

Annual Report



March, 2011



Regional
Economic
Development
Boards

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Message from the Chairperson

The following report outlines the operational activities of the Nordic Economic Development Corporation from April 1, 2010 to March 31st, 2011.

Out of the varied initiatives that Nordic has been involved with over the past year, we are particularly proud to report that Nordic has been directly involved in sustaining the forest industry on the Great Northern Peninsula. With the decision by CBPPL to curtail the purchase of fiber from this area, and with no outlet for pulpwood sized material, commercial harvesting operations would have effectively ceased in these two districts. Through collaboration with the Northern Peninsula Forest Resources Association, Dept. of Natural Resources, and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency a major crisis in the industry was averted. With Nordic being the project leader in the development of the Regional Wood Inventory Yard for Districts 17 & 18 which is linked directly to the Pellet Plant, it has enabled harvesting enterprises to remain operative. This initiative alone has proven that engagement with industry, being committed to building partnerships, and providing support works in sustaining and building industry. In recognition of its role Nordic received the Community Economic Development Award for “Initiative of the Year” at the CED Awards Banquet in Gander in the fall of 2010.

As this is the very first year completed under the new Performance Based Funding System it has certainly been a learning curve for all involved. As a board, along with staff participation in Opportunity Management it has become much clearer as to how economically viable initiatives are moved forward, the partnerships that are needed to support these initiatives and how all of these are linked together from local, regional and government perspectives.

With this being the last year of a three-year Strategic Economic Plan, April 2008 – March 2011, we can look back at what was contained within the document and the board is pleased with the progress of the action items. It has been through the commitment of all partners, which includes municipalities, business, government and other stakeholders involved that has lead to the successful implementation of these objectives.

We must commend our volunteers, who work tirelessly to make things happen that enables organizations such as Nordic to continue to be a success. Nordic’s Board of Directors and staff extends its thanks to all of its partners for their continued support as we look forward to another year of continual engagement and growth.

Respectfully yours,

Janice Pilgrim
Chairperson

Detailed Statement of Work

Nordic Economic Development Corporation will continue to undertake, implement and complete the following initiatives where appropriate as identified in their work plan and business plan. The Board will partner with the appropriate stakeholders: industry, community, residents, development associations, governments (municipal, federal and provincial), educational institutions and volunteers. Depending on the initiative undertaken, the Board will provide support in several other capacities.

1. Develop and coordinate the implementation of a strategic economic plan (SEP) in the zone supported by an integrated business plan (IBP).
2. Develop a strong partnership with municipalities in the zone that incorporates the strategies and priorities of municipalities in the economic planning process.
3. Develop partnerships in planning and implementation with Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations, labour organizations, post secondary institutions, CBDCs, and other zones that advance and support the economic environment of the zone.
4. Undertake capacity building and provide support to stakeholders to strengthen the economic environment of the zone.
5. Coordinate and facilitate linkages with federal/provincial/municipal government departments and agencies in support of the strategic economic plan.

The overall objective of these initiatives is to strengthen the economic environment of the Zone.

Strategic Planning:

Coordinate and facilitate planning sessions with local stakeholders to identify priorities and initiatives for updating of Board's Strategic Economic Plan.

- On September 8th a Transportation Forum was held in which action items were identified as to transportation issues/initiatives that are needed for the region.
- Nordic also assisted with the VTTA Planning & AGM session held on November 30th at which time participants identified the needs for the tourism industry on the GNP. Action items were noted and are being reviewed for the SEP.
- Nordic coordinated a "Tourism Opportunity Identification Session" with the Straits Regional Network on November 24th in Flower's Cove. This session helped the group in identifying their current assets in the region and other areas of development that may become potential initiatives for the region. An initiative around heritage was discussed as a potential beginning point for the group to move forward.
- Staff held an opportunity identification session with Nordic's Natural Resources Sub-Committee on November 29th, 2010. This helped identify potential opportunities around the region that may be included in the new SEP.
- Nordic has also partnered with the Rural Secretariat to hold Fisheries Focus Group Sessions throughout Zone 6. All sessions have included "opportunity identification" to help identify potential initiatives in this sector. Two sessions were held in Anchor Point (Straits Region) on December 2nd and Conche (NP East/WBC Region) on December 15th. Both sessions in the region were very successful in getting a good overview of the current state of the fishery and a few possible initiatives for consideration. All information gathered was noted for consideration in the new SEP.
- Nordic facilitated a meeting on December 7th for the forest industry that included representatives from DNR, NPFRA, Model Forest and local stakeholders. Discussion revolved around what is needed by the harvesting sector in order to continue to operate viable businesses. Recommendations from the Harvesting Diagnostics report were also discussed.
- On December 15th staff conducted a business site visit with Holson Forest Products and discussed some of the needs surrounding the production of pellets. Action items were noted.
- Nordic held an Opportunities Identification Session with various stakeholders in the Straits region at the Straits Regional Network meeting on January 13th, 2011. Nordic presented an overview of work completed in the past year and reviewed potential action items already identified for the Straits region. Stakeholders discussed and prioritized a number of possible initiatives for the region that can move forward over the next couple of years.

- Other fisheries focus group sessions were held in January. One was held in St. Anthony on January 14th and one in Main Brook on January 27th. That concluded all the fisheries focus group sessions for the Nordic region. A lot of feedback was received from fisherpersons and gave a good overview of the industry in each parts of the region. All information has been gathered and noted for consideration in the new SEP.
- Opportunity Identification was also part of the agenda for the Great Northern Peninsula Forest Network meeting held in February. The discussion led to opportunities around NTFP's, commercialized fuelwood, and the need for testing of harvesting heads.
- Nordic staff also attended Nortip's Planning Session at which time opportunities were discussed in the Tourism industry in the region which has led to inclusion of items for that particular sector in the new SEP.
- Staff created a public consultation survey to help identify opportunities in the region. The survey was created using www.surveymonkey.com and the link was sent out to all contacts within Economic Zone 6. This was a short survey that allowed people to give feedback on opportunity identification for the region. Using the survey monkey online tool also allowed for fast, efficient and immediate return of all surveys completed. It also helped provide an overall analysis of the common goals and initiatives in the region.

