

Newfoundland and Labrador Defense League (NLDL)



Newfoundland and Labrador – Make it Yours

Mission Statement

NL DL IS DEDICATED TO THE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF INITIATIVES FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PEOPLE.

Leadership Team

Your leadership team is made up of current and ex-patriot Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are committed to the growth, prosperity and cultural identity of our great land.

Darren Fancey – St. John’s NL;

John Feltham – Windsor ON;

Greg Byrne – Sackville NB;

Ron Woodman – St. John’s;

Myles Higgins – Portugal Cove NL

Steve Penney – Mount Pearl NL;

Liam O’Brien – Corner Brook

NLDL Position Paper

Updated April - 2007

Newfoundland and Labrador Culture

NLDL is committed to promoting and preserving the culture of Newfoundland and Labrador. We believe that the history, music, art, dialects and very attitude of the people here make Newfoundland and Labrador a distinct and culturally unique society that must be nourished, recognized and maintained as an integral part of our collective futures.

Transportation Links (TLH, Fixed Link, Marine Atlantic, Air Services)

NLDL is dedicated to the development of new and more efficient methods of transporting people and goods between the two main land masses within our province and ensuring that all efforts are made to optimize and improve transportation links between the province and important destinations in North America and Europe.

Trans-Labrador Highway – NLDL is committed to completion of the TLH as quickly as possible. We see this as a critical component in the growth and development of the province generally and Labrador specifically. The completion of the TLH is an issue that has been outstanding for far too long and is a major concern for NLDL.

In addition to the TLH, NLDL fully supports and intends to promote the development of connecting roadways from Quebec. We believe that a fully functional road network within Labrador and to the rest of Canada is critical to our future.

NLDL believes that Labrador has the potential for massive growth as a result of its vast open land area, mineral deposits and electrical generation capabilities. We believe that once the transportation network in Labrador is reflective of the areas needs, the availability of those resources and raw materials will make Labrador an attractive choice for investment, major industrial development and residential growth.

Fixed Link – NLDL fully supports the development of a fixed link between the island of Newfoundland and the Labrador mainland. We believe that our provincial and federal leaders have been extremely short sighted in not supporting this development and we are dedicated to promoting this project.

While NLDL realizes that completing a fixed link is an expensive project, we feel that not doing so has, and will, cost this province in ways we may never fully comprehend.

A fixed link between the two main land areas of the province will help bring the people of both areas closer together politically and socially. A well designed link will allow for the dependable and relatively inexpensive movement of people, consumer goods and

resources such as oil, gas and electrical energy across the entire North American continent.

Marine Atlantic – The ferry services between the island of Newfoundland and the mainland of Canada are key components identified within the Terms of Union by which the province became a part of the Canada. NLDL believes that Canada has neglected its duties with regard to the level and quality of service provided by Marine Atlantic. We also believe that this neglect, at the very least, constitutes a total disregard for the importance of the service and may even represent a breach of contract with regard to the agreement entered into on March 31, 1949.

Air Services – While air services themselves are largely run by the private sector and as such are difficult to apply pressure upon, NLDL is dedicated to maintaining and improving the current level of air service both domestically and internationally.

With regard to airport facilities, NLDL is dedicated to ensuring the long term viability of local air fields. Due to the province's location on the eastern most edge of North America we believe that air fields in this area are critical to the safety of the traveling public as was witnessed on 911. With this in mind NLDL will lobby all levels of government and all air service providers to improve and enhance local air services.

Sealing and Fisheries Issues

While the management of these industries is complex in nature, NLDL fully supports all efforts to develop and grow a viable, sustainable and economically sound industry that delivers product second to none which are in demand world wide.

Fisheries Issues – NLDL fully supports efforts to actively protect and manage fish stocks in the North Atlantic region. This includes:

- Support of a ban on bottom dragging equipment.
- The issuing of quotas based on sound science rather than political expediency;
- The concept of adjacency;
- The complete cancellation of all foreign held quotas issued within Canada's economic zone.
- The extension of the Canadian Economic Zone beyond the 200 mile limit, including the nose and tail of the Grand Banks and the Flemish Cap.
- Pending the extension of Canada's Economic Zone, NLDL supports the deployment of military patrols to seek out and arrest any foreign vessels illegally fishing in the Canadian or International waters of the North Atlantic.
- The NLDL believes that any vessels proven, sunk and that repeated infractions by vessels from so called "rogue" nations should result in severe economic sanctions being levied against those nations including exclusion from our ports.
- NLDL believes that improved fisheries management practices will only occur if the province itself has a say in that management. While we would prefer that

fisheries management revert directly to the province, in the interim NLDL will work to develop a joint federal/provincial management model.

- Due to current world market realities, including the production capacity of nations like China, the NLDL supports the development of a more focused and quality centric fishing industry in the province. NLDL believes that this industry should focus on growing the aquaculture sector, an increased focus on small boat inshore enterprises and the production of higher quality products rather than products intended for mass market appeal.

