



FFAW | UNIFOR
Fish, Food & Allied Workers

SUMMER/FALL 2020

the union forum



COVID-19 Takes World - and Fishery - by Surprise

**Young Harvesters
Forums Bring Together
Future of Fishery**

**Bill Broderick Retires
After 60-Years of Fishing
and Union Activism**



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Printing Transcontinental Printing, St. John's

Design Victoria Snelgrove

The **Union Forum**, the official magazine of the Fish, Food and Allied Workers' Union (FFAW-Unifor), is distributed free of charge to Union members quarterly.

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

Keith Sullivan, President



This issue of the Union Forum was originally scheduled to be published in late March. However, as most of the world, including this province, began to shut down in late February and March, we realized that circumstances were changing at too

fast a pace for our print magazine. Information on the pandemic and its impact were changing literally every day.

So instead your Union focused on providing constant updates on our website, allowing people to remain as informed as possible through a very difficult time that none of us anticipated. I'm very proud of the work your Union did with posting information and updates on the various pandemic support programs that were created. On one day in early April, there were more than 53,000 visits to our website, with the vast majority accessing our information on CERB and EI. It was such a high volume of traffic that we had to ask our website provider to increase our bandwidth.

Your Union was able to do this work – not just posting material but also seeking answers to the many questions that were posed – because it has built up the capacity to do so. We were able to adapt to this sudden shift posed by a pandemic because we have remained united and strong.

COVID-19 also highlighted the strong character of our membership. The vast majority of our membership were either in essential services or were able to continue to work during the worst of the pandemic in the province.

Whether it was at Long Harbour, in the Molson brewery, on the line in the fish plant, or on the deck of a boat, thousands of our members braved the uncertainty of a deadly and scary pandemic to keep our province's economy going.

But our members also displayed a great sense of concern and responsibility and were adamant about not bowing to pressure to put profits ahead of safety. In mid-April, with our COVID-19 outbreak not yet under control, processing companies started a not-so-subtle campaign to open our province's two biggest fisheries – crab and lobster. Processing companies wanted to put harvesters on the water, where social distancing and face masks are impossible, with no regard to the consequences of how an outbreak would impact rural NL. These same companies wanted thousands of people, mostly women, to work on a line in the plant, where social distancing is difficult, where ventilation is a concern, and where underlying lung issues like shellfish asthma are common. A COVID-19 outbreak in a fish plant in this province was a terrifying, but possible, prospect in April.

Harvesters and plant workers stood united on this. They said “NO” to profits before safety, and “YES” to keep their families and friends safe. It is possible that lives were saved by the decision of our members to resist an irresponsible call from processing companies to go to work. As the rest of the world has shown, it is in the harvesting and processing sectors where outbreaks are most difficult to contain.

While the actions of our membership have been exemplary and beyond reproach, the same cannot be said for other stakeholders in the fishery. It is no coincidence that in the midst of a pandemic processing companies decided to push for a massive, across the board, decline in fish prices. We have accused processors on many occasions across the negotiating table of “using” COVID-19 to lower prices. Processors have been indignant at this accusation. However, when the sole reason given for a price decline is COVID-19 and no evidence is provided of how COVID-19 is actually

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

affecting the price, then it is clear that pandemic is being used as a scare tactic to force a lower price.

We are currently in a very concerning phase in the relationship between harvesters and processors. Prior to the pandemic Royal Greenland agreed to purchase Quinlan Brothers. If this purchase is approved, Royal Greenland, owned entirely by the government of Greenland, will hold a dominating position in this province's fishery, unlike any other in our history. We have seen how Royal Greenland functions in other jurisdictions, where their dominating position coincides with reduced prices to harvesters. We have no doubt that the belligerency of processing companies this year is only a sign of what is to come if Royal Greenland acquires Quinlan Brothers.

In the face of the pandemic, we had hoped DFO would work more cooperatively with harvesters, but this never materialized. Announcements are left for too late and requests for information are slow to be fulfilled.

We had hoped after the 2019 spring protest, which was about respect for harvesters where many faced unjustified crab cuts and prompted DFO to appropriately change its position, that harvester's opinions would be given more consideration. Many believed this may have been a turning point in the relationship and that the voice of harvesters would be heard once again. That does not appear to be so.

DFO's work on cod was very disappointing. A full northern cod assessment was not completed because of the pandemic. That being the case, it stands to reason that there should have been a wider discussion on the science and a consideration of all available sources to compensate for the lack of assessment. This was not done. Instead, we were only allowed to provide input after all the relevant information was drafted. That is not good enough.

Predictably, we ended with no increase in cod quotas this year when the size of the stock could support something greater.

Similarly, DFO slashed the 3Ps cod quotas with inshore harvester's opinions and reliance on this fishery given little consideration. At these decreased levels inshore harvesters must have access to the full available quota.

On mackerel, DFO did nothing to further our efforts to secure an appropriate quota, with the result that harvesters will be left with little to land this year. While doing nothing on mackerel, DFO was content to approve a yellowtail quota for American vessels in Canadian waters, despite the fact that NL harvesters have no access to yellowtail but have capability to fish it.

There are some examples of DFO working closely with harvesters, but clearly much more cooperation is needed.

The pandemic has had deep financial impacts on many of our members and your Union has been at the forefront of securing programs and resources to provide support. Your Union played a leading role to secure financial supports that address the specifics of fish harvesting. Programs now exist that will help harvesters offset losses that may have accrued this year, while also securing access to a fair level of EI. We have also pushed very hard for supports for fish plant workers, understanding that they took on an incredible risk this year by working through the pandemic.

As we head into the last few months of 2020, I think of the many memes and cartoons posted on Facebook about how everyone will be glad to see this year in the rearview mirror. I can't say I disagree. But I think this year will be remembered for more than just face masks and physical distancing. I think we will remember it for our perseverance, for our ability to care for our communities, and for our patience and kindness and understanding. This has been a hard year, but we are weathering the storm.

Please stay safe and follow the recommended health guidelines during the pandemic.

FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR FISH HARVESTERS AFFECTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The application process for the Fish Harvester Benefit and Fish Harvester Grant is now open. Visit www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/harvesters-pecheurs to apply. The deadline to apply is September 21, 2020.

The Benefit will cover income losses beyond a 25% threshold for the 2020 tax year when compared to 2018 or 2019. The maximum benefit is \$10,164.

The Grant program a non-repayable grant to self-employed fish harvesters with a valid commercial fishing licence in 2020 and non-deferrable business costs of up to \$40,000. The grant program provides non repayable support of up to \$10,000, dependent on the level of the fish harvesters' historic fishing revenue in 2018 or 2019. A lesser grant amount may be provided on a sliding scale relative to revenue or actual expenses.

Enterprise owners should be eligible to apply for both the Grant and the Benefit if they did not avail of the CEBA loan or wage subsidy programs.

Crew members can avail of the Benefit program IF they are a shareperson, not a waged crew member.

All of the eligibility information can be found on DFO's

website. For questions or clarifications on the grant or benefit, please call 1-833-674-8283.

How is your Fish Harvester Benefit payment calculated?

You are eligible for Fish Harvester Benefit if you expect a fishing income decline of more than 25% in 2020, as compared to your higher gross fishing income from either 2018 or 2019. In other words, your expected income for 2020 must be less than 75% of your higher income from either 2018 or 2019. This becomes your fishing income decline threshold. The Fish Harvester Benefit is calculated based on your fishing income decline threshold, less what you expect to earn in 2020. You'll receive 75% of that value to a maximum of \$10,164, with a first payment of 60% of your total. This amount is taxable and taxes have not yet been deducted.

EXAMPLE:

The following calculations use the example of an income of \$30,000 in 2019 and an income of \$20,000 in 2020.

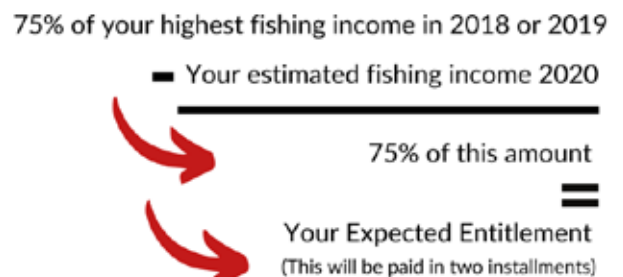
Your higher gross fishing income is \$30,000 so your

Calculating the Fish Harvester Grant



Your total Fish Harvester Grant amount cannot exceed your expected eligible expenditures or a maximum of \$10,000, whichever is lower.

Calculating the Fish Harvester Benefit



income decline threshold is 75% of \$30,000 = \$22,500.

Your expected income for 2020 is \$20,000.

- The total expected Fish Harvester Benefit amount is 75% of, your income decline threshold less your expected income, to a maximum of \$10,164:

75% of (\$22,500 – \$20,000) = \$1,875

- Your first payment is 60% of \$1,875 or 60% of the maximum \$10,164, whichever is lower:

60% of \$1,875 = \$1,125

How is your Fish Harvester Grant payment of \$3,000 calculated?

The following calculations use the example of an income of \$30,000 in 2019 and an income of \$20,000 in 2020.

You are entitled to 10% of the higher of your 2018 or 2019 gross fishing income.

Your higher gross fishing income is \$30,000 for 2019 and your expected eligible expenditures for 2020 is \$5,000. This amount is taxable and taxes have not yet been deducted.

- Your payment:

10% of \$30,000 = \$3,000

Your total Fish Harvester Grant amount cannot exceed your expected eligible expenditures of \$5,000 or a maximum of \$10,000, whichever is lower.

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CAMPAIGNS UPDATE

Alyse Stuart, Campaigns and Membership Development Coordinator

In response to the economic challenges of COVID-19 that directly impact our members, FFAW-Unifor has developed campaign action plans to push for support from the federal government. During the first months of the pandemic, the country saw record job loss. The timing also threatened the ability of our fishery to safely operate which meant the season was put on hold. The delay in the fishery due to safety and the stalling of global markets impacted our members who were facing the end of their Employment Insurance claims without clear economic recovery plans from any level of government. To address the needs of our members, FFAW-Unifor launched a campaign calling on the government to provide support for all workers in the fishery including harvesters, plant workers, and industrial professionals.

Our proposal highlighted the specific economic challenges that the NL fishing industry would face over the next 12 months and provided solutions to enable the inshore harvesting sector to survive the current economic storm caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The measures presented would better position the fishing industry to participate in the economic recovery over the longer-term with income support for all members, enterprise viability, and enterprise liquidity. Along with our submission to government and active lobbying, we launched two campaigns calling for support to fish harvesters and plant workers.

Save our Fishery was launched in the first week of May on our social media sites and included a tool for members to send letters directly to every NL Member of Parliament and the Prime Minister. In just over a week, our Union sent over 2000 letters! The direct action worked, because on May 14th the federal government announced \$470 million in support for fish harvesters with grants, subsidies, and changes to employment insurance. We continue to hold the government accountable on these commitments and

by calling on them to release the details of these programs. All updates will be available on our website www.ffaw.ca

Missing from the federal government's response to our proposal was the commitment to income support for plant workers and industrial professionals through changes to Employment Insurance. In order to bring attention to the workers that the federal funding missed, we met with plant workers to discuss how to best advocate for these supports.

We launched the campaign Federal Support for Plant Workers to call on the federal government to implement a multi-faceted program of financial assistance with amended extended E.I. benefits for a 12-month period based on the previous year, and an option to adjust the 14-week divisor based on the actual weeks of work to account for any discrepancy in reduced hours due to the pandemic. Over 1,500 plant workers from every plant represented by FFAW-Unifor signed our petition, which will be presented at the House of Commons by Jack Harris, NDP- St. John's Center in the fall. Again, any update will be available on our website at www.ffaw.ca.

As we all attempt to find a new normal it is important that we hear from FFAW-Unifor members about your experiences during the pandemic. Keep an eye out for a survey of members which will be circulated in the fall.

In these times, we are also investigating ways to communicate effectively with our members when we can't meet in person. Throughout the fall and winter, FFAW-Unifor will host webinars and video chats on various topics to keep you informed. Please make sure you are signed up to receive our emails, follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, to receive all the latest campaign updates.