Prepare an updated three year Strategic Economic Plan to be completed 30 days prior to renewal date.

- Nordic receive feedback from NLREDA and funding partners on December 20th regarding some clarification in moving forward with the creation of the new Strategic Economic Plan for REDB's. Nordic staff was able to review the information given which has assisted with completing the new SEP.
- As a result of participating in the Opportunity Management session, Nordic's Board and Staff have effectively utilized what was learned by incorporating the funneling process into the development of the new SEP and IBP. In assistance with the evaluation of how to include suggested items from the consultations, several factors were discussed which included resources, strategic directions, economically beneficial, and being realistic in what is achievable. Nordic's Executive Committee, with funding partners included, met and based upon the OM process has developed a new three-year SEP April, 2011 – March 2014.
- The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) has been completed and submitted to INTRD and ACOA as required on the deadline dates provided. The SEP has been developed in consultation with board members, industry stakeholders, funding partners and the residents of the Zone 6 to move forward common goals. All goals and objectives outlined in the SEP were highlighted as potential initiatives and/or activities for the yearly Integrated Business Plans. This ensured that achievable objectives are outlined in the SEP that coincided with yearly IBP's to ensure quality initiatives are moved forward on a timely basis for the long term benefit for the residents in the region.

Priority Initiatives:

6.4 ***BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY***

6.4.4 **Development of a Regional Wood Inventory Yard for the Great Northern Peninsula to support a wood pelletizing plant.**

1. *Lead and organize Management Team meetings:*

The Management Team that was put in place to guide the development of the RWIY consisted of members from the NPFRA, NEDC, ACOA, INTRD and the Department of Natural Resources. The team met approximately once per month in the beginning of the project and later met on an as needed basis to discuss and approve components for the development of the wood yard.

Meetings held were:

- December 14th, 2009 – To discuss details of the Letter of Offer.
- December 21st, 2009 – To discuss and approve third party agreements.
- February 3rd, 2010 – To discuss updates and new initiatives.
- April 23rd, 2010 – To discuss updates on initiatives.
- May 14th, 2010 – Tender documents openings and approvals.
- July 8th, 2010 – To discuss progress on land development, fencing installation and construction of Gatehouse. A site visit was also conducted by members of the Management Team to review progress of issued contracts.
- November 1st, 2010 – To discuss updates of the Gatehouse, Inventory Control System, weigh scales and Employees. Following the meeting, the Management Team participated in a tour of the Woodyard.

2. *Develop tender documents (i.e. Inventory Control System, construction of Gatehouse, Land Development and Fencing):*

All four tender documents for the Inventory Control System, Construction of the Gatehouse, Land Development and Fencing were developed and approved for tender calls. Copies of documents are on file.

Complete.

3. *Issue call for tenders:*

The tender documents were advertised in the local paper and distributed throughout the zone.

Complete.

4. Develop contracts around all tender documents:

Contracts specific to the nature of the tender call were developed with timelines, payment schedules, and the scope of work to be completed. Successful bidders were contacted, meetings set to discuss/review and signing of contracts.

Complete.

5. Meet with Contractors to discuss and confirm work schedules:

The Management Team met with contractors to discuss work schedules and payment plans for the scope of work for each contract. Staff monitored the scheduled timelines outlined in the contracts.

Complete.

6. Manages developments at the yard:

The Management Team continuously observed all operations and developments at the yard. The latest site visit was on November 1st, 2010. Employees were given layoffs early in December 2010 as Holson was no longer buying energy wood.

7. NEDC will work with the Northern Peninsula Forest Resources Association and Holson Forest Products through the Management Team to prepare these groups to take over the general operation of the yard after March 2011.

NEDC has facilitated three meetings with the NPFRA. At the latest meeting held on November 9th, 2010, Holson gave an update to the NPFRA as to the remainder of Energy Wood that would be bought and stored and the tentative date for the trail run for the Pellet Plant.

*A meeting will be held in March 2011 as a conclusion meeting for the NPFRA, Nordic and Holson as the transition will be the agenda item for the meeting.

The Executive remains updated on a regular basis. Also, NEDC and NPFRA continue to communicate with Holson to ensure that objectives of the project are being followed and fully developed. The partnership between the NPFRA, NEDC and Holson has been a successful one with the largest benefit being to the forestry industry on the Great Northern Peninsula as it has sustained that particular industry for another year.

6.2 NATURAL RESOURCES

6.2.7 BioMass Harvesting and Transportation

1. Draft Terms of Reference in consultation with all stakeholders

The Terms of Reference was drafted in consultation with all relevant stakeholders who were participating. This was also highlighted in consultation with the NPFRA as this initiative originated out of discussions with their membership and with Nordic taking the lead role in ensuring that the initiative would move forward. Feedback was provided by the NPFRA, DNR, Model Forest NL and the NFLTA. This included additional consultation with FP Innovations who had completed similar work in other parts of the province and the country. The draft was reviewed, revised and prepared for final submission to funding agencies. Document is on file.

This has been completed as noted.

2. Complete applications and source funding

Funding was sourced with partners, which included ACOA, NFLTA and Model Forest.

This has been completed as noted.

3. Submit applications to funding agencies

Applications were submitted to ACOA, Model Forest NL, NLFTA for funding as noted in the Terms of Reference.

Funding was approved from ACOA, NLFTA and the Model Forest.

This has been completed as noted.

4. On funding approval hire consultant

Funding was approved and FP Innovations was awarded the contract at the end of July 2010. New timeframes were then developed in consultation with FP Innovations, DNR and the NPFRA, due to funding being approved later than proposed. The new start date was then noted as August instead of June as noted in the initial Terms of Reference.

