

Sustaining Structures: Exploring the Collaborative Management of Wharves in Kings County

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The mission of the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre is to conduct and facilitate health promotion research that influences policy and contributes to the health and well-being of Atlantic Canadians.

The Coastal Communities Network (CCN) of Nova Scotia provides a forum to encourage dialogue and share information that promotes the survival and enhancement of our rural coastal communities

The goal of the Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Project is to increase the ability of rural communities and organizations in Nova Scotia to access and use social science research in order to influence and develop policy that contributes to the health and sustainability of communities. RCIP is a 5-year research project, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and co-sponsored by the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre and the Coastal Communities Network.

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executive summary

Many coastal communities in Nova Scotia are facing the daunting challenge of maintaining and managing their wharves. The current system of Harbour Authorities was created by Small Craft Harbours (SCH) and The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to give communities more control over their wharves. Unfortunately, this system often does not effectively address the needs of these communities. Many communities feel that they are worse off now than they were before Harbour Authorities were introduced. Furthermore, DFO has divested many wharves in Nova Scotia, leaving some communities with full responsibility for a wharf if they wish to maintain a viable fishing livelihood. These divested wharves are as important as those that DFO continues to support. This is particularly true in the Bay of Fundy where high tides and unpredictable weather often require fishermen to head to shore away from their home port.

Ideas for wharf management solutions involving communities working together have been discussed for many years in many different forums. In February 2004, at a Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Rural Policy Forum, ideas for action began to form. A group consisting of fishermen, community organizations, funders and policy makers recognized the need for improved wharf management and agreed that collaborative management could be the solution.

In April 2004, the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project (UBFWPP) was formed in an attempt to create an alternative community-based system for managing and maintaining wharves throughout Kings County.

This research project supported the UBFWPP by conducting relevant research and compiling useful resources for the group.

Purpose & Objectives

The purpose of this study was to provide research and logistical support to the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project.

The objectives of this study were:

1. To gain a better understanding of the Kings County wharf communities' perspective for a collaborative wharf management project;
2. Compile resources that will assist with the forming and functioning of a collaborative management group (Appendix B);
3. Document the process of forming the pilot project group.

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were carried out in four communities with 18 people to gain a better understanding of different community's perspectives on management approaches. Community partners contacted research participants and explained the ideas for collaboration involved in the pilot project. This was done in an effort to keep the research based in discussions among community members. The project also included a compilation of tools and resources that may be useful for an action oriented community group (Appendix B).

Findings

The major findings from the interviews focused on: Why get involved with the pilot project? and How should the pilot project be organized? All participants agreed that collaborating on a system of managing wharves could play a role in sustaining the wharves in Kings County.

Why get involved with the pilot project?

The major reasons described for getting involved by the majority of participants included: an opportunity to share skills and experiences, more effective management, improved communication with the government, increased access to funding and improved community collaboration (between the communities of Kings County). Minor reasons (mentioned by fewer people) included increased safety on the Bay of Fundy and building the tourist industry along the coast. The majority of people felt that working with other communities was the only way towards a sustainable future. Only a few people expressed concerns that working together would jeopardize their current situation.

How should the pilot project be organized?

Participants commented on 1) The structure of the group and 2) The role of the group.

1. Many people felt that the pilot project group needed to be committed to the principles of openness, inclusiveness and sharing. Community members wanted to be sure that the appropriate people were speaking on their behalf. Many participants identified the need to set up codes of conduct and nurture a positive group dynamic to overcome past politics and personal agendas. Most participants believed that it was important for the group to have a clear understanding of each wharf's unique situation and the individual vision each community had for its wharf.
2. The role of the group was unanimously seen as managing the wharf structure, including maintenance, insurance, bookkeeping, fee collection, record keeping and communication. Other roles included setting up a disaster or storm relief fund and sustaining positive relations with government and funders.

Conclusions

The research findings suggest that this pilot project has the potential to create positive change in the Kings County wharf communities. The collaborative nature of the project promotes both regional and individual community benefits.

Collaboration between these communities means more than just effective wharf management. Indeed, increased communication between communities will also affect the long-term sustainability and well-being of small coastal fishing communities in rural Nova Scotia. It is these main outcomes that will hopefully inform future attempts towards new methods of management and overcoming barriers to collaboration.

As communities in Kings County redefine their role related to the wharf, the role of government and funders must also be reassessed. Government must recognize communities' ability to determine their own future by allowing them to identify their problems, plan solutions, make decisions, implement projects and make changes based on evaluations. Government needs to increase its capacity to support and provide resources to communities who are attempting to sustainably manage their futures.

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Holly MacDonald, Glanville Travis and Ed Litle provided extensive support throughout the research and especially in their respective communities. In addition to participating in the development of the research itself, community members also spent a great deal of time familiarizing the researcher with the area and introducing the researcher to research participants. This research relied on these people's time and commitment to achieve the goals of this project.

introduction

The purpose of this project was to contribute to, and document the process of implementing a collaborative strategy that will allow Harbour Authorities to work together towards the management and sustainability of community resources. The premise of this strategy is that, through the sharing of resources and knowledge, and the process of networking, more can be accomplished collectively than as individuals.

The federal government, through the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), has been decreasing funding support for harbours and wharves. Policies related to Small Craft Harbours (SCH) are currently under review, which means that funding to support wharves and harbours may be further reduced. In the past, harbours have had to compete for limited funding; however, DFO is looking for alternate mechanisms and methods of funding wharves¹.

At the Rural Communities Impacting Policies (RCIP) Project Rural Policy Forum in February 2004, a workshop on Harbours and Wharves was attended by representatives from Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), NS Economic Development (Halifax and Kings Offices), SCH, Harbour Authorities, fishermen and community based organizations. Representatives of SCH stressed that the current system of funding is not working. This is backed by the Coastal Communities Network's recent study, which showed that 4% annual reinvestment is necessary to maintain wharves but only 1.36% is currently invested in NS². New and creative ways of saving Nova Scotian wharves must be found.

The need for new initiatives is particularly evident when looking at issues of safety and fishing methods for the Bay of Fundy. For example, in the Upper Bay of Fundy, most wharves are high water wharves with only a four-hour window per tide to safely make it ashore. With quick changing weather it is crucial for each wharf to be maintained for the safety of fishing crews. At the RCIP workshop in February, three wharves in the Upper Bay were represented. Along with ACOA, NS Economic Development and DFO, it was agreed that the group would investigate the possibility of launching a pilot project to address the maintenance of wharves³.

