



STATE OF BONNE BAY 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Friends of Bonne Bay is a community group that came together to discuss concerns around developments in the bay. Building on the original study conducted by Dr. Robert Hooper in 1975, this report, “State of Bonne Bay 2022”, combines academic and community-based expertise to document the current state of the bay.

Bonne Bay is unique in many ways. Its beautiful and world-famous landscape is enveloped within Gros Morne National Park, a World Heritage Site. It combines marine features of temperate and subarctic waters, and provides habitat for seabirds, shorebirds and waterfowl of Atlantic Canada, as well as whales, porpoises and other large marine animals, marine plants, shellfish, and a genetically unique and at-risk population of Acadian redfish. Bonne Bay supports a commercial fishery for lobster, herring, mackerel and capelin, as well as a vibrant recreational fishery. Of great significance is the enormous amount of scientific data and knowledge that has accumulated over the years since the Hooper report and the establishment of the Bonne Bay Marine Station. Bonne Bay can be regarded as a kind of “sentinel” fjord on the east coast of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which could provide a well-documented “base-line” against which to track the response of marine species and ecosystems to warming waters and other ocean changes.

Bonne Bay faces some of the same threats that face many marine environments today. Climate change, warming ocean temperatures and rising sea levels are among the most serious threats to quantity and diversity of the sea life in the bay. Over-exploitation of vulnerable resources, “fishing down the food chain” puts pressure on the whole marine food system. Human factors such as pollution and shoreline development, including dredging and wharf construction, and the dumping of gravel and waste to extend shorelines, can harm areas of spawning and recruitment of many species of marine life.

The federal government has plans to conserve 30% of its lands and waters by 2030. Protection can take many forms. Recent surveys indicated general support from local residents and fishers for enhanced protection of Bonne Bay. The Friends of Bonne Bay sees this as an opportunity to work with a wide variety of partners - community groups, fishermen, academic researchers, environmental groups, and municipal, provincial and federal governments, to collectively create a vision to protect and preserve this unique resource for future generations.

We would like to use this report to start the conversation, to gather traditional and historical knowledge from residents of the bay, and to connect with others who have knowledge and interest in crafting an inclusive strategy to support the future of Bonne Bay.

To read the full report, follow this link:

https://www.friendsofbonnebay.com/files/ugd/f1b3a1_538af652483e4c8bb39158aca8d4869e.pdf

The Friends of Bonne Bay

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