PANDEMIC HIGHLIGHTS FLAWS IN EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE SYSTEM

There is no question that this pandemic has highlighted the cracks in our social safety net, which for decades has been the target of regressive government cuts. Piece by piece, government after government, the systems of social welfare that were once celebrated have been attacked. As noted by unions and those advocating for a strong public sector, with every budget cut we see less funding to the programs crucial to our community survival.



With COVID-19, EI failed the greatest test of our generation. In fact, the system was so inefficient in helping workers that a completely new program had to be created. Our members who navigate EI could have predicted this epic failure.

Employment insurance is a program that is funded by workers and employers but is completely managed by the federal government without oversight from either of these groups. In recent years, the system has not effectively achieved its two primary goals of providing

income protection to those who are temporarily out of work and supporting skills training and labour market adjustment. Instead, the system is unnecessarily complicated and full of barriers to accessing income support.

Time has run out. Workers need quick processing from an assistance program, and it must be automated as much as possible to reduce wait-times and confusion. The aim must be to support the greatest number of unemployed workers, not create more barriers to accessing benefits. To do so, there must be standardized insurable hours and qualifying rules for all those who work, including low wage earners, precarious workers, and those who are self-employed. Once eligible for the support, benefits must be enhanced and expanded to 75% of insurable income. There is no longer room for error when millions of workers livelihoods are on the line.

In late August, the federal government announced changes to EI and the transition away from the CERB to a new program administered through the EI system. The EI reforms announced were a significant victory for unions who have long been advocating for changes. The EI program was modified to reduce the number of qualifying hours needed to open a claim and a new benefits floor of \$400 per week was announced. Make no mistake, these changes are a good thing. But in order to be truly effective, a major overhaul of the EI system is needed and the new measures announced in August must be made permanent.

The failure of employment insurance and the creation of the more streamlined financial assistance program with CERB has proven that the current system is broken, and the only repair is immediate and long-term reform. The focus must be on the needs of workers because we know partial solutions do not work.

YOUNG HARVESTERS FORUMS

Despite the significant victories of the fishery over the last ten years with increases in landed value, protections for workers, and the commitments in the Fisheries Act that solidifies fleet separation; considerable challenges remain to protect the future of the fishery. In Newfoundland and Labrador, across every sector pronounced labour market realities threaten our workforce with a shrinking and aging demographic, this is also true for the fishery. The future of the fishery depends upon encouraging new entrants and supporting young harvesters as they navigate this sector.



In order to start conversations about how we can better support young harvesters, FFAW-Unifor hosted the first round of forums in Bay Robert's, Gander, and Deer Lake in January and February. The Young Harvester Forums brought together approximately twenty young harvesters with several more seasoned harvesters to talk about the challenges facing the fishery and possible solutions. Sessions included an overview of the history of the union and FFAW Science initiatives, presentations from the CBDC about financial planning, the PFHCB about the certification process, the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour, and the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters.

Those in attendance at the forums shared experiences on the challenges in both entering and staying in the fishery. Common threads among these stories were the economic barriers to accessing the increasingly expensive

licenses, as well as the knowledge gap about funding options available to pursue education credits, enterprise loans, and other financial supports. Young harvesters mentioned the need for the strict enforcement from DFO to end the controlling agreements that are negatively impacting their ability to afford the available licences.

The commitment and passion among those in attendance showed our collective will to address problems and many harvesters are ready to work on finding solutions. Many participants expressed interest in attending more training sessions on various union activities, current research, financial workshops that are tailored to the needs of young harvesters, and other sessions that support the massive need for succession planning.

Part of the forum was dedicated to the recent research about young harvesters in the Atlantic provinces and accompanying programming being done by the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters. The Council completed significant research that shows the immense economic benefits of the fishery over the last ten years with steady increases in the landed value of stocks. However, the most alarming data from the research shows that the economic security of the fishery is threatened by demographic insecurity, with Newfoundland and Labrador facing the most severe shift in the workforce. Over 40% of the workforce is over the age of 55, while only 17% are under the age of 35, as those over age of 55 move into retirement there will be a substantial employment gap that must be addressed immediately by all those involved.

As a follow up to the forums, a survey was sent to young harvesters on our email list about next steps. We will continue to reach out about possible training sessions, workshops, and other opportunities as we work together to find solutions for the various barriers for young harvesters in this industry. We encourage young harvesters to ensure they have provided an up-to-date email for correspondence and are following us on social media, so they do not miss any announcements. Together, we can all build a bright future for young harvesters!

YHF - BAY ROBERTS



YHF - DEER LAKE



YHF - GANDER



THE COVID-19 SHOCK DOCTRINE AND FISH PRICES

Robert Keenan, FFAW-Unifor Projects Manager

COVID-19 is the biggest global event since the Second World War and has upended the global economy in a manner not seen since the Great Depression.

But COVID-19 is not affecting everything the same way and for some sectors, like the retail food market, it has produced incredible profits.

The fishery is a prime example of the uneven effects of COVID-19 on the marketplace. There remains a massive global demand for fish – it is nutritious, economical, and culturally important. Those facts do not change because of a pandemic. For some fish, particularly species usually consumed in restaurants like lobster and halibut, the impact of COVID-19 was expected to be more direct. This is precisely what happened, as prices for lobster and halibut declined to 2014 levels because restaurant sales plummeted.

However, fish processors in this province tried to use COVID-19 as a justification for collapsing all fish prices in this province. In turbot, the sole justification for reducing the per pound price by 75 cents was COVID-19, though no proof was provided linking the pandemic to lower prices. The mere fact that turbot is sold primarily to China, which once had challenges with COVID-19, was reason enough for the price cut. It was an argument with no backbone.

In capelin, the market report contained a section in big bold letters – COVID-19 IS NOT AN ISSUE IN THE CAPELIN MARKET. Nonetheless, a huge portion of ASP's submission was devoted to the challenges of COVID-19 and how it lurks everywhere and affects everything.

It would seem logical that cod prices would be stable during a global pandemic. It is widely available at retail and often cooked at home. But according to processors, COVID-19 would depress cod prices because cod would now have to compete at retail with other seafood that could no longer be sold in restaurants. There was no fact behind this argument, just an assertion that it would

happen because COVID-19 was presumed to have that sort of impact.

Even in lobster, where COVID-19 had a definite impact, processors pushed the impact of the pandemic to the extreme. Processors alleged that the price of lobster was going to drop so low and that there would be such a glut that lobster would be used for fertilizer instead of food. As such, they pushed to abolish the minimum price of lobster and sought to tie harvester prices to the low value lobster-flipping business conducted by many buyers. Of course, such a dire prediction on the value of lobster did not come to pass.

And, of course, crab is the ultimate example of using COVID-19 to reduce prices, and that is addressed in another article [SEE PAGE XX].

The examples above speak to the power of the COVID-19 argument. In no other circumstance could a processor assert without evidence an argument for steep price declines without any proof. With COVID-19, it was merely assumed that the worst would happen. As your Union pointed out to the Panel, COVID-19 placed a sort of reverse onus on harvesters – we had to show that the impact of COVID-19 on the market was smaller than what the processors alleged whereas processors did not have to prove how dire they expected the market to be.

Your Union was able to fight off most attempts to use COVID-19 to drastically reduce prices.

- In lobster, your Union won two Panel hearings whereby the processors sought to abolish the minimum price and gut the Urner Barry formula.

- In turbot, we won at the Panel and secured a price that was 50 cents higher than that being offered by processors.

- In capelin, we won at the Panel and secured a price increase over last year.

Unfortunately, processors were able to successfully use COVID-19 to reduce the price of cod. This was a poor decision by the Panel and one that we are certain will prove to be wrong.

We do not know how long the pandemic will last.

Optimistic estimates are that a vaccine will be available early next year. Even if that is true, it will take time to vaccinate billions of people. In the meantime, we must continue to fight back against processors who draw a direct line between the value of fish and COVID-19. If the scope of the COVID-19 outbreak determined price, then the price of crab would be at a record low because

it is mostly sold in the United States, which has the worst outbreak in the world. Instead, the price of crab is near a record high.

The COVID-19 pandemic has already been a huge challenge, but this is made worse by processors who try to use the pandemic to fill their coffers and reduce the financial stability of harvesters.

SUPPORT FOR PLANT WORKERS, OTHER SEASONAL WORKERS AND THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS DUE TO COVID-19

After months of lobbying government and following thousands of letters signed by affected workers, the federal government announced changes to benefits on August 20 for workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These new changes will help processing workers, other seasonal workers as well as those who have lost their jobs or have reduced hours due to the pandemic.



- The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) will be extended for an additional month followed by the introduction of recovery benefits and changes to the EI program.

- Under the new changes, workers will now need 120 hours to qualify for 26 weeks of employment insurance. Minimum benefits will now be at least \$400 per week.

- The Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB) will provide \$500 per week for up to two weeks, for workers who are sick or must self-isolate for reasons related to COVID-19.

- Workers who are self-employed or are ineligible for EI and still require income support, and who are available and looking for work, will be eligible for the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) which will provide \$400 per week for up to 26 weeks.

However, these proposed changes will need to be passed in the House of Commons in September.

More information can be found on the COVID-19 section of our website ffaw.ca and as new information becomes available it will be shared on our website, via email and on social media.

GREEN CRAB MITIGATION UPDATE

Dawn Street, Projects Coordinator

Placentia Bay

Green crab mitigation is ongoing in Placentia Bay in 4th year of the Marine Institute's Coastal Restoration Project, with one year remaining on this project.

While COVID-19 restrictions did not permit the spring fishery to go ahead, activities were able to begin with



David Savoury's first haul in Belleoram Harbour had many lobster even though he could see the green crab crawling along the bottom, it seemed they were scared of the lobster and wouldn't enter the traps. His second haul yielded much better results!



Gary Nash crushing up Green Crab before taking them to the dump in Hermitage.

green crab mitigation efforts on July 6th and will be ongoing until March 2021.

Last year's final totals, as reported in the last issue of the Union Forum, indicated that catches are declining steadily in all sites. Early reports from harvesters on the 2020 catches indicate that numbers are lower this year at all sites compared to the early hauls in previous years.

This is great news and we thank our members for your hard work combatting this invasive species!

Fortune Bay

Mitigation in Fortune Bay began in mid-August as funding was secured under the Department of Fisheries and Land Resources and Natural Resources Canada's BACKES program to combat effects of climate change. This funding is available for mitigation at 14 sites around Fortune Bay.

The draw process took place and those harvesters fished green crab from each site 3 days a week for 8 weeks. The sites were chosen using heat maps from DFO surveys that show the concentration of green crab along the coast of Fortune Bay and are as follows:



Tony Pierce of Harbour Breton hauling his traps in Jersey harbour.



1. Harbour Breton
2. Garnish/Frenchman's Cove
3. Belleoram
4. Connaigre Bay
5. Rencontre East
6. Little Harbour East/Harbour Mille
7. Grand LaPierre/English Harbour East
8. Seal Cove
9. Mose Ambrose/Wreck Cove
10. English Harbour West
11. Little Bay East/Bay L'Argent
12. Hermitage
13. St. Bernard's/Jacques Fontaine
14. Terrenceville

Interest in each of the sites surpassed expectations, indicating that harvesters are very concerned about this invasive species taking over their valuable marine ecosystem. We look forward to making an impact in Fortune Bay. Keep an eye out for future updates in the next issue of the Forum.



Tony Baker's green crab traps in Connaigre Bay.



THE CHALLENGES OF SNOW CRAB PRICING DURING A PANDEMIC

Robert Keenan, FFAW-Unifor Projects Manager

The per pound price of snow crab is the most important value in the fishery for a majority of harvesters. The overall landed value of snow crab is more than \$300 million per year, by far the most valuable fishery in the province. It is now the only species for which we receive two market reports, one for the Asian market and another for the American market.

The Pandemic in NL and the Snow Crab Fishery

This year processors made a mockery of snow crab negotiations at tremendous cost to harvesters. In mid-March, the first COVID-19 infection was confirmed for the province and the pandemic was growing quickly throughout the United States, our most important snow crab market. As most of the world started to shut down, FFAW met with the Association of Seafood Producers, including members from all the large snow crab processors.