The main focus of the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project (UBFWPP) is to create a pool of resources and funds from a variety of government departments

¹ Upper Bay of Fundy Co-operation Pilot Project (one-pager), Spring 2004, (Appendix C)

² Between the Land and the Sea: The Social and Economic Importance of Wharves and Harbours in Nova Scotia, Prepared by Praxis Research and Consulting Inc., January 13, 2004

³ Upper Bay of Fundy Co-operation Pilot Project (one-pager), Spring 2004, (Appendix C)

that will then be coordinated and administered jointly by representatives from each participating harbour. The newly formed Upper Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre and the Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre will provide support. This co-operative effort will open the door to new funding sources that would not be available to individual wharves. The coordination of pooled resources will be managed in a fair, transparent and democratic process through the UBFWPP⁴.

This research project, "Sustaining Structures: Exploring the Collaborative Management of Wharves in Kings County", documented the first stage of the pilot project by conducting interviews with people in communities to gain a better understanding of their objectives and visions for the pilot project. It is hoped that this document will be beneficial for community history, reflection and future projects of a similar nature. Furthermore, participating in the overall UBFWPP will potentially enable individuals and groups to influence policies that directly affect the livelihood of their wharves and their communities.

Ishbel Munro, Executive Director of the Coastal Communities Network, prepared the following Policy Backgrounder for discussion at the Wharves and Harbours workshop at the February 2004 Rural Policy Forum. The paper provides context for the pilot project that was conceived and launched at the Forum.

⁴ Upper Bay of Fundy Co-operation Pilot Project (one-pager), Spring 2004, (Appendix C)

policy backgrounder:

The Social and Economic Impact of Wharves and Harbours on Coastal Communities

Written by Ishbel Munro⁵

Coastal Communities Network recently released a report entitled ***Between the Land and the Sea: The Social and Economic Impact of Wharves and Harbours on Coastal Communities***⁶. The project generated compelling evidence of the importance of harbours as essential to the economic, social and cultural viability of coastal communities in Nova Scotia. It is equally clear that the overall social and economic well being of the province is immensely affected by developments in the coastal zone. The core argument can be presented in straightforward terms:

- 28% of the population of Nova Scotia lives in rural harbour communities;
- 24% of the employed labour force works in rural harbour communities;
- 14% of the provincial labour force is employed in industries that make use of wharves or benefit significantly from harbours;
- Nearly 70% of Nova Scotia's \$5.7 billion in exports is generated by industries that are predominantly rural-coastal based and rely on a rural-based labour force. The two largest export industries, non-metallic mining and mineral fuels and fisheries, represent 45% of overall exports and depend directly on harbours and wharves.

The foundation of the coastal rural economy continues to be the fishery and related sectors – fish processing, aquaculture, boatbuilding, etc. The fishery itself is structured to a very significant degree by federal government policies that have maintained control of the most valuable licenses in the hands of independent owner operators working out of widely distributed small inshore ports. Two important trends could destabilize the fishery and the coastal communities that depend upon it. The first is the trend toward consolidation of control over shellfish licenses.

On the second issue, wharves, the evidence generated by this study does not provide grounds for optimism. We have an increasingly valuable fishery, and significant growth in other sectors that depend on, or benefit directly from harbours, but public investment in maintaining and renewing harbour facilities

⁵ Ishbel Munro is the Executive Director of the Coastal Communities Network. She prepared this Policy Backgrounder for the RCIP Rural Policy Forum, February 2004.

⁶ *Between the Land and the Sea: The Social and Economic Importance of Wharves and Harbours in Nova Scotia*, Prepared by Praxis Research and Consulting Inc., January 13, 2004

continues to fall below the thresholds for sustainability. This trend is a direct and growing threat to the future viability of many coastal rural communities that already face serious demographic and economic challenges.

A comprehensive review of DFO-SCH (Small Craft Harbours) policy and program documents makes clear that several years of budget restraint have resulted in a situation where many wharves are not adequately maintained. This, in turn, translates into unacceptable levels of risk for users and their vessels.

In response to this situation, the SCH Branch has pursued a strategy of transferring ownership of recreational harbours and low activity fishing harbours to community-based groups, reducing their own inventory to those harbours that are essential to the commercial fishery, and expanding private sector involvement in the management of core harbours. The goal is to keep core fishing harbours open and operating at an acceptable standard within available resources.

The harbour authorities system was introduced in 1987 to involve fish harvesters directly in harbour management. Under the system, SCH retains ownership of core fishing harbours and leases them to representative user groups. The non-profit harbour authorities then take on most responsibilities for the daily operations and maintenance of the harbour. If a community shows no interest, and the facilities are deemed to be unsafe, the harbour is slated for demolition or total divestiture.

The original vision was for harbour authorities to take over all operating costs by 2001, but SCH has since had to revise this objective. Many authorities have not become financially self-sufficient or are still not fully effective on an organizational level. DFO-SCH has found that the authorities have widely varying abilities to generate revenues, depending on the extent of industry involvement and the value of local fisheries. Most of the authorities, at best, cover operating costs and have no money for capital expenditures. In part because they do not own the facilities and cannot use them as collateral, they have limited access to other sources of capital. In some harbours there are problems with volunteer burnout and conflicts among user groups.

The current SCH 2002 to 2005 business plan calls for inventory reductions of up to 50% of all harbours and client partnerships for 100% of core harbours. Greater efforts will be made to improve the management abilities and financial independence of the harbour authorities. One specific problem is that it costs money to close down inactive harbours and DFO-SCH currently lacks funds for further divestitures.

After substantial cuts in the mid-1990s, the 2002/03 SCH spending level at \$96.8 million is the highest since the early 1990s. However, engineering experts employed by the Branch have stated that an additional \$50 million is needed

annually to maintain the integrity of core harbours. DFO-SCH policy documents clearly recognize that the current and projected levels of spending on maintenance and major capital renewal are not adequate to maintain the asset base. Currently, 21% of the most active harbours register substandard performance ratings according to SCH criteria.

The experts indicate that the level of ongoing reinvestment needed to meet ongoing replacement and maintenance costs for marine structures should normally be set at between 4.0% and 4.2% of total asset replacement value. The following table shows that SCH expenditure rates in 1999 were well below that standard, both nationally and in Nova Scotia. (The reinvestment rates will have improved somewhat since that year.)

Reinvestment Rates 1999

Area	Replacement Value of Current Harbour Assets	Expenditures on Repairs, Maintenance & Recapitalization	Annual Reinvestment Rate
National	\$2.1 billion	\$40.9 million	1.95%
Nova Scotia	\$572.6 million	\$7.8 million	1.36%

The bottom line message is that spending levels are not adequate now to maintain existing core harbours at safe and efficient working levels, and this problem will grow as facilities age and deteriorate through use. This situation can only be resolved through the effective pursuit of one or more of the following four options:

1. Significant growth in the DFO-SCH budget;
2. Closure or complete divestiture from government of more harbours to free up resources to support a shrinking number of core fishing harbours;
3. Substantial increases in user fees;
4. Access to new revenue sources beyond the current user fees and DFO/SCH budget.