Sealing – The NLDL fully supports the Atlantic seal harvest. We believe that there is room for improvements that make the industry more financially attractive to business while allowing for an improved public perception of the industry. The NLDL fully supports efforts to accomplish the following:

- The issuance of quotas on a per fisher/boat basis rather than the current free for all system.
 - Eliminating first come first serve quotas will remove the need for sealers to quickly take as many seals as possible before the hunt closed. We believe this approach will help result in improved safety for sealers and help ensure that the already humane practices continue or are improved upon.
 - By allocating quotas to individual sealers or boats, the season could be extended making it more difficult for protest groups to locate and interfere with this legal and humane harvest.
- NLDL supports the development of any viable commercial practices and coordination efforts that would permit the entire seal to be landed and utilized for the benefit of local business.
 - Landing the entire carcass will more easily allow inspectors to prove once and for all that humane practices have and are being utilized.
 - In an effort to find ways of making the landing of the entire seal carcass economically viable, NLDL will work with the province, business, sealers and concerned interests to develop new industries or approaches that can make use of the full seal product.
 - NLDL will promote the economic potential of seal products in the areas of pet food production and meal material for the aquaculture and fur farming industries.
- NLDL supports developing economically viable and practical processes that will allow for the majority of seals to be processed onboard ship rather than directly on the ice, thus limiting the visual impact of current industry practices.
 - Moving the processing off the ice will reduce the ability of animal rights groups to use these necessary activities to their advantage for propaganda purposes.

- While the NLDL believes that the use of the hakipik is a humane and acceptable method of harvesting seals, we also recognize the reality of how this practice is perceived in animal rights circles. NLDL fully supports all rational and feasible alternatives put forward by experienced sealers that would limit the ability of protest organizations to use the image of hakipik as a propaganda tool.

Natural Resources

NLDL believes the management of resource exploration, development and production should fall under the sole jurisdiction of the Province to which those resources are most closely tied.

The NLDL believes that the primary beneficiary of all natural resources should be those most closely tied to that resource. We believe that all resources should be developed in such a way as to maximize the potential for secondary and tertiary processing within the province.

NLDL believes that the wealth of natural resources we have been graced with, combined with our location on the world map, make Newfoundland and Labrador uniquely capable of leveraging those resources to develop a strong manufacturing sector. A manufacturing sector that is capable of eventually becoming the envy the North American market place.

Non Renewable Resources – The NLDL strongly believes that all resources in and under the water off the province’s shores should be recognized in the same way as onshore resources. These resources belong should belong to the province, not the federal government.

The NLDL will work to ensure that natural resources are not included in equalization calculations and that any benefits to be gained from these “limited life” resources are fully recognized by the people to whom the resources belong.

By their very nature, the direct benefits of non renewable resources are finite and as such every effort must be made to use those resources and their associated revenues for the development of a less resource dependent society diversified economy.

Renewable Resources - The NLDL will work to ensure that renewable resources such as hydro electric energy, wind power, forest products and ocean species are managed properly and that the primary benefits of those resources are realized within the province.

Provincial Debt

NLDL recognizes that the current debt being carried by the province is having a crippling effect on our development and future direction. We believe that through the recognition

of improved resource royalties and revenues, in addition to promoting new industrial development, this debt can be brought under control once and for all.

NLDL fully supports all provincial government efforts to improve and enhance resource royalty arrangements and we will work to ensure that any financial gains resulting from this process will be used to further the provincial growth and debt reduction agenda.

NL's Political Position (Federal & Provincial)

NLDL feels strongly that the province of Newfoundland and Labrador has not been treated as an equal and respected partner within Canada. We believe that our province entered Canada in a less than dignified manner and that we have been treated as little more than a resource rich colonial outpost since 1949.

The NLDL is fully committed to initiatives that will:

- See the province gain the respect it deserves throughout the Country;
- Ensure a more powerful provincial voice in the federal arena;
- Development of electoral and political reforms that increase provincial control and limit that of the federal government.

Out Migration/Immigration

Rural communities are being devastated due to the collapse of traditional industries, limited employment opportunities and the phenomenon of out-migration. Debt continues to grow while the province loses its youth, culture, heritage and confidence.

NLDL fully supports the development of sustainable and economically viable business initiatives throughout rural Newfoundland and Labrador. We will work to grow the rural economy through initiatives that promote long term investment and job creation.

Newfoundland and Labrador faces unique citizenship challenges. The population of the province is decreasing, the age of residents is increasing and there is a shortage of specialized or in demand skills required to help sustain our economic growth. NLDL will fully support all initiatives to attract ex-patriot Newfoundlanders and Labraorians back to the province. We also support changes to existing immigration policies that will allow our province to attract and retain citizens who can help grow our economy, improve our ability to provide services, foster entrepreneurial growth and reduce unemployment.

NLDL believes that due to our unique culture and challenges, Newfoundland and Labrador, like the province of Quebec, should have more input on immigration policies here than currently permitted by the federal provincial system.

Newfoundland and Labrador Independence

While NLDL is not officially a sovereignty organization, we recognize that independence from Canada and the re-establishment of an independent nation may be necessary to achieve our goals of cultural preservation, economic viability and political control of our future.

While NLDL will work diligently to promote our agenda within Canada, we will address each issue with the understanding that sovereignty is an option that must be considered with the same level of rigor and serious thought as any other.