

2022 ANNUAL REPORT





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OF NEW BRUNSWICK**
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Staff and Board of Directors

Thank you to our staff from 2021-22:

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Elizabeth Gresh
Nadine Ives
Krystyn Lyons
Jon MacNeill
Adam Mahoney
Stephanie Phillips
Cecelia Perez Plancarte
Corey Robichaud
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Message from Our Team

The Conservation Council's greatest strength has always been the passion of the people for whom we do our work.

It's your commitment to protecting New Brunswick's rich but threatened natural environment that enables our independence.

It's your dedication to building sustainable, resilient communities that empowers our work for effective, **affordable** climate change solutions.

It's your enthusiasm for positive change, your refusal to accept the status quo, and your actions, both big and small, toward the world you want to live in, that inspire us every day.

It's powerful, what you bring to our work. And we are forever grateful, and proud, of the accomplishments we've achieved together, over the past 12 months and over the past 53 years, to better protect New Brunswick's forests, rivers and lakes, coastlines, oceans and communities.

It's been a good year.

Our artist collective, *From Harm to Harmony*, is truly hitting its stride and connecting with New Brunswickers from all corners of this province and all walks of life. Maybe you caught **our second**

exhibition bridging art and climate action, which toured St. Andrews and Fredericton last spring? Or did you join us in Saint John to build your own pinwheel during our interactive, whimsical and inspiring **wind energy exhibition?**

Don't worry if you missed us; we plan on doing much more of this in the year ahead, finding new ways of bringing you even deeper into the work you make possible for a better world.

Like we've done with our **Learning Outside project**, which again **helped hundreds of kids connect with nature** and let the outdoors be their classroom through fun and educational experiential learning activities.

Our multi-year campaign to protect more nature in New Brunswick came to fruition with the **addition of 100,000 hectares of new protected areas**, the largest-ever single increase in the province's history.

The recommendations we submitted in more than a dozen policy notes to federal and provincial departments, from **electrification** to **forest management**, pushed public policy toward the ambitious action we need to address climate change and the nature crisis.



Our research into the **factors affecting social acceptance of renewables** made a serious contribution to the national environmental movement, helping allies across the country better understand what it will take to move decarbonization forward.

And we remained steadfast in our oversight role as New Brunswick's environmental watchdog, keeping citizens informed on things like **who is polluting our province the most** and **where glyphosate-based herbicides are being sprayed** near waterways, communities and parks.

There is, of course, much more work to do. But whether pushing government to do more to ensure climate solutions are fair and affordable for everyone, to working to protect the Bay of Fundy from threats like **aquaculture expansion** and potential **increased LNG tanker traffic**, we know that, with you behind us, amplifying our voice, we will continue to achieve great things together.

For right now, though, we hope you enjoy this report and reading more about the work of our dedicated team in 2021-2022.

Thank you, always, for everything that you do.

Your Conservation Council Team





Climate Change Solutions

We are in the most critical decade humanity has ever faced. Keeping global temperature rise to below 1.5 degrees celsius requires gargantuan effort, coordination and ambition from political leaders, businesses, and citizens and civil society groups alike. Working to solve climate change and protect New Brunswickers' health and safety from the extreme weather it fuels underlies all of our work at the Conservation Council. Our team brings the latest science to help citizens understand climate change and how it is affecting our province today, presses governments to implement affordable climate solutions we know work, and provides analysis to journalists. We're here to help New Brunswick be part of the solution, and this work is carried out through citizen engagement, political advocacy campaigns, and extensive research to better understand the challenges we face, the solutions we need, and the best way to build broad, public support for urgent climate action.

Engaging New Brunswickers on Climate Solutions

Rising to the challenges of climate change will mean everyone doing their part on solutions. One of the things we need to do to get there is find better ways to involve mothers, fathers, grandparents and kids in the work we do. At the Conservation Council, our community-engaged artist collective, **Harm to Harmony**, is leading the charge on bringing the public into the fold, and their work is nothing short of inspiring. Launched in 2020, this group has only grown in scope, ambition and heart, deploying artwork—from songs to pottery, poems to pinwheels, paintings and more—to help New Brunswickers better understand the challenges and solutions to climate change and become part of this important movement. This year our community of practice, featuring 25 artists and facilitators from across the province, held two awe-inspiring shows with their **'Healing The Land, Healing Ourselves'** exhibition, one at the Sunbury Shores Art Gallery in St. Andrews and the other at



Our community-engaged artist collective held workshops helping kids make their own pinwheel as part of our wind energy exhibition.



