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The **FFAW-Unifor** is Newfoundland and Labrador's largest private sector union, representing 15,000 working women and men throughout the province, most of whom are employed in the fishing industry. The Union also represents a diversity of workers in the brewing, hotel, hospitality, retail, metal fabrication, and oil industries, and is proud to be affiliated with the Unifor Canada.

The Union Forum covers issues that matter to Union members - battles, victories and

the pursuit of economic and social justice. As a social Union, it is understood that lives extend beyond the bargaining table and the workplace. The magazine will reflect on the struggle to make our communities, our province and our country better for all citizens by participating in and influencing the general direction of society.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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**Keith Sullivan, President**



The current state of our provincial economy has its challenges. Many would say a “good job” is increasingly hard to come by. There is talk of bankruptcy, unemployment rates are expected to hit 20% and we have some serious demographic issues resulting from an aging population.

In the midst of the current sea of doubt, however, I see a bright future for Newfoundland and Labrador. We are a driven, hard working people and if we act together, with a collective vision and fortitude, we can have a vibrant economy with good jobs. But these actions must start now.

We need to examine what a good job entails if we want to encourage young people to stay in the province and attract people to come home. A good job is not precarious - it must provide a good income and consistent work. It takes place in a healthy and safe working environment and it allows workers to contribute to their community and the economy.

The good news here is that our province has the ability to provide this for young people. And it is desperately needed considering the aging demographic that is most obvious in rural regions of the province.

It’s because of these economic and demographic challenges that the recent decision on the arctic surf clam quota has been so frustrating. The Government

of Canada has decided to limit the amount of work for FFAW members in Grand Bank and provide an even smaller amount of work to workers in the Maritimes. This decision makes absolutely no sense as an economic development strategy and amounts to removing economic sustainability from one area and turning it into sharing shortages of work in two areas.

The challenges presented by the surf clam decision are indicative of the larger challenges that your Union faces and the province faces. We are in the midst of a transition on many different fronts - our marine environment is changing, our markets are changing, the province’s economy is changing, our communities are changing, and our demographics are changing.

Through these transitions, we need to demand and expect that our natural resources, like minerals, oil and fish, attain maximum benefit for our people and our communities. All of these changes bring different perspectives and potential solutions. But all of these changes can be eased, and even solved, with more and better paying jobs. It is not good enough that we receive a “good” price for unprocessed fish or we just get “reasonable” royalties from our offshore oil reserves.

The terms and spirit of the Atlantic Accord must be followed. We cannot have skilled trades workers being laid-off and under-employed while contracts for oil and gas projects in Newfoundland and Labrador are given to companies in New Brunswick, the U.S., and Norway. The oil and gas sector is not just about providing a royalty to the province; oil and gas is a dividend in which workers deserve a large part.

The people of our province deserve good value for the resource on our shelf. We need to fight for every single job. Not just the jobs that we currently have, but every job that we’ve lost or was not provided to us because a promise was not kept or a policy or plan was not followed.

When Voisey’s bay was being developed, Premier Brian Tobin said, “not one spoonful of ore” would

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

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leave the province. This is the right attitude, we cannot sell ourselves short. Like all major projects, it had speedbumps, but we now have a world class nickel smelter supplying good jobs in Long Harbour and adding value to the product mined in Labrador.

On the Agreement on Internal Trade, we need to ensure that exemptions for the brewing and bottling of beer are maintained and not regularly undermined. Our breweries provide good paying, secure jobs. These jobs cannot be lost so that Molson can make even more profit through job killing decisions couched in soft, friendly terms.

We need to secure an increased share and better access to the abundant fisheries off our coast. The federal government must demonstrate its commitment to the people of this province, just like they did with the commitment to the first 115,000 Mt of northern cod for inshore harvesters. We need access to more halibut on both the west and south coast and we need a greater share of the turbot fishery on the northeast coast. And we need DFO to apply some common-sense to the rebuilding of the northern shrimp fishery. The current low quotas cannot be justified by historical environmental facts.

It is time for processing companies to think outside the box and to start looking at harvesters as partners and not just the providers of raw material. Processors operate in near total secrecy, not just from harvesters but from each other. For some reason, they think this is good – that maintaining secrecy in how they operate gives them an advantage. It does not. It actually holds everyone down because there is no exchange of ideas to foster improvement. Harvesters want processors to get paid – why would harvesters want to bankrupt those that pay them? If there was a partnership, we could work together to be more successful. The fishery does not need corporate vertical integration; it needs intellectual vertical integration.

Processing companies also have to engage harvesters as partners in the marketing of fish from this

province. Harvesters have a role to play in marketing products that is not just confined to maintaining quality. We have tried for years to work with companies on the marketing of lobster and have been largely rebuffed. Meanwhile, the Chinese market for lobster has exploded and our companies are without a marketing strategy or brand to introduce into China. We are still offering companies the opportunity to partner on marketing, and this is an offer they should not refuse.

Whether we process fish from wild fisheries or aquaculture we have a responsibility to attain the best value and this includes focusing on by-products and full utilization. There is much room for improvement especially when we see those working in aquaculture struggling to get reasonable weeks of work.

Processing companies also need to improve how they operate. Harvesters sell thousands of tons of fish to processors each year, giving these companies the ability to operate in the increasingly lucrative global fish market. There is no excuse for poor wages to continue among fish plant workers. Wages of \$15 an hour should be the basement wage, not a lifetime achievement. Plants also need to provide a better work environment. Nobody working in a fish plant should be getting sick from conditions they were subjected to at work.

Our future is dependent on a shared vision of success in every corner of our province, including coastal regions. In recent months I've met with thousands of our members and at each of those meetings I am reminded of what we can accomplish with a united voice. Together, we have negotiated good prices, defeated bad policies and secured a better future for our members. Now, as we stand at the cusp of establishing a new sort of fishery and a new sort of economy for our province – one that is fairer, worker-oriented and sustainable – there are more bold steps to take and battles to win.

# MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

**David Decker, Secretary Treasurer**

After more than 20 (Dave has been with the Union for 20 years. But he was a fisher for at least 10 years before that) years working in this industry, there are many moments to look back on with a sense of pride and accomplishment. The fishery has changed so much in the past two decades and our union has made great strides to improve the lives and working conditions of our members.

While government policies are amended and adopted on a fairly consistent basis, there are none as integral to our fishery and our coastal communities as the owner operator and fleet separation policies. For years, our union has worked alongside allies from fisheries organizations across the country to lobby the federal government to protect the independence of inshore, owner operator fish harvesters by enshrining these policies in law.

On February 6, years of hard work paid off when Minister Dominic LeBlanc tabled amendments to the Fisheries Act in the House of Commons. While there's still a ways to go until the legislation receives royal assent and becomes law, this is a monumental victory for our union.

Protecting the independence of owner operator fish harvesters isn't just good for fish harvesters, it's good public policy. The wealth derived from the fishery stays in our coastal communities rather than in corporate coffers, bringing tremendous economic benefits and spurring growth in many areas of the economy.

Through the Canadian Independent Fish Harvesters Federation, we've been able to bring a united voice on this issue to Ottawa and our Members of Parliament listened. Now we must turn our attention to the Senate, as they'll have the final say on whether or not our recommendations come to fruition.

Nothing in this industry, or in politics, is set in stone. Every victory we have achieved has been hard fought and is the result of our united voice. And those gains can be reversed in an instant unless we maintain pressure and persevere.

We needn't look any further than Canada's west coast, where corporate concentration in the fishery is so prolific that independent owner operators have become an endangered species. Foreign investors have gained control of licenses and have essentially pushed independent fish harvesters out making it

near impossible to earn a decent living in the fishery.

This is why we can't take our foot off the gas until these changes become law.

Like you, I want to see a future for rural Newfoundland and Labrador and for our fishery. And we owe it to future generations to do everything we can to ensure they can make a living in this industry.

Over the past few weeks I've been traveling the province, meeting with our members and hearing their ideas and concerns. What has made these meetings so invigorating for me is hearing from young people who are entering the industry with enthusiasm and commitment. They are young women and men who see themselves working in the fishery for decades to come. These are the stories that motivate us as union activists.

The legal protection and enforcement of owner-operator and fleet separation will allow young harvesters in coastal Newfoundland and Labrador fair access to fishing licenses. After all, the success or failure of our work in the present will be judged by the legacy left for the those who come after us.





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At the best of times, it's hard to have sympathy for the bleatings of the St. John's Board of Trade.

They've been particularly irksome since their fall séance where they conjured the Ghost of Resettlement back to life.

I admonished them for that in our last edition but, alas, they turned their cannon to NAPE's bargaining and tried to have Government renege on the tentative agreement reached between the parties. A four-year deal without increases and the end of the severance provision wasn't good for Public Sector workers. The SJBOT cried out for more.

They got more when NAPE fired an extremely effective strategy broadside which silenced them to the point their leadership was silenced and mercifully replaced.

So, when West Jet cancelled its St. John's to London flight, the Board crowd once again took to the airwaves to complain about the loss of service.

They got the cheek of a robber's horse, I thought quietly to myself.

"Great Caesars Ghost," I said, "The SJBOT, Employers Council and the CFIB enjoy the low wage economy they've lobbied so hard for all these years and now they're complaining about that, too."

The low wage economy where half of us make less than \$40,000 a year.

12,000 make minimum wage and most of those are women, with tens of thousands more make very slightly more than minimum wage.

They lobbied politicians of every stripe to keep the minimum wage under Canadian poverty levels.

They have resisted changes to minimum labour standards to ensure they could continue to cheapen the incomes of NL workers.

Young workers are working full-time and living off their credit cards because politicians bought into it. Every time the minimum wage wasn't increased, the employer groups won.



Every time they sought cheap foreign labour in a province with a 15% unemployment rate, they won.

Every time they stick-handle around hours of work and overtime rates, they've won.

And every time they told the politicians to tax workers unmercifully and politicians listened, the Employer Organizations won.

So, I cracked-up when they expressed such indignation over the number of empty seats back in Economy on the London Redeye. Classic Comedy.

Most people can't afford to fly, most people, as you well know, are living cheque to cheque. Sorry, but that's exactly what you asked for; for people to have as little disposable income as possible. So, please stop complaining.

Interestingly enough, the St. John's to Dublin Flight is going full tilt. I understand it. After 200 years of St. John's Merchants, both Fish and otherwise, it might be time to pull up stakes and head back from whence we started.

My guess is most of the tickets are One Way.

No strangers to adversity, many of our Ancestors were driven out of Ireland over 200 yrs. ago, with the pricks of British bayonets in their arse. Their descendants are now being driven out of NL by the severe economic pricks of the SJBOT, Employer Councils' and their ilk. So, as you can appreciate, the homesteads and the rolling green grass of Wexford look pretty, pretty good to us about now. Can't seem to make any headway here at all.

Maybe that's what the Employer Organizations deserve. To be left here on the Island, the mean-spirited handful of them, fulfilling their dreams of getting rich by eating in each other's restaurants, building each other's houses, changing each other's oil, buying each other's bread.

Maybe after a couple of years of living on the Dickensian conditions they recommend for their employees, they'll come to realize how important workers are to a society.

They might also realize working people should not be cast into poverty while their Board of Trade member employers carry out their self-righteous entrepreneurial dreams of success. They might, but I doubt it. How do I know?

A couple weeks back, the Elephant laboured and brought forth a Mouse. The Provincial Government increased minimum wage by 15 cents an hour. The Employer Council spokesman could barely contain his enthusiasm.

"Final Boarding Call for West Jet Dublin". All passengers should now be on board".





# SAFETY ASSOCIATION WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Gail Hickey, Newly appointed Executive Director**  
*Newfoundland Labrador Fish Harvesting Safety Association (NL-FHSA)*

I grew up in Avondale and have lived on this island my whole life. My passion for health and safety began in 1997 when my youngest brother was working on rebuilding a CN Rail trestle in Terrace, BC when it collapsed. Workers fell 75 feet, there were two fatalities and his injuries included two broken vertebrae, the loss of his leg and the removal nearly half the muscle in his remaining leg. The inner advocate in me was awoken as I helped him put his life back together.

I completed my post-secondary studies at Memorial University and one of my first positions upon graduating was Chief Instructor of an FFAW Education centre following the moratorium. Since then I have worked in various capacities with labour, industry, Government of NL and Memorial University.

In 2009 I was hired as the founding Executive Director of the Office to Advance Women Apprentices with the goal of setting about to change the male dominant construction work culture. The organization has thrived and today there are in excess of 1200 tradeswomen registered in their database. I recently completed a four year assignment as Project Coordination/Diversity Lead on the Hebron Topsides project. My principal responsibility was ensuring contractors hired wom-

en in construction trades by collaborating with contractors and unions to implement industry leading diversity strategies. For this work in surpassing Operator goals on the Hebron project, I was awarded the YWCA Women of Distinction. This award was for making an outstanding contribution to the lives of women working in skilled trades in NL.

We have some great initiatives planned for the Safety Association that I am thrilled to be leading. We recently submitted a new core funding proposal to WorkplaceNL and I will be facilitating my first full board meeting at the end of March. A proposal to provide safety training to harvesters in communities to facilitate compliance with both federal and provincial regulations has recently been submitted to potential funding agencies. Additionally, another current initiative underway is an ExxonMobil funded program to provide life-saving equipment for fish harvesters. You can expect details on the roll-out of this program soon.