Action Plan

Leaders from the Coastal Communities Network and representatives of partner and stakeholder groups for this project participated in a workshop in October 2003 to plan how to respond to the findings of the study. (Groups included the Harbour Authority Advisory Council, Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, development agencies, fishermen etc.) They developed consensus on an action plan to address the issues raised about the sustainability of harbours in

the coastal rural region of Nova Scotia. The following are the main elements of that plan.

1. The CCN itself is a coalition of coastal community interests including the fishing industry, the tourism industry, local government and community economic development agencies, and a wide range of community organizations. As it did in initiating this project, the CCN should continue to make harbours and wharves an action priority and provide leadership for its members and affiliates in planning and implementing effective action to find solutions.
2. The CCN needs to develop and promote the use of the database on a continuing basis, share it with partner groups and agencies and provide access to it for community groups.
3. While not ignoring the interests and contributions of other sectors, the CCN should develop and communicate the importance of harbour infrastructure for the many small businesses that are the backbone of the rural economy in Nova Scotia. The message needs to be forcefully communicated that, for coastal communities, harbours and wharves perform functions equivalent to the major public infrastructure in urban areas, such as highways, bridges, airports and industrial parks.
4. There is a need for innovations in government policies and programs to integrate and streamline the management of harbours and wharves. This might involve new agencies or councils to coordinate multipartite decision-making similar to what was done for the TAGS program (DFO, HRDC and ACOA working together through a coordinating committee) and the Sustainable Communities Initiative that was jointly initiated by Environment Canada and DFO. Specific objectives would be:
 - a. *To develop a one-stop shopping approach for harbour authorities dealing with government*
 - b. *To develop more effective policy guidelines and funding strategies to address the fact that costs for harbours vary considerably depending on local environmental conditions, including tides, currents, exposure to open seas, etc.*
5. Using this report as a basis, the CCN should also undertake a more intensive strategy session through the Rural Communities Impacting Policy process to bring more partners into the process, build greater support on the harbours issue, and develop plans to access funding for follow-up activities.

the pilot project

At the February 2004 Rural Policy Forum, representatives from ACOA, NS Economic Development (Halifax and Kings Office), Small Craft Harbour (SCH), Harbour Authorities, fishermen and community-based organizations decided that a pilot project encouraging collaborative management of wharves might successfully address some of the problems imposed by the current system of Harbour Authorities. The pilot project could meet SCH's need to increase decision-making and responsibilities at the community level as well as Harbour Authorities' need to manage their own circumstances.⁷ The pilot could address issues such as volunteer burnout and implement a system of wharf management that looked beyond crisis-to-crisis management.

Since individuals from the Upper Bay of Fundy were present at the Rural Policy Forum Workshop, it was decided that the Upper Bay would be a good place to test out the pilot project. At the workshop, RCIP agreed to support the pilot project by providing a summer intern to work with the communities in the Upper Bay and help get the pilot project off the ground.

An Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot project team was formed at the RCIP Summer Intern Training session in late April. The project team designed the research project reported herein to support the needs of the pilot project⁸.

⁷ Wharves and Harbours Workshop notes, RCIP Rural Policy Forum, February 27 2004

⁸ For a more complete history of the launching of the Wharf Pilot Project, please see Appendix D.

purpose

The purpose of this research is to provide research and strategic support to the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project – a community-based attempt to create a collaborative management strategy for Harbour Authorities and Harbour Groups in the Upper Bay of Fundy region of Nova Scotia.

objectives

This research project attempted to fulfill the following three objectives:

1. Gain an increased understanding of the objectives and expectations of UBFWPP participants through in-depth semi-structured interviews.
2. Compile a collection of best practice examples, resources and tools that will be useful to the UBFWPP throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation stages.
3. Document the process of implementing the first stage of the UBFWPP.

methodology

This study was participatory in nature; the objectives stated above could only be met with constant and meaningful input from the UBFWPP project team and participants. This research was meant to support the UBFWPP's goals and objectives by responding to the project's information and research needs.

- 1. Gain an increased understanding of the objectives and expectations of UBFWPP participants through in-depth, semi-structured interviews**

This objective was met by conducting semi-structured interviews with key community members identified and contacted by the community partners on the UBFWPP Team. These community partners were present for the majority of the interviews for a number of reasons. First, the community partners provided credibility for the researcher. Second, the community partners enhanced the interviews since their relationship with the participants provided a comfortable environment for the participants to openly express their

opinions. Each participant was given an information package about the project that included a one pager about the project itself (Appendix C), an outline of the proposed research and a consent form to take part in the research. In total, 18 participants from four communities were interviewed.

Interview Format

The community partner explained the project to the participant and the researcher asked the interview questions. Participants were asked to answer eight interview questions (Appendix A) concerning the collaborative wharf pilot project. Interviews took place in a variety of meeting spaces including homes, libraries, C@P sites and cafés. The researcher took detailed notes that were always visible to the participant during the interviews. The data was analyzed by compiling the responses from people from the same community and drawing out common themes. After this was done for all of the communities, the data were integrated to determine the overall responses and themes from the wharf communities in Kings County.

2. Compile a collection of best practice examples, resources and tools that will be useful to the UBFWPP throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation stages

This objective was met in two ways: a) by contacting DFO staff regarding existing collaborative wharf initiatives in Nova Scotia and b) by compiling tools and resources for the pilot project group. While none of the existing initiatives precisely met the research criteria, namely, community collaboration based on community ideas, relevant tools and resources can be found in Appendix B.

3. Document the process of implementing the first stage of the UBFWPP

This objective was met by compiling meeting minutes, working group emails and verbal input from project team members. This information is available in Appendix D, "Seeking Solutions - Launching the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project".

limitations

This study had a very short timeframe, from June to August 2004, in which to collect and analyze data. Ideally, a qualitative study of this nature would allow more time for the researcher to get to know the communities, build relationships and trust, and become familiar with community stories and history before conducting interviews.

The number of participants in the study did not meet expectations. Only four of six identified communities participated in the semi-structured interviews. The number of participants from each community ranged from one to nine.

People contacted for interviews had an interest in their community's wharf or the sustainability of the community. The opinions of other community members, whether in favour of the project or not, do not appear in the research findings.