Our artists collective's second show, *Healing the Land, Healing Ourselves*, was well-received at St. Andrews' Sunbury Shores Arts & Nature Centre in March 2022.

the Provincial Archives in Fredericton. The collective also produced a moving **'ancient forest lullaby,'** a hauntingly beautiful a capella song written collaboratively by the artists from the perspective of Mother Earth speaking to her human 'children.' In the year ahead,

our collective is planning more ways to bring climate action and art to the public, including through planned workshops along the Acadian Peninsula and an interactive exhibition slated for Saint John's outdoor contemporary art festival.



New additions to our popular *For The Love of New Brunswick* video series included Gisele, a northern New Brunswick grandmother concerned about what climate change means for her grandkids.

Further engagement work this year included the production of three new videos in our popular [For The Love of N.B.](#) series, featuring a [Harm to Harmony](#) artist talking about creating art to relieve ecoanxiety, and a [mother](#) and [grandmother](#) talking about the joys and challenges of raising children in a changing climate.

We also launched our [electric school bus campaign](#) to help parents, students and teachers [call for a fully-electric school bus fleet in New Brunswick](#) over the next 10 years. This work included an EV bus roundtable where we heard and [developed recommendations](#) from bus drivers, educators, parents, students, government and school district officials.



Campaigns and Policy

A central part of our climate team’s work is proposing effective public policy, providing technical feedback on government proposals, plans and regulations, and helping citizens make sense of it all through expert analysis and commentary to journalists. This year our climate team submitted [14 briefing notes](#) to the federal and provincial government on climate change policy, draft regulations, and [environmental impact assessments for SMRs](#), among other topics. We [presented recommendations](#) to the legislative committee tasked with updating the climate change action plan, and [we helped New Brunswickers have their say](#) on what an updated climate plan should look like with our easy-to-use citizens action toolkit. We conducted two [national](#) and [regional](#) surveys and focus

groups on electricity issues to help shape our campaign and policy interventions. We produced reports on [electric school bus uptake](#), [climate resiliency in Fredericton](#), and [energy poverty](#). We continued to develop the [Atlantic Electricity Vision](#) section of our website, the centrepiece of our current policy work where we lay out—through case studies, reports, modeling and analysis—how we can build an affordable, reliable and 100 per cent renewable electricity system in New Brunswick and the Atlantic provinces today. This year we produced a series of [thoroughly-researched fact sheets](#) and [short videos](#) to help New Brunswickers sort through some of the myths and misconceptions around the renewable energy transition, covering small modular nuclear reactors, biomass for heating, electric vehicles, electric school buses, mining and the green energy transition, and liquefied natural gas.



Our [letter-writing tool](#) helped more than 170 New Brunswickers contact the Premier and Minister of Natural Resources this year to call for *Electricity Act* reform and better policies and programs to help citizens act on climate solutions. Program director, Dr. Louise Comeau, is quickly becoming a household name when it comes to climate commentary, having given more than two dozen interviews this reporting period on everything from energy electrification and affordable climate solutions to carbon pricing and extreme weather impacts at home.

Research: Empowering our Movement

We are proud to be at the forefront of research in Canada to better understand how we build broad support for renewable energy and climate policy and, critically, how organizations like ours should be talking to people to best inspire action and change. Our major study, [Factors Affecting Social Acceptance of Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects](#), was, to our knowledge, a first-of-its-kind deep dive into what citizens want and need



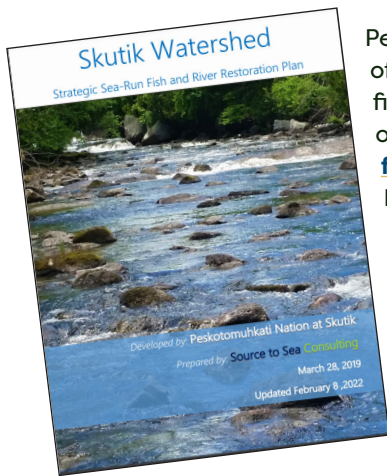
in order to get behind energy projects. The first phase, published in spring 2022, was based on Canada-wide focus groups and surveys and garnered attention from environmental and renewable energy industry organizations across the country. Our team is currently preparing a comprehensive case study expanding on this work, based on dozens of in-person interviews conducted during the spring and summer of 2022 with residents from two northern New Brunswick communities who rejected wind energy projects. Earlier in the year, we published research based on focus groups and surveys conducted in Atlantic Canada gauging [the public's understanding of electricity issues](#), which included recommendations on the best ways to talk to Canadians about these issues in order to grow support for sustainable electrification. We held webinars on each study and presented our findings to provincial, regional and national ENGOs.



