



Natural Resources and Energy Development

ANNUAL REPORT
2023-2024

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Province of New Brunswick
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Transmittal Letters

FROM THE MINISTER TO THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

Her Honour The Honourable Brenda Murphy
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable John Herron
Minister of Natural Resources

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Respectfully submitted,



Honourable René Legacy
Minister responsible for Energy

**FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER TO
THE MINISTER**

**Honourable John Herron
Minister of Natural Resources**

Sir:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development for the fiscal year April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Cade Libby
Deputy Minister

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Minister's Message

New Brunswick's abundant natural resources have always been part of our cultural fabric. I am proud of the responsibility we have at the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development to sustainably manage these valuable resources.

In New Brunswick, the forest industry and forest management are integral to the province's economy, environment, and culture. By ensuring sustainable management practices, the province can continue to benefit from its rich forest resources while safeguarding the health of its ecosystems, supporting local communities, and addressing the challenges posed by climate change. The future of New Brunswick's forests depends on balancing economic growth with environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

The impacts of climate change can be seen across the country with the increasing frequency of wildfires and other natural disasters. I am proud of the role our Wildlife Management Branch, departmental rangers and fire crews have played in not only protecting New Brunswickers, but also in assisting other provinces in their fight against devastating wildfires.

I value the dedicated staff at the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development who work hard on behalf of New Brunswickers every day. I look forward to continuing to work together with our partners, stakeholders and subject matter experts to ensure the future sustainability, health, and strength of New Brunswick's mines, forestry, fish and wildlife sectors.



Honourable John Herron
Minister of Natural Resources

Minister's Message

We are at the forefront of a significant energy transition, the demand for energy is increasing in New Brunswick. Climate change and the need for decarbonization continue to create new challenges and opportunities. I am honoured to have been entrusted with this portfolio and I applaud the achievements of the hard-working staff at the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development. The expertise, experience and commitment of the civil service are greatly appreciated.

I have confidence that together, we will take the steps necessary to balance the changing energy environment, transitioning New Brunswick's energy landscape. Together, we will approach this task with the efficiency and urgency it requires, whilst continuing to improve our province.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'René Legacy', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Honourable René Legacy
Minister responsible for Energy

Deputy Minister's Message

The Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development is committed to ensuring the safe and sustainable development of our province's most valued natural resources.

Forestry remains one of New Brunswick's largest industries. We released the State of the Forest report in August 2023, highlighting the province's Forest Management System. I deeply appreciate all those who contribute daily to the management of our forests.

On the energy front, demand is increasing due to economic development, electrification and a growing population, as well as climate change and the need for decarbonization. Balancing this changing environment with its impact on New Brunswick is a priority for our department.

We also undertook important initiatives such as working towards increasing Crown land available for the maple syrup industry, and creating more opportunities for people who enjoy hunting and trapping in New Brunswick.

We are extremely proud of our department wildfire team who were mobilized a record number of times in 2023 to assist other provinces facing wildfire emergencies. Over 240 firefighters and team members were sent to British Columbia, Alberta, Northwest Territories, Quebec, and Ontario.

None of these achievements would be possible without the professional, dedicated, and passionate employees of the department who are committed to ensuring New Brunswickers benefit from, and enjoy, our natural resources now and for future generations.



Cade Libby
Deputy Minister

Government Priorities

Delivering for New Brunswickers

STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This provides the Public Service with a proven methodology to execute strategy, increase accountability, and continuously drive improvement.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Our vision for 2023 – 2024 is a vibrant and sustainable New Brunswick. To make progress towards this vision, we must focus on our government's priorities.

- Energize private sector
- Vibrant and sustainable communities
- Affordable, responsive and high-performing government
- Dependable public health care
- World-class education, and
- Environment

Highlights

During the 2023 – 2024 fiscal year, the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development focused on these government priorities through:

- Introducing a new long-term management strategy for healthy and sustainable forests titled *Our Forests are for Everyone*. This strategy responds to emerging issues including climate change and identifies nine goals and 42 objectives for forest management under four broad themes:
 - Commitments to First Nation communities,
 - Stewardship of the environment,
 - Supporting a vibrant forest sector, and
 - Commitments to society.
- Publishing the 2023 State of the Forest report titled *Excellence in Forest Management – Understanding our System*, which contains detailed information on the management framework for sustainable forestry on Crown lands.
- Signing an eight-year contribution agreement “Helping Mitigate the Effects of Climate Change in New Brunswick” with Natural Resources Canada. This agreement involves a \$71.6 million investment (50 per cent cost shared by the province) aimed at planting an additional 52.9 million trees in New Brunswick over the next seven years.
- Launching a new energy strategy, *Powering our Economy and the World with Clean Energy – Our Path Forward to 2035*, on how to transition the province to clean energy, while ensuring affordability for New Brunswickers and economic growth. This strategy outlines a 12-year roadmap and supporting initiatives for the province to meet national and international clean energy transition targets.
- Signing a four year contribution agreement “Fighting and Managing Wildfires in a Changing Climate” with Natural Resources Canada. This agreement represents an investment of \$25.6 million (50 per cent cost shared by the province) for equipment and training to better prepare the province for the expected increases in wildfires due to climate change.

Performance Outcomes

Outcome #1

REDUCTION IN WORKPLACE RECORDABLE INCIDENT RATE (RIR) FOR ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

Reduce the recordable incident rate (RIR) for workplace accidents and injuries by five per cent each calendar year through targeted initiatives to improve the safety culture within the department.

(RIR = number of employees per 100 full-time employees involved in a recordable injury or illness in a given year).

Why is it important?

The department is committed to a health and safety program that improves occupational health and safety, and prevents injury, accidents, and illness in the workplace. An active health and safety program protects employees, property, and visitors in the workplace. The department is required through legislation to ensure the health and safety of its employees. We are responsible for taking every step possible to ensure employees return home at the end of each day, without injury, as a result of their workday.