FP Innovations was hired in late July 2010 and commenced field work in late August on the Northern Peninsula. A new time frame was proposed and accepted by all parties and November 5th was set as the new deadline for the draft report to be complete. The draft was completed on time as proposed and a final draft was presented in Plum Point on December 7th, 2010. All partners were pleased with the final report and with some final structural changes requested by Nordic. The final report and additional separate recommendations document was submitted to Nordic and partners on December 17th,

2010. Copies of the final report have been forwarded to participating partners. Nordic has also reviewed the recommendations section in the report for the development of its new SEP.

This has been completed as noted.

5. Consultant will be required to complete the following for each in-forest operation:

- *Evaluate improvement opportunities for existing harvesting and forwarding equipment and/or techniques*

Complete – All items as listed here and below have been completed as required. They have been included in the final report and list of recommendations presented to Nordic and partners in Plum Point on December 7th, 2010 and with final changes on December 17th, 2010. All partners, including harvesters and DNR, were pleased with the report as presented.

- *Identify improvement opportunities related to the modification of existing equipment and provide capital costs (order of magnitude) for each modification*

Complete – See Report

- *Identify a process and scope for the assessment of harvesting and forwarding productivity. The actual analysis and field work will be carried out by the Forest Engineering and Industry Services Division, Department of Natural Resources over the course of the summer and fall of 2010.*

Complete – See Report

6. Consultant will be required to complete the following for each transportation (trucking) system:

- *Evaluate improvement opportunities for existing trucking systems and equipment*

Complete – See Report

- *Identify improvement opportunities related to the modification of existing equipment and provide capital costs (order of magnitude) for each modification*

Complete – See Report

- *Identify new equipment opportunities that would provide each contractor with trucking flexibility for current and potential wood characteristics (eg: various log sizes).*

Complete – See Report

- *Identify new equipment/system opportunities that would provide each contractor with harvesting flexibility and diversity*

Complete – See Report

- *Identify a process and scope for the assessment of harvesting and forwarding productivity. The actual analysis and field work will be carried out by the Forest Engineering and Industry Services Division, Department of Natural Resources over the course of the summer and fall of 2010.*

Complete – See Report

6.2.2 Identify potential opportunities for NTFP's that would be suitable for development on the GNP.

1. Work with the Model Forest to organize workshops in mushroom harvesting and wreath production.

Nordic and partners assisted with and attended the Mushroom Foray on September 10th-12th, 2010. The group that attended held a post foray meeting/workshop to discuss what was learned and steps in moving forward with using this information towards opportunities in the region.

During the summer of 2010, it was agreed by the GNP Forest Network (Nordic is a partner) that due to the absence of an LCN coordinator in the region, the initial stages of the wreath initiative would proceed first in the White Bay South LCN and once a new coordinator was hired, follow up on the GNP. Nordic continued to work with the Model Forest, GNP Forest Network & White Bay South LCN on gathering additional information on wreath production. A new LCN Coordinator was hired in late December 2010 to help with this initiative.

The WBS LCN has established a network of individuals from the area who are interested in forming a NTFP Co-op on the west coast of Newfoundland. The group has met a number of times and initial indications show that they are prepared to proceed with the process before March 2011. Their intention is to use the Great Northern Peninsula as a supply source for their wreath product during the first year of production and expand into tying operations after that. The network has already established a supply contact in the Roddickton area that has shown interest in becoming part of the NTFP Co-op. Nordic will continue to work with the Model Forest, GNP Forest Network & White Bay South LCN on gathering additional information on wreath production. All information gathered in any region can be used to identify opportunities in this region.

Nordic also organized and facilitated a NTFP-Agrifoods Workshop, in partnership with GNP Forest Network, Model Forest and DNR, in Roddickton-Bide Arm on February 24th, 2011. The workshop highlighted many opportunities utilizing NTFPs such as wreaths, mushrooms, berries, crafts, etc.

2. In partnership with Red Ochre develop Labour Market Strategy for forest industry on the GNP.

A meeting was held on June 16th to discuss the labour market strategy & other forest network action items to be completed such as the fuel wood survey for retailers. Meetings have taken place with Stakeholders with regards to compiling information/needs assessment for the completion of the labour market strategy. This involved completing and compiling labour market surveys for various forest community businesses/users.

Twenty six businesses were surveyed; seven businesses did not reply and one no longer exists. The businesses surveyed were broke down into three main groups: Harvesters (Forestry based industry), Tourism, Accommodations/Outfitters, and Community Assistant Corporations.

Below are some initial results from the surveys:

Business Structure: The average number of years in operation for the harvesters is 23 years, 4 of the businesses operate year round and 3 businesses operate on a seasonal basis. All businesses are locally owned and operated. 3 of the businesses are family owned operations, 3 businesses are corporations, and 1 is a partnership. 4 of the businesses do not contract out employment opportunities, 3 do contract out employment opportunities.

Human Resources: On average the harvesters have 15 employees employed, with 2 companies having all Full-Time seasonal employees, and the rest having a mix of both Full-Time and Full-Time seasonal employees. The average age range of the employees for all the harvesting businesses is in the 40-49 age class.

Training: Of the businesses surveyed 5 have no educational requirements for employment, and 2 have a high school requirement for employment, as well as position depending requirements. All but one business will hire employees without the necessary qualifications. All businesses surveyed provide formal/informal training. All the businesses provide on-the-job training, with orientation and in-house training being the most used for new/current employees. Safety training and communication skills are required by all businesses for their employees. This training will be required in the future as well, along with specialized licenses and certification.

Recruitment & Selection: Of the businesses surveyed all expect hiring in the next five years, with 3 businesses expecting hiring in the next year. All businesses are expecting retirements in the next 5 years, with 1 expecting retirements in the next year. Six businesses do not have defined recruitment and selection processes and strategies in place were as only 2 businesses have them in place. Local recruitment is the means of recruitment for 6 businesses, and the other two businesses recruit both locally and provincially.

Some preliminary work has been completed in gathering labour market information from businesses in the region. A new GNP Forest Network Coordinator has been hired and will continue compiling all information gathered into a report identifying a Labour Market Strategy for the GNP forest industry.