The presence of community partners at most of the interviews could potentially be a limitation, however, the rationale stated in the explanation of objective one (page 15) provides a compelling argument for the added value of their presence at the interviews.

Most significantly, little input was collected from fishermen since the research was carried out during the fishing season. Although attempts were made by community members to set up interviews with fishermen, weather and tides dictated that the interviews did not occur.

findings: listening to communities

The findings from the project can be divided into two main categories; **Why get involved with the Wharf Pilot Project?** and **How should the Wharf Pilot Project be organized?** From these main categories, many sub categories emerged illustrating a broad range of reasons for participating in the project and ideas about how it should progress. Although the same ideas often arose in more than one community, it also became clear that people from separate communities had different ideas about the project and what it should try to accomplish. All of the information in this section came directly from the individuals that participated in this study⁹. Conclusions drawn by the researcher from these findings follow on page 26.

Why get involved with the Wharf Pilot Project?

The information and ideas in this section arose from questions related to people's motivations for being involved with the project group¹⁰. The major themes were sharing resources, increased effectiveness, access to resources, safety, tourism and community vision and collaboration.

Sharing Resources

The opportunity to share resources, skills and experiences was a primary reason to get involved with the pilot project. The people interviewed were from small communities with limited human resources. Bringing people together results in more knowledge and, hopefully, less trial and error, ultimately making the group more efficient. Furthermore, because everyone is volunteering, any pressure that could be taken off of individuals or community groups would also be a huge benefit. People understood the value of sharing skills and experiences and learning from each other; doing so could create more sustainability in the group since more than one or two people would possess the necessary skills. Teaching and learning are both integral parts of sharing. Finally, sharing information so that everyone was kept up to date on what was going on was also seen as important. For example, if one community heard something from DFO they could pass that information on to the rest of the group. In contrast, some people felt that the communities that had been successful shouldn't hand over solutions; it is important for each wharf to do the work themselves.

⁹ A summary of the key research findings can be found in Appendix E

¹⁰ A list of interview questions can be found in Appendix A

Increase Effectiveness

People felt that working together, rather than as individual communities, would increase their effectiveness when dealing with wharf management and communicating with the government. Managing the wharves as a group would take pressure off of people or organizations trying to enforce regulations on neighbours and friends; for example, dealing with fishermen who are reluctant to pay their berthage fees. Also, the more people on common ground, the more effective the group would be.

Working as a group would mean more clout when dealing with the government. The group would have more voice than individual communities and ultimately be harder to ignore. However, some people expressed concern about getting all people to follow the same means to an end. Some people felt that DFO has been pitting wharves against each other and there are hopes that a collaborative project would stop that from happening. Finally, some believed that this pilot project has the ability to influence or create a policy based on the needs of the wharves in King's County. Instead of having to comply with the policies handed down by bureaucrats in Ottawa, the group has the potential to create a viable policy alternative for wharves across Nova Scotia.

Access to Resources

Many people thought that a collaborative group could access better insurance rates, supplies, labour and funding. Insurance was a major concern; some communities already pay high insurance fees and others foresee insurance costs rising in the future. Insurance policies need to be tailor-made to reflect the activities on the wharf and save the groups paying for unnecessary coverage. Cooperative purchasing of supplies, including lumber, fuel and labour, could significantly reduce maintenance costs. The group could also bring in experts to help the communities try to overcome the barriers of working together. Access to funding could also be improved. Although no ideas were raised of what new sources of funding might be, hopefully more long-term commitments to maintain infrastructure could be secured. Many opportunities may arise from working together; however, some concern was expressed that a collaborative group approach might jeopardize the current relationships some wharves already have with government and funders.

Safety

All of the wharves in the Bay of Fundy are necessary for a safe fishing industry due to the high tides and unpredictable weather. All of the wharves must be equally maintained and comply with the safety needs of working wharves.

Tourism

Some wharves now deal with tourist activities in addition to fishing and spin off economies. Some people felt that all of the wharves needed to be presentable to tourists. However, others felt that the working component of the wharves outweighed the tourism agenda, especially when there is conflict between the two.

Community Vision and Collaboration

The coastal communities in Kings County have long histories as fishing villages and many people felt that it needed to be kept that way. Because of this, some felt it was very appropriate that wharves were at the centre of this project. People differentiated between looking to the past for solutions and looking to the future potential of their shoreline. In relation to sustainability, not all wharves will want to take the same route; for example, via tourism. One person stated in reference to his/her village, "...we don't want to become a theme park". The communities need to agree on an acceptable system of landings¹¹ and an acceptable process of how to get there.

This pilot project needs to spread beyond harbours to the whole Bay of Fundy region. These are small communities that can't work in isolation; they need to work with other communities because they are dependent on one another. The relationship between the wharves and the communities needs to promote cooperation and allow equal representation and opportunity to participate. Communities need to look beyond the past, develop their ability to see change and recognize that many issues (safety, pollution) affect all areas, and communities need to support each other. Communities need to strive to overcome the competition that has been present in the past. Looking at the bigger picture, instead of carrying out community development independently, will help nurture and build bridges between communities and perhaps serve to overcome or diminish personality conflicts. It is often difficult to get people and communities working together, but in this case it is essential.

How should the pilot project be organized?

Once people expressed their motivations for involvement in the Pilot Project, they commented on how they felt the Pilot Project group should look and function. The findings have been divided into group representation, process, functioning and role of the group.

¹¹ wharves and/or floating docks

Representation

How to find the right people?

Social mapping could search out the best knowledge for the future: Start by asking people who they think would be the best person to talk to regarding the future of the community. Whoever you ask will identify people recognized for working for the good of the community and not out of self interest. Ask all of the groups in the community - youth, retirees, fishermen, professionals - and the same names will keep coming up because each group sees that person as having an interest in the well being of the community. Although no one person can represent an entire community, the people that all groups identify are the people who need to be engaged in the project.

Some people expressed that it would make more sense to create the project based on ecological lines rather than political lines. One person stated, *"It is a shame to make lines based on unnatural jurisdictions. People respond to this place with their heart; I want it to remain viable for humans and animals"*.

Who are the right people?

Representation must come from all of the communities and it must be equal. Three would be an ideal number, one fisherman, one from the group responsible for the wharf and one from the community at large. It is essential that the group represent more than just the fishing community. Many community groups play a large role in activities at the wharf. However, although essential, it is often difficult to get representation and input from fishermen because they are so busy or not interested in (or excluded from) the process. Youth should be involved with the project because it will be their responsibility to maintain the project in years to come.