Overall performance

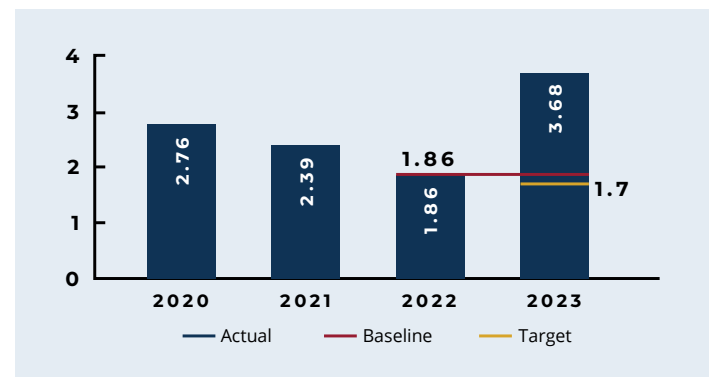
Recordable incidents increased in 2023. The increased number of departmental staff deployed on wildfire suppression activities and weather event responses, compared to the previous year, was the largest contributor to the increase. The Kingsclear Tree Nursery also saw an increase in recordable incidents. These incidents were related to overexertion and strain from repetitive motions caused by the labour-intensive nature of the work. A strengthened culture of safety awareness within the department may have also led to an increase in incidents reported.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The department undertook a number of initiatives to reduce the RIR, including the following:

- Increased audits of the field-level hazard assessments at the nursery,
- Established a Respiratory Protection Program (a joint initiative with Finance and Treasury Board),
- Introduced an additional 12 safety talks, and
- Implemented safety alerts for common safety concerns that can occur province-wide.

Workplace Recordable Incident Rate



Baseline: Recordable incident rate of 1.86* (2022)

Target: 5% reduction in recordable incident rate from 2022 (1.70)

Actual: 66% increase in recordable incident rate from 2022 (3.68)

*updated from the 2022 – 2023 annual report.

Outcome # 2

FULLY UTILIZED CROWN ANNUAL ALLOWABLE CUT

On an annual basis, the department aims to have all available Crown roundwood, as defined by the sustainable annual allowable cut (AAC), fully consumed by wood processing facilities.

Why is it important?

The volume of wood consumed each quarter provides insight on the wood flows through the year and it can be compared to consumption trends in previous years. Significant divergence from past trends may indicate required interventions to help keep wood flowing to New Brunswick facilities.

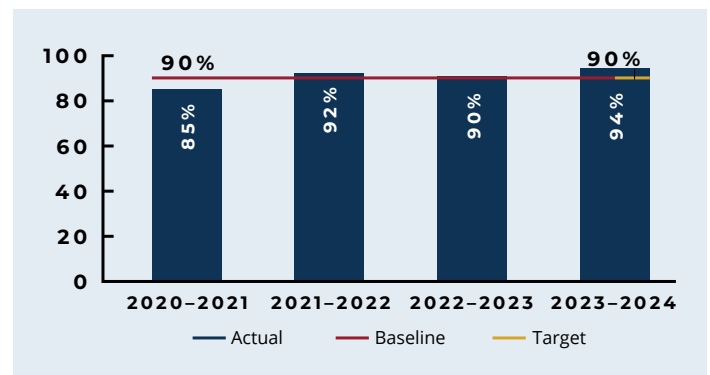
Overall performance

The annual volume harvested was 94 per cent of the AAC. A three per cent year-over-year increase in Crown timber deliveries to wood processing facilities occurred because of reduced volumes in the 2022 – 2023 operating year due to high inflationary costs. Softwood pulpwood makes up the majority of the harvest increase in 2023 – 2024 due to increased demand by New Brunswick facilities.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The department maintained actions from previous years to develop a process to better monitor wood flow trends and to improve and facilitate wood flow from Crown land. Export approvals and temporary assignments helped the department achieve the target of 90 per cent. These two measures allowed for approximately 683,000 cubic metres (m³) or nine per cent of total Crown wood to flow. Temporary assignments and exports totaled 613,000 m³ and 70,000 m³ respectively.

Fully Utilized Crown Annual Allowable Cut



Baseline: 90% (2020 – 2021 Allocated Volumes)

Target: 90%

Actual: 94%

Outcome # 3

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES ON NEW BRUNSWICK ROADS

In the renewed New Brunswick Climate Change Action Plan 2022 – 2027, the Province of New Brunswick committed to increasing the number of electric vehicles on the roads. The province has an action plan to achieve six per cent of new electric light-duty vehicles sales by 2025 and 50 per cent by 2030.

Why is it important?

Transportation continues to be a major contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in New Brunswick. Electrifying light-duty vehicles with available technology can help reduce emissions in the transportation sector.

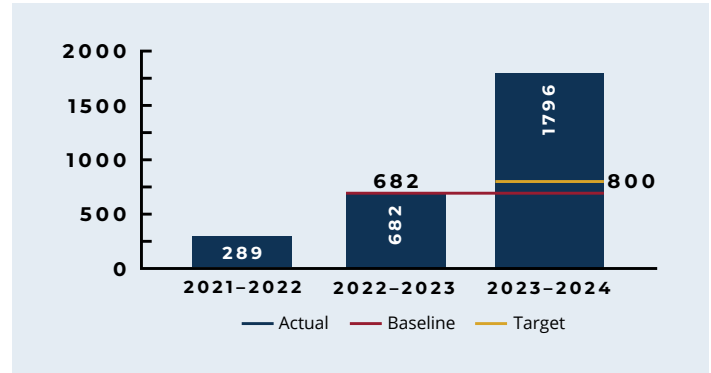
Overall Performance

During 2023 – 2024, 1,796 electric vehicle and 443 home charger rebates were delivered. That brings the total number of electric vehicle rebates provided by NB Power to 2,767 along with 719 home charging rebates.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The department secured funding from the Climate Change Fund for the continuation of the rebate program for electric vehicles and smart home chargers. The goal of the program is to incent the purchase of qualifying vehicles and home chargers. Administration, marketing, outreach and education were undertaken by NB Power. The province continues to see significant growth in demand for the incentive program, more than doubling the number of rebates delivered in 2023 – 2024. Electric vehicles made up 5.2 per cent of new light-duty vehicle sales in 2023, putting the province on track to meet its 2025 target.