*The LM Strategy will be completed by March 31, 2011. See appendix.

3. Participate in the Mushroom Foray (September 10th -12th, 2010).

This has been completed as noted. Nordic's EDO and Chairperson attended the Mushroom Foray as planned. Partners from the GNP Forest Network also attended which allowed for additional discussion around potential opportunities for the Northern Peninsula. This group that attended held a post foray meeting/workshop to discuss what was learned and steps in moving forward with using this information towards opportunities in the region.

4. Research the potential opportunity of a ``Community Forest`` in Economic Zone 6 and Economic Zone 7.

There have been two possible sites discussed to establish Community Forests. These possible sites are in Hawke's Bay (Zone 7) and Roddickton (Zone 6). Hawke's Bay does seem to be the most plausible location based on available area at this time. However, no community forest has been approved by the province to date and White Bay South is working with them to possibly establish a site north of Main River as a pilot community forest site as a reference to creating additional sites in other parts of the province.

There has been a number of meetings and informal discussions with the Model Forest and The Department of Natural Resources over the past year concerning this initiative. Initial reaction to the Community Forest concept has been good but the Model Forest has been advised to proceed with caution, as communities are currently unable to apply for land tenure under the current system. They have also been advised when ready, to present only **one** area and pursue it as Newfoundland's first community forest 'pilot project'.

At the moment there are two regions being considered: White Bay South in economic zone 8 and Hawkes Bay in economic zone 7. In economic zone 7, there have been a couple of informal meetings held with various council members with the Town of Hawkes Bay to gauge interest. The topic of Community Forestry has been brought up at council meetings and it is the intent of the Town of Hawkes Bay to draft a formal letter requesting the Model Forest to deliver a formal presentation on Community Forestry before the end of February. Once that request has been received and the presentation has been given, it will be up to the town to request the LCN to assist them in the process. Once this step has been completed a MOU will be drawn up and a full project plan will be developed.

DNR has requested that going forward we replace the term 'Community Forest' with "Regional Forest". Due to the wording of the current NL Land Tenure agreement, they feel that the term "Regional Forest" will be better received.

5. Plan and organize a conference on Community Forests for the Western Zones (6, 7, and 8).

The Forest Conference Planning Committee has scheduled the Forest Network Conference for April 13th, 14th & 15th, 2011 at the Gros Morne Resort in St. Paul's. The planning committee consists of representation from Model Forest NL, Zones 6, 7 & 8, INTRD, ACOA, DNR, Parks & Natural Areas and the Forest Networks in White Bay South and on the Great Northern Peninsula. All committee members have taken on responsibilities with Nordic's staff representatives are assisting with the Planning, the Technical and Logistics, and the Finance Sub-Committees.

The conference theme confirmed by the committee is "Rural Revitalization from Our Forests." Six main topics have also been confirmed and include: Community Engagement & Forest Management, Role of Government, Industry Perspective, Enterprise Development, Product Development and Access to Markets.

The planning committee held meetings throughout the summer and fall to discuss the finances, logistics and technical aspects required to implement this event this April. An early notice of the event was sent out to as many stakeholders as possible. The conference flyer has also been drafted and distributed to various stakeholders in the Nordic region.

A full day meeting was held in Cow Head on November 1st to finalize details, such as the conference outline, speakers, costs and logistics, for the conference. This gave the planning committee an opportunity to review what has been completed and what needs to be completed to deliver a world class conference in April.

The Event Chairperson submitted an application, on behalf of the group, to the Rural Secretariat of Canada for funding for the conference. This submission is pending review and further discussion with the Rural Secretariat of Canada.

Additional meetings were held on January 11th, 28th and on February 11th to discuss plans for the conference. The majority of speakers from across the country have now been confirmed. Financials and logistics have also been finalized with some additional work for sponsorships to be completed. A conference package was completed at the end of January and has been distributed to stakeholders for consideration. All plans are moving ahead as needed with a pre-registration deadline of March 8th, 2011. Meetings have now been tentatively planned for every second Friday as the conference date draws closer.

6. Investigate the potential around a Domestic Fuel Wood Operation on the Northern Peninsula.

A Sub-committee was created to investigate the domestic fuel wood initiative with some initial meetings taking place to discuss options around this potential initiative.

A Terms of Reference was then drafted for a domestic fuel wood business concept to be written. Several organizations were approached as to whom might be able to draft the detailed business plan needed.

Nordic then submitted a CAS funding application to ACOA on December 16th to complete an analysis on the feasibility of establishing a Domestic Fuel Wood Operation in Western Newfoundland, specifically Roddickton, Hawke's Bay or White Bay South.

This funding application was approved on January 10th, 2011. Nordic is the proponent for this work, but it will be completed in partnership with the Model Forest, HEDB and Red Ochre.

The contract for the feasibility analysis was awarded to Anderson & Yates to complete all work as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

*All proposed work will be completed by the end of March. The report with a full analysis from the consultant will be available for review by Nordic's year end of March 31st, 2011.

6.2.1 Research and prepare and Agrifood assessment with the assistance of a Local Produce Coordinator.

1. Draft & Submit funding proposal to HRLE for Local Produce Coordinator.

The funding proposal was drafted by Nordic staff and submitted to HRLE in March 2010 for consideration for funding. A Local Produce Coordinator position was approved for advertisement and two ads were placed to attract qualified candidates. Interviews were pending sufficient qualified applicants applied for the position as noted. However, no qualified applications were received under JCP funding and the board then decided to apply under other LLMP programming available through HRLE. Additional work related to this initiative was to proceed once funding was sourced.

The LLMP funding proposal submitted to HRLE has not yet been assessed. However, Nordic and partners are moving ahead with some of the work noted, but would still require additional human resources to complete all work outlined under the coordinator position.

2. Hire coordinator to begin work outlined in proposal.

Pending funding approval.

3. Complete local produce industry analysis and inventory for region.

Full analysis is pending funding approval of HRLE application. Nordic staff has been in contact with stakeholders throughout the region to create a preliminary draft inventory list. This covers the basic contact information of any local producer whether they are personal use producers or business producers.