The people who join the group should be down to earth and approachable; people do not want to work with people who make others uncomfortable. If the right people are chosen it is likely that they could take some of the pressure off the groups responsible for the wharves and help alleviate volunteer burn out. Every community has people who resign themselves to having lost what was there (the vibrancy in the community) as well as the 'go-getters'. These two community perspectives can be reconciled if both are included in the group and the process is carried out properly.

Process

Different ideas about the process of starting and participating in a group emerged. One participant explained that the communities involved have been linked previously under another organization - the government - presumably with the same goal of achieving a desired future for landings. Since the government process hasn't worked, a different process is necessary. This participant stated, *"A critical set of choices needs to be made regarding process. A process is required to build trust and open people to a possible and desirable future. People don't want to mess around"*.

Although some people thought an executive structure would be appropriate for the group, others offered organizational alternatives such as having a rotating chair at every meeting. One participant explained that the chair is the only person at the meeting with responsibility (by law) and that this often means that everyone else will act in an irresponsible way. This same participant stressed that ideally, the person managing the group would be from the outside so that a) The group would not feel one community dominating the process over another community; and b) Group members could fully concentrate on meeting content instead of process. Finally, the participant also stated that labeling the person who manages the process as a facilitator is misleading (the word 'facilitate' comes from the French *facile* 'to make easy') - that this process doesn't necessarily need to be made easy but that it does need to be respectful of all people participating.

Many participants expressed the need for a process to complete a task. For example, identifying a desirable future for wharf landings, leaving behind a network or coalition, or seeing a culture and society that evolves from the networking of wharf landings. One participant noted that goals should be bound in time – highlighting that even after setting goals, a group needs to constantly reassess to make sure that the goals are still the right ones. Another participant pointed out that each individual wharf would need to look at what they require for themselves before looking at the needs of others and the collective needs of the group.

Functioning

Group Dynamics

Every person must be committed to working together. There must be equal opportunity for discussion and a means of dealing with conflict. The group can (and must) go past the point of conflict if these communities are going to accomplish anything. The group must identify issues of conflict as irreconcilable and move beyond them. Many people were concerned about how to connect communities that have little history of working cooperatively. The most prevalent solution raised was to build relationships based on commonalities, including experience and struggle. The communication and contacts created through this project will help the communities work together on other common issues in the future. The better understanding each community has of the goals and visions other communities have for their wharves, the less room for misinterpretation of intentions. The group must be confident that people are not padding their own interests through being aware of what others are willing to share.

Meetings

The meetings need to be open and encourage sharing. Many people felt that the meetings themselves should be kept informal so as not to intimidate or hinder attendance and participation. The importance of keeping meetings on schedule and relevant was emphasized; people don't like to waste their time at meetings where nothing gets done. The codes of conduct need to be established to deter sarcastic behaviour and personal attacks; many people will suffer if one person acts inappropriately. The meeting should be action-oriented and actions shouldn't be ignored if they don't get done. Someone needs to follow through and pursue the action plan. The meetings could rotate location so that everyone visits each area and people can get to know each other in different locations. Another idea was to have each wharf give a brief synopsis of what they are doing and how they are coping to bring the group up to speed. Some people also felt they needed an overview of the current government structure (DFO, SCH) that affects the wharves.

People suggested having social events, like a pizza party or potluck, as a way of establishing trust and friendships. Food puts people at ease. Another suggestion was to get the group on a boat and visit the wharves via the sea. Such an outing would provide a better perspective for those people who are not usually on the water.

Role of the Group

Management

The main role identified for the group was to manage the wharf facilities. Management might include enforcing docking fees, creating a disaster fund, maintaining administrative obligations, holding workshops and, ultimately, taking pressure off the community.

Enforcing fees poses a problem when members of the group responsible for the wharf are personally attacked when they ask for money. One community expressed quite strongly that they would like to avoid butting heads with their neighbours over enforcing fees. A larger group that includes people from outside of the community could make the collection of fees occur more smoothly. Having all of the wharves use an acceptable formula to create docking fees for fishermen and recreational users would also help alleviate problems, since the method for arriving at a fee would be the same everywhere and every boat would have to pay.

Participants hoped that pooled resources would mean easier access to funds for disaster and storm relief.

Fulfilling administrative duties included maintaining the books, seeking out appropriate insurance, keeping clear and up to date records, communicating with other communities (via email, meetings), and maintaining a website.

Some people thought that the group might be able to streamline through government red tape and help avoid the runaround many people experience when dealing with government, including SCH and DFO. For example, when a pile of gravel needed to be moved, too many people had to be contacted to give permission. (Some participants pointed out that local officials did tend to streamline decisions; however, Halifax officials were a different story). Furthermore, volunteer hours that should be spent more constructively are often spent tracking down information from government.

External Relations

People recognized the need to keep government bodies, including SCH, DFO and the Kings CED, updated about the project. Some felt that these groups should be present from the very beginning; however, the majority believed that ownership within the community needed to be established before inviting others to the table. The role of government needs to be clearly defined. Past experiences with government made some people cautious to involve government groups for fear of losing control, both ideologically and financially, of the project. It was important for many people to go together to the government with a solution, which means waiting until the group has decided on its approach and intentions.

conclusions: a researcher's perspective

It is important to note that what follows is by no means exhaustive of the conclusions that can be drawn from this research.

Overall, people's attitudes were positive towards starting a collaborative pilot project. People identified the need for a system of management that would fulfill the long-term requirements of all wharves. People also saw the project's potential for building community relations to address the long-term sustainability of the communities involved. The idea of accomplishing more together than as individuals appeared again and again in the data.

The main conclusions from this study address 1) regional versus individual community gain; 2) the long-term sustainability of Kings County coastal communities; and 3) the role of government and funders. Ultimately, the success of this pilot project and the sustainability of the coastal communities in Kings County depends on community groups, like the one being formed by this pilot project, being granted power and control traditionally held by government.

1) Regional and Individual Community Gain

The reasons for working together reflected both a desire for community capacity building in individual communities and also in the greater region of Kings County.

Regional Gain

The themes from the research reflect a desire for capacity building in the Kings County region. For example, people were willing to share their skills and lessons learned from experiences with other communities who lack the expertise. It was recognized that sharing knowledge and skills would take pressure off themselves as others could share in the work. Similarly, there was recognition that a regional voice could achieve increased influence through recognizing the deep-rooted common struggles that all communities face.

Most people were willing to speak on behalf of one another and have others speak on their behalf. This could decrease workload and also recognizes that each wharf deserves and requires the support of the group. By working together, the group gains knowledge, effectiveness and resources.