Instead of being told the market had collapsed, processors advised that there was still strong demand. ASP even brought up the possibility of establishing a rebate system, whereby harvesters were paid a base price and then received a rebate depending on the value of the snow crab in the market. The processors strongly hinted that they were eager to start on time, even though there were no COVID-19 safety protocols in place for either the harvester or processing sectors.

In the last two weeks of March, COVID-19 infections soared in this province. At one point, we had the second highest infection rate in Canada, just behind Quebec.

Harvesters and plant workers were afraid. How far would this spread? How would we know if someone was infected? What would happen if someone got infected while out to sea or on the line?

Being at home, harvesters and plant workers saw non-stop news coverage of thousands of the elderly dying from COVID-19 and it was understandable that they looked around their own communities, where the elderly far outnumber the young, and felt concern. The tragedy that COVID-19 would create in our rural communities was not difficult to imagine.

Thus, harvesters unanimously decided to delay opening the snow crab season until April 20th. As that date approached, our province was doing better with respect to COVID-19 infections and we had just started flattening the curve, but we were not in clear. As a result, the chairs of the various crab committees voted to further postpone the fishery until May 11th. As was discussed at the time this decision was made, to start both the crab and lobster fisheries would mean putting upwards of 25,000 people in motion, crossing all over the province. Open crab and lobster fisheries would make it very difficult to contain a COVID-19 outbreak.

Processor Reaction

This decision by harvesters to put the safety of their fellow harvesters, plant workers, and communities first, brought out the pettiness of the processors. Companies contacted harvesters to convince them to go fishing and, when this was not successful, they went on the radio and television and accused harvesters of throwing away this year's fishery, an accusation that implied some more negative and cruel. This accusation was rude and

unfounded and spoke to the nature of those who run the fish processing sector in this province.

As a further sign of pettiness, processors then refused to negotiate a price. Instead, they presented the snow crab negotiating committee with an impractical and mean-spirited fleet and trip limit schedule that was not worth debating. Still sulking over harvesters putting safety over profits – an unheard-of commitment in the processing sector – processors then leaked the fleet schedule online to cause further dissent. Every time we tried to bring up prices, ASP referred back to a fleet schedule and trip limits and said that prices could not be



discussed until trip limits were sorted out. It was pure childishness, as if NL trip limits impact the international snow crab market.

Though refusing to negotiate prices, processors had no difficulty arranging to purchase crab from vessels in the Gulf, upon whom trip limits were not imposed, to be processed in Newfoundland. It was a move that was insulting to harvesters, for whom they had made no commitment to buy the entire NL snow crab quota. It was also reckless decision, as it involved unnecessary interactions with people from outside the province at time when travel between the provinces was limited to essential personnel.

Snow Crab Panel Hearing

As the date for the Panel hearing approached, ASP still

refused to negotiate a price, saying that the trip limit issue had to first be settled. Your Union eventually put across an offer with a base price and rebate system based on export values. It was ignored by the processors, which offered an insulting 1 cent in response – a ploy to maintain their ability to appear before the Panel.

It is unfortunate that the Panel does not have the ability to sanction one party for abusing the Panel process. We informed the Panel of the processors' refusal to negotiate, but the Panel could do nothing.

At the Panel hearing, your Union laid out all the market information that was available and stated clearly that the FFAW price of \$3.50/lb was a reasonable price in a very uncertain time. A further reconsideration by either party could account for a better or weaker market if it developed.

ASP's position was essentially that the prices discussed with the Union in March were no longer valid; harvesters could not now receive these prices because they refused to fish during the worst of the pandemic. This, again, was petty, but also wrong. Processors know exactly how the market is functioning. They have access to direct market information that harvesters do not receive. They knew that at that time of the Panel hearing the price in the market for 5-8 sections was above \$5.50 USD per pound and could easily support a price of \$3.50.

But the processors had the power of the pandemic argument on their side and addressed the Panel in apocalyptic terms about the state of the American economy, the disruption to trade, and the postponement of the Tokyo Olympics. Therefore, the price of crab needed to be \$2.90 a pound, because any market strength right now would evaporate as the unemployment numbers increased and restaurants remained closed.

This was all conjecture. ASP never once provided any real evidence to show how all the COVID-19 disruption was actually impacting the market – we never saw a contract from a processor with a purchaser showing a drastic reduction in price. There was no substance to attach to their predictions.

Your Union had the facts on its side. It knew what the market was in the Gulf and at what price product was being sold into the US. We thought that current prices may decline, but we also did not believe that the market was on the verge of utter collapse, which is what the

ASP price suggested.

In the end, the Panel made a terrible decision and selected the ASP price. Your Union was shocked and angered by the result. The decision could not be justified. A \$2.90 price supported a market price of less than \$5.00 USD, and not even the Panel thought the price would get that low.

Price Reconsideration

Harvesters fishing crab for \$2.90/lbs for a prolonged period of time was not acceptable to your Union. That was an insulting price, and even in the uncertainty of the pandemic, the price should have been higher. The financial cost to harvesters of fishing at \$2.90 was too great.

Your Union submitted its request for a reconsideration a week after the Panel's decision, explaining how incorrect



the \$2.90 price was. The challenge your Union now faced was what price it should submit for the reconsideration. There was a little more market information available and that was positive, but the market was still unsettled. Then, the night before the hearing, John Sackton supplied an updated market analysis to the parties and the Panel, arguing that nothing had changed since the Panel's initial decision and that the Panel should not be adjusting prices upwards.

The Sackton report put your Union in a very difficult position. Should we submit a price higher than \$3.50 and run the real risk of losing? If we lost the reconsideration, there would be no further chance to increase the price.

Or do we stick with \$3.50, confident that we would be successful at this price. Keep in mind that in early May, we were still being told that the price of crab would go down, not up from the \$6.95 market price.

We also did not know if ASP was going to stay with the \$2.90 price on which it had won originally or whether it would go higher. Given the market at the time, it is quite possible that a new ASP price offer of \$3.20 could have won. In the end, they stuck at \$2.90.

Your Union stayed at \$3.50. The risk and consequence of a loss was simply too great. Your Union won the reconsideration on May 13th, but it now had no further reconsiderations available for snow crab.

The Snow Crab Market Summer 2020

The snow crab market remained steady through May, but as businesses re-opened in the US in June prices started to increase. Your Union looked at these market increases with deep frustration; we should not have lost the original hearing, which meant we would have had our reconsideration left. Harvesters were losing tens of millions of dollars because of a bad decision from the Panel.

In mid-June, we filed another request for a reconsideration with the Panel, citing the higher market prices and the challenges posed by the pandemic as reasons for why a second reconsideration was warranted. This request was a longshot, as legislatively we were limited to one reconsideration per species. Our request was denied.

In the end, we were caught in a system that needs some change so that the losses this year are never again repeated.

- There needs to be changes in collective bargaining. Price positions need to be supported by fact and documents. If these cannot be produced, then a price position cannot prevail.
- Related to the first point, there needs to be transparency in collective bargaining. We should not be arguing over crab yields and the value of domestic sales.
- The panel process needs to be more flexible to promote greater negotiation and cooperation. There needs to be consequences when one party does not a meaningful effort to participate.

HARVESTER PROFILE

IVAN LEAR

HOME PORT: Port de Grave

YEARS IN INDUSTRY: 15

FISHERIES: Crab, turbot, shrimp and cod

Ivan Lear is a FFAW-Unifor Inshore Council member elected to represent one of two Young Harvester positions on the council.

Ivan is a fourth-generation fisherman who grew up fishing with his father and now owns and operates the family fishing business with his older brother in Port de Grave, fishing for crab, turbot, shrimp and cod.

Ivan says what he loves most about fishing is the sense of freedom on the water and the adventure that each day brings.

Ivan decided to run for a leadership position because he felt he could offer a different perspective as a younger person in the industry, combined with what he has learned from older generations in his family. He felt it important to give young harvesters a voice at the table to ensure there is a fishery for the future.

Ivan feels good about the future of the fishery and says, "Just like every industry, when faced with challenges you have to adjust the main sail and navigate the changes."



CORPORATE CONCENTRATION IN THE NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR FISHERY

In Newfoundland and Labrador, there was a time when the processing sector was largely represented by local independent processing plants in communities across the province. However, over time and more intensely in recent years, larger companies have purchased these independent companies, concentrating more processing licenses in the hands of a few larger companies. These larger companies, some of whom are multi-national, have extensive amounts of capital investments and are able to purchase smaller companies along the supply chain. Currently, there are four companies that represent a significant market share: Barry Group International, Ocean Choice International, Quinlan Brothers, and Royal

prime example of corporate concentration can be seen in food retail in Canada, where 4 large corporations (Loblaws, Sobeys, Costco and Walmart) control 72% of the market, with Loblaws and Sobeys holding over 50%. With such a high level of corporate concentration, these large retailers are able to influence food prices and encourage low wages, as seen by the recent bread price fixing scandal and removal of hero pay to retail workers who stood on the front lines of the pandemic.

Since acquiring Quin-Sea in 2016, Royal Greenland has expanded its footprint in the NL processing sector by acquiring an interest in Gulf Shrimp Limited and Independent Fish Harvesters Inc. These two companies

Top Ten Seafood Processing Companies	
2000	2020
Fisheries Product International Ltd.	Quin-Sea- Royal Greenland
National Sea Prodcuts Ltd.	Barry Group International Ltd.
Woodman's Sea Products Ltd.	Quinlan Brothers Ltd.
Barry Group/ Seafreeze	Ocean Choice International Ltd.
Seacrest Corporation of Canada Ltd.	Labrador Fishermen's Union Shrimp Company Ltd.
Daley Brothers Ltd.	Icewater Seafood Inc.
P. Janes & Sons Ltd.	Beothic Fish Processors Ltd.
Allen's Fisheries Ltd.	Clearwater Seafoods Limited Partnership
Eric King Fisheries Ltd.	Codroy Seafood Inc.
St. Anthony Seafood Ltd. Partnership	Notre Dame Seafoods Inc.
Top 10: 80% of Production	Top 10: 95 % of Production
Top 4: 72% of Production	Top 4: 82% of Production

Greenland. If the proposed sale of Quinlan Brother's Ltd. is approved by the provincial fish processing licensing board, Royal Greenland will not only have a significant market share within the province, but almost total control of processing in an entire region of our province.

Economists, policy makers, and many companies alike are in agreement that competition is healthy in any industry as it allows for a more robust market. However, when corporate concentration surpasses certain levels and competition decreases, like we are seeing in this province, there are considerable negative impacts on the market, overall capacity, and worker wages. A

have primary processing plants in Black Duck Cove, Baie Verte, and Brigus, that process shrimp, pelagics, groundfish, lobster, and snow crab. If the sale of Quinlans Brothers to Royal Greenland is approved, 12 processing plants in this province will be owned by Royal Greenland, many of which are the largest employers in their regions. With this proposed sale of Quinlan's to Royal Greenland, we will see the further corporate concentration in the fish processing sector, only this time it will be a foreign owned and operated company that is at the top.

It is important to note that significant amounts of

profit and tax revenue will not stay here in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and will instead leave with the salaries and bonuses of the Royal Greenland executives. In a province that faces very difficult financial challenges, allowing the executives of another nation to reap huge profits from NL resources is a financial and social miscalculation.

Aside from significant taxable income leaving the province, there will be significant impacts on the communities that will solely depend upon Royal Greenland. In Old Perlican, the town has already come to understand the impact of doing business with a large corporation who is unwilling to pay their fair share. Royal

Greenland and Quin-Sea refused to pay municipal water taxes citing unfair increases, however the new rate was not only a competitive with other jurisdictions, but the increased cost was a result of the strain being put on the water system by the processing plant.

It is the responsibility of the Provincial Licensing Board to uphold the highest standards for those who are granted the privilege to process seafood in Newfoundland and Labrador. We must always look to protecting the future of the fishery and our coastal communities through the highest standards provincial oversight and transparency in fish processing.