4. Lead and organize an Agrifood Development Workshop in partnership with DNR.

Nordic partnered with the GNP Forest Network, Model Forest NL and DNR to organize a workshop on agrifood development and non timber forest products. The NTFP - Agrifood Workshop was held on February 24, 2011 in Roddickton-Bide Arm. The workshop exceeded expectations in attendance and it was noted to be a very interesting and informative workshop for everyone.

Nordic had submitted an application to INTRD under their Community Capacity Building and received approval to deliver the workshop. A representative from the Agrifoods Division of DNR and from the Model Forest NL presented to the participants on potential opportunities in the region. Some products highlighted include: mushroom harvesting and cultivation, berries, cranberry production, sheep farming, vegetable farming, wreaths and other greenery, honey bee farming, tree saps, peat moss, caribou/moose jerky, animal parts crafts, community gardens, etc. The brainstorming session during the workshop was very valuable in indentifying potential opportunities for the region. Business opportunities and support mechanisms, such as training, were also discussed at the workshop using a couple of the highlighted opportunities. The workshop was extremely successful overall as a development and opportunity identification initiative with # of people participating.

5. Local Produce Coordinator list of activities are **(Pending Funding Approval)**:

- *Conduct individual interviews; PowerPoint Presentation for 3 public sessions, one in each sub-zone.*
- *Plan and develop the logistics.*
- *Prepare reports based on discussions/interviews.*
- *Research information needed for report by utilizing the NL Federation of Agriculture, NL Federation of Cooperatives, zone six business inventory list and other related sources to present findings/opportunities to interested stakeholders to provide awareness and education with regard to agrifood opportunities even on a small scale for individuals in the region.*
- *Investigate harvesting techniques for current and prospective agrifood businesses that would be compatible for this region and maintain the best economic benefits.*
- *Plan and deliver an awareness campaign to promote the local produce opportunities for the region. This will include awareness days in all three sub-regions of the zone.*
- *Promote agrifood cooperative concept for creating and maintaining a local produce market within the region.*

6.3 TOURISM

6.3.4 Organize and form a Straits Sub-zone Municipalities network that will promote existing tourism sites in collaboration with relevant stakeholders in the Straits.

1. Meet with the Towns of Anchor Point & Flower's Cove to further discuss their plans for tourism development in their region.

Initial discussions took place with the Towns of Anchor Point & Flower's Cove to further discuss the development of tourism and other industries in the Straits Sub-Region. A formal meeting with the two towns was then held on July 20th with representatives from both towns present. They reiterated the need for a regional approach to moving tourism and other developments forward in the Straits region and looked at the Northern Peninsula East Heritage Corridor model as a positive approach. They requested that as many stakeholders as relevantly possible to be invited to participate in the next meeting and begin the discussion that will lead to coordinated development.

Completed.

2. Organize an initial meeting with all relevant stakeholders in the Straits region to discuss options for collaboration.

The first Straits Regional Network meeting took place in Flower's Cove on September 23rd, 2010.

The stakeholders meeting went ahead as scheduled at the municipalities' request. However, they both had noted a regional approach and requested that Nordic lead and facilitate the initial meetings for the region.

Completed.

3. Organize tourism opportunity identification session.

The Tourism Opportunity Identification Session took place with the Straits Regional Network in Flower's Cove on November 24th, 2010. A list of assets in each community in the region was noted at the last meeting, but the group narrowed that list down to tourism assets and possible opportunities around it in the region. Several potential initiatives were identified ranging from a year round nature park to a regional multi-purpose centre. The session helped the group identify potential action items for them to begin to move forward and in addition it provided a venue to discuss opportunity identification for Nordic's new SEP consultation.

4. Develop & Draft partnership plan for tourism development in Straits region.

The plan was drafted for the Straits Regional Network members to review and will be finalized at the next meeting to be held in March 2011.

Other Activities:

6.3.1 Develop a Tourism Resource Binder for Zone Six.

1. Update Business Inventory List.

The Business Inventory List has been updated with the most accurate information for regional businesses, organizations and other stakeholders.

Complete.

2. Contact businesses, municipalities, stakeholders, etc for updated information.

All businesses, municipalities and other stakeholders have been contacted to provide the most updated information for the inventory and for the tourism binder.

Complete.

3. Gather and compile information on accommodations, tourist attractions and other businesses.

All information for the Tourism Resource Binder, such as accommodations, tourist attractions and other businesses has been gathered and compiled into the tourism resource binder. The binder was used in the Flower's Cove Tourist Information Centre this summer as a pilot to see how effective it could be, if changes were necessary, if there was information missing, not relevant, etc. Once the Centre was closed for the season results were brought back to staff, reviewed, and revisions were completed.

Complete.

4. Seek sponsorships from private business

Sponsorship letters requesting assistance for the production of the binder were sent out in October 2010 to all tourism related business operators in the region. Sponsorship has been received from some businesses in the area. NEDC is continuing to follow-up with other business.

5. Develop and distribute a Tourism Resource Binder to each tourism related business in Zone 6.

The Tourism Binder is complete and has been printed for distribution. Sponsoring businesses have received copies of binders.

Nordic also partnered with the Town of St. Anthony, in particular their Tourism Development Officer to deliver and present a copy of the binder to Telelink which is the company that manages the provinces Tourism Destination Marketing System. The EDO met with twelve of the employees from Telelink and the binder was well received and is now part of their resource library. It was reiterated as well that the binder was needed as they have very little resources and information on our area.

6.4 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

6.4.3 Bridging the Gap Program

1. Consult with RNDA on terms of contract and sign agreements

A Partnership Agreement was developed and signed in May outlining responsibilities for RNDA and Nordic in delivering the BTG Program to the participating business which is Holson Forest Products.

Complete.

2. Hire BTG Coordinator

An Employment Agreement was also developed and signed with the BTG Coordinator who was also hired in May.