Individual Community Gain

In addition to the benefits for the overall group, benefits for individual communities are also possible. Through working together, a wharf may receive more funding or resources than it did before the project began. A community may develop skills that can be applied to other projects. The nature of this project is that both regional and individual community gains are possible. Being part of the project does not mean that communities can no longer undertake projects themselves¹². Instead, communities would be encouraged to use the knowledge and skills gained from being part of a group to achieve their individual goals that do not fall within the parameters of the project (this will be easier to define when the parameters of the project have been fully developed).

2) Long Term Sustainability of Communities

The majority of people believed that this project has implications that reach beyond the management and maintenance of wharves. All of the participants recognized that their community, along with other rural coastal communities, is in danger of disappearing as the rural population ages, youth migrate to cities and resource-based industries, including fishing, become less accessible to younger generations. Encouraging people from different communities to communicate and work together could be a first step in a collaboration plan that extends beyond the wharves and attempts to address the long term sustainability of coastal communities in Kings County. However, achieving successful collaboration was a concern for participants since these communities do not have a history of working together. Defining an appropriate process for the group to undertake is key to its success.

Volunteer Burnout

Every participant recognized that volunteer burnout negatively affects the capacity and long-term sustainability of their community. Volunteers only have so much time and energy to give no matter how great the project or worthy the cause. Intimately related to the issue of burnout is recruiting new volunteers, specifically youth. The volunteers currently involved with wharf management groups need support from the rest of the community for the group to remain successful. Youth must be part of the group to ensure its sustainability and to maintain the relationships created between communities through the next generations.

¹² UBFWPP Meeting Minutes, July 9th 2004

Achieving Effective Collaboration

In order to achieve the goal of community collaboration, people were willing to invest in the project and take part in a new and unfamiliar process. Most participants recognized that the current relationships between communities would not support a collaborative project. Most importantly, people involved in the pilot project must be willing to try to understand the perspectives of others. Respect and an open mind are key to the success of a project.

Although the small number of research participants was first seen as a limitation, it revealed that a larger communication strategy was needed to inform more people about the project and invite a broader range of community participation. Having more people supportive of the pilot project increases the likeliness of project success and sustainability.¹³ The communities must create and own the project if it is to succeed.

3) Role of Government and Funders

Since people in communities are taking the leadership role in this pilot project, the role of SCH, DFO and funders needs to be redefined. The Harbour Authorities system created by DFO was essentially an attempt at co-management between communities and government. Although the responsibilities were given to the community; control remained with the government¹⁴. This pilot project attempts to move beyond co-management, effectively taking on responsibility and the power to make decisions, implement plans, carry out evaluations and refine the project as needed. Therefore, the ideal role for government and funders is one of support and assistance. Evidence shows that communities know best what they need and how to go about achieving it; it is time that government and funders allow communities to choose their own solutions and provide them with the appropriate resources to carry out those solutions.

¹³ UBFWPP Meeting Minutes, July 9th 2004

¹⁴ Wharves and Harbours Workshop notes, RCIP Rural Policy Forum, February 27 2004

future research

Future research to continue supporting the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project could look at other examples of collaboration between community groups to better understand their own situation. This could also initiate communication and valuable peer-to-peer learning experiences between communities and groups.

More research into the dilemma of volunteer burnout and involving youth in community activities would also be useful to the pilot project.

This report would be best enhanced by the thoughts and reflections of RCIP and CCN staff and the community members involved. This input would be useful to help interpret the research findings and determine future research goals. People reading this report can share their thoughts and ideas with the Pilot Project team through the Upper Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre: Box 52, Canning, Nova Scotia, B0P 1H0 or (902) 582 3174.

Appendix A:

Interview questions

1. What are your objectives for being part of this Upper Bay of Fundy collaborative wharf management project?
2. What are your motivations for being involved?
3. What are your expectations of the group?
4. How would you like to see the group structured?
5. What would you like to see happen at the first Pilot Wharf project meeting?
6. Do you have any ideas on how the meeting should be designed and run?
7. When would you like to see the first meeting take place? Dates/times?
8. Is there anything more you would like to add to what we have already discussed?

Appendix B:

Resources for the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project

1. **CCN Wharves and Harbours Database**

<http://www.coastalcommunities.ns.ca>

- The database provides extensive information about coastal Nova Scotia from a variety of sources.
- The database can be used to compile information on a geographical area or specific issue or trend (for example, youth migration).
- The database provides concrete evidence to support funding proposals from coastal communities.
- To get a copy of the CCN Wharves and Harbours Database, contact the Coastal Communities Network by email at coastalnet@ns.sympatico.ca or by phone at 902.485.4754.

2. **RCIP Rural Tackle Box**

<http://www.ruralnovascotia.ca/tacklebox/>

- In the RCIP Rural Tackle Box there is a section called '*Become an Active Member*'. This section contains tools for joining an organization, starting an organization, strategic/business planning, financial support, volunteer recruitment and evaluation.
- Follow the link in the RCIP Rural Tackle Box to other Tool Boxes to find a variety of resources, for example, number 3-5.

3. **The Citizen's Handbook, A Guide to Building Communities**

<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook/>

- This toolbox provides resources on community organizing and community building. Resources include full-length articles, case studies and links to other useful resources

4. Stepping Forward: Your Community's Guide to a Sustainable Future

<http://www.mta.ca/rstp/public.html>

- This resource from Mount Allison University in New Brunswick provides a step-by-step guide to building a sustainable community while dealing with a decline in natural resource employment, aging populations and other common issues faced by rural communities. However, the guides must be purchased.

5. Building Sustainable Non-Profits: The Waterloo Region Experience

<http://www.crehs.on.ca/downloads/sustainability%20manual.pdf>

- This resource focuses on four dimensions: 1) Relationships and partnerships, 2) Organizational culture, 3) Planning and leadership and 4) Organizational relevance. This resource provides an excellent discussion and valuable tools for assessing the four dimensions mentioned above.

6. The Inclusion Lens (Written by Malcolm Shookner)

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/regions/atlantic/pdf/inclusion_lens-E.pdf

- This resource can assist with planning, development and social action to address the sources of exclusion in communities and public policies. It will help find solutions that are inclusive.

7. The Search Conference

<http://www.ccnr.net/searchconf/search.htm>

- A Search Conference is an exercise in collective problem identification, discussion, and agenda setting. The Search Conference assumes that a) People are purposeful, with a capacity to select and produce desirable outcomes, b) People will accept responsibility for a task that is meaningful for them and c) People can function well in an ideal-setting mode in appropriate conditions.

<http://cbae.nmsu.edu/%7Edboje/514emerys.html>

- This website provides a further explanation about search conferences.