Marine Conservation

As the temperature of our beautiful Bay of Fundy waters continued its unfortunate trend of being **one of the fastest-warming bodies of water in the world**, so too did our Marine Conservation team and Fundy Baykeeper turn up the heat on our advocacy for better protected marine waters, sustainable fisheries to support thriving coastal communities, and oversight of activities and projects that are or could pollute our coastal waters, from the Baie des Chaleurs, along the Northumberland Strait, to the Passamaquoddy Bay and Fundy.

Supporting the Peskotomuhkati-led Skutik River Restoration Project



Peskotomuhkati-led restoration efforts of the Skutik Watershed. The fifth and final year of this project saw the release of the **updated strategic sea-run fish and river restoration plan**. This Indigenous-led project is designed to restore fish passage, fish habitat and water quality in rivers from the Skutik (St. Croix) to the Lepreau river. Supporting this project has been incredibly meaningful work for our team. Our efforts are now focused on helping to implement the higher level restoration plan, keeping

efforts to **remove the Milltown Dam on track**, engaging key stakeholders and doing the complex policy and political work it takes to restore a river at the heart of an Indigenous nation's territory and which forms the border between two countries. It is important to note that the efforts on the Skutik River are having positive effects throughout the region: We are supporting efforts to remove the Windsor Causeway in Nova Scotia, and we are conducting a study to look at restoration potential of gaspereau and other sea run fish throughout the region.

Matthew Abbott says supporting the Peskotomuhkati-led update of the Skutik restoration plan is one of the most meaningful things he's done in 10 years as Fundy Baykeeper.



Pushing for Marine Protected Areas

We continued our work, with allies in the Atlantic region, toward securing an additional Marine Protected Area in the Bay of Fundy. This work was focused on the ground game of effective community engagement and collaboration required to foster acceptance, buy-in and enthusiasm for marine conservation among many stakeholders. Our team also sat on the ENGO caucus helping to plan the **5th International Marine Protected Area Congress** (IMPAC5), slated for Vancouver

in February 2023. This work allowed us to track national and international MPA trends, influence Canada's position and strategy toward MPAs, and leverage the international congress to engage local decision makers on the importance of marine conservation. We remained very engaged, of course, in the **Musquash Estuary Marine Protected Area** (which, you'll remember, the Conservation Council was instrumental in securing nearly 20 years ago), participating in regular Musquash Advisory Committee meetings and the peer-review process for the Musquash MPA management plan.



© Nick Hawkins

Wild Atlantic salmon swimming in a New Brunswick river.

Keeping Tabs On The Aquaculture Industry in the Bay of Fundy

As the Bay of Fundy faced increasing stress and pressures from the effects of climate change, we remained steadfast in our position that aquaculture operations in the bay require greater oversight, regulation and enforcement in order to reduce the stress they place on marine life in the bay. Threats from salmon aquaculture include legal (and illegal) pesticide use; risks to wild salmon from interbreeding, sea lice and disease; nutrient pollution; marine debris; and conflicts with other users on the water. At the provincial

level, we stand ready to challenge, with our allies, [attempts to expand salmon farms in the bay](#), which already has some of the densest siting in the world. Along with our allies, we are advising the province on a much-needed update to the provincial *Aquaculture Act* with hopes of securing modest improvements in monitoring and oversight. Nationally, we continued working with key ENGO, community and fisheries partners on the federal government's proposed *Aquaculture Act*, employing the same approach we used when securing meaningful environmental provisions in the updated *Fisheries Act*.



Supporting efforts to protect and restore North Atlantic right whales

Our team continued to report on the [plight of the critically-endangered North Atlantic right whale](#). Warming oceans caused by climate change has affected the whales' feeding patterns, forcing them to [leave their traditional feeding grounds in the Bay of Fundy](#) to journey through waters they typically were not seen in high numbers, such as the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This tragically led to a record-breaking 12 right whales killed in Canadian waters (and six found dead in U.S. waters) in 2017. At the time, the Conservation Council called on the federal government to act swiftly on measures such as mandatory speed restrictions for tankers in the gulf. This year we continued to support our allies working on [right whale policy, protection and recovery](#). We contributed to workshops on fishing, whales and ghost gear debris, and helped highlight the findings of MARS' July 2021 report, [Beyond The Numbers: A 15-Year Retrospective of Cetacean Incidents in Eastern Canada](#). We also partnered with the award-winning filmmaker behind the 2022 documentary, *The Last of The Right Whales*, to host several screenings of the film in New Brunswick, [including in St. Andrews and Shediac](#).