Complete. A replacement BTG Coordinator was hired on November 29th, 2010.

3. Advertise BTG Program

In June the advertisement was developed and distributed requesting applications for individuals who were interested in re-training for employment in the wood pellet industry was distributed.

Complete.

4. Select participants; interviews to take place in June.

69 applications were received from a wide variety of individuals and locations. 28 interviews were conducted with 14 individuals selected for the positions. Initial intake information and one-on-one sessions were held with these individuals to confirm that the set criteria were being met.

Complete.

5. Participate in Community Learning Network which is a network that aims to further community development by supporting and encouraging social and economic growth.

The Network aims to further community development and enhance the lives of rural communities by supporting and encouraging social and economic growth. In this particular instance, the BTG Coordinator and RNDA are responsible for the organization of the meetings.

6. Participants to begin training in July

Referrals with CERC and HRLE were completed and the BTG Program participants began their training on August 9th. Academy Canada was selected as the training institution and hired a local individual as the instructor/facilitator. Meetings were also held in July with the provincial team leader, BTG Counsellor, MUN, and Holson to discuss expectations and delivery.

Complete

7. Monitor progress

As a Nordic employee, the BTG Counsellor submits monthly reports detailing the work that has occurred. Normal communication is on-going with the organizations and the business involved.

To date participants have completed courses in First Aid, WHMIS, Fire Prevention and a Lean Manufacturing Course that was delivered by the VP of Best Practices and Lean Management Atlantic Region of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters. The course was directed at the day to day operations of a pellet plant. It also focused on safety, planning events through an essential step by step process and area management. The participants are now certified in Lean Manufacturing Level 1.

The BTG Program is scheduled to be completed in May 2011.

6.1 TRANSPORTATION

6.1.4 Lead and organize the Great Northern Peninsula Transportation Forum in support of the study completed as a result of the completion of the Trans Labrador.

1. Lead and Organize a Transportation Forum to promote study findings to local business community.

The Transportation Forum went ahead as planned in St. Barbe on September 8th, 2010 and was noted as a very successful event. There were approximately 70 people in attendance for the day long forum. Notes and action items were compiled from the event and distributed.

Complete.

2. Form planning committee with partners in Zone 6 & 7.

Nordic took the lead in forming a planning committee which consisted of Nordic, Red Ochre, CBDC Nortip, GNP Joint Council, Rural Secretariat, St. Barbe Development Association, INTRD & ACOA as well as consultation with the business community.

Complete.

3. Plan & organize regular planning committee meetings & logistics for forum.

Nordic staff organized and planned regular committee meetings since initial plans began in early April 2010 for an initial date of June 9th. This date was postponed due to various factors such as timing and other commitments keeping key stakeholders/speakers from attending. It was decided that September would be better for most people and the new date of September 8th was chosen by the planning committee on June 24th.

Complete.

4. Draft agendas, invitations & letters to send to speakers, businesses and other partners.

An initial email invitation was sent out to stakeholders noting the new date for the forum and approximately 80 people confirmed attendance. Sponsors were confirmed for lunch and the networking sessions, which included the Rural Secretariat, Provincial Airlines, CBDC Nortip, Red Ochre and Nordic.

Agendas were completed; letters were drafted and sent out to speakers, businesses and other partners. Two constant contact invitations were sent out months prior to the event

and again several weeks prior to remind stakeholders of the forum. This was followed by newspaper Ads, news releases/articles and additional direct contact to confirm as many stakeholders as needed for the forum.

Complete.

5. Note & follow up on action items specified at forum.

All action items have been noted and have been followed up on via discussions with the planning committee and stakeholders.

The committee met on several occasions after the forum to follow up on the action items specified. All action items were discussed as to how and if they could move forward. They will also be noted for consideration during the SEP opportunity identification process by Nordic and Red Ochre.

6.3 **TOURISM**

6.3.4 **Build capacity within the Northern Peninsula East Heritage Corridor (NPEHC) to promote developments with the seven communities on the Eastern side of the GNP.**

1. Consult with WDMO on promotion of tourism attractions.

Nordic staff has consulted with WDMO on promotion of tourism attractions in the Northern Peninsula East region. The WDMO conducted 20 FAM tours in the region over the summer and early fall.

Nordic staff attended the WDMO Product Development meeting in Hawke's Bay on November 16th which also discussed the promotion of tourism attractions. Tourism sites in Zone 6 were discussed in relation to further product development. Nordic has also delivered a copy of the Tourism Resource Binder to the WDMO for their resources as well.

2. Organize logistics around delivery of Strategic Planning CCB Module for the NPEHC.

As requested by the NPEHC, Nordic became the proponent to the CCB Program to deliver the Strategic Planning Module to the NPEHC and to Municipalities (4 municipalities participated) on the Eastern side of the NP. A proposal along with an application was submitted to CCB which was approved. All logistics such as location, meals, travel, contact with participants and sourcing a facilitator was completed by Nordic staff, which also attended and assisted with the facilitation of the session.

Complete.

3. Assist NPEHC with development of proposals for Multimedia Director and Partnerships Planner.

Assistance was provided in the development of a proposal for the NPEHC that would enable the organization to continue to develop and promote the region. If funds are accessed these individuals will be responsible for developing stronger partnerships with the communities, businesses and tourism sites; ensuring quality products are ready for tourists to purchase by providing workshops in product readiness; producing common promotional items for each community to use strategically; provide workshops to help tourism sites and businesses gain knowledge in social media usage to promote their businesses. Each community has already touched on promoting their local community, businesses and sites, but it was felt that a common promotional plan will lead to much greater success. Each community, site, and business will be able to gain knowledge in multimedia areas such as website maintenance, blogging, using social media sites, to promote their business, through workshops offered right in the area. The NPEHC has submitted an application to HRLE to assist in these developments.

Complete.