Appendix C:

Upper Bay of Fundy

Co-operation Pilot Project (one-pager)

"Community development is about 'letting go' (but not abandoning). Letting go of control - from Ottawa, from Halifax - to communities who are ultimately responsible for the leadership of their own development. Government has a role - to facilitate and support - but it cannot own the process."

- Chris Bryant, NS Economic Development, RCIP Policy Forum - February 2004, Truro, NS

Purpose:

The goal of the pilot project is to develop and implement a strategy that will enable Harbour Authorities to work co-operatively in the management and sustainability of community resources. The premise is that through the sharing of resources, skills, knowledge, and through networking with each other, we can accomplish more together than we can individually.

Background:

The Federal government has been decreasing their funding support for Harbours. Small Craft Harbours (SCH) is currently under review, which means their funding may be further reduced. In the past, harbours have had to compete for limited funding. DFO is looking for alternate mechanisms and methods of funding wharves. In a recent meeting of the **Rural Communities Impacting Policies (RCIP) Project**, a session was held on Harbours and Wharves. Representatives attended this meeting from ACOA, NS Economic Development (Halifax and Kings Office), SCH, Harbour Authorities, fishermen and community based organizations. SCH stressed that the current system of funding is not working. This is backed by recent CCN study, which shows that 4% annual reinvestment is necessary to maintain our wharves but only 1.36% is currently invested in NS. Obviously we need to find creative ways of saving our wharves. This is particularly true when we look at issues of safety and fishing methods within the Bay of Fundy, because the wharves in the Upper Bay of Fundy are high water wharves with a window of four hours per tide to safely make it ashore. Each of the wharves along this shore is crucial for healthy and viable fisheries and communities.

At this session, three of the six wharves in the Upper Bay were represented. Along with ACOA, NS Economic Development and DFO it was agreed that we investigate the possibility of launching a pilot project to address these needs.

The wharves and Harbour Authorities in the Upper Bay of Fundy region are invited to participate in this exciting two-year pilot project.

Project Description:

The main focus of the project is to create a pool of resources and funds from a variety of government departments that will then be coordinated and administered jointly by representatives from each participating harbour, with support from the newly formed Upper Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre and the Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre. This co-operative effort will open the door to new funding sources that would not be available to individual wharves. The coordination of the pooled resources would be managed in a fair, transparent and democratic process.

A second focus is to address training needs of Harbour Authorities such as tendering bids and contracts, conflict resolution, fiscal management, wharf engineering and general organizational skills. Coastal Communities Network is currently seeking funding for the training.

The Coastal Communities Network will be a partner in this pilot project to assist with the launching and implementing of the project.

Appendix D:
seeking solutions
Launching the Upper Bay of Fundy
Wharf Pilot Project

The story of how the Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project got started has a number of beginnings and a diverse cast of characters. Many individuals, communities and governments have thought about, mentioned or discussed options of collaboration for wharf management. What follows is a description of events from the perspective of a Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Project Summer Student Intern during the spring and summer of 2004.

Creating the concept

In February 2004 at the RCIP Rural Policy Forum, a workshop group discussed the state of wharves and harbours in Nova Scotia and tried to come up with some solutions and actions for more efficient wharf management. This group included representation from communities, Harbour Authorities, DFO, ACOA and The Government of Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development.

A major theme that emerged from the workshop was that the current government system of Harbour Authorities was not working for many communities. The group explained that, "they [the communities] sought 'co-management' and found themselves with more responsibilities than they wanted or needed"¹⁵. Furthermore, wharves that have been divested by DFO still support a viable fishery but required funding (which they were not getting) for maintenance and repairs. The workshop participants agreed that a new system of management was necessary and that collaborative opportunities should be explored.

After the Policy Forum, community members were eager to get the project going. One community member stated, "...time is passing and I haven't heard anything from any [one] involved. We had the commitment at the workshop, now we need to communicate and try to get this project up and running"¹⁶. Community members were ready to talk to other communities about being part of the pilot project; however a project description or fact sheet needed to be developed.

¹⁵ Wharves and Harbours Workshop Notes, February 27, 2004, RCIP Policy Forum, 2004.

¹⁶ Project team email, March 10 2004

In early April, representatives from Harbour Authorities and other wharf management groups, CCN and the Marine Resource Centre in Cornwallis wrote a one-pager describing the proposed pilot project (Appendix C). The main focus of the project was to “create a pool of resources and funds from a variety of government departments that will then be coordinated and administered jointly by representatives from each participating harbour”¹⁷. The document went on to state that, “This co-operative effort will open the door to new funding sources that would not be available to individual wharves. The coordination of the pooled resources would be managed in a fair, transparent and democratic process”¹⁸. With the one-pager in hand, the next step was to get other wharf communities to participate in the project.

Helping it Happen

In late April, the initial Upper Bay of Fundy Wharf Pilot Project Team formed, consisting of CCN staff, an RCIP staff member, an RCIP intern and two community representatives who had attended the February 2004 Rural Policy Forum Harbours and Wharves workshop. The goal of the team was to get the pilot project off of the ground; the role of RCIP and the r intern was to support the process as needed. At this meeting the project team discussed other experiences of collaboration, possible roles of government and government allies. The group also determined who would contact the other potential wharves in the Upper Bay. The group decided to hold a meeting of all of the participating wharves later in the summer to ultimately determine how the project should proceed. An additional action from the meeting was to find out the status (DFO/non DFO) of the wharves in the Upper Bay of Fundy.

Creating Connections

Contacting other communities was the essential next step for the project. One project team member said, “We all must be at the table before we can go any further”¹⁹. Efforts were made using personal and second hand contacts to reach members of each wharf community in the Upper Bay. Although some communities expressed interest there were still obstacles to overcome. Many people interested in the project were busy with fishing activities while these initial steps were taking place and some communities were not organized around their wharf and, therefore,

¹⁷ Upper Bay of Fundy Co-operation Pilot Project, Spring 2004, (Appendix C)

¹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹ Project team email, April 22 2004

unsure about how their community could participate in the project. In the past, each community has worked independently to maintain and develop their own wharf. However, a project team member observed of the communities, "There is a real willingness to work together"²⁰. Attaining government support was an additional challenge for the project team.

SCH provided information regarding the status of the wharves. This input clarified which wharves were currently supported by DFO and which were scheduled for divestiture or demolition. Contact was made with past government officials who had expressed support for the project. The response reinforced a community partner's strongly held belief that "communities need to have more ownership (not government) over how policies are developed and managed...and that this will look different in every region"²¹. Attempts to contact current DFO officials were made but received no response.

Which Wharves?