I'm looking forward to working with you in advancing the safety mandate of the association in reducing injuries and bringing you home safely at the end of your voyage!



**NL-FHSA**  
FISH HARVESTING  
SAFETY ASSOCIATION

# COMMERCIAL FISHING SAFETY RAISED BY SENATOR DOYLE

Senator Norman E. Doyle made the following speech to the Senate on February 8, 2018

**H**on. Norman E. Doyle: Honourable senators, commercial fishing is considered to be one of the world's most dangerous occupations. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are all too familiar with the hazards, hardships and tragedies that have been part of the industry since the first fishing fleet worked off our coastline centuries ago.

In 2013, the Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvesting Safety Association was formed to fully address the issue of safety at sea. Last month, Gail Hickey was appointed executive director of the association with the specific mandate to bring forth programs, training and regulations that will play a major role in creating a safe environment for the men and women working in our fishing industry. Gail Hickey is proposing that this new initiative will promote an industry-driven focus as well as being critical to fish harvesters' well-being and protection from harm, and fundamental to having a motivated, engaged and productive workforce.

The training proposed by the Safety Association will fill a

void in industry-specific training that currently exists in the fish harvesting sector. It will be a significant undertaking, with consideration given to the type and size of fishing vessels, equipment and the educational level of fish harvesters.

The training, which will include federal and provincial legislation, regulation and best practices, is necessary and will work effectively to lower injury and fatality rates, reduce the financial costs of work-related injuries and make it easier for fish harvesters to work safely and compete in global markets, thereby enhancing profitability.

Fish harvesters need training that will have a genuine impact on their safety and well-being and save lives at sea. The Safety Association has the credibility and the support of the industry to lead that initiative.

I congratulate the Safety Association for this major initiative, and I wish the organization's recently appointed executive director, Gail Hickey from Avondale, Newfoundland, calm seas and a safe voyage as she navigates these uncharted waters.



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# OFFSHORE OIL & GAS EXPANSION UPDATE

Robyn Lee, Petroleum Industry Liaison

The Provincial Government's recent announcement of "Advance 2030" is in sync with other processes and initiatives ongoing to double offshore oil production in NL waters. FFAW-Unifor has had several meetings with the Province, the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) and representatives of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA), soon to be renamed to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC), to consider the fishing industry in this planned expansion.

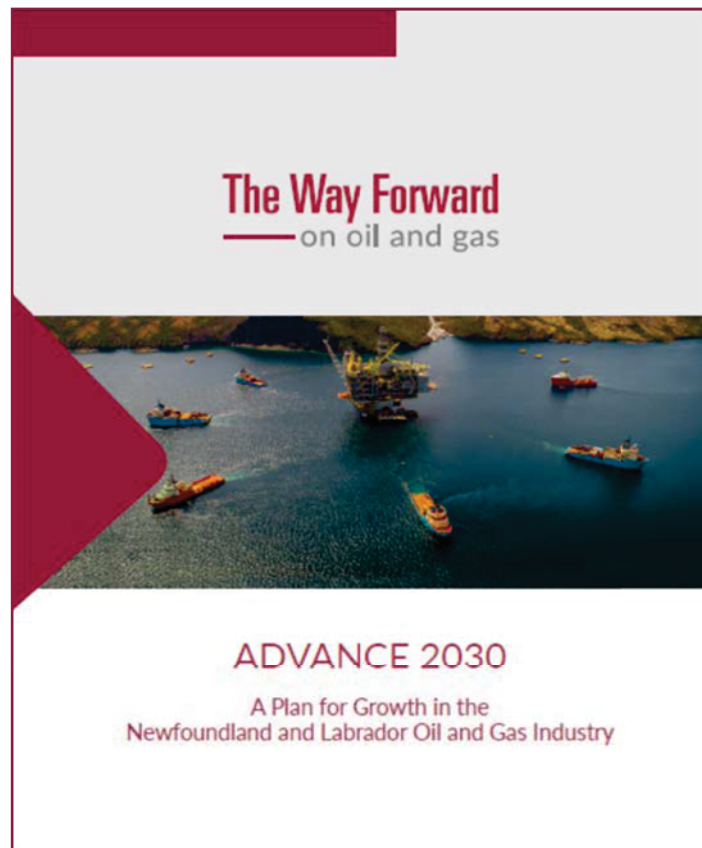
New drilling programs must now go through an additional layer of federal process review through the newly created Impact Assessment Agency of Canada. FFAW-Unifor has made a formal submission on the first two drilling projects and will submit comments on the other four currently in development.

Input will also be provided to the CNLOPB on the recent call for nominations for new areas of oil and gas exploration in the Eastern Newfoundland Region as part of the scheduled land tenure system. Specifically, FFAW-Unifor will bring to attention the socio-economic impacts of oil and gas exploration, development and production on the fishing industry. The loss of fishing grounds to safety zones, drilling and production activities, abandoned wells and cable linkages, for example, all prevent economic opportunity to fish in areas that the oil industry has acquired offshore.

***"Specifically, FFAW-Unifor will bring to attention the socio-economic impacts of oil and gas exploration, development and production on the fishing industry."***

Based on interest from the call for nominations, the C-NLOPB could decide to create a new sector. Creation of a sector could lead to a call for nominations of specific parcels which could lead to a call for bids for these parcels and the subsequent issuance of more Exploration Licenses offshore. Therefore, FFAW-Unifor input at the beginning of this cycle is important.

Seismic prospectivity over the past few years has heightened awareness of the large footprint that oil and gas activities could potentially have on traditional fishing grounds. Today, our four producing oil fields are located on prime cod



grounds. As our groundfish resources rebuild it is critical that ongoing and future planning for oil and gas expansion take our changing fishery into account.

Working collaboratively with the oil industry has certainly advanced the understanding of the issues and concerns raised by harvesters over the years. However, fishing activities or patterns have been forced to change because of oil and gas developments in the offshore.

We fully understand and recognize the benefits of the oil and gas industry to our Provincial economy. However, growth of one industry must not come at the expense of another.

Our fisheries resources are renewable and will be a vital part of the economic future of Newfoundland and Labrador for many years to come. Therefore, it is crucial that the federal and provincial government factor in the implications of oil and gas activities on the fishing industry when reviewing proposed projects and plans.

If you have questions related to offshore oil and gas activities please contact Robyn Lee, Petroleum Industry Liaison at the FFAW-Unifor Office at (709) 576-7276.

# HISTORIC CHANGES TO FISHERIES ACT WILL SAFEGUARD INDEPENDENT OWNER OPERATOR FISHERY

Jessica McCormick, Assistant to the President

On February 26, Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, tabled proposed changes to the Fisheries Act in the House of Commons. The amendments are a culmination of years of concerted advocacy and lobbying by FFAW-Unifor and other fisheries organizations from across Canada. For inshore fish harvesters, the key component of the changes will be the enshrinement of the owner operator and fleet separation policies into regulation.

The combination of amendments, known as Bill C-68, are extensive and will have far-reaching changes on fisheries policy and the industry as a whole.

If the amendments are adopted as proposed, the new Fisheries Act will allow the Minister to make fisheries decisions with a consideration for the “preservation or promotion of the independence of license holders in commercial inshore fisheries” and “social, economic, and cultural factors.” Both considerations rebuff longstanding positions held by corporate interests, and clearly support the government’s efforts to end the use of controlling agreements in the fishery.

Additionally, these new amendments will empower the Minister to establish specific regulations to protect the fleet separation and owner-operator policies. Enacting these regulations is the next step in the legislative process to protect the owner-operator fleet in Atlantic Canada.

Including the owner operator and fleet separation provinces, the proposed amendments would:

- Help ensure that the economic benefits of fishing remain with the license holders and their community by providing clear ability to enshrine current inshore fisheries policies into regulations;
- Clarify and modernize enforcement powers to address emerging fisheries issues and to align with current provisions in other legislation;
- Recognize that decisions can be guided by principles of sustainability, precaution and ecosystem management;
- Promote restoration of degraded habitat and rebuilding of depleted fish stocks;
- Allow for the better management of large and small projects impacting fish and fish habitat through a new permitting framework and codes of practice;

While there is certainly much to be celebrated in these proposed changes, particularly with respect to the protection of independent owner-operators, it must be noted that the amendments to the Fisheries Act are wide in scope. Careful attention must be given to each of these changes in order to determine how they will impact FFAW-Unifor members. Over the coming weeks and months, we will continue to review the proposed amendments and see clarity and further information from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Bill C-65 will follow the standard legislative process. First reading took place on February 6 and second reading on February 13. Next, the Fisheries and Oceans Committee, chaired by Newfoundland and Labrador Member of Parliament Scott

***“Careful attention must be given to each of these changes in order to determine how they will impact FFAW-Unifor members. ”***

Simms, will examine the Bill and hold hearings to gather testimony and feedback from interested stakeholders. Once this process is completed, the Committee will report on the Bill and amendments will be considered and voted on by Parliament. Once the third reading of the Bill takes place and there is a debate and vote, the Bill will go through a similar process in the Senate before it receives Royal Assent and becomes law. While there is no guaranteed timeline, the entire process could take 18 months or more.

There will be ample opportunity for the public to provide feedback and input on the proposed changes to the Fisheries Act. Your Union will keep you up to date on the progress of the amendments and will notify you of opportunities to provide your feedback to government.

These changes to the Act are a result of decades of hard work and determination by fish harvesters but we can’t rest on our laurels. There is still a way to go before the amendments become law. Without a doubt, corporate interests will be lobbying hard to maintain controlling agreements that threaten the independence of our inshore fishery.

At every opportunity, we encourage you to send a strong message to your Member of Parliament that amendments to legislation that enshrine owner operator and fleet separation policies in regulation are vital to the sustainability of our coastal communities.

# PROTECTING THE OWNER-OPERATOR: BREAKING FREE OF COMPANY CONTROL

Dwan Street, Project Coordinator

**O**n February 6, 2018, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Dominic LeBlanc, announced proposed amendments to Canada's Fisheries Act. For fish harvesters, their families, fisheries organizations and coastal communities, it was an emotional day, one that many waited on with baited breath for decades.

I cannot recall the first time I heard the term "trust agreement." I try to pinpoint it as it was a pivotal moment that shaped me and my future academic and career paths. When the dirty little tool called the "trust agreement," or "controlling agreement," entered into our fisheries, it negatively altered an industry once built firmly on kinship and survival.

I grew up in Spillar's Cove, a rural town outside the historic fishing community of Bonavista, the original "company town" in the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery. When then-Minister of Fisheries Romeo LeBlanc introduced limited entry licensing and the policy of Fleet Separation in 1979, five licenses were grandfathered and permitted to remain property of now-defunct Fisheries Products International.

The names of these vessels exist still in policy documents – Margaret R, Random Buster, Silver Jubilee, Rose Venture, and the Edwin Charles, a name I often said as a child and repeated over the VHF radio in our little dining room, waiting for a response from my father – "Edwin Charles, do you read, over."

The fishery was family to me. My grandfathers, father, and uncles all made their livings from the sea; my grandmother, mother, and aunts all worked in the fish plant.

The dichotomy of the independent harvester and the company boat was evident. While company control had not yet turned into the monster we are now faced with, the pieces were there; the creation of a class structure within the social fabric of our little coastal town. The result was a class of hardworking people who lived an industry that ran through our veins as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and yet often produced nothing more than a small paycheck and a suit of oil clothes.

As I grew up, our fishery changed. As value increased, there were forces under the surface, from deep corporate pockets, that were morphing the relationships within our industry and within our towns.

Trust agreements began to rear their heads in the 1990s, as our fisheries shifted to rely on more lucrative shellfish like snow crab and northern shrimp.

I remember standing on the wharf in Old Perlican in 2005, an excited 23 year old Masters student. I wanted to explore the dynamic of trust agreements in a community other than my

own, I wanted to speak to harvesters about their experiences, and I wanted to produce work that would open up the discussion on what were being referred by many to as contracts with the devil.

I sat at the table of the only harvester who had agreed to speak to me. It was then and only then that the true control exhibited by a trust agreement became clear. Like Fight Club, the first rule of a trust agreement is, "Do not talk about a trust agreement."

In 2007, then-Minister of Fisheries Loyola Hearn announced that there would be a 7 year period for harvesters in trust agreements to get out; in 2014, the efforts had consisted of nothing more than high priced lawyers finding more ways to open loopholes.

Since, the deep pockets of corporations have meant more licenses have been stripped from the hands of young harvesters who long to sail on the Atlantic. Plants continue to outbid those who try to better their enterprise and have driven the prices of licenses far beyond the reach of the harvester. As a result, the autonomy of the independent harvester is overshadowed by a corporation making decisions on when one sails and who crews a vessel; while watching money roll into their bank accounts without regard for those on the decks who bring the wealth to shores.

Trust agreements and corporate control beat down and strip what we, as resilient Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, have survived on for generations – hard work, and preservation of our marine resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods in our coastal communities for the future.