4. Development of Strategic Plan for the NPEHC.

The delivery of a Strategic Planning CCB Module for the NPEHC took place on June 30th in Englee. Session notes were compiled, and from these notes goals, objectives and action items were identified which resulted in a Strategic Plan that includes a vision, five main goals and a number of objectives with listed action items for each. This draft was initially reviewed by the group at a NPEHC meeting on November 24th, 2010 and finalized in February.

See appendix.

Complete.

6.3.6 Provide assistance with planning for the Iceberg Festival 2010.

1. Attend regular planning meetings to provide planning support and assistance to the WDMO and the VTTA for promotion of the Iceberg Festival.

Nordic staff sits as part of the planning committee for the Iceberg Festival and attended regular planning committee meetings leading up to the festival held from June 11-20th, 2010.

Complete.

2. Provide assistance with marketing initiatives to ensure the festival is fully promoted for all businesses in the region.

Staff provided assistance with marketing initiatives by drafting a feature article for the Where It's At? Booklet completed by the Northern Pen newspaper. Additional assistance was provided with the writing of news articles and releases, PSA's, posters, and scheduling.

Complete.

3. Attend festival ceremonies which require committee member involvement and assistance.

Staff attended the festival opening with other committee members and assisted with opening festivities as needed. Politicians, additional members of the community and a large amount of visitors attended the opening and it was deemed a success by the committee.

The festival was a success again this year with higher attendance numbers at the various events throughout the region. Festival events were highlighted in the local newspaper for a couple weeks and highlighted the success of the festival for the region's economy.

Complete.

4. Attend sponsorship committee meetings in support of seeking new sponsors to support the ongoing success of the festival.

Staff also took part in the festival sponsorship committee in identifying existing and new potential sponsors for the festival. The committee was successful in getting new sponsors for the festival this year to support the ongoing success of the festival. Larger sponsorships have grown from the previous year.

Complete.

1. Initiate meetings/discussions with municipalities/LSD's to identify initiatives/go forward strategies.

Nordic partnered with the Town of Flower's Cove to secure funding for the second phase of development around tourism sites within the town. The first phase of development, including all signage, has been completed. The second phase included development of two kiosk pull offs at both entrances to town, further parking lot development at Thrombolites site and White Rocks Trail and additional signage. Funding was secured between HRLE and INTRD to complete all the work noted in the revised second proposal. All of this work has now been completed as noted in the proposal.

Nordic planned and initiated a meeting on November 24th with various community stakeholders in the Straits Region to discuss initiatives around tourism for the Straits Regional Network. This "Tourism Opportunity Identification Session" was used to highlight current and/or potential opportunities around tourism development within the region. The two municipalities, some LSD's and other organizations in the region were present at the meeting

On December 14th, 2010 staff also met with the Town of Anchor Point and the Town of Flower's Cove to discuss municipal planning and how the two Towns can partner on initiatives.

In November, Staff along with representatives from INTRD also met with the Town of Englee to have some discussion as to future developments for the Town. Some of the discussion that ensued consisted of obstacles that prevent moving forward, investment attraction and assistance that is needed from government departments and other organizations. Potential opportunities were also discussed which led to Nordic forwarding information on these to the Town. A follow up meeting has been scheduled.

Nordic planned and attended another meeting with the Towns of Flower's Cove & Anchor Point and other LSD's in the Straits region on January 12th, 2011. This was to discuss the opportunities for the region under the Straits Regional Network and Nordic also hosted an opportunity identification session during this meeting to identify opportunities for its new SEP.

Nordic staff has also been working with representatives from the Communities of Sandy Cove and Shoal Cove East to complete a proposal for their Come Home Year celebrations. This was completed as requested in partnership with Nordic.

Nordic staff met with the Town of Main Brook and the Main Brook Research and Development Corporation (MBRDC) on December 15th, 2010 and January 27th, 2011 to discuss an initiative to allow continued access to the fish plant in the future. The loading area for the fish plant faces an old wharf and cribbed area that has now been deemed unsafe to work on at its present state. The MBRDC and partners are proposing to remove the old wharf frontage and replace it with a new filled in access space to the plant. This will allow fork lifts to have access from offloading trucks into the production area of the plant to continue operations in future seasons. Nordic, in consultation with partners, has completed the proposal as requested by the group.

2. Distribute trail counters to attractions on the Eastern side of the GNP and track user numbers for 2010. Compile a report and distribute to appropriate groups and organizations.

Nordic staff distributed trail counters (seven) to WBCDA, FSHS, Town of Roddickton-Bide Arm and to the Town of Englee for their respective sites and trails. Staff met with managers and gave instructions as to how to install the counters. Nordic has the software that will download and analyze the data at the end of the tourism season, at which time individual organizations and municipalities will have access to the data relevant to their trails and the Corridor as a whole.

Early December 2010, the information from each trail counter was collected. This information was then analyzed through the program DataNet. DataNet is a comprehensive online software solution to analyze, manage, store and share TRAFX Counter Data and allow various charts, reports and tables to be created.

With the partnerships that were initiated NEDC has received monetary contributions from the Town of Englee and the Town of Roddickton-Bide Arm that has assisted with the analyzing of the data collected.

A final report was compiled including weekly, monthly and daily averages for each site and the Northern Peninsula East region, which has been forwarded to the partners involved, the VTTA, WDMO and funding partners

3. Support to the Save Our Char Committee (SOCC) by attending meetings and assisting with public relations activities.

A new SOCC Coordinator was hired through SABRI and worked out of the DFO office in St. Anthony and on site at Western Brook/Parker's River. There were some issues with installing the counting fence and underwater camera this year, which did not begin until the first week in July.

Nordic staff continued to help the SOCC move forward its five year plan by assisting with proposals, public relations and via the webpage hosted on the Nordic website. Numbers for the 2010 season have now been collected and released. Three community information sessions were held throughout the St. Anthony Basin region to inform the community and to seek new members interested in the group. Nordic staff also provided some preliminary assistance on a proposal planned for the 2011 season where the group hopes to hire two staff people to accelerate work within the plan. The SOCC Coordinator hired for the 2010 season was finished on December 3rd and completed the last of three community information sessions held in the region.

