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The Coaster News

Coast of Bays representatives meet with government officials **Minister Tom Hedderson coming to Coast of Bays in 2009**

Executive Director of the Coast of Bays Corporation, Conrad Collier, and the Executive Director of the Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association, Miranda Pryor, joined with MHA Tracey Perry to present an overview of the aquaculture sector in the Coast of Bays region to the Economic Policy Committee of Cabinet.



This committee provides input to Cabinet during the budgetary planning process. Members of the committee meeting with the Coast of Bays representatives included Minister Trevor Taylor (Transportation and Works), Minister Tom Hedderson (Fisheries and Aquaculture), Minister Clyde Jackman (Environment and Conservation, acting), Minister Paul Oram (Business) and Minister John Hickey (Labrador Affairs).

While the fishery is still an important component of the region's economy, the presentation provided an opportunity to highlight to the ministers the challenges faced by industry and municipalities along with the business opportunities that are emerging as a result of a growing aquaculture sector. Emphasis was placed on the need for marine infrastructure to ensure a bio-secure industry and improvements required on Route 360, the Bay D'Espoir - Harbour Breton Highway. Snow clearing, ice control and preventative maintenance was also discussed.

The presentation demonstrated the need for a cellular communications network in the Fortune Bay North Shore area and the requirements in various municipalities including water and sewer management systems, street and waterfront access improvements, municipal zoning in some communities and waste management issues. Municipalities have much to benefit from the growth of the aquaculture sector and must be a partner with industry if it is to achieve its full potential.

"The Coast of Bays is a rural area with a lot of potential that will soon be turned into reality," said Wesley Harris, chair of the Coast of Bays Corporation. "With the combined efforts of all sectors of the economy, municipalities and government, we will make it happen. Meetings like this serve to put the region on government's agenda."

Members of the committee reiterated Government's commitment to the Coast of Bays and to the aquaculture sector. With the decline in the economy across the country and in fact worldwide, we are not immune to the impacts associated with such a downturn. The Committee assured the delegation that the information provided would be considered in

the budget preparation process. Minister Hedderson will be coming to the Coast of Bays in the New Year to meet with municipal leaders in the region.

The Coast of Bays Corporation is one of 20 Regional Economic Development Boards in the province with a mandate to create a climate for economic growth in the Coast of Bays region. The Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association is a member-based, not-for-profit industry association that represents the interest of the aquaculture industry throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

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