When Minister Dominic LeBlanc stated and restated his commitment to enshrining Owner Operator, Fleet Separation and PIIFCAF in legislation, a ripple of hope could be felt throughout coastal communities. The corporate lobby came out swinging, seeing their death grip on the fishery loosening, and finally being told that value would no longer be funneled from our coastal communities and into banks on Bay Street. No more.

The five grandfathered vessels from Bonavista are more than names immortalized in fishing policy; they served to be harbingers of decades of erosion of identity and the social fabric of entire communities. The circumvention of these policies have had an effect far beyond the simple ownership of licenses and the concentration of wealth into corporate coffers.

To hear Minister LeBlanc's announcement has been equally as surreal, emotional, and the result of decades of activism and dedication from those who hold the fishery dear to their hearts.

# FFAW QUESTIONS EFFECTIVENESS & PROCESS FOR NEWLY ANNOUNCED MARINE REFUGE CLOSURES

Johan Joensen, Industry Liaison

The process used by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to establish Marine Conservation Areas (MCA) in areas adjacent to Newfoundland and Labrador was severely flawed. The process was rushed, failed to adequately account for concerns by fish harvesters, and, at times, was both contradictory and illogical.

The illogical component refers to establishing MCAs for both the Hawke Channel and Funk Island Deep. These MCAs supposedly conserve seafloor habitat important to northern cod and they require that all fishing activity cease. Despite this stated intent, fish harvesters have received no evidence in support. Harvesters do fish for turbot using longline in the Hawke Channel, but reported have no cod bycatch. It is unusual to protect a habitat for cod when it is not an important cod ground.

Protecting areas that are important to the ongoing recovery of the cod stock is welcome. However, evidence must be presented that establishing an MCA will further protections for pre-spawning and spawning aggregation of northern cod. Further scientific work needs to be conducted to show that the permanent closures of these areas do in fact help protect our cod resource. Fixed spatial closures like that for the Hawke Channel and Funk Island Deep may only provide effective protection of cod for a short window of time, which may not correspond with pre-spawning and spawning aggregations.

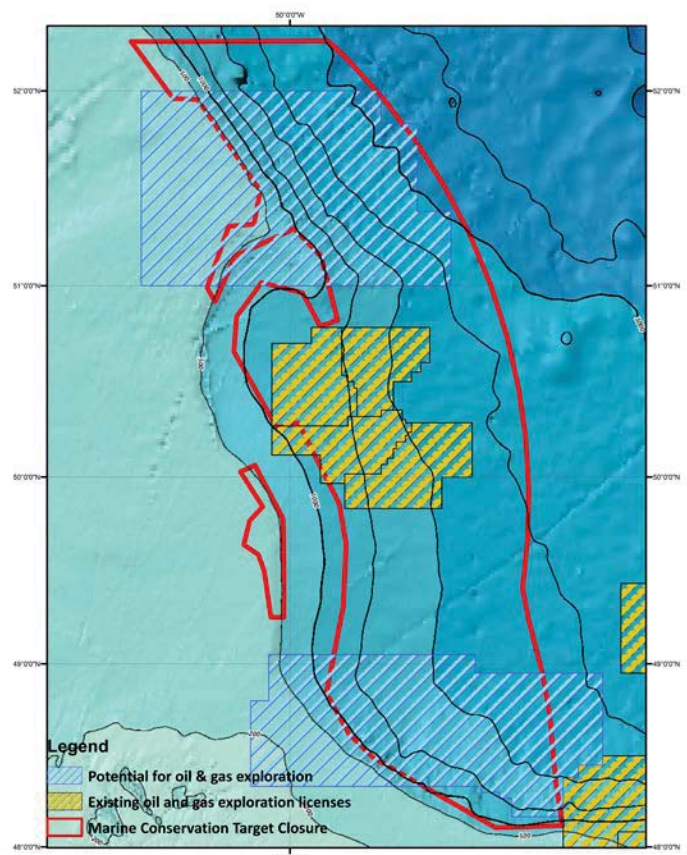
Another closure put in place by DFO is the Northeast Newfoundland Slope. The area announced is different than that on which DFO held consultations with stakeholders. The closure prohibits all bottom contact fishing activities and is likely to have an impact on turbot harvesters, limiting their fishing grounds. The conservation intent of this closure is to protect corals and sponges – not any commercially harvested species.

The troubling aspect of this closure is that the entire area does not count towards the government's commitment of Marine Conservation Targets because oil and gas exploration in the area is allowed to continue. Thus, fishing is not permitted, but drilling into the ocean floor to extract material that is toxic to fish is permitted.

“Any closures intended to focus on marine conservation must

restrict all other marine industrial activities. We cannot ask fish harvesters to accept the closure of an area to fishing activity in the name of conservation while continuing to allow oil and gas exploration in that same area,” said FFAW-Unifor President Keith Sullivan.

FFAW-Unifor supports the intent of marine conservation for the benefit of the environment and the protection of marine species at sensitive life stages. We do however strongly object to the manner in which the government has decided to implement these Marine Conservation Closures. These area closures were pushed forward despite a lack of evidence that objectives would be achieved. Most concerning, oil and gas and seismic activity will continue in these areas, calling into question whether these closures will truly achieve any conservation goals.



# GREEN CRAB REMOVAL EFFORTS CONTINUE IN FORTUNE BAY AND PLACENTIA BAY

**Dwan Street**, Projects Coordinator

Green crab removal efforts continued in both Fortune Bay and Placentia Bay in fall 2017. These projects were components of separate projects.

## FORTUNE BAY

The Fortune Bay mitigation efforts were a continuation of 2016 efforts funded by the provincial Department of Fisheries and Land Resources.

A call for applications was issued in late September as funding approval was later than in the previous year. Work began October 1st, with 22 harvesters selected. Applications were received from a wider cross section of communities in For-



Ken Viscount, participant in the 2017 Placentia Bay green crab project

tune Bay this year and so fishing periods were reduced to 7 days from the previous 9 to allow better coverage of the Bay and an opportunity to survey previously untouched areas.

22 harvesters were drawn from 86 applications received. Interest in this project grew significantly compared to the initial 2016 call for applications, with many harvesters calling to express the necessity of the work and a want to expand efforts both in length of fishing period and amount of gear used.

Applications were grouped by area once again with 2 harvesters chosen per block. Ensuring the widest geographical coverage was key. Harvesters participated in the following areas:

1. St. Bernard's
2. Fortune
3. Wreck Cove
4. Rencontre East
5. Harbour Breton
6. Harbour Mille
7. Belleoram
8. Boxey
9. Seal Cove
10. Pool's Cove
11. English Harbour East
12. Little Bay East
13. Grand LePierre
14. Belleoram
15. English Harbour West
16. Hermitage
17. Garnish

The first fishing period spanned from October 1st-8th, and the second commencing immediately after from the 9th-15th. Harvesters were given 10-15 Fukui traps. In total, 97,084 crabs were removed in total.

## PLACENTIA BAY

Placentia Bay removal efforts were a part of the Marine Institute's Coastal Restoration Fund project that will restore eel grass in areas that have faced reductions in eel grass beds. As green crab are known destructors of eel grass, removal is essential as part of site preparation.

A call for applications was sent in late September upon announcement of the funding, and 2 harvesters from each site hauled twice a day until the first week in December. Work continued for 8 weeks. Green crabs were harvested from:

1. Baine Harbour
  2. Bay de Léau
  3. St. Joseph's
  4. Swift Current
  5. North Harbour
  6. Northeast Arm/Placentia
  7. Southeast Placentia
  8. Placentia Sound
  9. Fox Harbour
- (2 harvesters participating, 2 sites)

In total, from 10 sites, 279,874.19 lbs of green crab were removed. FFAW technicians estimate that approximately 2.6 million green crabs were removed from Placentia Bay over these 8 weeks. One harvester per site will continue to haul once every two weeks as maintenance over the winter months. Efforts will continue throughout 2018 and at a larger scale. Please keep an eye out for a call for applications in April.

Your Union has heard the concerns of harvesters and is looking at all possible avenues to remove as many green crab as possible from the environment.

# FISH HARVESTERS & FISHERIES SCIENCE: ON-THE-WATER OBSERVATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS AT THE ASSESSMENT TABLE

Erin Carruthers, FFAW Fisheries Scientist

Fisheries science – like all science – has a series of steps. On-the-water observations lead to research questions, which in turn are focused into hypothesis or testable expectations. Those expectations are based, not only on observations, but also on an understanding of how the world works. These expectations about how the world works are then ‘tested’ or challenged. New information at any stage in the process can cause you to loop back and help refine your thinking and ideas.

Of course, the fishery is not the same as a chemistry lab. Testing by experiments can be difficult, impossible or not appropriate for all fisheries questions. In fisheries science you may not be able to test a hypothesis but you can look to your information or time series of data and ask: given this hypothesis or expectation, do the data support or refute that expectation? What information is missing? What type of data would challenge my expectations?

Our Union has an important role to play when it comes to participation in fisheries science.

On-the-water observations need to be brought forward to researchers and at the stock assessment table. Participation in surveys and data collection means harvesters have a sense of what data are being brought forward – and what the signal was from their area.

But participation through on-the-water observations and data collection is not enough. Harvesters’ have made, and continue to make, crucial contributions to the design of new surveys or research programs and to the evaluation of existing ones. The collaborative post-season snow crab survey is a key example of this type of harvester participation.

It is important to have harvesters involved throughout the science process, including having a seat at the stock assessment table. Having a seat at the assessment table means being able to see how the data are used, to understand the process and to understand – and question – assumptions used to build assessment models.

Assessment models are meant to represent an understanding of how a stock is doing; it’s status and how it is changing. Catch rates, tagging return data, observed migrations or information on the size or age structure of a group of fish are often used to build stock assessment models.

Having a seat at the assessment table means that harvesters have the opportunity to reflect on how an understanding or assessment model is supported – or refuted by – evidence. Evidence that includes fish harvesters’ records and their on-the-water observations.

Having a seat at the assessment table also means harvesters have the opportunity to understand what is missing and enter the fisheries science loop again, with new observations and on-the-water data collection programs.

Over the past year, harvesters have volunteered their time and brought their experience, observations and understanding to the assessment table for cod, crab, shrimp, capelin, herring, and sea cucumber. Harvesters also contributed to the design and evaluation of survey programs for crab, halibut and redfish last year. This, in addition to ongoing participation in collaborative science research programs for lobster, cod, and crab, among others. Thank you for your time and effort. It is invaluable.





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# ‘ROCK’ LOBSTERS

**Robert Keenan, Projects Manager**

Lobster is historically the quiet child in the family of species that are fished by harvesters in Newfoundland and Labrador. Many residents of the province not active in the fishery have little to no knowledge that there is a substantial, and thriving, lobster fishery in Newfoundland and Labrador. After all, lobster is the symbol of the Maritimes and New England – a prosperous fishery enjoyed by tourists at restaurants in seaside hamlets.

The reality, however, is that the lobster fishery stands on the cusp of transforming the expectations and economics of the fishery for hundreds of fish harvesters on the south, west, and northwest coasts of the province. The live lobster market is best described as “red hot”, as record landings in 2017 produced record prices, a circumstance at odds with standard economics whereby more supply lowers prices. There are a variety of factors pushing this red-hot market, such as the health of the global economy and individuals with more disposable income to purchase “luxury” goods.

But the biggest factor is China, and to a lesser extent other parts of East Asia. The changes currently underway in China are of a scope that is difficult to describe. Over the past 30 years, tens of millions of Chinese have entered into a middle or upper-class income bracket, with more disposable income. This change is expected to be more rapid over the next decade, with estimates that by 2030 more than 350 million Chinese will be considered middle or upper-class. That’s a population that is bigger than the entire United States.

Fortunately, China is the largest consumer of seafood in the world and is willing to pay top dollar for North American lobster. It is not uncommon for lobster prices in China reaching \$50 to \$60 per pound. With a huge market demanding more

lobster, exports to China have exploded in the last five years. In 2013, Canadian exports to China were 2.7 million kg; in 2017 exports were 16.4 million kg – that’s a 499% increase. China is now the second biggest market for Canadian lobster.

The impact of the Chinese market is definitely felt by lobster harvesters in NL. The price of lobster to harvesters in the province is set by the Lobster Price Formula established by your Union in 2010, which guarantees harvesters a share of the market price, with the share increasing as prices increase. In 2013, the average per pound price to harvesters was \$3.61. In 2017 it was \$6.89, a 91% increase in 4 years.

Even more encouraging is the growth in lobster landings in the province. Between 2014 and 2017, lobster landings increased by 28% from 2119mt to 2906mt. This growth is seen in all major lobster fishing areas.

The impact on harvesters is noticeable. At meetings, most harvesters state that 2017 was the best fishing year they can remember. They said the same after 2016 and our hope is that they will say the same after 2018. There’s an unprecedented value in the lobster fishery, where landed value increased from \$18 million in 2014 to \$44 million in 2017. It is now the second most valuable fishery in the province after snow crab.

The future looks very bright for lobster harvesters. China will continue to drive prices for the foreseeable future and environmental conditions are optimal for improvements to the lobster stock.

Negotiations for the 2018 lobster season will take place in early April.