4. Support to the CURRA & ICZM by participating in planning meetings and sessions on industry issues.

Nordic remains an official community partner with CURRA and is privy to all updates from the group on academic studies that could lead to possible new opportunities for the region in the future. The CURRA newsletter was completed for fall 2010 and was provided

to Nordic staff and board committee for review. This includes updates from various research projects ongoing throughout the Northern Peninsula and West Coast. It also included an article on the GNP Transportation Forum which was highlighted to the committee. CURRA is also involved in the new pilot project with the GNP Heritage Network which includes heritage organizations in Zone's 6 & 7.

The ICZM, in partnership with DFO, have completed all maps to highlight all species and other assets in each sub region of the ICZM region from Cape Bauld (Ship Cove) to Cape St. Gregory (Trout River). These maps are for use by potential oil and/or other resource companies looking at exploring the region for extractable resources. This was completed in consultation with fishermen, DFO, DFA, TOWNS, Nordic, Red Ochre and other relevant stakeholders in the region.

Nordic staff attended an ICZM meeting in Hawke's Bay on November 22nd to discuss the upcoming workplan with the ICZM group. Mr. Gros, who is representing Municipalities, has become the newly elected Chairperson of the ICZM committee. Glenda Bavis-Reid has been elected the new Vice Chairperson. The committee will also be looking for additional members to fill some gaps in representation. There was some significant discussion at the last meeting around a potential Lobster Hatchery(s) within the ICZM region and the need to complete research to look at this potential opportunity.

Another meeting was held in Hawke's Bay on January 13th, 2011. The meeting discussed the potential around a Lobster Hatchery within the ICZM region and getting a full analysis completed. This could be pending further review of the work being completed on the east coast. The provincial government has announced additional funding for the third phase of the Placentia Bay Lobster Hatchery Pilot Project in September 2010. This project is being led by the FFAW along with other partners such as DFO, CCFI and Marine Institute. This may shed some light into what can or cannot be done on the Northern Peninsula as well.

The ICZM is also looking at completing a non-fisherperson survey to map the coast of the entire Northern Peninsula which would include St. Anthony and the eastern side which is not currently included in the ICZM region. This could lead to the possible inclusion of the entire Nordic region into the ICZM zone pending approval by the partners. The ICZM has updated their website to include the most updated information including the marine coastal maps completed last year.

5. *Support to the IATNL (International Appalachian Trail-Newfoundland & Labrador) to develop trails in the region.*

Nordic staff has been continually updated on the IATNL trail work completed to date; however, no work was completed in this region this year due to funding limitations. Their AGM was confirmed to go ahead on March 4th in Corner Brook. Nordic staff followed up with the IATNL and they currently have no set plans for the next year to date. They did note that the French Shore IATNL Trail remains in the plans to be completed pending available financial resources.

6. Provide support for research and development of training needs at the College of the North Atlantic – St. Anthony Campus.

The Glass Art Program was delivered at the campus in St. Anthony with a full intake of students for the day and evening classes. This was done in partnership with Grenfell Historical Society and students used Grenfell minded designs to create their glass art. Nordic has been working with the college and Grenfell to help move this forward as new product development for Grenfell.

Nordic has also engaged stakeholders in promoting new programs that the college now offers such as the Hunter/Guide Program and the Licensed Practical Nursing Program that began in September 2010.

As per the CBCCL study that was completed on converting the Campus to pellets, Nordic staff planned and organized a meeting with CNA, DNR, Model Forest, INTRD and ACOA as to the potential surrounding the conversion. As a result of the meeting, the Administrator has developed a proposal that outlines the components of conversion, demonstration centre and training. The project will aim to (1) research the environmental impact of wood pellet conversion at the campus, (2) study the feasibility of converting similar CNA institutions within the region and across Newfoundland and Labrador to wood pellet consumption, (3) educate burner mechanics and installers on appropriate maintenance and installation techniques for wood pellet burners and stoves, train those that work in wood pellet plants in the area of process operations, (4) establish a demonstration centre for various types of wood pellet stoves (5) and educate consumers on the benefits of converting to wood pellets. This pilot project will also aim to establish a market for wood pellet consumption across Newfoundland and Labrador in support of government's recent multi-million dollar investment in wood pellet production within the province. St. Anthony campus is ideally suited to fulfill this role. Feedback has been provided to the draft and it is now the sole responsibility of the College to submit to potential funding agencies.

7. Organize logistics around the delivery of the CCB Module "Opportunity Management" for Nordic Board, Staff and stakeholders.

This module was completed. The session was held at Grenfell Heritage Hotel and Suites in St. Anthony on November 18th, 2010. The session was well attended by both the board of directors and staff. Funding was approved under the Department of INTRD's Capacity Building Program to cover expenditures for this session. Mr. Ted Lomond was the facilitator.

The notes from the session have been compiled and are on file.

8. Participate in NLREDA's AGM and Western Caucus (DAWN) meetings.

Nordic's Chairperson, ED, and EA attended the NLREDA AGM on November 3-5, 2010 in Gander. Staff was provided with professional training during that time from ACOA and the College of the North Atlantic. The ED also gave a presentation on the Regional Wood Inventory Yard. Nordic also received the first ever "Initiative of the Year" award for the RWIY.

The last DAWN meeting was held on June 18 & 19, 2010 in Rocky Harbour which was attended by the Chairperson, Treasurer, ED and EDO.

OTHER:

Grenfell Historical Society

In the past year, Nordic has also assisted the Grenfell Historical Society with the implementation of their marketing plan as a member of the marketing committee and board. Two thirds of the items identified in the plan have either been implemented or work on items has begun. With the partner's involvement, Grenfell has had a 60% increase in sales this year and a 10% increase in visitation.

French Shore Historical Society

NEDC has also continued with its partnership with the FSHS and provided assistance with the development of its business and marketing plan. FSHS was successful in receiving funding to complete these plans and Nordic staff has assisted with revisions to these plans at the meetings with the consultants who have been contracted to deliver the plans.