Incentives for electric and plug-in hybrid electric qualifying vehicles



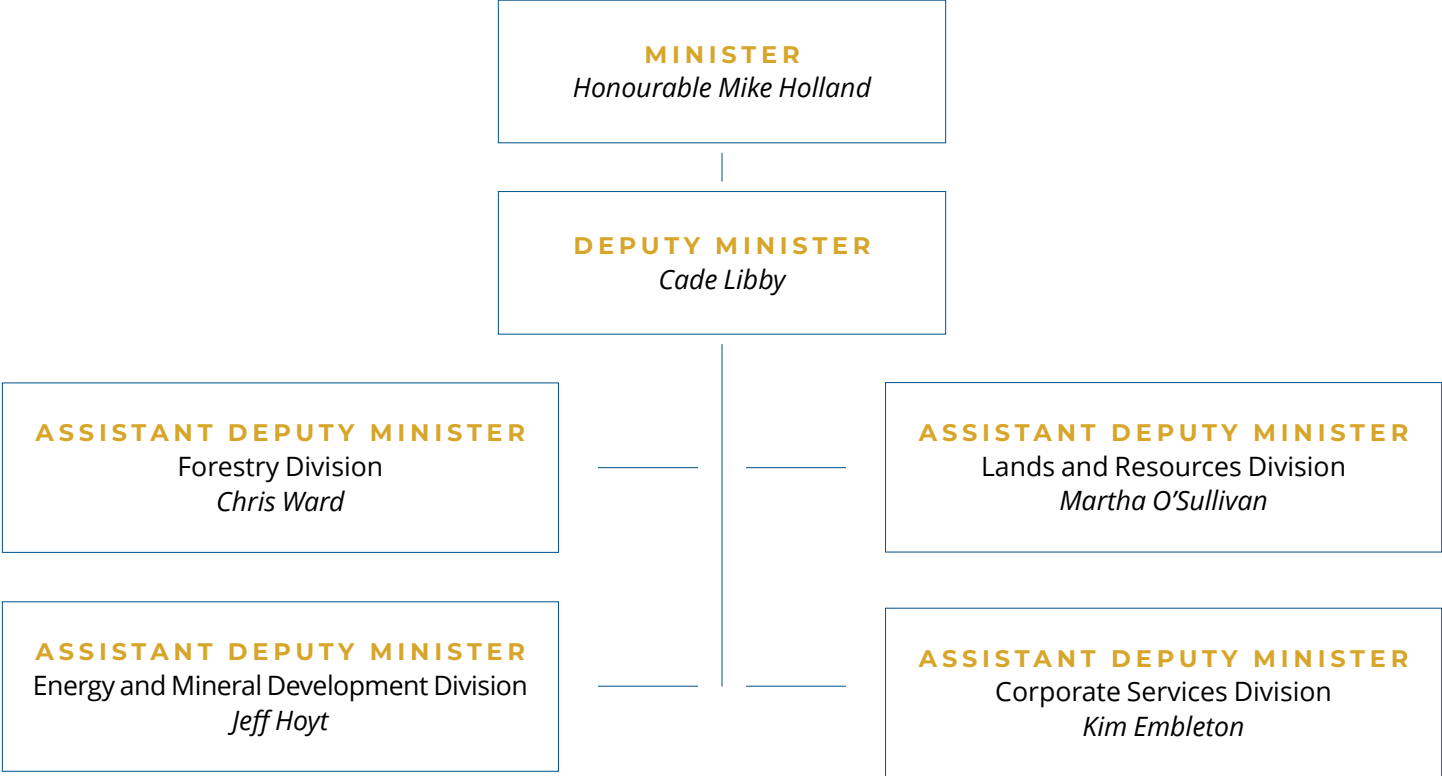
Baseline: 682 incentives

Target: 800 incentives

Actual: 1796 incentives

Overview of Departmental Operations

HIGH-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Division Overview and Highlights

The budget and expenses for the common administration of the Departments of Natural Resources and Energy Development and Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries are recorded in the 2023 – 2024 annual report for the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development. The common administration applies to the Corporate Services Division.

FORESTRY DIVISION

The Forestry Division is responsible for the sustainable management and protection of New Brunswick's forests. The Forest Planning and Stewardship Branch and the Forest Operations and Development Branch share these responsibilities.

The **Forest Planning and Stewardship Branch** is responsible for the acquisition and analysis of inventory data that characterizes forests and other terrestrial ecosystems. The branch leads the strategic planning and resource modelling for timber and habitat supply over time and is responsible for the monitoring and protection of forest health through integrated pest management. The branch also leads the conservation effort for the province's natural biodiversity, with programs for the identification and recovery of species at risk, and through the management of a network of protected natural areas.

Highlights

- Acquired approximately 1,000 hectares of climate-sensitive lands with the support of the provincial Climate Change Fund and in partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Nature Trust of New Brunswick.
- Implemented an action plan for New Brunswick's most at-risk species that resulted in:
 - Status reports for eight species assessed by the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk,
 - Feasibility of recovery for eight species assessed by the department, and
 - Recovery strategies and management plans publicly released for six species.