# CANADIAN INDEPENDENT FISH HARVESTERS FEDERATION HOLDS ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

Dwan Street, Projects Coordinator & CIFHF Board Member

The Canadian Independent Fish Harvesters Federation held its annual board meeting on January 29-30 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Your union was represented by FFAW Executive and staff: David Decker, Bill Broderick, Dwan Street, Jessica McCormick, Tony Doyle, Nelson Bussey and Mike Noonan.

The CIFHF now consists of 32 fisheries organizations across Canada, as the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association (PEIFA) has joined. As a result, the Federation now has membership from all Atlantic provinces.

FFAW played a vital role in pushing for the creation of the Federation in its early days, realizing the importance of having a united voice to fight for the preservation of the independence of our inshore fisheries. This work fits with the FFAW mandate of ensuring that value of our resources are returned to our coastal communities, and ensuring our communities are prosperous for generations to come.

As a result, the protection of the independence of fish harvesters and solidifying a future for our coastal communities has been the CIFHF focus from day one. Minister LeBlanc's commitment to enshrining Owner Operator and Fleet Separation in law has been long-awaited and welcomed news. This year's Board meeting agenda was very positive, with many presentations focused on the progress being made in this direction.

Members were updated on progress in investigations of controlling agreements by province. In each province, DFO have dedicated teams who focus on this file only, and have

stepped up efforts significantly. In Newfoundland and Labrador, we thank DFO for their hard work in this area. However, much more investment and more resources are still required in this area to ensure investigations and enforcement is not only ongoing but done in an effective, thorough, and timely manner.

We were pleased to have Newfoundland and Labrador RDG Jaqueline Perry join Assistant Deputy Minister Sylvia LaPointe to provide this update. 107 files have been active within our province, with targeted reviews ongoing.

DFO also presented on the Fisheries Act, and provided an update on the legislative process that now lies ahead.

The Federation also continued to rally for a license review of current conditions in British Columbia. As our BC members celebrate positive movement forward on the Owner Operator and Fleet Separation policies in Atlantic Canada, we must also ensure this review takes place to ensure no further erosion of independence in fisheries on our nation's west coast. DFO committed to exploring this further.

The positive energy from this year's winter Board meeting has been unrivaled. We look forward to working closely with Minister LeBlanc and DFO as we reach the realities of finally seeing Owner Operator and Fleet Separation enshrined in legislation.

Federation President Melanie Sonnenberg expressed optimism in the recent changes. "This is a very historical announcement that the Federation is pleased to support and continue to work towards the preservation of the owner op-



# BARB NEIS INDUCTED INTO ORDER OF CANADA FOR WORK ON SAFETY IN FISHING INDUSTRY

Distinguished University Professor Dr. Barbara Neis was recently named a member of the Order of Canada, “for her innovative research on the interactions between work, environment and health in the coastal communities of Newfoundland & Labrador and beyond.” During her career she has researched many areas of the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery including gender, occupational asthma in the snow crab fishery, fishing vessel safety, and fishers’ ecological knowledge.

“Barb has been a pioneer in her research on shellfish asthma and occupational health in the fishing industry. Her work has highlighted the dangerous working conditions experienced by workers in processing plants in our province. As we continue to fight to bring to fruition the recommendations from Barb’s extensive research over the last few decades, we are grateful for her dedication to bringing to light these issues and advocating for the safety of workers,” said FFAW-Unifor President Keith Sullivan.

We had the opportunity to put some questions to Barb on her work that has spanned four decades. This is a short excerpt of that interview, the full interview can be found on our website ([www.ffaw.nf.ca](http://www.ffaw.nf.ca)).

## **What made you gravitate towards fishery-related issues?**

I grew up on a small family farm in Northern Ontario where we all worked on the farm from a very young age. Moving to Newfoundland in 1976 gave me an opportunity to shift my focus to fisheries, rather than agriculture. I started working on occupational health and safety in the NL fisheries while I was doing research for my doctorate on the Burin Peninsula in the early 1980s.

## **You were part of a ground-breaking study on shellfish asthma. What were the major findings of that study?**

My interest in crab asthma came about with an impromptu conversation in an airport in the early 1990s with a woman from a Northern Peninsula plant. She described workers in the plant she was expected to manage starting to collapse and her efforts to find out why they were collapsing. She was eventually told this might be ‘crab lung’ by someone from one

of the company’s other plants, on condition that she did not say where she learned this.

A quick search told me that the first small study in the world on what is now called shellfish asthma was actually done in the Bareneed plant in NL. I also found a major study on the subject done in Quebec in 1984 documenting a high rate of about 15% of workers with occupational allergy and asthma to snow crab after only 3 years of working in the plant. So, as it turned out, the mystery problem of ‘crab lung’ was not really a mystery at all outside of NL.

I received funding to visit two NL crab processing communities and it was immediately obvious that workers and management in those plants were well aware of breathing problems among the workers.

In 2000, we brought an international expert on seafood asthma to Newfoundland from Quebec, and then managed to secure a large grant to do a study that ended in 2004. The resulting report had 64 recommendations covering everything from preventing the development of new cases through more effective diagnosis and treatment of those affected, to the kinds of supports needed by workers.

## **How do you feel those workers have fared since that research was published?**

It’s been 14 years since we released our final report. To my knowledge, most of the recommendations in the report have not been addressed.

It is also my understanding that very few plant workers have been compensated for shellfish asthma – many fewer than our findings would suggest are out there. This is not surprising because one of our findings was that workers would do anything to keep working and to get enough hours for E.I. eligibility. Their livelihoods depended on it. But in the process they could easily become very sick; often could not afford to buy the appropriate medications, suffered a lot, and ran the risk of developing chronic asthma that affected them not only during the season but in the offseason as well.

There is evidence that shellfish asthma continues to be under-reported and under compensated in the province. This means workers are likely paying the costs – personal and financial – for this illness and if they develop chronic asthma,

# R OF N FISHING

they can continue to pay those costs well beyond the end of their working lives.

It is possible that allergen levels are lower because of changes in production – this remains to be seen but there was a trend in that direction. We were told that our study helped workers ask for improvements in ventilation – even in non-unionized workplaces to which we were not given access. One question is whether those improvements were sustained and effective in actually reducing exposures to the proteins that cause the allergy to shellfish in plant workers.

## **What are some of the barriers to making workplaces safer?**

Occupational disease, like occupational asthma, is challenging to prevent wherever it occurs because it can a.) take years to develop; b.) not everyone who is exposed gets sick; and, c.) because of the challenge involved in distinguishing between work and non-work-related illnesses like asthma.

Some companies - not those involved in the study – made efforts to deny workers' their legal right to know the hazards that are in their workplace by preventing us from distributing our materials to their non-unionized workers and using the results of our study as a rationale for telling me I would never get into another crab plant in the province. There was a culture in some companies that was more intent on hiding the evidence of illness and challenging compensation claims than on meeting their obligations under the law to provide safe working environments. I hope these attitudes have changed in the 14 years since 2004. They have no place in the 21st century.

## **What would you like to see change in the shellfish processing industry?**

A safety sector council that includes in its mandate preventing illness and injury in seafood processing, with a multi-stakeholder advisory and adequate resources to design and lead interventions would be a very good first step to improving safety in the sector. But in addition to that, we need to find a way to strengthen access to resources for hazard detection and reduction, diagnosis and treatment in the primarily rural and remote regions of the province where the industry is located.



# METHOD FOR CALCULATING SHRIMP STOCK REFERENCE POINTS MUST BE RETHOUGHT

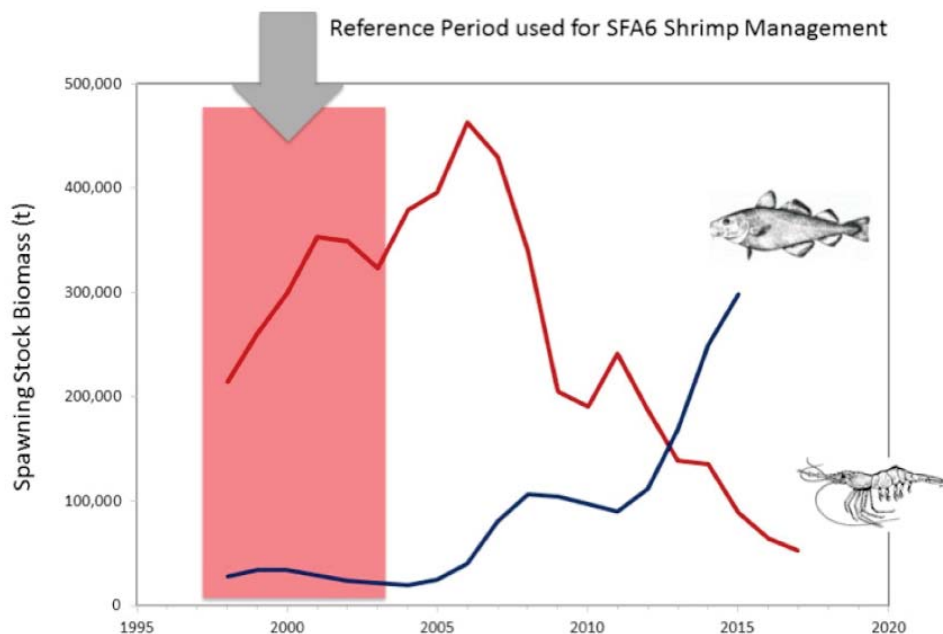
Following the most recent stock assessment, your Union has once again called on the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to re-evaluate the reference points used to establish the stock status of Northern Shrimp in Shrimp Fishing Area (SFA) 6.

Currently, DFO Science sets reference points based on the average Spawning Stock Biomass from 1996 to 2003, a time when shrimp predators such as Northern Cod were at an all-time low and shrimp stocks were increasing rapidly. A re-

Approximately 3000 people are directly employed in the inshore shrimp fishery, which together with its spinoffs, contributed \$250 million to the provincial economy in 2015. In 2015, shrimp income made up greater than half of the total harvesting income for more than 75 per cent of shrimp harvesters. Combined with declining crab stocks and few other fisheries to fall back on, these cuts are having a significant impact on the economic livelihood of our members.

In addition to these changes needed to Northern Shrimp management, FFAW has also renewed our call for the Minister to remove offshore trawlers from SFA 6, which must be exclusively allocated to inshore harvesters. The offshore fleet, which also has access to areas 4 and 5 that are currently considered in the healthy zone, should not be permitted to exploit the only area inshore harvesters have access to.

“Unless the Department re-considers their approach, given the current status of the stock, harvesters will expect to see another cut to shrimp quotas again this year. A well-managed transition from shellfish to groundfish is critical to the economic wellbeing of our coastal communities,” said Sullivan.



building plan based on this reference period means Northern Shrimp will likely not recover out of the critical zone, irrespective of any fishing pressure.

Earlier this year, FFAW-Unifor representatives and fish harvesters participated in a technical briefing of the upcoming Northern Shrimp Stock Assessment. DFO Science officials reviewed stock status and indicated that shrimp levels are currently comparable to what they were pre-groundfish collapse in the 80's and 90's.

“This Northern Shrimp assessment paints a picture of an ecosystem in transition, not simply the decline of a stock. It is crucial that DFO incorporate pre-1996 biomass levels in the management of Northern Shrimp,” said Keith Sullivan. “Re-evaluating the reference points would help to stabilize this fishery and avoid further economic hardship in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.”



# WORKSHOPS BRING QUALITY TO THE FOREFRONT OF THE NEW COD FISHERY

Beginning in February and running through the month of March, Cod Quality Handling Workshops are taking place throughout the province. The workshops are delivered through the Fisheries Science Stewardship and Sustainability Board (FSSSB), which was founded to promote issues to benefit harvesters and solve problems related to fisheries.



Over the past three years, the FSSSB has carried out significant activities focused on monitoring cod grading returns and enhancing cod quality handling practices. As a result of this work and the dedication of harvesters, there has been significant improvement in cod grades.

The focus of this new series of workshops is on the new cod fishery and top quality, fresh product. In order to achieve that, both harvesters and processors are rethinking how fish is handled. While there is always debate about methods and gear types, one thing is clear: it will take a lot of hard work and investment from everyone in the industry, including fish harvesters, processors and government, to make the new groundfish fishery work.

The FSSSB developed these cod quality handling sessions in order to share best practices with all fish harvesters in the province. Equally important in these sessions is that participants share their own feedback on what handling practices work in their particular circumstances.

The initial series of workshops saw an incredible turnout of 426 harvesters at 35 meetings. The feedback received from participants is that the information presented has been valuable and relevant for all harvesters who fish cod.

Harvester Jamie Goodyear sums it up, "We cannot go back to the old ways of landing very high volumes of fish with little return for our hard work. This will not sustain the fishers

that are involved now and it definitely will not attract young people."

Cod landings in the province have increased significantly over the last few years. Over the last three seasons, companies have reported that the amount of Grade A product has gone from approximately 65% to 85%. Harvesters have shown that although there might still be some challenges, landing quality product is certainly possible in Newfoundland and Labrador.

When asked what other harvesters should consider, Good-year continued, "We have to make this new groundfish fishery work. We have to make it work for our enterprises and make it work for our communities. Quality is the first priority if we want to compete in the markets and receive maximum value for our product. If we don't do it right, someone else will. If we don't take the initiative, the offshore, which is mostly owned and controlled by foreign investments, will take control of this fishery and our communities will get very little in return."