FFAW TO RETRIEVE LOST FISHING GEAR FROM AROUND THE PROVINCE

This year marks the initiation of a two-year project by FFAW Science to retrieve lost fishing gear from around the province as part of a large national effort to remove lost and derelict fishing gear and minimize ghost fishing in Canadian waters. With funding from the Federal Government Ghost Gear Fund, the union will consult harvesters to identify inshore fishing areas where lost gear is likely to be found, and charter fishing vessels in these areas to retrieve gear from all across the province. Gear detection and retrieval will occur simultaneously using two vessels, one equipped with gear detection technology - namely a side scan sonar or multibeam echosounder - and one larger vessel to retrieve any gear that is located.

Once retrieved, gear will be separated and quantified.



An inventory of amounts of the material collected (e.g. nylon, iron, polyethylene) will be inventoried by the Civic Laboratory of Environmental Action Research (CLEAR) at Memorial University. These findings will be used to guide future gear disposal and recycling programs in the province, by first understanding what industry requirements are for large-scale recycling of such materials.

Following the inventory process, all identifiable gear will be provided to DFO for return to harvesters. Secondly, components such as rope will be made available to local entrepreneurs and artisans who make recycled fishing gear doormats and other products or recycled where available. Any materials that cannot be reused, upcycled or recycled will be transported and landfilled.

Once gear retrieval and inventory has been completed, findings from the FFAW's gear retrieval efforts and materials inventory will be compiled into a Lost Gear Retrieval Best Practices Training Workshop that will be delivered through face-to-face outreach across the province over the next two years.

Gear retrieval efforts started in 4R this August and will move to 3Ps later in the year. The union plans to spread gear retrieval efforts across all NAFO divisions by the completion of the project in 2022.

SEISMIC EXPLORATION ON TURBOT GROUNDS

Robyn Lee, FFAW-Unifor Petroleum Industry Liaison

Three weeks prior to the start of the 2020 turbot fishery opening in 2J3KL there was a change in location for one of the three offshore seismic programs being undertaken this year. The Ramform Atlas was planning to shoot a 3D seismic program in the Northeast Slope Marine Refuge (see Figure 1). A last-minute change, due

open turbot fishing this year there was active fishing close to where the seismic vessel was shooting. We have heard concerns from harvesters regarding turbot catch rates related to adjacency of the seismic vessel. We've spoken directly with several harvesters but encourage more harvesters to connect with their Staff Representatives and/or the Petroleum Industry Liaison, Robyn Lee, to document these cases. It is important that



Figure 1. Map of the seismic plan and historical fishing data for the Blomidon project with the original plan, outlined in grey, and the shifted plan, outlined in orange. The grey blocks are historical turbot catch data while the blue blocks represent crab catch data. (All catch data is not presented here).

to a delayed announcement related to the CNLOPB's scheduled land tenure system, resulted in the vessel starting its season acquiring seismic data in a block that straddles the boundary between 3K, 3L and the shelf break. The block also comprises important turbot grounds for harvesters in 2J3KL.

FFAW-Unifor continues to be focused on mitigating impacts of seismic activity on the fishing industry. As a condition of their authorization to conduct work offshore the seismic vessel had committed to avoid active fishing areas. This is a mitigation measure, not an absolute rule/regulation. DFO does not put any conditions on where seismic vessels can work during active fishing seasons.

The activity of seismic vessels is monitored by FFAW-Unifor 24/7. Fisheries Liaison Officers (FLOs) are deployed onboard seismic vessels to speak to harvesters on the water and note where gear is set to avoid gear interactions. This particular seismic vessel tows 16 streamers so preventing entanglement with fishing gear is very important. If entanglement does occur, a Gear Compensation Program is accessible to harvesters.

During the coinciding period of seismic shooting and

information be reported accurately to appropriately assess and quantify seismic-fishing interactions.

The CNLOPB's scheduled land tenure system has recently identified a proposed sector to promote future exploratory drilling in this same area. The area has been roughly outlined but it is concerning to the fishing industry as there could be conflict for both crab and turbot harvesters going forward. Calls for nominations to delineate any parcels of land that will then be put out to bid will not be until next summer (2021). The actual call for bids will not be until 2022.

FFAW-Unifor will continue to express concerns to provincial and federal government agencies and departments in order to mitigate impacts of oil and gas activities on the fishing industry. More local research, particularly, is needed to quantify and qualify harvester concerns related to seismic-fishing interactions in our offshore.

If you have questions related to seismic exploration or other oil and gas issues please contact Robyn Lee, Petroleum Industry Liaison at FFAW-Unifor at (709) 576-7276.

NICE CATCH!



A blue crab caught by Chris Careen and crew of the Point Lance Predator, caught in nearshore area.



A purple/blue snow crab caught by the crew of the Conception Run. Thanks to Ivan Lear for sharing!



Wade Stoodley in Connaigre Bay earlier this season. A beautiful v-notched lobster put back into the ocean for generations to come!



Vibrant blue lobster caught by Raymond Hardy in Rencontre East, LFA 11. Amazing!



We've seen lots of unusual coloured lobsters, but have you ever seen an albino snow crab? Gavin Careen caught this pigment-free snow crab about 30nm SSE from Cape Race, in the nearshore for the small supplementary fleet.

FFAW REDFISH TRAWL EXPERIMENTS: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE AND PROFITABLE REDFISH FISHERY IN THE GULF

Dr. Erin Carruthers, FFAW-Unifor Fisheries Scientist

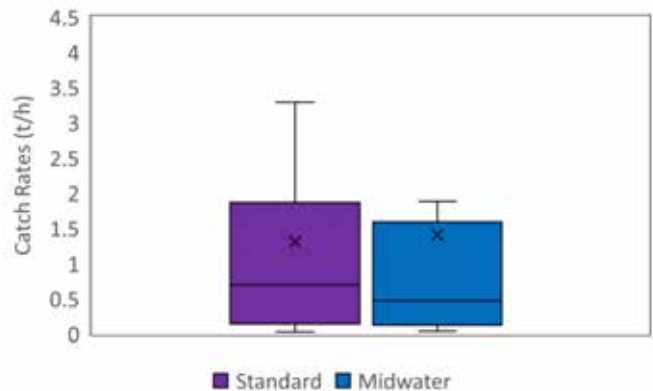
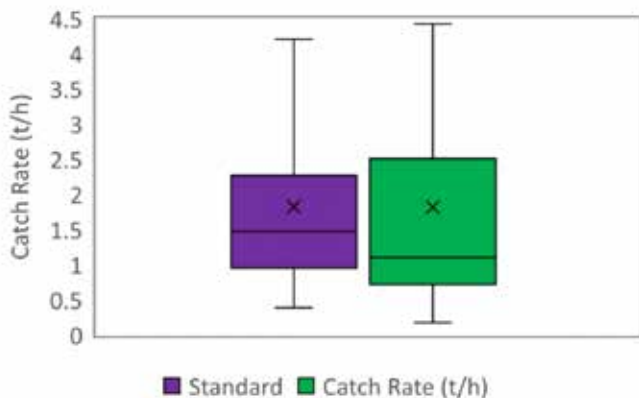
Redfish biomass continues to grow and dominate the Gulf of St. Lawrence finfish biomass, with *Sebastes mentella* trawlable biomass estimated to be 4,365,000 t in 2019, which is the highest level since the 1980s. It is a once-in-a-lifetime fishery development opportunity but there are still considerable challenges in building this sustainable, profitable, and long-term fishery. FFAW and the NL groundfish otter trawl fleet in 4R3Pn have been doing experimental fishing to find ways to: (1) target the more abundant redfish species (mentella); (2) minimize bycatch and harm to groundfish like Atlantic halibut; and (3) fish more sustainably overall.

We fished a modified bottom trawl and a standard groundfish bottom trawl side-by-side. The modified trawl was fished with semi-pelagic doors and the result was that the redfish catch rates were as good as – and at times better than – the standard trawl. Redfish catch rates were on average 1.8 t/h, which is comparable to commercial catch rates in the 1980s. This means there

is no decrease in commercial catch rates from fishing with the semi-pelagic doors – and minimizing trawling impacts on the bottom.

In January 2020, there was one midwater set with close to 4 t caught in less than a ½ hour fishing, although these catch rates were variable, these were as good as those from the standard bottom trawl fishing trials. This was a major improvement because midwater catch rates were quite low during fishing trials in 2018 and 2019. Troy Genge, the captain of the *Guardian Gale*, reported that when they fished the midwater trawl there was very little bycatch and that when you looked back on the deck, it was all redfish.

Given the magnitude of the future redfish catches compared to the size of the Gulf halibut TAC, the bycatch must be near zero to protect existing high-value, sustainable fisheries. Projected redfish TACs range from 40,000 t up to over 100,000 t depending on the success of the fleets in targeting – and documenting catch of the more abundant mentella species. With over 500 licenses, Atlantic halibut is essential in supporting the sustainable



high-value fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the 3Pn4R longline fishery. Consequently, FFAW is testing ways to: 1) avoid halibut bycatch; 2) modify trawls so halibut can escape the gear at depth, and 3) determine if post-release survival is viable.

It may be possible to avoid halibut bycatch as no halibut were captured in the midwater trawl and, in November of last year, halibut were rarely caught at depths greater than 300 m. Furthermore, only 14% of deep sets caught any halibut, whereas 64% of sets fished shallower than 300 m caught halibut. It was encouraging that when we attached a sample bag to the underside of the modified trawl to count fish swimming below a horizontal separator panel and out through the escape vents, we found that all halibut swam below the panel and out through the vents.

However, we still have work to do to problem solve how to avoid halibut bycatch because a good portion

of redfish catch escaped through the modified trawl vents. This is one of the areas that Ren Genge, long-time 4R3Pn trawl captain and the fish harvester who got this research started, would like to focus. Now that we have shown halibut can escape through these modified bottom trawls, we must concentrate on making adjustments to improve our retention of redfish.

If otter trawl fleets can demonstrate that they can target the more abundant redfish species and can stay within fishing limits for the less abundant redfish species, TACs could be considerably higher for the rebuilt redfish fishery. Our work has demonstrated that information collected from onboard commercial fishing vessels can be used to determine where, when, and at what depth, fish harvesters can target the more abundant redfish species. These results and continued research will help guide the foundation of a sustainable and profitable redfish fishery and protect existing fisheries in the Gulf.

PROVINCIAL READY MIX WORKERS RECEIVE BONUS CHEQUES AFTER 5 YEAR BATTLE WITH EMPLOYER

Nearly 6 long years after the battle began, workers at Provincial Ready Mix in Long Harbour could finally celebrate the resolution that comes through solidarity and perseverance when they received their bonus cheques awarded by the Labour Relations Board in November of last year.

The arduous process began in 2014. The employer made every effort to break down the efforts of workers to form a union – to take away their rights to collectively bargain. FFAW-Unifor received certification in 2015 but there was significant pushback and delays from the employer, leading to the Union's application for conciliation and subsequent requests to the Department of Labour to impose a first contract.

Through it all, these workers stood strong. They did not let this employer break their resolve, and they did not falter in their determination. They knew their worth and they fought for it.

Finally, 5 years after the process began, the Labour Relations Board selected FFAW-Unifor's offer for wages and classifications using a final offer selection process. In addition to a significant increase in wages, workers were

awarded a signing bonus that ranged from \$3,000 to \$15,000 per person depending on years of service.

As their Union, we are proud to be fighting alongside these individuals to ensure they received the compensation and recognition so deserved. But this process was unjustifiable and arduous - and no workers should have to experience what they have been through.

The process should react more rapidly if an employer tries to break the union or weaken the resolve of the workers to have a collective agreement. Workers have a right to a union, and they should have a right to a timely collective agreement should the employer disrespect their wishes to unionize. This half decade battle was unacceptable on many levels. The Board's November decision sent a strong message to imprudent, callous employer groups who are contemptuous of workers' right to organize and to achieve a timely first collective agreement.

Thank you again to the Shop Stewards who saw this process through to the end, and to all the employees of Provincial Ready Mix at Vale in Long Harbour for your patience and determination.

A SCIENTIFIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE 2020 CRAB FISHERY

Dr. Erin Carruthers, FFAW-Unifor Fisheries Scientist

The 2020 snow crab fishery had a few surprises, most notably in Conception Bay. Tony Doyle, the crab fleet chair for Crab Management Area 6B said that while Conception Bay harvesters were expecting a bit of an increase in marketable crab to the fishery, because there was soft shell in the Bay last year, the increase in catch rates took everyone by surprise. Catch rates more than doubled compared to last years' catch rates at the same locations in Conception Bay.