- Developed Conservation Recognition Agreements with three organizations in New Brunswick to recognize and report privately-owned land which is voluntarily protected or effectively conserved for long-term sustainability. These sites capture more than 19,500 hectares which compliment and add to the efforts to conserve biodiversity on Crown land by protecting forests, coastal wetlands, lakes, and other critical habitats.

The **Forest Operations and Development Branch** is responsible for the operational oversight of silviculture, roads, harvest operations, and timber harvested from Crown lands. The branch also operates the Kingsclear Tree Nursery, where approximately 16 million seedlings are grown each year. The branch is engaged daily with the forest sector on operational issues, but also leads strategic forest sector initiatives on behalf of the department.

Highlights

- Implemented the Timber Royalty Adjustment Regulation under the *Private Woodlot Sustainability Act* resulting in Crown timber royalties being adjusted monthly based on the performance of commodity markets.
- Developed a new Sub-License – Form 1 in Timber Regulation (86-160) under the *Crown Lands and Forests Act*.
- Modernized and signed new Forest Management Agreements with all Crown Timber Licensees.

ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The Energy and Mineral Development Division provides the regulatory structure for the managed development of the province's energy sector, and the geoscience and regulatory structure for the responsible development of the province's non-renewable resources. The division consists of the Energy Branch, the Geological Surveys Branch, and the Resource Development Branch.

The **Energy Branch** is divided into three main areas: sustainability, electricity and petroleum, with sustainability crossing all aspects of branch activities. The branch is responsible for providing energy policies, regulations and legislation that allow the downstream energy sector to operate in the province and ensure everyone has access to safe and reliable energy at the lowest price possible without jeopardizing the continuity of supply.

The branch works closely with the Climate Change Secretariat to implement actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the energy sector and to develop more sustainable energy policies for the province that include renewable energy, energy efficiency, and demand side management. The branch assists in determining the impacts and opportunities of federal greenhouse gas legislation and monitors the New Brunswick Energy and Utilities Board hearings to ensure provincial acts and regulations are working effectively.

Highlights

- Released a Hydrogen Roadmap, as part of the clean energy strategy, *Powering our Economy and the World with Clean Energy – Our Path Forward to 2035*. This roadmap outlines a five year plan with 13 actions aimed at leveraging New Brunswick's strategic location, natural resources and existing capabilities to develop the hydrogen industry. The goal is to position New Brunswick as a leader in hydrogen production for consumption domestically and abroad.
- Amended the *Electricity Act* to modernize the legislation, improve transparency, strengthen consumer protections, and help facilitate the development of clean energy.
- Signed Memorandums of Understanding and agreements with the Czech Republic and the Province of Saskatchewan related to the energy sector and the further development of advanced small modular reactors.

- Collaborated with NB Power to access federal funding and support applications for clean electricity projects in New Brunswick. This effort resulted in the first solar farm in Shediac, as part of the Shediac Smart Energy Community Project, and the announcement by NB Power of a new 25 megawatts wind farm that will produce new clean electricity through the Neweg Energy Project.

The **Geological Surveys Branch** consists of three sections: Geological Surveys North, Geological Surveys South, and Promotions and Information Services. The branch is responsible for collecting, interpreting, and disseminating geoscience information to support and promote non renewable resource exploration and development, and to inform land management decision-making. The branch provides advice to the public and private sectors regarding mineral, peat, aggregate, and petroleum resources; land use planning; and the impact of climate change, particularly in coastal zones. The branch actively promotes the province's mineral and petroleum resource potential to attract investment in the mineral and petroleum sectors by participating in national conferences and organizing the department's annual Exploration, Mining and Petroleum Conference. The branch also manages an extensive geological, mineral, and petroleum resources database; publishes geoscientific information about New Brunswick geology; and administers the Exploration Assistance Program to stimulate mineral exploration in New Brunswick.

Highlights

- Hosted the 48th annual Exploration, Mining and Petroleum conference, which featured a technical workshop and two days of oral and poster presentations on diverse topics related to minerals and energy in the province.
- Provided approximately \$354,000 in assistance to junior mining companies to help fund 14 exploration projects and approximately \$303,000 to 40 prospectors through the New Brunswick Exploration Assistance Program.
- Advanced several geoscience initiatives aimed at evaluating provincial critical mineral resources.

- Organized two outreach events in partnership with academia and local geoscience organizations to educate the general public about the importance and use of minerals.

The **Resource Development Branch** is composed of the Resource Tenure, Petroleum Resource Development, and the Mining and Mineral Resources sections. The branch provides oversight for the responsible exploration, development, and management of mineral and petroleum resources, as well as Crown peat and Crown aggregate resources, through the administration of departmental legislation.

LANDS AND RESOURCES DIVISION

The Lands and Resources Division is responsible for the administration and management of programs and activities within the Fish and Wildlife Branch, the Regional Operations Branch, the Wildfire Management Branch, and the Crown Lands Branch.

The **Fish and Wildlife Branch** administers programs related to the sustainable use of fish and wildlife resources in the province and manages hunting, trapping and angling activities. The branch is also responsible for fish and wildlife-related licensing and conservation education activities.

Highlights

- Initiated and led a number of amendments to the *Fish and Wildlife Act* and its regulations pertaining to hunting, fur harvesting, and trespass on agricultural lands. These amendments included new hunting opportunities, expanded hunting seasons for some animals and expanded hunting opportunities for youth aged 12 and up.
- Updated the Hunter Education course (Part B) to reflect hunter education curriculum changes. This included an updated manual and instructor materials.
- Issued 18,890 Outdoors Cards to new clients, enabling them to enroll in conservation education courses and to purchase hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses.

