

My signature below is indicative of my accountability for the achievement of the goal contained in this plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Murphy  
Chairperson

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## Overview

There are significant growth opportunities in the agriculture sector in Newfoundland and Labrador. Only 3% of beef and 15% of root crops consumed by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are produced here. Furthermore, as a result of an additional 31 million litres in industrial milk quota negotiated in 2001 and to be developed over the next 8 years, specifically for the production of such dairy products as cheeses and yogurts, there is an opportunity to double the province's total milk production.

The availability of suitable farm land is one of the more critical challenges facing the agriculture and agrifoods industry. In order to position this industry to take advantage of the tremendous growth opportunities, farmland has to be made available. The expansion and development of the land base will provide the root crop sector with the means to increase local production and create opportunities to increase the consumption of locally-grown goods. For the dairy sector, it will mean having access to more land for forage production.

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee administers the land consolidation program designed to provide the opportunity for non-farmer landowners and retiring farmers to sell their granted land to the provincial government. In turn, government makes this land available to existing commercial farmers, part-time farmers and new entrants who are in need of additional lands.

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has one member from the Department of Natural Resources, one member from the Department of Transportation and Works, a representative from industry and a chairperson from the public at large.

The current members are: Randy Ricketts (Department of Natural Resources); Martin Balodis (Department of Transportation and Works); Robert Walsh (industry); and Brian Murphy (Chairperson). Ken Bailey (Department of Natural Resources) is the committee's secretary, researcher/assessor and maintains the files.

The agricultural land consolidation program is currently operating based on a \$17.5 million, five year budget covering the period April 1, 2005 until March 31, 2010.



## **Mandate**

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has a mandate to:

- (a) Ensure public awareness of government's land consolidation program;
- (b) Evaluate applications for land acquisition by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador under the land consolidation program based on established guidelines and policies; and
- (c) Facilitate and conclude negotiations for a land purchase and sale agreement for applications that meet criteria.



## Values

The Land Consolidation Review Committee performs its duties within the following core values:

**Integrity** - Each individual will be honest, dependable, fair, credible and trustworthy. They will openly acknowledge mistakes, seek to correct them and learn from them.

**Respect and Professionalism** - Each individual will apply program guidelines and policies equitably to stakeholders. They will serve our client groups to the fullest extent possible.

**Timeliness** - Each individual will meet specified deadlines in accordance with priorities and follow through on their commitments.

**Collaboration** - Each individual will seek the opinions and ideas of others in the application of supporting legislation and policies.

**Innovation** - Each individual will demonstrate initiative and flexibility in responding to challenges and change.

## **Primary Clients**

The clients of the Land Consolidation Review Committee are members of the public who wish to sell or relinquish land to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for agricultural purposes.

## **Vision and Mission**

Given its clients, the Land Consolidation Review Committee has established a vision and mission to guide its activities during the transition year (April 1 2007 to March 31, 2008) planning period and into successive planning cycles.

### **Vision**

The vision of the Land Consolidation Review Committee is of a province that is realizing the full benefit from its agrifood resources in a sustainable manner.

### **Mission**

The Land Consolidation Review Committee promotes and facilitates the sustainable development of the province's agrifood resources through sustainable land consolidation activities for the overall benefit of the citizens and Newfoundland and Labrador.

The mission of the Land Consolidation Review Committee is as follows:

By March 31, 2011, the Land Consolidation Review Committee will have identified and facilitated opportunities for sustainable agriculture and agrifoods resource development through land consolidation.

### **Measures:**

Identified and facilitated opportunities for land acquisition.



**Indicators:**

- Informed stakeholders of the Program
- Maintained statistics of applications received
- Assessed applications for eligibility based on guidelines
- Initiated negotiations with eligible applicants
- Purchased properties for allocation as Crown Land Leases

## Goals

The Land Consolidation Review Committee facilitates purchase of land by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for resale to farmers based on guidelines for the land consolidation program (contact the departments Land Management Officer at 709-729-6692). The process involves a periodic public notice to submit an application for agriculture land purchase. Applications are reviewed by the committee to determine whether the land is suitable for agricultural purposes and is free of zoning issues. Applicants wishing to sell suitable land are invited to commence negotiations for a purchase and sale agreement. A number of third parties are involved in the process, such as land appraisers, land surveyors and lawyers. An environmental assessment may be required.

**Goal:** By March 31, 2008, the Land Consolidation Review Committee will have processed applications and purchased acreages under the Land Consolidation Program.

**Measure:** Processed applications and purchased acreage

**Indicators:**

- Assessed applications for eligibility based on guidelines
- Initiated negotiations with eligible applicants
- Purchased properties for allocation as Crown Land Leases

## Conclusion

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee is committed to fulfilling its mandate and to working in support of the mandate of the Minister of Natural Resources.



## Appendix A

### Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

**Title: Sustainable Resource Development**

**Strategic Direction:** From the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency’s strategic plan

Outcome: Effective and efficient management of our natural resources to ensure they are utilized in a sustainable manner such that the resources and the economic benefits from these resources are optimized. This outcome supports direction as outlined in Government’s 2003 Policy Document and the 2004 and 2005 Speech from the Throne.”

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is addressed in the Agency’s			
	strategic plan	activity plan	operational plan	branch/ divisional work-plans
2. Agrifoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary Agricultural Production</li> <li>• Secondary Processing and Diversification</li> <li>• Land Development and Sustainability</li> <li>• Research and Development</li> <li>• Food Safety and Quality</li> </ul>	*			