The second meeting of the project team occurred in mid-May at the Upper Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre. Another community member from the Upper Bay joined the project team. The group discussed which wharves should be included in the pilot project. Originally, the project hoped to include all high water wharves because they face similar issues of safety and maintenance. However, the group decided that the project needed to be reasonable about its scope. (The geographical area of all high water wharves spans over 100 kilometres and two counties). The group recognized that distance and political divisions might be detrimental to the project. As a compromise, the project team decided to target the wharves in Kings County. If the pilot was successful, the model could be used all over Nova Scotia and adjusted to work beyond political boundaries.

Concerns regarding non-DFO wharves being involved with the project were raised. Everyone agreed that non-DFO wharves were equally important and needed as much support as DFO wharves. The question immediately arose: how would DFO feel about funding a project that involved wharves that were no longer their responsibility? Was it worth proceeding not knowing how DFO would react to the project? One team member stated, "I feel if we don't have confirmation from DFO, that there will be many, including myself, who may step away from the pilot. What point would there be, to work with a group on a pilot project, if all taking

²⁰ Project team email, May 19 2004

²¹ Project team email, May 5 2004

part in the group were not considered equal participants?"²² Another team member stated that DFO and the Department of Economic Development had been supportive of wharves working together in the past and that both might be willing to provide some funds for the project: "If we form the group as a unit, they will have to deal with the group"²³. The project team continued trying to get the support of wharf communities in Kings County.

Seeking Support

In order to create support for the project in Kings County, community partners arranged for a short presentation at community meetings in some of the specified communities. These presentations received a variety of responses. One community exercised much caution around the project but agreed to continue participating in discussions. At another presentation, the community group agreed that the project was worth exploring as the wharf management group recognized that a new solution was needed to ensure the long-term viability of the wharf.

Relevant Research

Simultaneous to the activities of the project team, the RCIP intern received approval from the project team and the Dalhousie University Ethics Review Board, to conduct research that would provide strategic support to the pilot project. The research involved interviewing community members about their motivations and objectives for being part of a collaborative management group. Also, the research attempted to draw on best practice examples to make recommendations to the group regarding group structure and process. Finally, the research would result in the documentation of the pilot project thus far.

The interviews with community members began the day after each respective community meeting. The project team member from the community arranged interviews with a variety of people and attended most of the interviews. Through the presentations and interviews more people became informed about the pilot project and its possibilities. Most importantly, the research encouraged people within the communities to share their thoughts and ideas with the project team.

²² Project team email, June 22 2004

²³ *ibid*

Increasing Input

The next project team meeting was held in early July at the Upper Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre as part of the RCIP Interns Mid-Point Meeting. The project team, as well as additional community members, SCH, Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre (Cornwallis) and other interested individuals, attended the meeting. The group was updated on the status of the project followed by a discussion of the status of each wharf in Kings County. At that time, only three of the six identified wharves had committed to discussion or participation in the project. Although individuals from other communities had expressed interest, there was no organized support from their community. The group decided to put forth a funding proposal to build a pilot project communications strategy to promote interest, participation and input into the collaborative harbour management project. At the conclusion of the meeting it seemed that an all-wharf meeting was nowhere in sight.

In early August, however, the project team realized that an all-wharf meeting still needed to happen. The team approached another Harbour Authority representative from one of the remaining wharf communities. The representative expressed interest in the project and committed to taking the idea back to the Harbour Authority executive. It was during this discussion that it became clear that a meeting of all of the interested wharf communities was essential for the pilot project and a successful communication strategy. Sitting at the same table would promote discussion between communities about the project and encourage the sharing of responsibility for engaging other community members to become actively involved in the pilot project.

Currently, the first meeting of wharf communities interested in participating is scheduled for the end of August. The project team hopes that this meeting will begin a new phase of the pilot project as more people from different communities begin to interact, share ideas and create a way forward for their communities and the Kings County region.

Appendix E:

Summary of Key Research Findings and Conclusions

In June and July, interviews were conducted in an attempt to find out how people living in coastal communities in Kings County felt about participating in a collaborative wharf pilot project. The following summarizes the personal opinions expressed by the participants from four communities and main conclusions drawn by the researcher. What follows does not represent the opinions of any community as a whole.

Why get involved with the Wharf Pilot Project?

1. Share Resources

- Increased opportunity to share resources, skills and experiences between communities.
- Take pressure off of volunteers (reduce burnout).
- Keep every community up to date (i.e. about DFO information).

2. Increase Effectiveness

- As a managing body on the wharves (fee enforcement).
- When dealing with government (influencing policies).

3. Increase Access to Resources

- Group purchasing of materials, fuel, labour and insurance.
- Funding – more long-term commitments for maintenance.

4. Community Vision and Collaboration

- Use the potential of the shoreline for the good of the community.
- Small communities cannot work in isolation; communities need to collaborate using principles of fairness and openness.

5. Safety

- All of the wharves are necessary for marine safety; they all need to be acceptably and equally maintained.

6. Tourism

- The relationship between fishing and tourism must be reconciled. Each wharf will have its own ideal balance.

How should the Pilot Project be organized?

1. Representation

- All interest groups within a community must be represented through the community members in the group.
- Representatives should be down-to-earth, approachable and open to change.
- Fishermen **must** be represented as well as youth and community development associations.

2. Process

- The group needs a process that builds trust and encourages people to work together towards a common goal.
- Use an outside facilitator so that community members can focus on the content of the meeting.
- A rotating chair is another option that does not put one person or community in a position of power.

3. Functioning

- Meetings should be open and encourage sharing.
- Meetings need to be relevant and action oriented.
- The group should encourage building relationships based on commonalities.
- Trust is essential.
- Participants must be committed to the goals of the group and not work towards personal agendas.

4. Role of the Group

- *Management of the wharves*
 - Collect and enforce fees.
 - Create a disaster fund.
 - Maintain administrative obligations.
 - Maintain communication with other wharves.
- *External relations*
 - Keep government and other funders updated about pilot project activities; however, do not allow anyone to take the project out of the communities' control.

Researcher's Conclusions

1. Regional and Individual Gain

- The project has the potential to stimulate regional gain as communities in Kings County share knowledge, skills and resources.
- The region could also have a stronger voice and more influence
- Learning transferable skills and accessing increased resources can also result in individual community gain.

2. Long Term Sustainability of Communities

- The relationships and coalitions created by this project have the ability to address other issues common to the sustainability of these coastal communities.
- The project currently has the potential to and challenge of addressing ongoing issues of volunteer burnout, youth involvement and community support.

3. Role of Government and Funders

- The power to make decisions and implement those decisions must exist within the community. Therefore, the role of government and funders and their guidelines must be redefined.

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