Highlights

- Maintained essential operations at three New Brunswick mine sites, including site security, water treatment, and environmental monitoring work.
- Issued three new peat leases for horticultural peat operations in Northern New Brunswick.
- Generated over \$3.5 million in revenue from rents, fees, and royalties associated with mineral, hydrocarbon, Crown peat, and Crown aggregate resources in 2023 – 2024.
- Managed 561 active leases, licences, and permits, as well as 113 active work authorizations.

The **Regional Operations Branch** is responsible for activities and services associated with the operational delivery of forestry, fish and wildlife, forest fire management, and Crown land programs. The branch is divided into two regions, East Region and West Region. The regions are divided into 12 districts with 18 offices. The branch is also responsible for the department's land surveying duties.

Highlights

- Collaborated with the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries on a vaccine baiting project in response to a positive case of raccoon rabies in the Upper Saint John River Valley. 18 West Region staff members were mobilized.
- Increased Crown Land Inventory and Permanent Sample data collection for 1,400 Crown land inventory plots.
- Mobilized six forest rangers to assist the Emergency Measures Organization's Incident Management Team in December 2023, when more than 90,000 NB Power customers were without power during a severe weather event in Charlotte County.

The **Wildfire Management Branch** is responsible for the coordination, education and administration of the provincial forest fire protection and suppression program, as well as coordination and support for departmental vehicles, departmental radio communications, and small engine maintenance.

Highlights

- Launched the New Brunswick FireSmart program, aimed at educating New Brunswickers on how they can make their communities more resilient to the effects of wildfire.
- Mobilized a record number of firefighters in 2023 to assist other provinces facing wildfire emergencies. A total of 242 firefighters were mobilized to British Columbia, Alberta, Northwest Territories, Quebec, and Ontario.

The **Crown Lands Branch** is responsible for management of the province's Crown lands, including coastal and submerged lands. The branch administers the legal responsibilities and manages initiatives associated with Crown lands of New Brunswick, including all recreational and commercial land transactions, such as leasing, purchases, sales and exchanges. The branch also administers recreational trail maintenance programs (non-motorized, ATV and snowmobile).

Highlights

- Managed the Request for Proposal process for the maple sugary increase in allocation.
- Decreased the cycle time for Crown land applications to be processed from 22 to 7 days.
- Invested over \$2.5M in bridge infrastructure and another \$1.5M in erosion mitigation and repair, through Capital budget and the remaining Canada Community-Building Fund.

CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

The Corporate Services Division provides direction and support in matters of human resources, financial services, policy, strategy, information and technology, and facilities management. The division consists of the Financial Services Branch, the Human Resource Services Branch, the Information Systems and Departmental Services Branch, the Strategic Planning and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, and the Regulatory Affairs Branch.

The **Financial Services Branch** is responsible for the department's financial resources, including expenditure and revenue management, budgeting, accounting and financial reporting services, and supports departmental procurement.

Highlights

- Supported the GNB Enterprise Resource Planning team and the department with the implementation of quarterly reporting within the Enterprise Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service.
- Supported the transition of the Ordinary Budget process to allow for electronic submission within the Enterprise Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service.

The **Human Resource Services Branch** is responsible for providing all human resource management services, including recruitment and retention, classification, labour relations, human resource policies, employee engagement, organizational development, succession planning, and administration of programs such as health and safety.

Highlights

- Coordinated health and safety and employee experience initiatives.
- Completed a significant hiring exercise for permanent seasonal forest rangers.

The **Information Systems and Departmental Services Branch** provides province-wide services to the department, including information technology, records management, information security, intranet management, facilities management, remotely piloted aircraft (drone) services and geographic information system services.

Highlights

- Expanded the Remotely Piloted Aircraft program within the department, including setting up a contract of supply, training staff and deploying resources.
- Revamped the department's GIS Open Data web page, setting up distinct download pages for the data sets.
- Amalgamated regional files into departmental Central Records.

The **Strategic Planning and Intergovernmental Relations Branch** provides strategy development, strategic planning, and support for federal-provincial-territorial activities. The branch is also responsible for trade policy analysis, economic forecasting, monitoring, research, statistical analysis and reporting. The branch supports departmental programs to align towards common goals and conducts improvement projects to close gaps. This work is done using process improvement, project management, change management, and other innovative techniques. Additionally, the branch is responsible for the management of ministerial correspondence.

Highlights

- Hosted the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers federal-provincial-territorial annual meeting.
- Published (on-line) Sectors in Review Reports for Mining and Energy for 2021, as well as the New Brunswick Energy and Natural Resources Export Highlights for 2021.
- Managed 15 projects across the department, including leading strategy development for the Forest Fire Management Branch and improvements to the Crown land application process.

The **Regulatory Affairs Branch** provides leadership, coordination, and supports the development of legislation, policy initiatives and proposals, and the Minister's legislative business. The branch also manages Agencies, Boards and Commissions, requests under the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and provides support on privacy matters. The branch, in conjunction with the Strategic Planning and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, provides policy administrative support to the department's Policy Management Committee.

Highlights

- Coordinated responses to 19 requests under the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- Supported the department with four legislative changes, 16 regulatory changes, and other proposals.