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# CHOOSING FISHERIES CERTIFICATION THAT MATTERS TO HARVESTERS

Courtenay Parlee, FFAW Research Intern

There has been an explosion in the number and type of eco-labels, certifications and traceability schemes in fisheries. There are several reasons for this including changes in fisheries management toward an ecosystem-based management approach, public concerns about unsustainable fishing practices, and the mislabelling of seafood. The fishing industry in Newfoundland and Labrador is engaging with various forms of those. However, there is some uncertainty around the degree to which different schemes result in recognition and rewards beyond, for example, maintaining access to existing markets for harvesters.



As a research intern with the FFAW, my first task is to identify qualities of the fishery for which fish harvesters want to be recognized and rewarded. Through focus groups and interviews, I am asking fish harvesters about the management,

social, economic and environmental qualities often found in certification schemes. I am asking what Newfoundland and Labrador harvesters value. The research will then determine the type of programs that the fishing industry might engage in to recognize and reward those qualities.

So far, 19 people have participated in this research either through an interview, or through a focus group. To date, participants include fish harvesters, buyers and processors, and an employee of the provincial government.

At a broad level, participants highlighted the importance of inclusive decision-making but also pointed to programs led by a particular fishing fleet. Programs they are proud of: Cod Quality and Biodegradable Twine in Crab Pots.

The social aspect of Newfoundland and Labrador fisheries that are important to participants include support for Owner-Operator fleets and support for Safety At-Sea initiatives.

There are fisheries certification approaches that highlight – and ideally reward – safety and independent fish harvesters. And those certification approaches may suit Newfoundland and Labrador harvesters. The first step is to hear from you in this ongoing research.

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me directly by email (CourtenayE.Parlee@gmail.com) or at the FFAW office in St. John's.

*Courtenay is a MITACS Accelerate Post Doctoral Intern with the Fisheries Science Stewardship and Sustainability Board, and the Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Her research is being conducted with support from the Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW-Unifor).*



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# SISTERHOOD

Tina Pretty, Women's Coordinator/Executive Assistant



## UNIFOR DONATES TO GRACE SPARKES HOUSE

Unifor recently donated \$2000 to Grace Sparkes House, a women's shelter in Marystown, as part of their overall \$146,000 contribution to similar organizations nationwide which aids families who are fleeing domestic violence. Unifor National President Jerry Dias said, "This contribution is to support and acknowledge the important community work



that this organization and its dedicated staff provide to help those in need during times of great difficulty. Services for those living with violence are greatly under-resourced and Unifor offers its support to women who are transitioning to new lives, free of violence."

To assist women in the workplace, Unifor has been successful in negotiating paid domestic violence leave into collective agreements across the country and continues to advocate for legislative change to include this as a right. Unifor's groundbreaking Women's Advocate program also trains representatives in the work environment to assist other women with issues of harassment and abuse with the aim to create healthier workplaces, secure homes and safer communities.

The cheque was presented by FFAW-Unifor Executive Board and Women's Advocate Member Karen Caines who said, "It was a great pleasure to be able to do this once again".

Joan Coady-Kelly, Executive Assistant at the shelter accepted the donation and acknowledged the Unifor Social Justice Fund for their generous donation.

## NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE & ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

A luncheon was held at the FFAW-Unifor Board Room on December 6th to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. This date was recognized by Parliament in 1991, two years after the Montreal Massacre at the Ecole Polytechnique de Montreal where 14 women were gunned down and was clearly an act of gender-based violence. Mary Shortall, President of the NL Federation of Labour, Ameila Reimer, Cultural Support Coordinator for the St. John's Native Friendship Centre, and Tina Pretty, Women's Advocate Program Coordinator all gave short presentations. As part of the event was a showing of the Montreal Massacre video and a lighting of candles for victims of violence. "We do this as a way to say women matter and their experiences matter, violence is never acceptable, and we believe and support these women and girls", said Tina Pretty. Over 20 participants attended from FFAW, Fish Harvesters' Resource Centre, the Professionalization Fish Harvesters' Certification Board and the NL Fish Harvesters' Safety Association. Part of the event was a fundraiser for the

St. John's Native Friendship Centre where personal items was generously donated by participants.



# WOMEN'S MARCH 2018

With a smattering of pink pussy cat hats and flags, about 100 women, men and children marched through the downtown of St. John's in freezing temperatures to demand equality. The January 20th march was organized by Deenaree Voelker, an American who moved to the province 5 years ago. She organized the event as a sister movement to the American Women's March which began last year in protest of US President Trump's inauguration. The 2018 march was part of a coordinated global event that included 40 Canadian cities. Before the march commenced there was a brief rally with a number of speakers representing labour, students, NL Human Rights Commission, and sex workers. Some of the equality issues raised were pay equity, workplace harassment, fairness toward women, trans and non-binary individuals in political policies, the wage gap, a national child-care program, and sex workers' rights. A strong delegation of FFAW-Unifor women and children participated in the rally and the march.



# COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RESULTS IN HIGHER LANDED VALUES DESPITE LOWER LANDED VOLUMES

Robert Keenan, Projects Manager

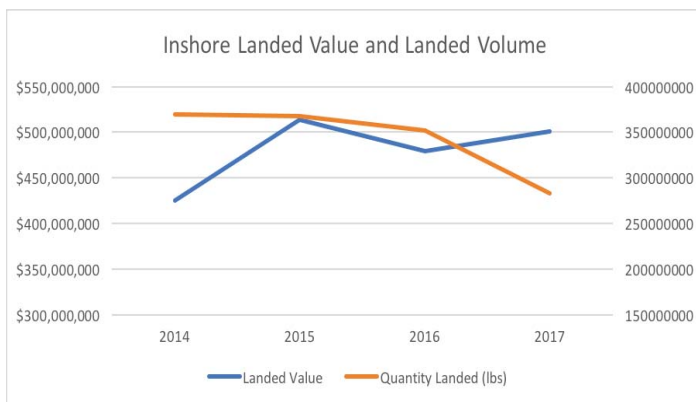
FAW has one legislated requirement for being the association representing inshore fish harvesters – to collectively bargain minimum fish prices for its members. Collective bargaining is a difficult and delicate responsibility and measuring success is a challenge requiring context of quotas, markets, and currency.

The Newfoundland and Labrador inshore fishery is certainly in a state of transition – shrimp quotas have declined at an astonishing rate and snow crab quotas are down by a third since 2014. To put this in perspective, shrimp and crab made up 50.7% of all fish landed by the inshore in 2014; these two species 35.8% of all fish landed by the inshore.

While this decline moves forward, the full return of the cod fishery is still a few years away. This is the transition – an uncertain period that is difficult to predict year after year.

Though the transition can be difficult, it has been the position of your Union to minimize its financial impact. Your Union has done some of its best work at the collective bargaining table, keeping prices to harvesters high to compensate for lower quotas levels.

The chart below puts the success of our price negotiations since 2014 in proper context. On the left axis is landed value and on the right axis is landed volume.



As the chart shows, landed volume has been in decline since 2014. That year approximately 370 million pounds of fish was landed by the inshore. In 2017, the landed volume dropped noticeably to approximately 283 million pounds. This is a 23.5% decrease in landings.

But as volume has decreased, value has increased. In 2014 the landed value was approximately \$425 million; in 2017

it was approximately \$500 million. This was an increase of 17%. Since 2014 harvesters have landed almost 100 million pounds less, but the value of their landings has increased by \$75 million.

The increases in value are seen across all the species negotiated by your Union.

- Snow crab 2014 price \$2.34 in 2014; in 2017 it was \$4.39, an 87% increase
- Shrimp 2014 price was 93 cents in 2014; in 2017 it was \$1.27, a 36% increase
- Lobster 2014 price was \$3.92; in 2017 it was \$6.89, a 76% increase
- Halibut 2014 price was \$6.15; in 2017 it was \$7.00, a 14% increase
- Capelin in 2014 was 9 cents; in 2017 it was 14 cents, a 55% increase
- Cod in 2014 was 80 cents for Grade A; in 2017 Grade A was 83 cents, a 4% increase.

Together, these 6 species accounted for 65% of all fish landed by the inshore in 2017.

Harvesters saw price increases for all of these species over the past 4 fishing seasons, due to the collective work of your Union and the hundreds of volunteers that sit on negotiating committees.



# FFAW-Unifor Life Insurance

As of May 2013, life insurance has increased from \$10,000 to **\$15,000**. If your death is accidental, your beneficiary(ies) will receive \$30,000. All FFAW-Unifor members in good-standing are covered through Sunlife Financial and Industrial Alliance Insurance. Your beneficiary(ies) will receive a tax-free, cash benefit through this insurance policy. Since 2016, this insurance plan has helped 85 families, which amounts to more than one million dollars going to members' families. Ensure your beneficiary information is up to date by contacting our office.

## frequently asked QUESTIONS

### Q: How much does the insurance cost?

**A:** The insurance plan covers FFAW members who are in good standing. Members in good standing receive a union card that covers them from August 1 to July 31 of the next year. Being a member in good standing is based upon the payment of union dues from the previous year. Thus, union cards and Sunlife insurance coverage for August 1, 2017 to July 31, 2018 are based upon the payment of union dues for the 2016 calendar year.

### Q: What do I have as proof of my coverage?

**A:** Your union card is proof of your insurance. Your insurance coverage is only valid until July 31, 2018. After this date, if you have not paid your dues for the 2017 year **you will not be covered**.

### Q: Am I covered only while working or fishing?

**A:** No. Coverage is for a period of one year, from August 1 to July 31 each year.

### Q: What happens if I don't identify a beneficiary?

**A:** If you do not identify a beneficiary, the insurance benefit will go to your estate. This may complicate matters and make it difficult for your beneficiary(ies) to receive the money in the event of your death. Protect your loved ones by filling out the beneficiary form.

### Q: My circumstances have changed since I last sent in my beneficiary form (for example: married or divorced)

**A:** If this is the case, make sure you send in a new beneficiary form. The last beneficiary form on file will be the one used.

### Q: Am I still covered once I retire, am no longer actively fishing, or am no longer employed with the company I currently work for?

**A:** No. The insurance is only for active, card-carrying members of the FFAW and does not cover members who are no longer active or no longer hold seniority status within the union.

### Q: Is there an age limit?

**A:** Yes. Coverage discontinues when a member turns 70 years old. This is a requirement of the insurance company.

### Q: Are prescriptions, hospital stays, therapy sessions, etc. covered?

**A:** No. This is strictly a life/accidental death/dismemberment insurance policy. There is a cash benefit payable for loss of limbs, loss of hearing, loss of sight, etc. due to accidents only.

**For questions or to request a new beneficiary form, please call Paula at 576-7276**

# FFAW MAKES ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

Each Christmas season, FFAW-Unifor makes donations to organizations that work to help people in need around our province. This year donations were made to the Kids Eat Smart Foundation, the Community Food Sharing Association for, and the Canadian Cancer Society's Daffodil Place. All donations made on behalf of FFAW membership are decided each year by the FFAW's elected Executive Board.



David Decker and Keith Sullivan present cheque to Canadian Cancer Society NL Executive Director Matthew Piercey



Keith Sullivan presents cheque to Kids Eat Smart Executive Director Celina Stoyles



Keith Sullivan presents cheque to Community Food Sharing Executive Director Eg Walters

# SECURING A FUTURE WITH PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

Mark Dolomount, Executive Director, Professional Fish Harvester Certification Board

Many things have changed since 1997 when DFO turned over the registration and certification of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) fish harvesters to the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB). Linkages between DFO licensing policy and PFHCB certification now require fish harvesters to be PFHCB certified in order to be a designated operator (Level I) or to receive the transfer of a federal species licence (Level II). Not only have these policy linkages ensured that only legitimate professional fish harvesters can receive access to federal licences, the professional certification requirement has established NL as the best trained fisheries labour force in the country – a model for other jurisdictions.

Lately, some people have publicly questioned if the PFHCB criteria are too difficult and restrictive and act as a barrier to younger harvesters accessing licences.

The reality is that PFHCB professional certification actually secures a future for younger harvesters looking to have a career as an independent enterprise owner. It protects Level I and Level II harvesters who have worked hard to upgrade their certification by ensuring that only harvesters who have the required training, experience and attachment are granted federal licencing privileges and access rights to a limited number of Core enterprises. More specifically, it upholds DFO's owner/operator & fleet separation policies by ensuring that species licences are only accessible to fish harvesters with the required professional certification.

