

Steve Bonnell, AMEC Environment and Infrastructure  
133 Crosbie Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 4A5

Dear Mr. Bonnell,

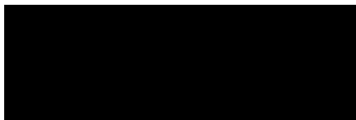
I am writing as a follow-up to the Western NL Offshore Area Strategic Environmental Assessment Update and Public Consultation Session at Rocky Harbour. I wanted to remind you of some of my concerns.

1. *Risks to the world heritage image.* Gros Morne National Park is a very important tourism generator for the province, attracting more than 180,000 visitors each year, roughly half of these from outside the province. These visitors inject 35 million dollars annually of direct expenditure in the region. (You can apply economic analysis formulae to calculate the full economic impact). What attracts visitors from around the world are the scenery, the visual aesthetics, and the environmental integrity of the region. Any activity along the coastline that compromises this landscape or its image risks undermining this region's major source of long-term economic benefit. While beauty is a subjective quality and is based on values, this is a very tangible and renewable source of prosperity for the province as a whole.
2. *Threats to the cultural character of the communities.* While culture is not static, the defining character of the Gros Morne region is natural and marine-focused. Heavy industry and industrial-scale resource extraction is not compatible with this identity. As a retired person, I have chosen to continue to live here because of the quality of life and the clean environment. Other people are moving to this area for similar reasons. Unlike many outpost communities, the towns surrounding the national park are culturally and economically vibrant and in a state of dynamic equilibrium. Yes there is out-migration but there is also a return flow of educated people who contribute to the cultural and economic life of the communities. It has taken almost a generation to accomplish this creative transformation, to integrate traditional lifestyle with environmentalism.
3. *Interference or disruption of the fishery.* The underwater landscape supports important fisheries for lobster, crab, herring, groundfish and shrimp. Many of these fisheries take place within a few kilometres of shore, due in large part to the geology and glacial history of the area—the rocky platform nearshore, the deep bays such as Bonne Bay, and the offshore terminal

moraine that stretches from Trout River to Sally's Cove. Staged from local harbours, these fisheries not only sustain the fishers but make a valuable cultural and culinary contribution to the tourism industry, enabling restaurants to obtain fresh local product. This source of local protein also contributes to food security for residents. Altering this productive marine environment through increased sedimentation, changes in salinity or temperature, or the release of petroleum or drilling fluids, could compromise a multi-billion dollar industry in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

As you prepare an update to the SEA, I urge you to consider these points in light of current global trends. From my perspective, after thirty years of working in the tourism industry, the best strategy is to protect and enhance the existing sustainable industries rather than chasing the uncertainty of non-renewable and potentially destructive oil development. These two cannot co-exist in this region.

Sincerely yours,



Anne Marceau