Financial Information

EXPENDITURES IN DETAIL 2023 – 2024 (\$)

ORDINARY PROGRAM	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS*	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Administration	9,006,000	16,500	9,022,500	8,150,600	(871,900)
Natural Resources	93,091,000	4,375,900	97,466,900	97,045,900	(421,000)
Energy and Mines	17,476,000	48,706,400	66,182,400	59,227,000	(6,955,400)
Land Management	3,157,000	18,500	3,175,500	3,111,700	(63,800)
Total 2023 – 2024	122,730,000	53,117,300	175,847,300	167,535,200	(8,312,100)

* Includes Supplementary Estimate of \$50,000,000

CAPITAL PROGRAM	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Mine Reclamation	250,000	-	250,000	-	(250,000)
Musquash Watershed Infrastructure	791,000	-	791,000	182,800	(608,200)
Sentier NB Trail Infrastructure	4,930,000	-	4,930,000	1,985,000	(2,945,000)
Total 2023 – 2024	5,971,000	-	5,971,000	2,167,800	(3,803,200)

SPECIAL PURPOSE PROGRAM	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Wildlife Trust Fund	1,525,000	-	1,525,000	1,688,300	163,300
Recoverable Projects	-	-	-	447,100	447,100
Trail Management Trust Fund	1,700,000	-	1,700,000	2,035,300	335,300
Total 2023 – 2024	3,225,000	-	3,225,000	4,170,700	945,700

REVENUE IN DETAIL 2023 – 2024 (\$)

REVENUE	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Conditional Grants - Canada	-	-	-	3,447,500	3,447,500
Return on Investment	126,000	-	126,000	1,437,800	1,311,800
Licences and Permits	7,493,000	-	7,493,000	9,519,200	2,026,200
Sales of Goods and Services	6,087,000	-	6,087,000	9,790,000	3,703,000
Royalties	70,294,000	-	70,294,000	75,197,700	4,903,700
Fines and Penalties	238,000	-	238,000	100,100	(137,900)
Miscellaneous	20,000	-	20,000	74,200	54,200
Total 2023 – 2024	84,258,000	-	84,258,000	99,566,500	15,308,500

CAPITAL RECOVERIES	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Capital Recoveries - Own Source	50,000	-	50,000	106,000	56,000
Total 2023 – 2024	50,000	-	50,000	106,000	56,000

SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Wildlife Trust Fund	1,525,000	-	1,525,000	1,751,800	226,800
Recoverable Projects	-	-	-	447,100	447,100
Private Woodlot Sustainability Fund	-	-	-	10,415,900	10,415,900
Trail Management Trust Fund	1,705,000	-	1,705,000	2,082,900	377,900
Total 2023 – 2024	3,230,000	-	3,230,000	14,697,700	11,467,700

Summary of Staffing Activity

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for their respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2022 – 2023 for the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES AS OF DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR		
EMPLOYEE TYPE	2023	2022
Permanent	434	416
Temporary	71	73
TOTAL	505	489

The department advertised 18 competitions, including 12 open (public) competitions and six closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to sections 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high degree of expertise and training; • A high degree of technical skill; and • Recognized experts in their field. 	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	2
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	10

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	13
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	34
Regular appointment of students/ apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

Summary of Legislation and Legislative Activity

BILL #	NAME OF LEGISLATION	DATE OF ROYAL ASSENT	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
32	<p><i>An Act Respecting Transferring Powers to the Energy and Utilities Board</i></p> <p>Chap-6.pdf (gnb.ca)</p>	June 16, 2023	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer the functions currently performed by the Financial and Consumer Services Tribunal and the Mining Commissioner to the Energy and Utilities Board. • Utilize the Energy and Utilities Board to its full capacity, and to eliminate some identified inefficiencies in the province's Agencies, Boards, and Commissions. • Provide the Energy and Utilities Board with modernized governance features, such as the ability to add more members if needed, and update the Energy and Utilities Board's assessment and cost structure.
10	<p><i>An Act to Amend the Electricity Act</i></p> <p>Chap-37.pdf (gnb.ca)</p>	December 13, 2023	<p>Created to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce barriers and encourage development of advanced small modular reactors, clean hydrogen, and renewable generation. • Help provide regulatory clarity for how the Mandate Letter should be treated in the regulatory process. • Deny electricity service to new cryptocurrency mining businesses in the province to help protect rate payers. • Allow for the purchase of electricity produced by up to two advanced small modular reactors. • Support technology development in New Brunswick by indicating to investors that the province is committed to the development of advanced small modular reactors. • Energize the private sector and contribute to climate goals and industrial development. • Allow new large loads, like a hydrogen electrolyzer, to be connected to new clean electricity, like a large wind farm, that is not owned by NB Power.

BILL #	NAME OF LEGISLATION	DATE OF ROYAL ASSENT	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
11	<i>An Act to Amend the Fish and Wildlife Act</i> Chap-38.pdf (gnb.ca)	December 13, 2023	Amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibit the discharge of firearms from or across the paved portion of a designated road or within 10 metres of a designated road.
12	<i>An Act Respecting Trespass on Agricultural Lands</i> Chap-39.pdf (gnb.ca)	December 13, 2023	Amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the <i>Fish and Wildlife Act</i>, no person may enter on the classes of agricultural lands referred to under the <i>Trespass Act</i> to pursue and take wounded wildlife before informing the owner or occupant of the land. Sign posting of the above- noted classes of lands is no longer required as persons wishing to hunt, trap and snare on these classes of lands must obtain the written consent of the landowner or occupant prior to doing so.

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
Amendments to the Timber Regulation (86-160) under the <i>Crown Lands and Forests Act</i>	April 1, 2023	Amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the fair market value rates and the associated royalty rates of standing timber for 2023 – 2024.
Amendments to the General Regulation (2002-37) under the <i>Transportation of Primary Forest Products Act</i>	May 18, 2023	Amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorize the use of transportation certificates in a digital format as an alternative to paper certificates used for the transport of primary forest products. Authorize the Minister and the New Brunswick Forest Products Commission to approve the form and content of certificates to be used on Crown lands and on private lands, respectively. Better regulate the remittance and return requirements for used books of transportation certificates and scale bills.