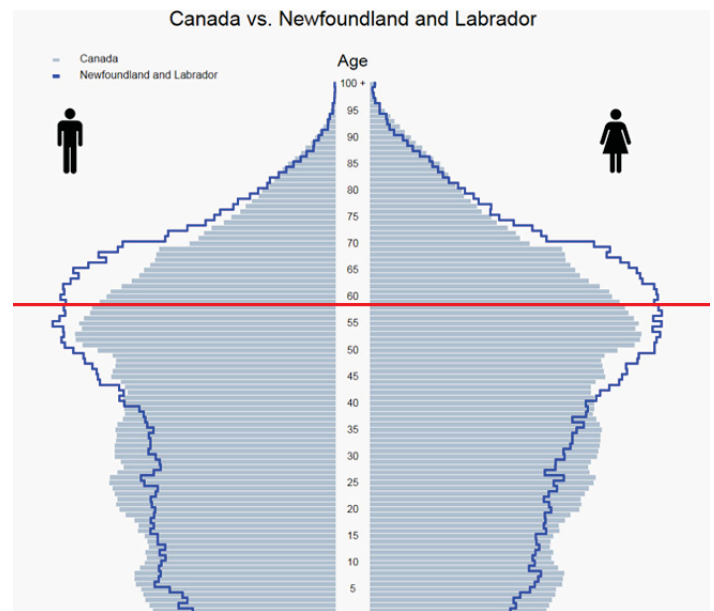
Conversely, consider the long-term implications of “making it easier” to acquire Level II certification:

- It has potential to further exacerbate the problem of “unaffordable licences” by creating additional competition for the limited number of licences available.
- It undercuts the current Level II's who have worked hard to earn their certification and eligibility to hold a federal species licence.
- It poses added risk to safety by allowing less trained and less experienced harvesters to access fishing enterprises up to 90'.
- It undermines one of the main overall goals of professional certification, which is to establish

fish harvesting as a legitimate respected occupation/profession.

- It jeopardizes DFO's owner/operator & fleet separation policies by risking access to those who have not committed to the required training, experience and attachment to the NL industry.

There is no denying we have an aging fisheries labour force, with the average age of all certified harvesters currently at 51, and the average age of Core enterprise owners at about 57. But that isn't an issue unique to the NL fishing industry. The “aging labour force issue” spans every other sector in NL, every jurisdiction in Canada, and nearly every industrialized country in the western world. The fact is, Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1965) make up more than 30% of the Canadian population, and about 60% of all NL Core enterprise owners. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that only a small percentage of current Core enterprise owners (14%) and about the same percentage of Level II certified harvesters (15%) are under the age of 45.



The increasing average age of NL fish harvesters (currently 51 years old) is not surprising if you consider that more than 30% of the NL population are baby boomers between 53 and 72 years of age.

[ continued on next page ]

It is important to acknowledge that our aging fish harvester population could eventually result in a labour shortage (particularly skilled labour), but we are not currently in “crisis mode.” There are nearly 1,000 Level II’s under the age of 45, and approximately 2,400 Level II’s (who do not currently hold species licences) that are eligible to receive the transfer of a Core enterprise. Additionally, 47% of all Apprentices and Level I’s are under the age of 45, hundreds of whom are currently pursuing Level II certification upgrading. And on an even more positive note, more than 400 Core enterprises are currently held by fish harvesters under the age of 45, and there is growing interest from young harvesters looking to upgrade their certification level for the purpose of pursuing a Core enterprise and a career in the fishing industry.

The inter-connection of population trends, licencing policies,

rationalization measures, enterprise values and professional certification can raise some very complex questions to which there are no single or simple answers. But two things are certain: 1) As licence holders get older, there WILL continue to be opportunities for younger harvesters in future; and 2) we MUST ensure that we have an adequate number of fish harvesters, including an adequate number of qualified Level II’s eligible to receive the transfer of licences.

We should be proud of our accomplishments over the past two decades, and insist on keeping our professional certification standards high - ensuring that Core enterprises remain in the hands of legitimate, professional fish harvesters who have the attachment/experience and skills necessary to be safe and successful. How else will we ensure a viable future for independent owner operators in coastal fishing commu-

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
<b>Total Enterprises (CORE &amp; N-CORE)</b>	5410	5015	4987	4927	4820	4594	4248	3845	3620
<b>Level II Harvesters</b>	8702	7998	8087	7815	7428	7039	6610	6137	5720
<b>Rate of Level II's (per Enterprise)</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>1.59</b>	<b>1.62</b>	<b>1.59</b>	<b>1.54</b>	<b>1.53</b>	<b>1.56</b>	<b>1.60</b>	<b>1.58</b>

*Between 2000 and 2016, in comparison to the total number of fishing enterprises, the number of Level II fish harvesters has remained stable at a rate of 1.53- 1.62 Level II's per fishing enterprise.*

## Are you an Apprentice or Level I interested in Level II certification?



The PFHCB is committed to identifying and working closely with any fish harvester interested in pursuing Level I or Level II certification upgrading. Are you an Apprentice or Level I interested in upgrading your certification level? If so, the PFHCB will guide you through the upgrading process.

For more information on the PFHCB certification criteria, or your own personal certification status, please call Juanita Cutler at the PFHCB at 722-8170.

To maintain a stable, professionally-certified fish harvester labour force into the future, the PFHCB is committed to:

- Dedicated permanent staff member working individually with harvesters - keeping in direct contact with harvesters in pursuit of Level I and II - providing them with a “personalized road map”;
- Providing Apprentice and Level I harvesters with better and more frequent information on the requirements and opportunities for certification upgrading;
- Enhancing access to the required number of education credits (i.e. expanding the number of credits available through online courses, and through the PLAR program);
- Ensuring the maximum amount of flexibility is applied in cases of harvesters who fish full-time during the fishing season but who explore other employment opportunities outside the fishing season;
- Continuing to protect harvesters pursuing Level II (as well as current Level II’s) by ensuring that harvesters holding full-time, permanent employment outside the harvesting sector, not fishing on a full-time basis, are not eligible for certification upgrading; and
- Continuing to review our criteria to ensure that it remains relevant and in the common interest of professional fish harvesters.



# INJURED WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS TO INCREASE

Jessica McCormick, Assistant to the President

After years of consistent lobbying by FFAW-Unifor and our allies in the labour movement, workers in Newfoundland and Labrador are celebrating a victory at the Workers' Compensation Board. On February 20th, the provincial government announced that the income replacement rate for injured workers will be increased from 80 per cent of net earnings to 85 per cent.

With these changes, wage-loss benefits will now be calculated at 85 per cent of a worker's after-tax earnings, capped at the Maximum Compensable Assessable Earnings (MCAE) of \$64,375 for 2018.

The demands from employer's groups to get a break on their assessment rates has come about much more easily than a modest increase to injured workers' benefits. Workers' compensation is funded by employers, as part of an historic compromise. The compromise was that injured workers would forgo the right to sue an employer for any work-related injury or illness and in return, the injured worker would be provided with compensation, medical care and rehabilitation services.

WorkplaceNL is responsible for managing the workers' compensation injury fund. The health of the fund determines the average employer assessment rate. The employer assessment rate for 2018 was lowered from \$1.90 per \$100 of

payroll for employers in Newfoundland and Labrador. Since 2014, the WorkplaceNL injury fund has had a surplus of over 110 per cent and at the end of 2017, the injury fund surplus was the highest ever, at 126%. Since 2013, employers have seen assessment rebates in excess of 30 per cent while injured workers have had to fight for a modest increase.

Prior to the recently announced injured worker benefit increase, NL had the lowest injured worker benefit rate in Canada, at 80% of net income. Six provinces and territories provide an income replacement rate of 90% and four others are at 85%.

There are approximately 13,000 injured workers who rely on WorkplaceNL for services. In Newfoundland and Labrador, 14 individuals are injured at work each day. For too long injured workers have faced an uphill battle to get the benefits they deserve, while employers have enjoyed annual reductions in their assessment rate. Government is finally doing the right thing and honouring the Statutory Review recommendation to increase the rate. While there is still more work to be done to achieve an income replacement rate consistent with the majority of the other provinces and territories, this important victory is a step in the right direction.



Workplace NL CEO Dennis Hogan and Minister of Service NL Sherry Gambin Walsh making the announcement in February

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND THE PROPOSED GRIEG AQUACULTURE PROJECT IN PLACENTIA BAY

Johan Joensen, Industry Liaison

Since the Grieg aquaculture project for Placentia Bay was announced in 2015, FFAW has consistently called for a thorough assessment to properly understand both the environmental impacts on the marine environment and the economic impacts to harvesters.

An environmental impact assessment of the proposed Grieg project should not be controversial. The proposed project is far bigger than any previously established in the province, the aquaculture industry has a spotty record, at best, when it comes to minimizing environmental damage, and Placentia Bay is the busiest bay in the province and is currently shared by hundreds of harvesters and a heavy flow of industrial traffic. The logic of an environmental impact assessment is beyond doubt.

Unfortunately, the environmental impact process has not been smooth. There have been well-publicized court challenges and government decisions, and the process has moved into a consultations phase.

Fish harvesters are the biggest stakeholder in the area where the proposed project is to be built. As such, the rights and interests of harvesters need to be respected and their perspectives need to be heard. It is unclear whether that is the case. The consultation phase that is currently underway are described information sessions, which are not conducive to proper feedback and discussion.

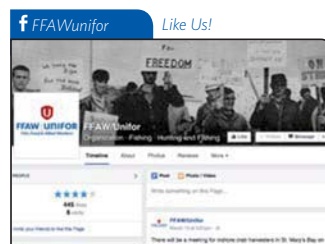
There is a submission phase to the environmental impact study and FFAW submitted its comments in February. The key point of our submission is that a study needs to be undertaken on the condition of the marine environment prior to the commencement of the aquaculture project. This study will establish a baseline against which future marine environment impacts can be assessed. What the province and Grieg need to appreciate, it that once the marine environment is changed, it will be very difficult to undue those changes. The aquaculture industry has an obligation to a steward of the marine environment and its successes and failures in this role need to be properly understood and accounted for.

It is anticipated that the Grieg project will significantly impact harvesters in the region. Adding sea cages into Placentia Bay will likely displace fish harvesting efforts, incurring costs for fish harvesters in the bay. There is also no assessment on the potential impact of fish escaping from the aquaculture project and interacting with other species. As recently as February 2018, there have been escapes from a Grieg owned aquaculture facility in the Shetland Islands, calling into question the assertion by the company that sea cages can be made to be wholly escape proof.

FFAW-Unifor strongly advised that government to not move forward with any project approval until a proper consultation process with fish harvesters has been pursued. After all, this project may put the livelihood of harvesters in the area at risk. The provincial government must responsibly lead the environmental impact process when major projects are proposed. Community consultation cannot and should not be left entirely to the proponents or contractors of the project.

FFAW staff members will continue to monitor the progress of the Grieg aquaculture proposal. The minister is due to issue the approved EIS guidelines around the time of publication of this article. At that time, it will be clear the government's strategy on the Grieg project and the environmental impact.

**DON'T MISS A THING!**    
**Connect with us - Your Way.**



# AQUACULTURE STILL HAS A LONG WAY TO GO

**Greg Pretty, Industrial Director**

**H**ave you heard the new buzzword?  
Supercluster.

I'm familiar with the word "cluster" from my stint with the Militia. Combining "super" with "cluster" is not a good visual for any ex-army personnel.

But, nonetheless, we are now going down the road of super-cluster in oil, gas, fisheries and aquaculture.

I hope it's a better model than what we've become accustomed to. Just ask the workers on the Connaigre Peninsula.

Despite the tens of millions of dollars of infrastructure pumped into the industry over the last 25 years, aquaculture still only produces meagre, precarious employment for production workers in the industry. In other words... it's tough to get a week's work.

You'll remember a number of years ago when the federal government of the day paid aquaculture companies to dump fish during the initial ISA scare.

Ten dollars a fish. Tens of millions to the companies and zip, zero to displaced workers. Nothing "super" about that, unless you own the company.

If politicians want, once again, to strengthen the science, marketing and viability of salmon aquaculture, they'd better start with listening to workers.

Having production workers as poor third cousins to giant multi-national companies has to stop. That antiquated model must change for both proposed and established operations.

If a supercluster can't provide a minimum of 40 hours of work to production workers, then the business model is seriously flawed and not worthy of federal and provincial attention.

They should be told to go back to the drawing board and start from the production floor up.

Our federal Members of Parliament praised the supercluster and its incredible ability to make our ocean industries first class. To that end, they have matchable funds available to the tune of about 900 million dollars.

So, let's try and get it right for once. Here's what should

happen.

First of all, they would do well to revamp and revise the Employment Insurance program as it applies to all seasonal workers but particularly in industries such as aquaculture, where temperature/growth/harvesting delays cause huge disruptions in workers' annual income. Making the EI program meaningful and responsive to seasonal issues should be a mandate of elected politicians, the same ones promoting the supercluster. The program should meet the needs of workers as opposed to the current model where workers struggle in a system never intended for aquaculture.

In short, move the EI Program into the 21st Century.

Secondly, aquaculture companies planning to use their own money or relying on government funding should be required, by law, to establish a production plan, outlining job numbers and weeks of employment.

A security bond, required as a Condition of License should be established for each aquaculture enterprise. Based on the number of employees, the bond will be utilized by the Province and provided to workers adversely affected by the failure of the business, the closure of a plant or grow out or breach of contract between the companies and the Province or companies and workers. So far, the history of the industry has been when companies leave, workers are left with nothing. This model cannot be carried to superclusters.

Thirdly, borrowing from what we know of supercluster so far, workers would insist on a world class Occupational Health and Safety Research and Development Facility, funded by aquaculture companies and administered by workers and company representatives.