In addition to catch rates, a good in-season indicator is that catch rates do not decline sharply as the season progresses. Fleet chairs from 8A, Bonavista Bay and 3Ps inshore all reported that catch rates were just as good at the end of the season as they were at the start.

Trevor Jones, the 3K offshore fleet chair reported that even though it was a late start, the 2020 fishery was one



of the best that they have seen in a number of years, which is nice to see after some tough years.

The 2020 snow crab stock assessment predicted an increase in recruitment to the fishery over the next 2-4 years in most areas. Indeed, there were reports of an abundance of small crab by many fleets, with harvesters reporting that many small crab were close to the measure or just under the minimum legal size. These reports came in from 3K, 3L inshore, 3LNO offshore and 3Ps. Even where there were initial reports of some decline in catch rates, such as in Trinity Bay, there was a good sign of recruitment and an abundance of small crab.

Overall our fleet chairs reported improvements in the 2020 fishery, although some areas did see a bit of soft shell at the end of the season and others had a slow fishery. In the upcoming assessment, we should be able to see how widespread recruitment was in 2020. Data from the fishery, pot survey and RV survey track small crab coming into the fishery. Similarly, it will be good to see the complete catch rate data presented at the assessment.

SCIENCE TECHNICIAN PROFILE: AN INTERVIEW WITH SCOTT SMITH



Name: Scott James Smith

How long have you been in this position: 20 years

What made you want to become a Science Technician:

The fishery was a big part of my childhood. I fished with my dad and brother until the moratorium came into effect, after which I moved onto other lines of work but eventually found my way back to the ocean as a science technician.

I always had a passion for the water and now I had chance to see how things were changing and how science would be able to help different scenarios that have arose over the years. For example how to deal with the different invasive species that show up on our shores. I also get to work alongside harvesters getting their input on the fishery, as they are the ones that see most of the changes in environmental conditions, fish patterns , etc. So with the science and knowledge of harvesters, why not get out there

and collect the data.

I also been a Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) aboard oil and gas vessels from time to time and I enjoyed it to the fullest. My responsibility was to look after the harvesting side, making sure there was no conflict with gear, making sure harvesters interests were put first ahead of oil and gas exploration while they were doing their work. The fishery was here first and we need FLOs aboard these seismic vessels to look after our harvesters' rights.

What do you like most about your job?

I like getting out there and travelling to different parts of our beautiful province . Every year I learn new things; whether it's a new step to our programs, or finding a new (to us) species that may have travelled far and wide to our part of the ocean. But nothing beats the beauty of those early morning sun rises that I get to see on those beautiful days. I also enjoy meeting new harvesters and developing friendships that will last a lifetime.

Tell us a bit more about what you do and places you go for work.

Work takes me to all ports all over this province. They may be simple day trips, leaving in the morning and returning again in the evening, or lengthy trips where we're gone for a week or more which could be along the coastlines of NL and Labrador or to the Grand Banks or Labrador Sea collecting science data on whatever species we are working on.

Some science projects I have been involved in over my 20 year period included cod sentinel, lobsters and, crab surveys, mobile gear surveys on cod and redfish, green crab, halibut surveys, cod, crab and halibut tagging , acoustic and satellite tags, lobster tray collection, cod quality program just to name a few. The tagging and acoustic work we do on different species gives us the knowledge of where fish are moving throughout the year which is a very important in tracking their migration routes. Our cod sentinel, lobster surveys and crab surveys are used in the stock analysis which is important in keeping track on how healthy the fish are or stock size and is used along with other data in setting upcoming quotas which is very important.

Every year more projects towards science comes on stream and I look forward in working with harvesters, the union, DFO and Sea-Watch to get the much needed science work done.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF FISH HARVESTERS DURING THE 2020 FISHING SEASON - A TIMELINE



NL-FHSA
FISH HARVESTING
SAFETY ASSOCIATION

A NEW CONTAGION SURFACES

The novel coronavirus was first identified in China in December 2019 and began sweeping across the globe. By January 2020, the World Health Organization had declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern and on January 27th, the first case was confirmed in Canada. On March 11th, a COVID-19 pandemic was declared due to the sudden emergence and spread of the disease around the world.

Three days later, on March 14th, it became evident that the pandemic had reached Newfoundland and Labrador when the first case of COVID-19 was announced. By the end of March, 152 people in the province had become infected with the virus; nine of them were hospitalized and one had died from the disease. Newfoundland and Labrador had the second highest incidence of COVID-19 per capita in Canada and plans were underway to open the crab fishery, mobilizing in excess of 10,000 people across the province. To say that these were trying times would be an understatement and for everyone involved in the fishing industry, the big question on everyone's mind was 'can you fish during a pandemic'?

UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, little was known about the virus and its transmission. Medical research on the virus was in its infancy. However, what was known about it and was being said with certainty is that the virus replicates where there are weak links. How to operate a safe, commercial fishery in the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic presented a unique and complex challenge.

Without a vaccine in sight, the best way to prevent and slow down the transmission of the COVID-19 virus was to be fully informed about the disease, how it spread,



Port de Grave harvester Ivan Lear wearing a mask while fishing.

and possible control measures that could contain and prevent its spread. Fish harvesters wanted and needed to fish despite the COVID-19 pandemic and were looking for ways to carry out this work safely, without risk to themselves and their families. This became the starting point for the development of a safe work practice focusing on the hazards of COVID-19, the risks of exposure as well as measures for preventing and controlling its spread.

DOWN TO WORK

The Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvesting Safety Association (NL-FHSA) began working to gain an understanding of COVID-19 and its potential impact on the fish harvesting industry in this province. A working group was established in partnership with the FFAW-Unifor and the Professional Fish Harvester Certification Board (PFHCB), as well as with the NL-FHSA Board of Directors. Consultation was carried out with the inshore council members, members of the NL-FHSA Advisory Committee and fish harvesting safety associations across the country. There was also collaboration with the Provincial Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH),

Dr. Janice Fitzgerald, and her team for guidance. The goal was to develop sound, reasonable, achievable safe work practices that could be applied to all fishing vessels taking into consideration their vessel design and crew size using the most up-to-date health and safety information available; all the while being mindful of the concerns of fish harvesters.

As work progressed on the safe work practices, the health and safety concerns of fish harvesters and the recommendations of the CMOH were paramount as there were many challenges. Some of these are noted here.

Restricting all access on board the vessel to only the crew was one source of apprehension for skippers and owner/operators and proved impossible to enforce as fuelers, technicians and mechanics regularly require access to vessels in order for them to operate. Physical distancing was also found to be a major challenge regardless of vessel design and crew size given the congested work environment both on and off the vessel as well as the living conditions on board some vessels. Travel to and from the fishing vessels was another concern for some harvesters who were required to take public transport or carpool long distances by road to gain access to their vessels. Installation of physical barriers recommended in many industries to separate workers was not a practical solution on board fishing vessels as it had the potential to introduce more peril to an existing hazardous work environment. Accessing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks and gloves, as well as thermometers and hand sanitizers was also difficult and practically impossible to attain due to the high demand for these products.

In response to concerns regarding the lack of availability of thermometers, face masks, and hand sanitizers, the PFHCB, as a partner on the working group, began researching the availability and cost of (PPE), and considering ways of distributing it to fish harvesters throughout the province. On April 16th, the PFHCB approved a financial contribution (\$25,000) to purchase and distribute PPE to certified fish harvesters at subsidized rates of approximately 50% of cost. Shortly thereafter, the PFHCB began taking orders for PPE for distribution throughout the province by Express Post.

On April 19th, after several drafts, the Communicable Disease Briefing on COVID-19 Safe Work Practices was released by the NL-FHSA for distribution to fish

harvesters via the NL-FHSA and FFAW-Unifor websites. It was presented as a guideline for fish harvesters to use to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on their vessel and amongst their crew, knowing that if any person on board a fishing vessel became infected with the virus, it would be difficult to contain its transmission to the rest of the crew. The COVID-19 Safe Work Practice was developed using the most up-to-date information available at the time of its release and it was updated on May 5th as new information on COVID-19 symptoms became available.

A FEW MONTHS LATER - WHERE ARE WE NOW

COVID-19 remains a serious health threat and the situation is evolving daily. In Newfoundland and Labrador, As of July 26th, over 23,657 people in the province have been tested for COVID-19. Based on confirmed results, 266 individuals tested positive, 259 recovered and there have been three deaths from the disease. (Source: Government Newfoundland and Labrador).

The number of fish harvesters availing of PPE supplies from the PFHCB has been overwhelmingly positive. To date, orders for approximately 1,000 face masks, 250 thermometers, and 100 gallons of hand sanitizer have been filled and limited amounts of PPE are still available to certified fish harvesters at reduced prices compared to local pharmacies or medical supply stores. Call 709-722-8170 for more information.

WHERE TO FROM HERE

Given the number of cases in Canada, the risk to Canadians is considered high and consequently, COVID-19 is continuing to become a new normal. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the situation is being monitored closely and public health measures are being relaxed or added according to the spread of the disease; testing, tracing and isolation of cases; risk of outbreaks; workplace preparedness; identification and isolation of travel-related cases; and community readiness to live with COVID-19. As new information becomes available and the provincial Alert Level System changes, the NL-FHSA will continue to consult with the working group and update the COVID-19 Safe Work Practice for the fish harvesting industry as necessary. For updated information on COVID-19, refer to the following websites.

www.nlfhsa.com; www.ffaw.com; www.govnl.ca/covid19

SHRIMP PROCESSORS LOCK OUT HARVESTERS IN ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROCESS

Shrimp harvesters in our province had a rough start to the 2020 fishing season with processors refusing to buy at the negotiated price, leading to weeks of uncertainty for harvesters and plant workers alike.

Unlike other years, there was no spring shrimp fishery or price negotiations this year as a result of the uncertainty in the markets because of COVID-19. The first round of negotiations were at the end of June and saw the Price Setting Panel side with the FFAW's price position of \$1.18 over ASP's unacceptably low \$0.70.



Processors quickly filed for a reconsideration, which was improperly accepted by the Panel. This time, processors increased their offer to \$0.85 with FFAW bringing their price down to \$1.08. The offers from ASP were far below what the market indicates is a fair price inclusive of the market impacts from COVID-19. ASP also provided very little evidence to support their position. The Panel chose FFAW's price, which was supported by the latest market

information. With the price set at \$1.08, processors still refused to accept buy and start the fishery.

This illegal lockout led to shrimp harvesters in 4R holding a July meeting in Anchor Point to decide whether to fish at a price below the negotiated price of \$1.08. Harvesters unanimously voted to refuse to sell for anything less than the fairly negotiated price of \$1.08. Ninety-eight percent of the fleet was in attendance for the meeting.

Harvesters also called for a halt to industrial (offshore) shrimp processing at local NL plants while processors were engaged in an illegal lockout. Processors should not favor offshore shrimp over that which is landed by inshore vessels.

"Harvesters in the shrimp fleet couldn't accept that a company who has the privilege to operate in this province were buying shrimp from factory vessels to process and put on the market but refused to buy from local inshore harvesters," said Rendell Genge, Chair of the 4R Shrimp Fleet.

Shrimp processors in New Brunswick and Quebec, including Royal Greenland owned plants, were buying shrimp from harvesters in that province while refusing to purchase from Newfoundland and Labrador harvesters.