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
Amendments to Schedule A of the List of Species at Risk Regulation (2013-38) under the <i>Species at Risk Act</i> and the Prohibitions Regulation (2013-39)	May 18, 2023	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the status of Anticosti Aster (<i>Symphyotrichum anticostense</i>) and Cobblestone Tiger Beetle (<i>Cicindela marginipennis</i>) from endangered to special concern, and add Eastern Waterfan (<i>Peltigera hydrothyria</i>) as a threatened species. • Remove Anticosti Aster (<i>Symphyotrichum anticostense</i>) from the Prohibitions Regulation, as a result of amendments to the List of Species at Risk Regulation from endangered to special concern.
Amendments to the Hunting Regulation (84-133) under the <i>Fish and Wildlife Act</i>	June 29, 2023	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a hunting season for ring necked pheasant in New Brunswick.
Created the Timber Royalty Adjustment Regulation (2023-38) under the <i>Private Woodlot Sustainability Act</i>	July 1, 2023	<p>Created to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribe commodity-based royalty adjustments for the purpose of enhancing the management of New Brunswick private woodlots.
Amendments to the Timber Regulation (86-160) under the <i>Crown Lands and Forests Act</i>	August 9, 2023	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the forest management expense rate to \$3.00/ m³ for allocated volume.
Amendments to Schedule A of the List of Species at Risk Regulation (2013-38) under the <i>Species at Risk Act</i> and the Prohibitions Regulation (2013-39)	September 7, 2023	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Eastern Painted Turtle (<i>Chrysemys picta picta</i>) to the List of Species at Risk Regulation as a species of special concern and add Black-foam Lichen (<i>Anzia colpodes</i>) as an endangered species. • Remove Skillet Clubtail (<i>Gomphurus ventricosus</i>) from the Prohibitions Regulation as a result of amendments to the List of Species at Risk Regulation from endangered to data deficient.

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<p>Amendments to the Hunting Regulation (84-133) under the <i>Fish and Wildlife Act</i></p>	<p>September 7, 2023</p>	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a one-week period immediately following the end of the regular firearms deer season, during which authorized deer licence holders can hunt only using a muzzle-loading firearm. • Establish fees in the amount of nine dollars plus HST for residents and \$46 plus HST for non-residents to purchase a muzzleloader authorization that will link to their existing deer licence, for the above-noted muzzle loading firearm season. • Eliminate the \$1 sum paid by the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development directly to a deer registration agent for each deer registered, and establish a new fee of \$4 to be paid directly by a hunter to a deer registration agent for each deer registered. • Lower the minimum age for purchase of a Class I and Class III licence (non-resident and resident deer and small game licence) and a non-resident and resident bear hunting licence from 16 years to 12 years. • Eliminate the option for a resident bear hunting licence holder to purchase a second bear licence after harvest of a bear, and instead allow the harvest of up to two bears by a resident bear licence holder. • Require that a successful deer hunting licence holder register their harvested deer no later than 24 hours following the close of hunting season.
<p>Amendments to the Timber Regulation (86-160) under the <i>Crown Lands and Forests Act</i></p>	<p>November 3, 2023</p>	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the existing Crown Timber Sub License (Form 1) to update performance expectations for both Licensees and Sub-Licensees.
<p>Amendments to the Establishment of Protected Natural Areas Regulation (2003-8) under the <i>Protected Natural Areas Act</i></p>	<p>November 16, 2023</p>	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace all instances of the name “S---w Cap Mountain Protected Natural Area” with “Meto’mqwijuig Mountain Protected Natural Area.”

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
Amendments to the Fur Harvesting Regulation (84-124) under the <i>Fish and Wildlife Act</i>	January 1, 2024	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate fees for minor’s fur harvester’s and minor’s rabbit licences to encourage more participation by youth. • Change the season dates for the snaring of bobcat, coyote, and fox in wildlife management zones 1 through 12, for an additional week. • Create a fur harvester’s deer and game bird bundle for resident hunters and resident hunters 65 years of age and older at a reduced fee.
Amendments to the Wild Turkey Hunting Regulation (2021-30), and to the Registration Procedure Regulation (2015-4) under the <i>Fish and Wildlife Act</i>	January 25, 2024	<p>Amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the age to apply for a resident wild turkey licence to 12 years of age from 16 years of age. • Move the last day to apply for a resident wild turkey licence from the first Friday in April to last Friday in February. • Establish a limited-entry non-resident wild turkey hunting season in New Brunswick. • Establish a fee in the amount of \$25 plus HST to apply to a non-resident wild turkey hunting licence draw. • Establish a fee in the amount of \$80 plus HST for a non-resident 12 years of age and older to purchase a non-resident wild turkey licence. • Establish a fee in the amount of \$5.25 plus HST to purchase a replacement non resident wild turkey licence. • Establish a conservation fee in the amount of \$10 plus HST on the non-resident wild turkey licence for the Wildlife Trust Fund. • Require an applicant for a non-resident wild turkey licence to register with the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development before they apply.

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
Amendments to the Timber Royalty Adjustment Regulation (2023-38) under the <i>Private Woodlot Sustainability Act</i>	March 28, 2024	Amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve setting of the royalty adjustment for several timber classes. • Improve commodity price information for several timber classes. • Change the minimum royalty adjustment.

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2023 – 2024 may be found at:

[Natural Resources and Energy Development \(gnb.ca\)](https://www.gnb.ca)

Summary of Official Languages Activities

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development has continued to respect its Official Languages obligations by focussing on four sectors of activity. The following outlines the actions taken during 2023 – 2024 in each of the four areas of focus.

FOCUS 1

Ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province:

- Employees were provided with the tools enabling them to be successful in respecting their legal obligation to offer service of equal quality in English and French in all locations.
- Linguistic profiles were respected through the recruitment process to make certain that the department is able to provide services in both English and French throughout the province.

FOCUS 2

An environment and climate that encourages, for all employees, the use of the Official Language of their choice in their workplace:

- Communication, correspondence, and interactions with employees such as performance appraisals, were delivered in the employee's Official Language of choice.
- The department continued to encourage the use of both Official Languages for small meetings. For all large meetings, the department promoted bilingual presentations or separate English and French sessions.