And lastly, it must include an Industry Environmental Protection/Monitoring Agency. This Agency would be funded by Industry and both levels of Government and could be a significant employer in the areas of aquaculture grow-out and production. Monitoring, surveillance and facilitating liaisons between aquaculture and wild fisheries.

And that would be Super. And meaningful. And World-Class. Rural Newfoundland and Labrador deserves nothing less.

# FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR ENTERPRISE OWNERS THROUGH ATLANTIC FISHERIES FUND

Representatives from the Atlantic Fisheries Fund (AFF) attended the most recent Inshore Council meeting in February to provide council members with an in depth overview of available funding opportunities.

For Newfoundland and Labrador, the AFF has allotted \$100 million from the primary fund for projects specific to the province. FFAW-Unifor pushed for this investment during the last federal election, which the Liberal party committed to our Union prior to being elected.

The purpose of the fund is to help the seafood sector transition to meet the growing demands of the market for products that are high quality, have value added, and are sustainably sourced. To receive funding, a project must fall within one of the following pillars – innovation, infrastructure, or science partnerships. Each pillar has its own definition to allow an applicant to understand what pillar his or her application would fall under. There is no standard application process, as it changes depending upon which pillar the application is made. For example, an application under “infrastructure” requires that a business case be developed, which is different than the application for innovation.

Many harvesters have already availed of the funding, including Inshore Council member from Mary’s Harbour, Alton Rumbolt. “This year I am investing in an auto-line baiter to make it more efficient for fishing, and to help us get better quality fish. It’s harder to get crew members these days so this technology will allow us to fish with fewer people on the boat,” said Rumbolt. Rumbolt applied to the AFF, which covers up to 80% of the cost of his new technology. “The fund is encouraging people to improve the infrastructure on their

vessels,” he added.

To be eligible to apply for the NL funding, a harvesting has to show they are a resident of the province, are an active harvester, and explain the economic benefit that the province would receive if the application is accepted.

Council members will be bringing information back to their areas and we encourage you to reach out to your elected member or staff representative to hear more about what was presented.

There is an application form online along with detailed instructions on how to apply and what information needs to be provided. This is the home page for the fund: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/initiatives/fish-fund-atlantic-fonds-peche/index-eng.html>. There are links to select from that page that will take you through the process.

Please note, the application process is not clearly set out on the DFO website. The application form is not on the same page as the instructions; moreover, the instructions are broken up into several different webpages. The most comprehensive explanation of the application process can be found at this link:

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/initiatives/fish-fund-atlantic-fonds-peche/doc/atl-fisheries-fund-guide-fonds-peche-eng.pdf>

That is a link to a pdf of an instruction booklet on the application process. It condenses many different webpages into one. If you want to understand the application process, accessing this booklet is strongly recommended.





# LET'S MAKE #METOO A PERMANENT SHIFT

**Jerry Dias, Unifor National President**

The recent outpouring of women's experiences of trauma, sexual harassment and assault, under the social media hashtag of #MeToo last year has provoked a deeper conversation about how sexism and misogyny harms women.

In the weeks since the #MeToo movement surfaced, the discussion also morphed into #TimesUp as women's anger and outrage gave way to determination to create a better future by fighting sexual harassment and gender inequality.

It's a movement we all must support and encourage our union sisters to speak up.

In a conversation with the Unifor Women's Director Lisa Kelly I was reminded that the #MeToo movement allowed some women to re-examine interactions and events that have happened in their lives, through a different lens and it has helped many to recognize that what happened previously was really not okay. This awareness is an important part of creating progressive change.

But change comes through different forms and tactics. In January, millions of women around the world took to the streets once again, on the one-year anniversary of the global Women's March and the inauguration of Donald Trump. I was proud to see so many Unifor members out in big numbers at rallies and marches across the country.

At the same time, here and across the border, women have come forward about male politicians who have abused their positions of power to harass and assault women. In a single week in January, three Canadian politicians – two provincial Progressive Conservative Party leaders and one Federal Minister – resigned after accusations of sexual assault and

harassment came to light.

A cultural shift and understanding about harassment and the treatment of women is taking place right now and we all need to embrace it, including men. This after all is an important moment for all of us to advance women's equality. I am proud to say that our union and Unifor activists have been deeply committed to re-enforcing this shift by taking part in public actions, online dialogues and making it a priority in our government lobbying and at the negotiating table. We have seen progress and there is more to do.

Now we must work to ensure this movement becomes a permanent cultural shift, to make equality and respect the new normal, in our workplaces and in our communities.

These conversations about #MeToo have also opened the door to thinking about other social and political inequities between women and men, including gender expectations, access to decent work, fair wages, affordable housing and laws that actually address women's realities.

Our advocacy and resistance over the last year has led to tangible gains. Unifor has led the fight for paid domestic violence leave in several provinces, Manitoba, Alberta, Ontario and hopefully New Brunswick. The union has negotiated this paid leave in several collective agreements across the country. All of this work is in conjunction with Unifor's ground-breaking women's advocate program that assists women with concerns such as workplace harassment, intimate violence and abuse. I am very proud of the fact that there are currently 350 advocates in Unifor represented workplaces across the country. In addition to that, I encourage all locals to negotiate strong anti-harassment language, respectful workplace training, a joint-investigation committee for sexual harassment and assault, to make our workplaces safer and free of harassment. Let's all say "Times Up."

# 2018 FFAW SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW-Unifor) awards six \$750 scholarships every year to eligible dependents of members in good standing. Congratulations to the recipients and best of luck in your studies!

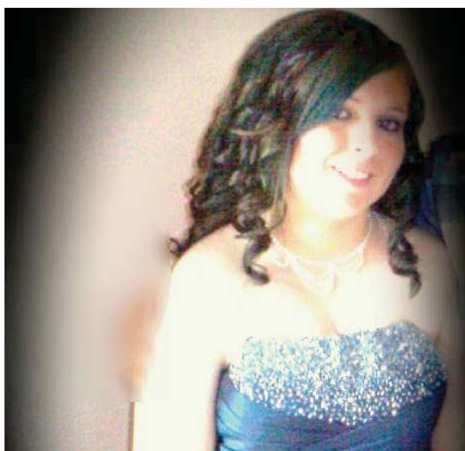
## RICHARD CASHIN SCHOLARSHIP

## RAY GREENING SCHOLARSHIP

## BOB WHITE SCHOLARSHIP



**Kristen Morrissey**, daughter of Rodney & Carol Morrissey, Cuslett



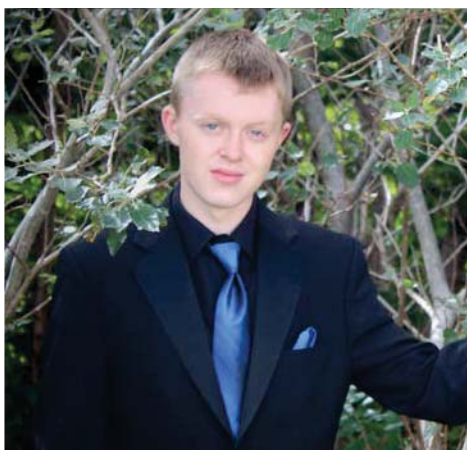
**Christina Ricketts**, daughter of Robert & Joanne Ricketts, Knights Cove



**Jonathan Morrissey**, son of Rodney & Carol Morrissey, Cuslett



**Laura Oake**, daughter of Wade & Monda Oake, Beaumont



**Noah Careen**, son of Gilbert & Kim Careen, Point Lance



**Brittany Chambers**, daughter of Aaron & Vicky Chambers, Blue Cove



**Blair Roland Genge**, son of Brad & Kim Genge, Anchor Point

Applications are due each fall and recipients are announced early in the new year. To find more information on how to apply for next year's scholarships, visit our website.

# Have you ever thought about taking a family holiday with your union?



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## 2018 Unifor Family Education Program

ADDED SESSION #1—Sunday, July 15th to Sunday, July 22nd *inclusive*

SESSION #2— Sunday, July 22nd to Sunday, July 29th *inclusive*

SESSION #3—Sunday July 29th to Sunday, August 5th *inclusive*

The program is held at the Unifor Family Education Centre in Port Elgin, Ontario, on the shores of Lake Huron. To find out more information on the program, and to obtain an application form, contact a member of your Local Union Executive Board, or go to our Education website at [www.unifor.org/education-en](http://www.unifor.org/education-en).

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE - FRIDAY, APRIL 20TH, 2018**

**For more information, please contact your staff representative**



mb:cope343

# LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO END HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Jessica McCormick, Assistant to the President

Over the past several weeks I've watched as so many women across Canada and around the world have spoken up about the harassment and violence they face in the workplace. They're actors, writers, politicians, activists, friends, colleagues. Their stories tell us that harassment and sexism have become all-to-common in our society. It's part of our daily lives. While this doesn't come as news to union women who have been talking about it for years, it does feel like this moment is somehow different; that maybe, finally, change is just around the corner.

It's the kind of change that trade unions have spent decades fighting for.

But naming and shaming will not be enough. We need to translate this watershed moment into the structural and societal change necessary to end workplace harassment for good.

For unions, the fight for equality and economic justice are intertwined.

For more than 30 years, Unifor and its predecessor unions have made ground-breaking advances at collective and political bargaining tables. Through the Women's Advocate program, we've trained workplace representatives who assist women with concerns such as workplace harassment, domestic violence and abuse. Across the country, more than 350 Women's Advocate positions have been negotiated into collective agreements.

At FFAW-Unifor, we've trained 26 Advocates who live in rural communities around the province. These women act as a resource not just in their workplace, but for their entire community. The program builds activism and empowers women in our union to take on leadership roles and engage in the kind of collective action necessary to end systemic violence and harassment.

While unions have made incredible progress in our fight to end workplace harassment, there is still much more work to be done. We must continue to leverage our collective power to enact real change. We must tackle the underpinnings of harassment – sexism, misogyny and the devaluing of women's work. Because it's a perceived power and superiority over another person that is at the root of the toxicity in our workplaces. Trade unions are best positioned to challenge these inequitable power dynamics and push for transformative change.

When we fight for economic justice, for universal childcare and pharmacare, pay equity, paid domestic violence leave, and a living wage, we chip away at the structural inequities that create the foundation for sexism and misogyny.

The #MeToo movement has started a public conversation that was

long overdue. For too long, women have been silenced, shamed and ignored when they face harassment and violence. For too long, our governments sat idly by, wringing their hands and shrugging their shoulders when we called for action.

Let's seize this moment and use it to build power in our workplaces. Together we can find collective solutions to the systemic challenges we face as a society. It's through our direct action, our mobilization and our advocacy that we can demand better for women and for all workers. When we use our voices to call for meaningful, structural change and for policies that get at the root causes of sexism and violence against women, then we get one step closer to creating a truly equal society.



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# MARINE HARVEST ACQUIRES NORTHERN HARVEST SEA FARMS

**Monty Way, Staff Representative**

As many people may have already heard, especially those that live in the Coasts of Bays region of the Connaigre Peninsula, a company called Marine Harvest is in the process of acquiring Northern Harvest Sea Farms, an aquaculture company that has operated in that area for a number of years.

Marine Harvest ASA is one of the largest seafood companies in the world and the world's largest producer of Atlantic salmon. With its main office in Bergen, Norway, Marine Harvest employs 12,717 people globally and is represented in 24 countries.

While the sale of Northern Harvest to Marine Harvest is in the final stages, reports indicate that the review of the sale by the competition authority is expected to be completed in the coming weeks. Upon finalization, the FFAW has requested to meet with representatives of Marine Harvest to discuss the impact on our members currently employed at Northern Harvest and our members in the Harbour Breton and St. Albans plants.

No doubt, the talk of future production seems promising, but aquaculture workers need more than promises - they need 40 hours weeks. And, the NL government has a role to play to ensure that workers, their families and communities benefit from aquaculture investment. It's not enough that the companies and consumers rake in all the benefits. Government has a responsibility to ensure the industry is environmentally sustainable and provides safe and meaningful employment for workers.

Company representatives recently made a trip to the Connaigre Peninsula to meet with fish harvester representatives in that area to hear their concerns and to answer any questions they might have. Meetings were held in Harbour Breton, Hermitage and McCallam as these are the main areas where Northern Harvest currently operates and where the company plans to focus their efforts.

Harvesters that live on the Connaigre Peninsula are very familiar with aquaculture as companies have been operating there for many years, but they still have concerns over the potential impact it could have on the local environment where they fish.

One of the biggest concerns harvesters have about aquaculture are over the kinds of chemicals that are being used to treat sea lice outbreaks. Lobster is the most important species in this area and there is apprehension about the impact these chemicals may be having on lobster larvae. It is well known that lobster larvae are suspended in the water column for the first few weeks of life and that sea lice treatments are not just contained to the cage where it is placed- there is always some dispersal.

After some discussion about this issue, harvesters were happy to learn that in most cases Marine Harvest has moved away from using chemicals to treat sea lice in other jurisdictions and are now using lumpfish and cunners. It seems both of these species work very well at keeping sea lice abundance within the cages at low levels and is a very environmentally friendly way of doing so.