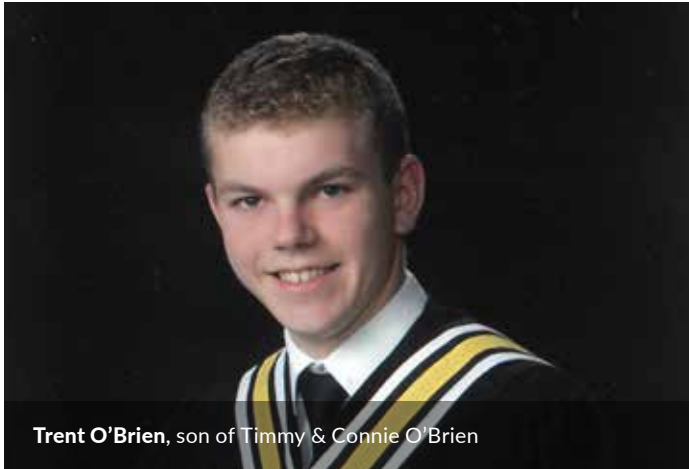
The only processor that was buying inshore shrimp early on in the season was the Labrador Fisherman's Union Shrimp Company in Charlottetown. Plants that participated in the lockout included Ocean Choice International (Port aux Choix), Royal Greenland (Old Perlican), Barry Group International (Anchor Point), and Fogo Island Co-Op (Seldom). Meanwhile, Royal Greenland was processing industrial shrimp.

Eventually the processors relented and agreed to open up the fishery, citing a moral obligation to coastal communities and claiming they would be operating this year at a loss. Based on available market information that remains a questionable statement and it's far more likely that their goal of undermining the collective bargaining and price negotiation process had failed.

2019 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



UPDATE ON INDUSTRY COD TAGGING PROGRAM FOR 2020 SEASON

The FFAW continues this year with our long-standing Cod Tagging program in order to collect crucial information on exploitation rates, mortality, and movement of our cod stocks. This information feeds directly into the DFO stock assessment process, and helps determine the future of cod fisheries management in this province.

As FFAW technician Scott Smith put it, “in Placentia Bay, we had our best success in the bottom of the bay, and they were healthy looking fish there as well. Fortune Bay was a bit slower this year, but we managed to get enough tags out in the end. We also helped DFO get acoustic tags out this year at the bottom of Placentia Bay, which is a first for us,” said Scott, who in addition to

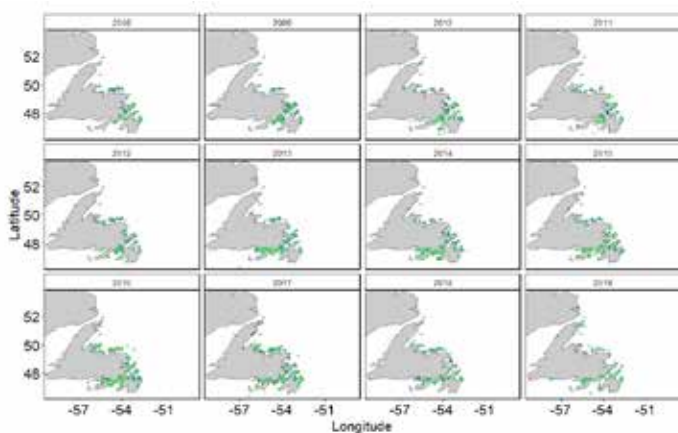
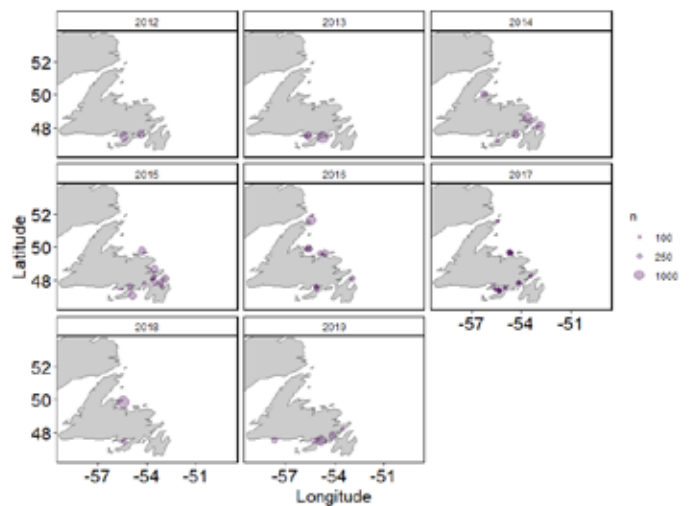


Figure 2. Atlantic Cod Floy tag recaptures from 2008-2019 (3Pn and 4R data not currently available)



As in the past, FFAW technicians will apply low-value yellow (\$10 per tag returned) and high-value pink (\$100 per tag returned) spaghetti floy tags to fish caught across Newfoundland and Labrador for enhancement of the ongoing mark-recapture program. In order to cover all areas adequately, research areas are prioritized and divided between FFAW and DFO cod taggers, in an arrangement that varies from year to year. In 2019, FFAW focussed primarily on southern and western portions of the province while DFO focussed on tagging in northern and eastern portions, including 2J and 3K. In total, FFAW deployed 5,667 tags in 2019: 2,869 in 3Ps, 1,766 in 3Pn, 922 in 4R, and 110 tags in 3L. In terms of deployment and recapture, the diagrams provided by DFO paint a useful picture of where and how cod tags have been deployed and recaptured over the past 11 years in 2J, 3K, 3L, and 3Ps. Note that data on 3Pn and 4R deployments and retrievals are not available at this time.

deploying floy tags in 3Ps also assisted DFO technicians in deploying 26 acoustic tags as part of their tagging efforts this year.

Both FFAW and DFO have begun deploying tags for the 2020 season, with initial focus from FFAW technicians on 3Ps before moving to 3K later in the summer. As we forge ahead for another year, a friendly reminder to fish harvesters and plant workers to please return these cod tags with the information required: date, location (latitude and longitude), fish length, fish sex, depth fished and gear type used. By continuing to collect this information into the future, the FFAW will play a vital role in cod science in Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly as we work towards the new Northern Cod fishery.



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OFFSHORE EXPLORATORY DRILLING: FULL SPEED AHEAD

Robyn Lee, FFAW-Unifor Petroleum Industry Liason

When the Provincial Government released its Way Forward strategy for the oil and gas industry in 2018 it envisioned over 100 new exploration wells would be drilled offshore by 2030. Despite the recent drop in the price of oil and the pandemic, two of the three exploratory drilling programs planned for 2020 did proceed and have now been completed or are nearing completion.

The CNLOPB's scheduled land tenure system has been highly successful in attracting investment by global oil companies to lease offshore parcels of land to conduct exploratory drilling offshore Newfoundland and Labrador. Numerous exploratory drilling projects are already in the pipes at various stages of assessment and approval by the federal government and the C-NLOPB.

Previous federal legislation (CEAA, 2012) required that all offshore exploratory drilling projects go through project assessment at the federal level as well as through the C-NLOPB. For oil companies, this increased the regulatory burden and lengthened the time it took to get projects approved.

Prior to the Impact Assessment Act (IAA) being passed on August 28, 2019, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change launched a Regional Assessment of Offshore Oil and Gas Exploratory Drilling East of Newfoundland and Labrador in the spring of 2019. This is the first Regional Assessment conducted under the former Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012, and has proceeded in time through this change in legislation.

A five-person committee was appointed and tasked to undertake the Regional Assessment (RA) last spring. The RA objective was to facilitate a more effective and efficient assessment process for exploratory drilling projects in the defined offshore study area while ensuring the highest levels of environmental protection. As can be seen on the map (Figure 1), the study area under assessment was quite vast.

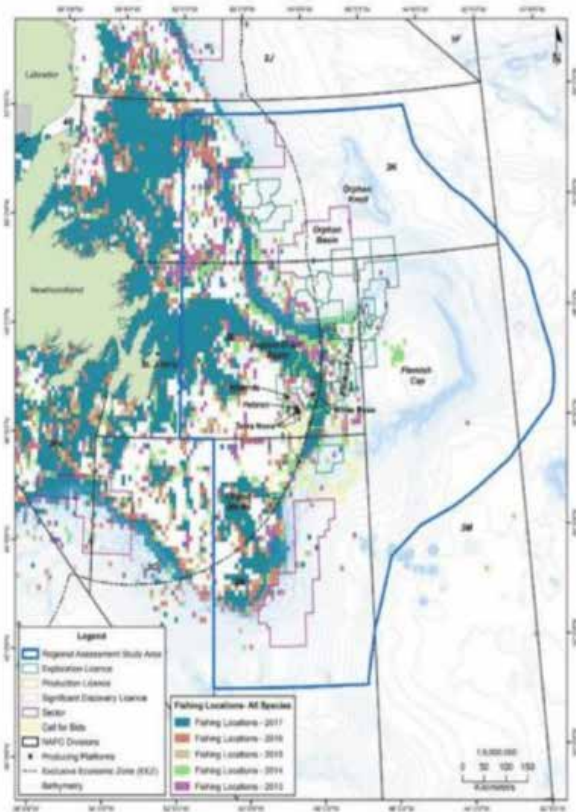


Figure 1. The Regional Assessment Study Area for Offshore Exploratory Drilling East of Newfoundland and Labrador is the large area within the blue lines as depicted above.

FFAW-Unifor contributed significantly to the RA process by attending meetings and speaking to the Committee on issues related to the fishery as well as ensuring meeting notes were accurately recorded. Written comments were also submitted to the Committee throughout the process.

While the Committee listened to FFAW-Unifor members' concerns throughout the process it was most alarming that our provincial and federal governments throughout the process did not recommend that any portions of the Study Area be excluded from future exploratory drilling, including valuable fishing grounds. As a result, the Committee did not recommend that any area, within the large Study Area, be excluded from exploratory drilling.

A Discussion Paper on a Ministerial Regulatory Proposal was released for public comment on March 4, 2020. Due

to the pandemic the usual 30 day review period was extended until April 30, 2020. FFAW-Unifor submitted comments on this proposal as well.

Following this regional assessment process, inclusive of the Ministerial proposal to make regulatory changes to the Impact Assessment Act, 2019, the federal government announced on June 4, 2020, to designate individual projects within the study area of the Regional Assessment for exclusion from federal assessment requirements. This change ultimately fast-tracks the process for many exploratory drilling projects although all offshore projects will still require some form of assessment and authorization from the C-NLOPB.

This one-size-fits all scenario is concerning on many levels but particularly for a vast ocean area that is highly dynamic. It is very much anticipated that there will be situation-specific issues that need to be addressed moving forward that are not being considered in this static approach to offshore assessment.

Valued at \$1.3 billion in 2018, the fishing industry is the largest, single, private sector in the Province. We continue to seek balance and consideration for the fishing industry's socio-economic value to the Province as oil and gas activities increase offshore. Protecting important fishing grounds is a top priority for FFAW-Unifor.

FFAW-Unifor has been engaged in numerous meetings

with federal and provincial ministers and representatives to address concerns related to oil and gas expansion offshore. The potential for any exploratory drilling project to interact with and directly affect the fishing industry will be highly dependent on the nature, location, timing, activities and the equipment and/ or gear involved. Discussion has been focused on areas of competing interests.

As the Regional Assessment Committee noted in its report, if potential adverse effects of exploratory drilling are to be avoided or minimized there requires a more proactive and holistic approach through associated policy and planning decisions by the federal and provincial governments. We fundamentally agree with this statement and will continue to speak to federal and provincial governments about a way forward to protect important fishing grounds.

If you have questions related to exploratory drilling or other oil and gas issues please contact Robyn Lee, Petroleum Industry Liaison at FFAW-Unifor at (709) 576-7276.

ST. ANTHONY SEAFOODS REMAINS SHUTTERED FOR 2020 SEASON

St. Anthony Seafoods Limited continues to leave plant workers in a troubling and uncertain position as the processing facility did not open in the 2020 shrimp season. This means that plant workers will have gone over a year without employment amidst a global pandemic and now with EI claims and the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit running out—workers face dire financial conditions.

Throughout the process of the possible move to a shared partnership by Quin-Sea and Clearwater Seafoods, workers have not been informed about the decisions being made by the companies and are left in the dark when seeking answers. With the continued decline in

the northern shrimp fishery and supply of raw material to the plant, the past years have been especially hard on plant workers in St. Anthony.

Protecting the vitality of our coastal communities depends upon ensuring workers are at the center of any decision and companies must be open and transparent employers. The union will continue to push for EI coverage for plant workers through an extended federal funding program as many struggle during this difficult time.