FOCUS 3

New and revised government programs and policies will take the realities of the province's official linguistic communities into account:

- Correspondence and information were provided to the public in the Official Language of their choice.

FOCUS 4

Ensure Public Service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Official Languages Act*, relevant policies, regulations, and the province's obligations with respect to Official Languages:

- The Deputy Minister, and other management team members, reminded employees of their legal obligation to offer services in the Official Language of choice of the client. Employees were also reminded of the Language of Service Policy and Guidelines and the Official Languages Toolkit; and
- As part of the ongoing process for employee orientation and performance management, employees were required to read the policies related to Official Languages.

CONCLUSION

The department understands, promotes, and honours its obligations under the *Official Languages Act* and related policies. It strives to provide quality services to clients in both Official Languages. The department encourages and supports the use of both Official Languages in the workplace and invests in employee development through second language training.

Summary of Recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General

Section 1 – Includes the current reporting year and the previous year.

The department did not receive any recommendations from the Auditor General's reports in 2022 or 2023.

Section 2 – Includes the reporting periods for years three, four and five.

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS	
	TOTAL	IMPLEMENTED
2021 V2 Chapter 2: Residential Energy Efficiency Programs – Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development, NB Power Chap2e.pdf (agnb-vgnb.ca)	2	2
2020 V1 Chapter 4: Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development – Follow-up: 2008 Timber Royalties Chap4e.pdf (agnb-vgnb.ca)	5	3

Report on the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development received no disclosure of wrongdoing in the 2023 – 2024 fiscal year.

Appendix A: Silviculture

Production at the Kingsclear Nursery and the Atlantic Forest Seed Centre

YEAR	PRODUCTS			
	SEEDLINGS PRODUCED	SEED PRODUCED KILOGRAMS (KG)	SEED STORED (KG)	SEED STORED FOR CLIENTS (KG)
2023 – 2024	18,400,000	13	1,977	3,288
2022 – 2023	16,144,000	9	1,985	3,117
2021 – 2022	16,055,000	26	2,101	3,023

Crown silviculture by year (ha)

YEAR	PLANTING-RELATED ACTIVITIES		PRE-COMMERCIAL THINNING
	TREE PLANTING	PLANTATION TENDING	
2023 – 2024	9,885	16,186	11,989
2022 – 2023	9,404	13,199	12,934
2021 – 2022	9,578	16,877	14,672

Private land silviculture by year (ha)

YEAR	PLANTING-RELATED ACTIVITIES			PRE-COMMERCIAL THINNING
	SITE PREPARATION	TREE PLANTING	PLANTATION TENDING	
2023 – 2024	1,479	1,145	1,283	1,550
2022 – 2023	1,808	1,342	1,407	1,794
2021 – 2022	1,556	1,671	1,195	2,115

Appendix B: Crown Harvesting

Forest products harvested from Crown lands Cubic Metre (m³)

YEAR	SPECIES GROUP	LICENCEES AND SUB-LICENSEES	FIRST NATIONS	SPECIAL PERMITS	TOTAL
2023 - 2024	Softwood	3,704,245	219,067	8,704	5,557,561
	Hardwood	1,551,098	62,934	11,513	
2022 - 2023	Softwood	3,487,460	209,457	2,139	5,382,624
	Hardwood	1,596,181	62,725	24,662	
2021 - 2022	Softwood	3,470,559	202,093	6,715	5,490,015
	Hardwood	1,722,968	59,886	27,794	

Appendix C: Fire

Area affected by fire in hectares (ha) 2023, 2022, 2021

YEAR		EAST	WEST	TOTAL
2023	Fires	66	143	209
	ha	48	809	856
2022	Fires	89	125	214
	ha	53	123	176
2021	Fires	62	118	180
	ha	812	219	1,031

10-year average: 261 fires, 457.7 ha

2023 fires by cause

CAUSE	NUMBER	HA
Human/Industry	199	842
Lightning	10	14

Appendix D: Fish and Wildlife

Hunting licences issued

LICENCE TYPE ¹	DEER	MOOSE ²	BEAR	BIRD AND SMALL GAME	VARMINT	WILD TURKEY	MINORS ³
Resident	43,162	5,014	9,727	10,549	14,923	488	410
Designated Hunter	N/A	3,929	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Resident	290	120	2,298	436	40	N/A	N/A
Total 2023	43,452	9,063	12,025	10,985	14,963	488	410
Resident	42,989	4,998	9,351	11,690	13,622	376	677
Designated Hunter	N/A	3,891	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Resident	256	101	1,892	410	22	N/A	N/A
Total 2022	43,245	8,990	11,243	12,100	13,644	376	677
Resident	43,838	4,731	9,569	12,113	12,161	349	661
Designated Hunter	N/A	3,621	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Resident	198	99	479	335	12	N/A	N/A
Total 2021	44,036	8,451	10,048	12,448	12,173	349	661

¹ 11,280 licence bundles were sold in 2023 – 2024.

² Resident moose hunters may designate a hunter to accompany them. The bag limit for the party remains one moose.

³ The equivalent of a small game licence for person aged 12 to 15 years.

Angling licences issued

SPECIES	2023	2022	2021
Salmon	12,372	12,320	11,574
Angling (except Salmon) ⁴	50,125	48,430	53,218
Total	62,497	60,750	64,792

Details of licences issued, 2023

ALL SEASONS	RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
Salmon	9,945	2,427
Angling (except Salmon) ⁴	46,387	3,741
CROWN RESERVE ⁵		RESIDENTS ONLY
Miramichi		1,081 / 1,053 Rod Days
Restigouche		658 / 960 Rod Days

⁴ Includes ice/winter fishing licence sales.

⁵ Regular stretches