While lumpfish are easily produced on shore, cunners are much more difficult. According to company representatives, there is a program in place in Norway where inshore harvesters fish for cunners and sell them to the aquaculture companies. Harvesters were quick to point out that cunners are abundant in some areas and they could easily catch them. This could possibly lead to some opportunity for harvesters down the road.

The other major concern harvesters brought to Marine Harvest was the topic of debris. Harvesters wanted to be assured that Marine Harvest would continue to operate as Northern Harvest did and do what they could to keep the local environment free of any debris that could in some cases be a safety hazard for harvesters. After a lengthy discussion on this issue, the harvesters present felt comfortable that Marine Harvest seemed to be very serious about the safety of harvesters and will do what they could to minimize any risk.

While the FFAW is encouraged by recent comments from the Fisheries, Food and Aquaculture Minister renewing the commitment to aquaculture workers and ensuring they have meaningful work. It is critical for the province and the company to work together to provide clear answers and reassurances on what future operations will look like.



## CREW OF OCEAN BREAKER MAKE GAINS IN NEW CONTRACT

Last fall, negotiations concluded with the workers of the Ocean Breaker, an OCI trawler with significant improvements to the latest contract agreement.

Some of the key gains included increases to: fish prices, the Christmas bonus, two job/gear retrieval rate, and the clothing allowance. The company will now replace bedding annually, and floater jackets will be provided to all deckhands.

Even with these improvements, crewmembers are looking forward to getting back to the table in 2020 and making much further improvements to this agreement.

“Working twelve months a year on a trip on trip basis, fishing on the high seas is a tough life. It’s difficult for families onshore when those howling fall and winter winds shake your home, knowing their love ones are out there somewhere pounding the seas with rail in rail out,” said FFAW Staff Representative Roland Hedderson.

“Having this contract agreement gives these crewmembers some assurances that the company will not run roughshod over them. The crewmembers of this fishing vessel deserve much more. It’s step by step, contract by contract. That is how it’s done,” added Hedderson.

## 2J3KL NORTHERN COD FISHERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL A GRADE

Dwan Street, Projects Coordinator

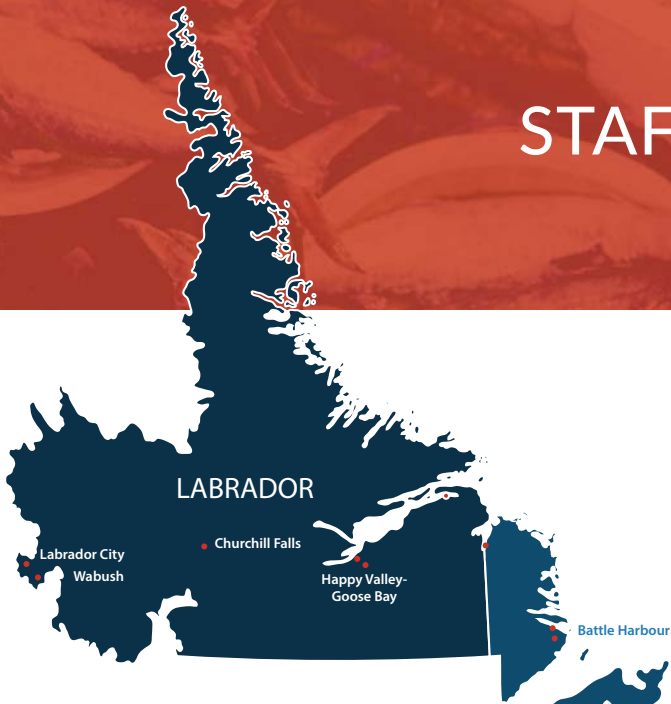
The 2J3KL Northern Cod Fishery Improvement has reached a significant milestone. FisheryProgress.org, an international website for fishery improvement projects, has graded the FFAW/Unifor-WWF Canada co-led FIP an A!

Launched in 2016, FisheryProgress.org is an international directory of fishery improvement projects from all over the world, run by FishChoice. FishChoice labels itself as “an on-line, sustainable seafood sourcing tool that connects retail, restaurant, and institutional seafood buyers to suppliers of sustainable seafood products. FishChoice also helps sustainable aquaculture operations and wild fisheries that utilize environmentally responsible fishing methods find markets for their products.” Governed by an Advisory Committee, FisheryProgress.org is a library of ongoing fishery improvement projects which are graded on an international scale based on progress and success.

The Grade A is a result of activity updates provided by FFAW and WWF Canada. Our FIP has made significant progress in addressing concerns around bait, endangered/threatened/protected (ETP) species, harvest control rules and management plans, and other areas. We would also like to commend the Newfoundland and Labrador Groundfish Council for both being a FIP partner and for their approach to management over the past two seasons. This gradual management approach was a key factor in achieving the A grade, and is recognized now internationally for its importance.

We look forward to providing further updates and ensuring our FIP receives top grades for the hard work put in by our members. The FIP will ensure northern cod is once again recognized as a top class, sustainably harvested product in the marketplace.

# FFAW | UNIFOR STAFF REPRESENTATIVES



**BILL BRODERICK**

*Inshore Director*



**JASON SPINGLE**

*Staff Representative*  
West Coast, Northern Peninsula & Labrador



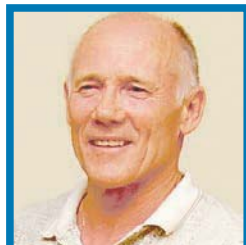
**GREG PRETTY**

*Industrial/Retail/Deepsea Director*



**MONTY WAY**

*Staff Representative*  
Connaigre Peninsula, Burgeo-Ramea-Francois, Jackson's Head to North Head



**ROLAND HEDDERSON**

*Staff Representative*  
St. Brides to English Harbour East, 3K Inshore to North Head to Cape Freels, OCI trawler fleet



**JOHN BOLAND**

*Staff Representative*  
Inshore, Cape Freels to Cape St. Mary's



**SHARON WALSH**

*Staff Representative*  
Industrial/Retail/Offshore

# ELECTED LEADERSHIP



FFAW-Unifor is overseen by the 19 member Executive Board, which is elected every three years. Below the Executive Board, there are two councils; the Inshore Council and the Industrial/ Retail/ Offshore Council. These councils are also elected every three years. Each Council has numerous committees on various issues such as regional or species specific committees.

FFAW-Unifor is overseen by the 19 member Executive Board, which is elected every 3 years. Below the Executive Board, there are two councils; the Inshore Council and the Industrial/ Retail/Offshore Council. These councils are also elected every 3 years. Each Council has numerous committees. The next elections will take place in 2018.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

Keith Sullivan	PRESIDENT
David Decker	SECRETARY-TREASURER
Tony Doyle	INSHORE VICE-PRESIDENT
Eric Day	INDUSTRIAL VICE-PRESIDENT
Loomis Way	INSHORE NORTHERN PENINSULA/LABRADOR
Nelson Bussey	INSHORE AVALON PENINSULA
Vacant	INSHORE WEST AND SOUTHWEST COASTS
Glen Newbury	INSHORE NORTHEAST COAST
Mike Noonan	INSHORE CREW MEMBER
Joan Doucette	INSHORE WOMEN'S POSITION
Nancy Fillier	INDUSTRIAL NORTHERN PENINSULA & LABRADOR
Paul Kean	INDUSTRIAL NORTHEAST COAST
Mike Devereaux	INDUSTRIAL NON-FISHING
Charles Baker	INDUSTRIAL SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST COAST
Warren Broderick	INDUSTRIAL AT SEA
Karen Caines	INDUSTRIAL WOMEN'S POSITION

# INDUSTRIAL-RETAIL-OFFSHORE COUNCIL

---

Eric Day	VICE-PRESIDENT
Melvin Lockyer	ICEWATER
Paul Kean	BEOTHIC
Nancy Fillier	LFUSC
Charles Baker	CLEARWATER
Mike Devereaux	HOTEL GANDER
Warren Broderick	CANCREW
Doretta Strickland	OCI TRITON
Trudy Byrne	ST. ANTHONY SEAFOODS
Flora Mills	NOTRE DAME COMFORT COVE
Vickie Morris	LABRADOR CHOICE
Karen Caines	OCI FORTUNE

Dwayne Harnum	PENNECON
Patricia Dawe	FOGO ISLD CO-OP
Hubert Stacey	OCI ST. LAWRENCE
Candace Francis	OCI PORT AUX CHOIX
Joey Warford	MOLSON
Vacant	OFFSHORE SHRIMP
Maudie Maloney	SHAMUT
Ed English	M&M OFFSHORE
Barry Randall	OCI BONAVISTA
Vacant	OFFSHORE TANKERS
Lloyd Squibb HR.	GRACE COLD STORAGE
Sharon White	DEEP ATLANTIC
Leonard Norman	BEOTHIC FISH

# INSHORE COUNCIL

---

Tony Doyle	INSHORE VICE-PRESIDENT
Loomis Way	N. PENINSULA & LABRADOR
Nelson Bussey	AVALON PENINSULA
Vacant	WEST & SOUTHWEST COASTS
Glen Newbury	NORTHEAST COAST
Joan Doucette	WOMEN'S POSITION
Mike Noonan	CREW MEMBER
Jim Chidley	POUCH COVE TO POINT LANCE
Brian Careen	ST. BRIDES TO SWIFT CURRENT
Alfred Fitzpatrick	MONKSTOWN TO GARNISH
Dan Baker	ST. BERNARDS TO MACCALLUM
Kevin Hardy	FRANCOIS TO CODROY
Roger Lacosta	HIGHLANDS TO COX'S COVE
Frank Piercey	TROUT RIVER TO NODDY BAY & LANSE AU CLAIR TO RED BAY
Michael Symmonds	QUIRPON TO ENGLEE
Albert Wells	JACKSON'S ARM TO N. HEAD <40'
Randy Randell	JACKSON'S ARM TO N. HEAD >40'

Eldred Woodford	N. HEAD TO POINT ALBERT INCL. NEW WORLD ISLAND AND TWILLINGATE
Basil Goodyear	GANDER BAY TO CAPE FREELS, INCL. FOGO AND CHANGE ISLANDS
Dennis Chaulk	NEWTOWN TO ELLISTON
Gilbert Penney	LITTLE CATALINA TO GREEN'S HARBOUR
Keith Smith	WHITEWAY TO CARBONEAR
Wayne Russel	HR. GRACE TO PORTUGAL COVE NORTH
Alton Rumbolt	HENLEY HARBOUR TO CARTWRIGHT
Larry Pinksen	CREW MEMBER
Darrin Marsh	CREW MEMBER
Shelly White	CREW MEMBER
Loretta Kelly	WOMEN'S POSITION
Nancy Bowers	WOMEN'S POSITION
Denise Hillier	WOMEN'S POSITION
Ren Genge	MEMBER AT LARGE
Kevin Best	MEMBER AT LARGE
Glen Winslow	MEMBER AT LARGE
Andy Careen	MEMBER AT LARGE

# NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PLANT WORKERS, HARVESTERS TO SUFFER AT LOSS OF SURF CLAM QUOTA

The recent decision by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to give 25 per cent of the current quota for Arctic surf clams to new entrants to the fishery has raised serious concerns for members of the Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW-Unifor).

The fish processing sector in Newfoundland and Labrador has faced some very significant challenges in recent years due to a decline in various fish species. Arctic surf clam has played a vital role in ensuring plant workers in Grand Bank have good paying, full-time jobs—something that has been increasingly scarce in our province’s fish processing sector in

es in this area is unprecedented, necessitating immediate action by the provincial and federal governments. Inshore fish harvesters and south coast communities are more dependent on the small-scale cod fishery now more than any time in decades.

“Inshore owner-operator vessels are capable of being engaged in the arctic surf clam fishery,” says Keith Sullivan, President of FFAW-Unifor. “In an area like Placentia Bay that has been devastated by the decline in crab and cod, surf clams would present an excellent opportunity for rural economic sustainability in the region. Inshore harvesters would



recent years. Now, there are serious concerns that a large cut in surf clam quota will result in job losses and a reduction in hours of work in our province.

“The surf clam fish plant is the economic driver of Grand Bank and surrounding communities,” says Charlie Baker, chair of the FFAW local at the plant and a member of the Union’s executive board. “This is good work and it shows the onshore value that can exist when adjacency and historical attachment are applied.”

Moreover, inshore harvesters in this area are facing economic conditions that rival the cod moratorium. The severe decline of a large variety of commercially valuable fish resourc-

es be landing the clams onshore, giving Clearwater the opportunity to work with inshore harvesters in this fishery to meet processing needs,” adds Sullivan.

Upon the announcement of a new license for surf clam, harvesters and the Union were disappointed to learn that the owner-operator fleet was not eligible to apply, as the new license would be reserved for a First Nations application.

“There is room to pursue First Nations reconciliation and rural economic sustainability simultaneously. There is space in the surf clam fishery for owner-operator harvesters and First Nations participation. As it stands now, our province will suffer greatly as a result of the decision,” concludes Sullivan.

# FLASHBACK



Do you recognize these people? Who are they? What are they doing? What was the name of the group they were a part of? If you know the answers please send them to [cglode@ffaw.net](mailto:cglode@ffaw.net) and your name will be entered for a prize. The winner will be announced in the next issue of The Union Forum.



Last edition's flashback photo was not identified.

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