A MESSAGE OF THANKS AND RECOGNITION - BUT NOT GOODBYE - FOR RETIRED INSHORE DIRECTOR, BILL BRODERICK

When Bill Broderick sailed out of Shalloway Cove, St. Brendan’s Island, to spend his first summer fishing on the Labrador coast in the 1960’s, he could never have dreamed that the inshore fishery would shape his life the way it has. Fishing, as they say, is in his blood, but those close to him know that his Union is what fills his heart!

While his retirement at the end of January marked the “formal” end to a fifteen-year career as Inshore



Director of FFAW/Unifor, Bill’s commitment to the Union, and the men and women of the fishery, spans more than four decades. Following a break to further his education and teach school for a short period, he returned to full-time fishing in 1980. For the next 25 years he owned and operated his own fishing enterprise in the <40’ fleet. Throughout his fishing career, he got

increasingly involved with the Union - first as chair of his local fishermen’s committee, and from 1987-1995 as an FFAW peer-instructor, delivering a variety of training to fellow fish harvesters throughout the province. It was during this time that Bill was first elected to the FFAW Inshore Council, and in 1995 he was elected Inshore Vice-President – a position he held until 2005 when he accepted the staff position as Inshore Director.

But his contribution to the Union and to inshore fish harvesters doesn’t end there. Bill has an impressive resume of fisheries-related board and committee involvement. He played an instrumental



role in establishing the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB), and has been the Board's Chairperson since its first election of officers in 1997. He served as a member of the Fisheries Resource Conservation Council (FRCC) from 1999-2003, and has been serving on the Board of Directors of the Fish Harvesters Resource Centres (FRC) from 1993-present.



More recently he has been active with the Fisheries Science, Stewardship and Sustainability Board (FSSSB) and Groundfish Industry Development Council (GIDC). Nationally, he has been the FFAW/Unifor member on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH) from 1996-present, and has been a member of Transport Canada's Canadian Marine Advisory Council (CMAC) for the past 20 years.

Few people have dedicated as much time and energy to their Union and to inshore fish harvesters, as Bill Broderick, and even fewer have worked with his level of



passion and conviction. The famous football coach Vince Lombardi once said "The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender". This describes Bill's recent retirement perfectly. His official employment with FFAW/Unifor has ended, allowing him to spend more well-deserved time at home in St. Brendans with his wife Eileen, and visiting



with their children and prized grandchildren. But his invaluable role with FFAW/Unifor certainly doesn't end here! Bill has amassed vast experience and knowledge in all aspects of the fishing industry, and gained the respect of industry colleagues throughout this province, across Canada and beyond. No doubt, he will remain dedicated to the work of his Union, sharing his wisdom



and expertise for many years to come.

It is said, "There is no greater calling than to serve your brother. And, no greater satisfaction than to have done it well". As Bill steps back from his official role with FFAW/Unifor, and reflects on his career to date, he should do so with enormous pride and satisfaction.

Please join us in congratulating Bill on his retirement from the position of FFAW/Unifor Inshore Director, thanking him for his dedication to the Union, and recognizing his remarkable career – thus far!

THE TRUE EFFECTS OF ITQs: USING BC'S PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERY AS A CASE STUDY

Dawn Street, FFAW-Unifor Projects Coordinator

New research out of British Columbia is shedding more light on the controversial management system of Individual Transferrable Quotas (ITQs) and the implications for the BC fishery. The transferability of quotas has long been a hotly debated topic among fish harvesters, corporations and researchers. We've seen it happen in the United States and on our country's west coast; the ITQ system takes the power away from owner-operator harvesters and puts it into the hands of corporations – driving up the price of licenses to exorbitant prices that are unattainable by small players in the fishery. British Columbia's Pacific halibut fishery is often held up as the posterchild for ITQs.

Last year, Danielle Edwards and Evelyn Pinkerton, two researchers in British Columbia, produced a series of papers examining ITQs and their role in the current state of corporate ownership in the halibut fishery in BC. While many works have theorized and analyzed ITQs, these papers examined hard data that opened up new outlooks on corporate concentration, the declining socioeconomic wellbeing of fishing enterprises, and lack of government oversight in the process. Using provincial and federal data sets, as well as input from fish harvesters, Edwards and Pinkerton drew out the detrimental effects of ITQs on shaping the management of the fishing industry and where benefits of the resource actually go.

Individual transferrable quotas have long been touted as a fisheries management tool that benefits fisheries in both conservation and economics outcomes. Some have argued that ITQs allow a harvester to harvest freely, within a quota constraint, while also aiming to maximize net return in making the quota negotiable to the harvester in regard to buying and selling. The reality, however, is that ITQs in BC have allowed for processors to become “hubs” for quota leasing and exert control over the fishery through their control of quotas, clouding how much of the market return of the fish actually goes

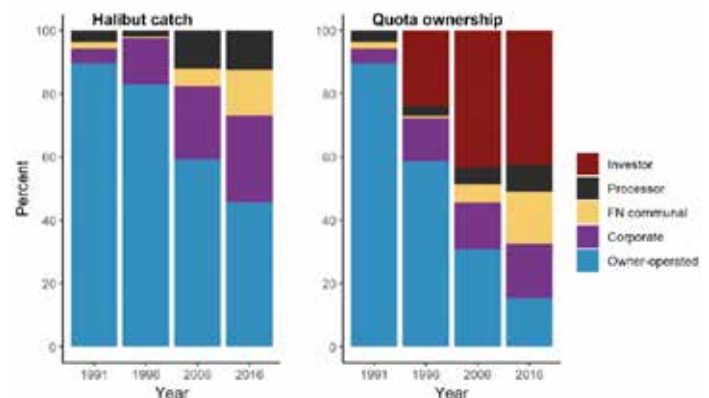
to those who harvest it on the water.

The Pacific halibut fishery in BC brought \$58.3 million in landed value and \$93 million in wholesale value to the province in 2016. Individual quotas were implemented in 1991 and limited transferability was introduced in 1993. In 1999, quota in the fishery became fully transferable. As is the norm in BC's fisheries, there is no limit to the number of licenses or amount of quota that an individual or company can own.

In BC there are five key types of players in the fishery:

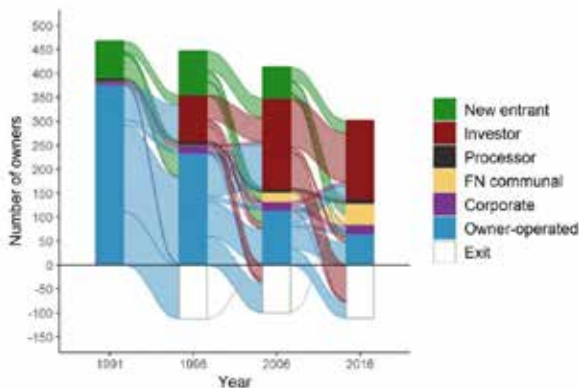
- Owner-operated fishing enterprises: persons or companies that own a vessel and licence that they personally fish;
- Corporate fishing enterprises: companies that own vessels and licenses that are fished by hired skippers;
- Processors: fish companies who purchase product from fishing enterprises, process and sell product to market;
- Investors: companies or persons who own quota they lease out to others to fish; and,
- First Nation communal lessors: First Nation governments or organizations that hold communal licences and quota that is fished by First Nation members or leased out to non-members to fish.

According to Edwards and Pinkerton, the fishery in BC,



under an ITQ regime, has shifted from a primarily owner-operator fishery to one dominated by corporate control by processors and investors. In 1991, owner-operators owned and fished approximately 90% of the halibut quota, but by the mid-2000s nearly every halibut license in BC was involved in some form of leasing.

Processors were involved in 59% of transactions, with activity concentrated among four main processors, and quota mostly leased from investors. The increased penetration of processors can be tied to one factor – their access to capital. Edwards and Pinkerton stated in their research, about 70% of fishing enterprises in 2016 fished at least 20,000 lb (9072 kg) of halibut quota. The lease cost for 20,000 lb (9072 kg) of halibut quota is estimated to have been as high as Can\$168,000 in 2016. Most enterprises cannot come up with this amount of money at the beginning, or even during, the fishing season. Thus, processors and investors, often in interdependent relationships, have come to control

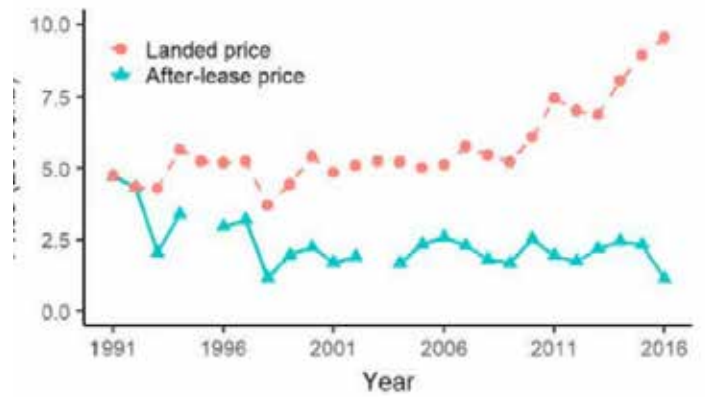


most of BC's halibut quota leasing market.

By 2016 it is estimated owner-operators caught 45% of the quota but owned only 15%.

And in fact, most of that ownership was held by original grantees of quota from 1991 who have remained in the fishery. The owner-operators who have entered the fishery since 2001 collectively own less than 1% of the halibut quota.

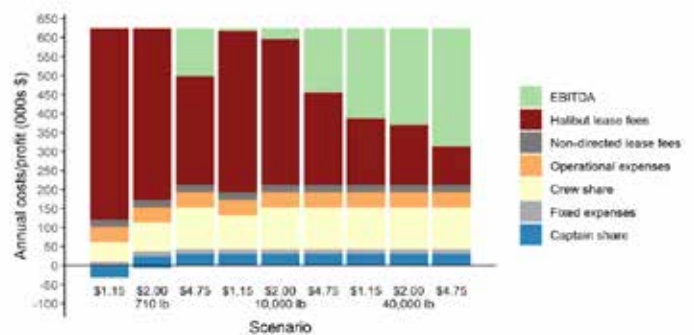
The ITQ system in BC has also led to less transparency over market price. Information about landed value and lease fees are cloudy, as the purchase slip given to the harvester only records the price paid to the harvester. This is not the actual landed price, and harvesters do not know how much is paid for lease fees or what the fish has actually been sold for at the wharf. Data from the



province of British Columbia indicate that while halibut has experienced a steep increase in landed value, the price paid to harvesters have been stable to actually trending down.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of oversight by government agencies. In BC there is no owner-operator policy like in Atlantic Canada. Edwards and Pinkerton point out that in past assessments of the BC fishing fleet commissioned by the federal government, leasing was acknowledged to perhaps be a relevant concern in a broader policy context, but was excluded from consideration on the basis that "lease costs do not affect the investment return of a vessel-license owner" and "lease costs are only a transfer among the capital and labour interests of the fleet," -- a gross oversimplification of actual ramifications of leasing. As they also discuss, a requirement of Canadian fisheries is to meet certain socioeconomic objectives.

On the point of socio-economic returns from the fishery and the distribution of benefits, through data from DFO, the province of BC, Statistics Canada and Transport Canada, Edwards and Pinkerton developed an enterprise-level financial performance model and



analyzed the profitability of a typical owner-operator enterprise under different leasing scenarios.

Their conclusion states, "Given current price conditions in the fishery, in which lessee owner-operators are not profitable over the long-term and income from the fishery does not support repayment of quota purchase costs, there is no scenario in which the fishery is self-sustaining for owner-operators over the long-term". It is simply not possible for harvesters to earn a living wage if they don't already own significant amounts of quota, which is the reality for the majority of current owner-operators on the country's west coast.

The ITQ regime has changed the face of not only the halibut fishery in BC but also the coastal communities

that depend on the fishery for survival. No longer is halibut fishing a viable profession and the value of the fish landed on BC wharves does not trickle down to the harvesters on the water. While ITQs are often promoted as a preferred management regime, it is clear from the example of BC halibut that ITQs are in fact a tool to concentrate wealth into the corporate pockets of a select few and remove it from those who should benefit most.

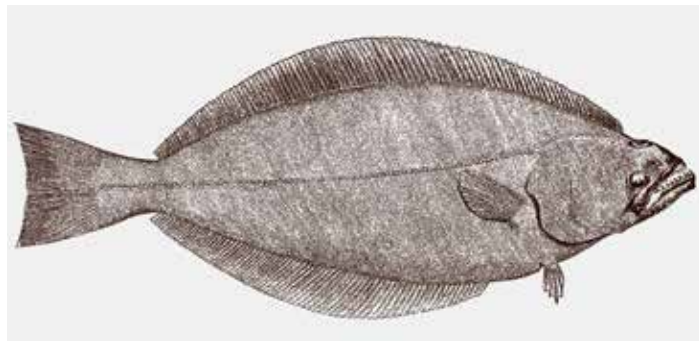
It is for this reason the FFAW and its associated organizations on the east coast fight every day to protect the owner-operator structure. We fight for the owner-operators of today and for the fishery of the future, to ensure the wealth off our shores stays in our communities and out of the pockets of corporations for

NEGOTIATING THE PRICE OF TURBOT

Robert Keenan, FFAW-Unifor Projects Manager

One of the strengths of your Union is its ability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances and to address specific challenges. This was the case in the turbot fishery this year.

In past years, the price of turbot was established between the harvester and processor, an arrangement endorsed by harvesters. According to harvesters, they often were not quoted a price until they were on the way out turbot fishing, but this late notice was not an issue since the prices offered were good – between



\$1.70 and \$2.00 per pound in the past few years.

This year some harvesters did the same and were frustrated when told, while already on the water,

that the price would be \$1.25. By some miraculous coincidence all the processing companies had individually determined through no discussion or coordination amongst themselves to lower the price from \$1.90 last year to \$1.25 this year. Of course, the justification for this massive price cut was COVID-19, despite there being no evidence that the pandemic was impacting export prices for the species.

Harvesters then asked their Union to get engaged. With the unanimous support of the turbot committee, we filed a notice to negotiate, forcing the processors to engage in collective bargaining within 20 days.

In the end, negotiating turbot prices turned out to be the right move for the fishery. Instead of going fishing for the same turbot price that existed in 2014, harvesters managed to keep most of the gains of the past few years, as the Panel sided with the FFAW's price position of \$1.70.

The value of this win is significant. If harvesters land the same amount of turbot as last year, the negotiated price will produce a landed value of \$15.1 million. If the processors' price had prevailed, the landed value would be \$11.1 million. Collective bargaining on turbot is putting \$4 million more into the hands of harvesters, their families, and local and regional economies.

WORLD OCEANS DAY 2020



Much like every other event that was scheduled during COVID-19, the World Oceans Day celebration had to be completely changed. Instead of cancelling, the decision was made to move forward with a virtual event that would last an entire week with the theme Protecting our Ocean Home. The week would offer a variety of programming about our oceans and conservation provided by organizations around the province.

Every year World Oceans Day brings together thousands of people at Memorial University's Marine Institute. The crowds can enjoy booths from our province's fishery, environment sector, local crafters, conservation groups, and many more. It is an important time to educate the public about all the work being done in coastal communities around the province. The challenge this year was attempting to get the same level of community engagement without having the exciting physical booths from participants, including

the very popular FFAW-Unifor lobster traceability touch-tank!

To get people from coast-to-coast engaged, each day of the virtual programming had a specific ocean topic with related content, from a day dedicated to local solutions to our Wild for Wildlife Wednesday. Within these days we were able to organize some exceptional local videos, including; a cooking special with Chef Mark Crowe, a trivia night, educational videos, a sing-along with Terry Riley, a read along with a local children's author, and an ocean art class presented by an artist from Denmark.

Everything was hosted on our World Oceans Day NL Facebook page, which also provided links to the Virtual Ocean Classroom that had a treasure-trove of educational resources. As a result of all this programming, we were able to get 1,201 page views from Facebook users, a post reach of 27, 525, and an overall post engagement of 6,203 users. These are certainly encouraging numbers and speak to the popularity of the World Oceans Day programming, even amidst a global pandemic.

The World Oceans Day planning team hopes to return to the physical event in 2021 but due to the success of our virtual programming, we will be attempting to host online events as well.

BARRY GROUP WITLESS BAY VOTES IN FAVOUR OF ONE-YEAR DEAL

On Saturday, June 20th workers at Barry Group International in Witless Bay voted 77% in favor of ratifying a one-year deal to get them through this season with a wage increase of 40 cents retroactive to the start of the season. This puts the base rate at the plant at 16.75 per hour for the 2020 season with full bargaining set to take place prior to the 2021 season.

Staff representative Allan Moulton said, "It was tough to carry out bargaining in the midst of the COVID-19 situation, but nobody wanted the season to slip by without an Increase in wages." Moulton extends special thanks to Melvin King and Josie Hawkins for conducting the vote as well as the workers at the plant for their Support.

ATTENTION FISH HARVESTERS:

A Message from the Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvesting Safety Association



NL-FHSA
FISH HARVESTING
SAFETY ASSOCIATION

The Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvester Safety Logbook

As a commercial fish harvester who works in what is considered to be one of the world's most dangerous occupations, you know only too well the hazards and risks that are associated with the fish harvesting industry.

Your safety is integral to your well-being and the future of the industry.

Since 2013, the NL-FHSA with the support of fish harvesters and industry experts, has been helping reduce injuries and save lives at sea. The continued efforts of everyone in the industry is necessary as we look to the future where fish harvesters have the necessary skills, knowledge and technology to work successfully and return home safely.

In 2019, one of the commitments of this industry-led association was to focus on the risks to fish harvesters as they carry out their work and to build awareness and the development of health and safety practices among fish harvesters to help them address these risks. One of the initiatives to support fish harvesters with these challenges is the preparation of the resource the *Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvester Safety Logbook*.



HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH FISH HARVESTING

This Logbook, which is easy to read and understand, provides information on fishing vessel safety. It contains the following information:

- Skipper's Standing Orders,
- Emergency Contacts and Reference Information,
- On-board Familiarization,
- Safety Drills,

- Maintenance,
- General Information,
- Fishing Vessel Safety Legislative Requirements
- Safety Procedures and,
- Safety Information

The *Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvester Safety Logbook* was produced by the NL-FHSA with the financial assistance of the Fish Food and Allied Workers' Union (FFAW-Unifor), the Professional Fish Harvester Certification Board (PFHCB) and WorkplaceNL. Content for this publication in part was provided by ©Fishing Safety Now — a division of the Nova Scotia Fisheries Sector Council and Fisheries Safety Association of Nova Scotia, 2017 — “Nova Scotia Wheelhouse Safety Logbook.”

It has been designed to be a living document, therefore the continued contribution of fish harvesters will be invaluable as the *Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvester Safety Logbook* will be updated overtime.

To obtain your free copy, contact the NL-FHSA.

**Newfoundland
& Labrador Fish
Harvester Safety
Logbook**

NL-FHSA
FISH HARVESTING
SAFETY ASSOCIATION

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368 Hamilton Avenue
St. John's, NL A1B 3N4

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www.nlfhsa.com



WORKING IN SCIENCE THROUGH A PANDEMIC

Miranda McGrath, FFAW-Unifor Science Coordinator

To say that things changed in Newfoundland and Labrador in March 2020 would be an understatement; the world that we knew had been turned upside down, normal everyday tasks were now complicated burdens – having everyone second guess the moves that they made and be cautious around the people that they would once greet with open arms.

Like most things, Covid-19 has had an impact on how we run our science programs as well. The typical planning of yearly science projects and surveys has shifted as we learn to work under a “new normal.” Of course, Covid-19 presented us with some huge issues this year; the biggest adjustment was determining how to move forward when observers and technicians who record data cannot be on board vessels. On April 2nd the Department of Fisheries and Oceans released a Fisheries Management Order requiring all fishing activities to be carried out without any at-sea observer on board fishing vessels for a 45-day period. This management order brought with it quite a bit of uncertainty for the future development of our fisheries. How would any stock assessment be complete without scientific data collected by these observers and technicians?

Our science team immediately pulled together to see what options we had in order to move forward with executing our programs and maintaining the lengthy time series we’ve established with our surveys. Our team prepared for our later-starting surveys and deployments (snow crab survey, sentinel program, etc.) as per normal but with contingency plans for all the “what-if” situations. What-if there’s another wave of illness and technicians have to quarantine before and after deployments? How does the work still get completed? In a world of what-ifs and uncertainty, we still had to focus on the tasks at hand – the best ways to get as much information as possible to develop our fisheries.

FFAW Science also took measures to get information from our time-sensitive fisheries, like lobster, in the

best and safest practice possible. Without at-sea observers, our lobster season did start about a month before we were permitted to have any technicians onboard vessels – losing a month of high-catch data information. In a normal year our lobster science technicians go from boat to boat all over the island, measuring lobster and taking information on the egg stages and clutches of females, bringing forth recruitment and stock information to the assessment level. This year, with Covid-19 looming overhead, technicians were not able to change vessels. Luckily, most of our technicians come from fishing backgrounds or fishing families and were able to board vessels within their individual bubbles. They were able to record information from the same sites over most of the season – paying closer attention to the timing of changes with egg clutches and the capture of different sized lobster. Of course, our technicians still had to follow strict protocols including daily temperature checks and monitoring of symptoms before stepping foot on a vessel. We still wanted more hands-on work completed but in a hands-off world, that seemed difficult. As a result, we developed a phone survey to gather information from other harvesters about what they have seen over this season, what changes they noted most and any and all information they could provide us.

As for most other surveys, we are lucky enough to have a longer time period to conduct our work. All of our technicians are required to fill out daily Covid-19 Checklists while doing deployments and associated work for us, checking their temperatures daily and noting the absence or presence of any potential symptoms. They also now carry large amounts of hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies must be available on all vessels they work on. FFAW Science is moving forward as normal as possible in an environment that is far from normal. As always, we remain committed to collecting the best possible fisheries science information in order to support our work advocating for sustainable fisheries that support FFAW members and their communities.

FFAW-UNIFOR STAFF REPRESENTATIVES



JASON SPINGLE

Staff Representative
West Coast, Northern Peninsula & Labrador



GREG PRETTY

Industrial/Retail/Offshore Director



MON TY WAY

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



ROLAN D 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



ALLAN MOULTON

Service 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.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

Keith Sullivan	PRESIDENT
David Decker	SECRETARY-TREASURER
Tony Doyle	INSHORE VICE-PRESIDENT
Doretta Strickland	INDUSTRIAL VICE-PRESIDENT
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Kevin Hardy	INSHORE WEST AND SOUTHWEST COAST
Glen Newbury	INSHORE NORTHEAST COAST
Mike Noonan	INSHORE CREW MEMBER
Joan Doucette	INSHORE WOMEN'S POSITION
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Sheila Howell	INDUSTRIAL NORTHEAST COAST
Joey Warford	INDUSTRIAL NON-FISHING
Charles Baker	INDUSTRIAL SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST COAST
Warren Broderick	INDUSTRIAL-RETAIL-OFFSHORE AT SEA
Karen Caines	INDUSTRIAL WOMEN'S POSITION

INDUSTRIAL-RETAIL-OFFSHORE COUNCIL

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Ed English	M&M OFFSHORE		

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Vacant	WEST & SOUTHWEST COASTS	Darrin Marsh	NEWTOWN TO ELLISTON
Glen Newbury	NORTHEAST COAST	Keith Smith	LITTLE CATALINA TO GREEN'S HARBOUR
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Carl Hedderson	BARR'D HARBOUR TO NODDY BAY & L'ANSE AU CLAIR TO RED BAY	William White	MEMBER AT LARGE
Michael Symmonds	QUIRPON TO ENGLEE	Glen Winslow	MEMBER AT LARGE
Albert Wells	JACKSON'S ARM TO N. HEAD	Andy Careen	MEMBER AT LARGE
Eldred Woodford	N. HEAD TO POINT ALBERT INCL. NEW WORLD ISLAND AND TWILLINGATE	Ivan Lear	YOUNG HARVESTER
		Jay Ryan	YOUNG HARVESTER



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FLASHBACK



Do you recognize these people? Who are they? What are they doing? If you know the answers please send them to communications@ffaw.ca and your name will be entered for a prize. The winner will be announced in the next issue of The Union Forum.



The last photo was not identified.

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