Forest Conservation

Fighting for forestry reform and a better protected Acadian forest has been a mainstay of the Conservation Council's work for decades. In a province dominated by a powerful and influential forestry industry, substantial victories in this space have been hard to come by despite sustained pressure from our team and a growing chorus of New Brunswickers calling for change. This year, however, that pressure and citizen engagement saw, at long last, **significant steps forward for nature protection in New Brunswick, and we saw some of the biggest signs yet that the tide is finally turning on glyphosate-based herbicides** in N.B.'s woods and beyond.



A Watershed Moment

In the summer of 2022, after years of advocacy, dozens of meetings with Ministers and department staff, and helping more than 1,000 New Brunswickers speak up for new protected natural areas, we got what we'd been fighting for—or a good start, at the very least. The province announced the **creation of 100,000 hectares of new protected natural areas** under its Nature Legacy program. You'll remember that in 2019 the provincial government committed to increasing protected land in N.B. from 4.9 per cent (nearly the worst percentage in Canada)

to 10 per cent, meaning the addition of roughly 450,000 hectares of new protected areas. Throughout 2021, **we helped citizens have a say** in where these new protected areas would fall, helping them navigate the nomination process through the government's Nature Legacy portal. We continue to keep pressure on the government to ensure the remaining 350,000 hectares are protected, with our sights set on 25 per cent protection by 2030. At the federal level, our 2021 **election questionnaire toolkit** helped citizens **keep nature protection on the radar of political candidates** vying for their vote.



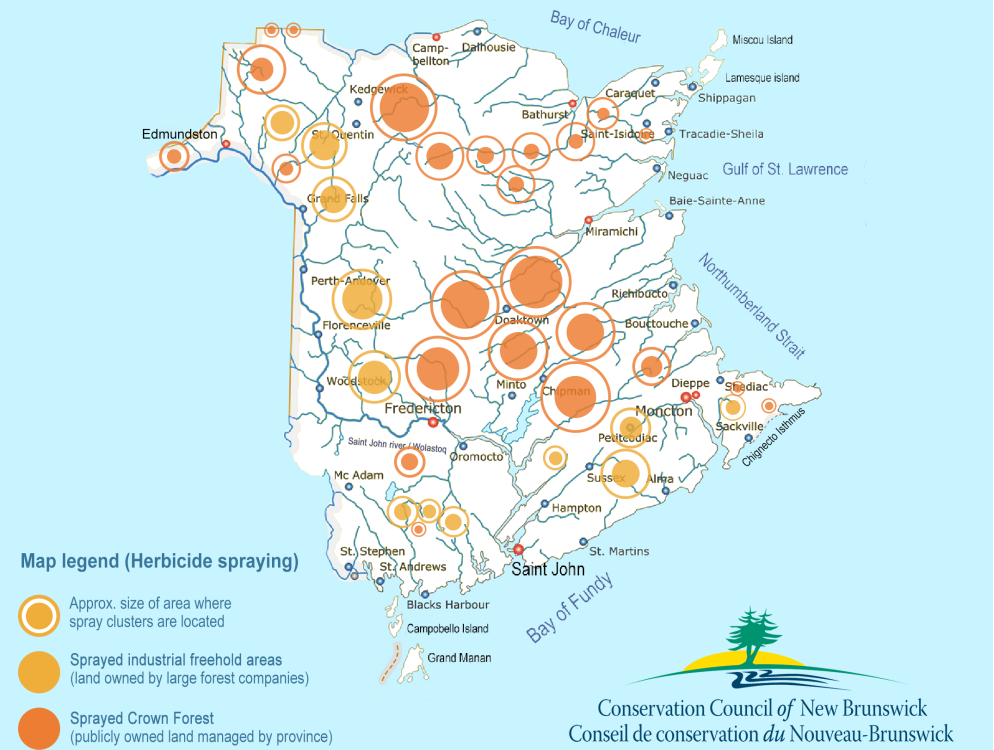
In our February 2022 poll, 79 per cent of New Brunswickers said ensuring adequate space for recreational activities should be a key consideration when reviewing forestry management practices.



Turning Tide: The Fight To Stop Spraying Our Woods

The body of scientific evidence showing glyphosate’s harmful effects on ecological and human health **continued to grow this year**, and with it, so too did the momentum against herbicide spraying in New Brunswick. For the first time ever, glyphosate spraying was the subject of a series of standing committee hearings where **MLAs heard from experts**, scientists, citizens, Indigenous leaders and conservation groups, including your Conservation Council. Our presentation to the committee **called for a ban on spraying in the Crown forest while pushing for broader forestry reforms**, noting that spraying is a symptom of a broken management system that still favours old fashioned practices like large-scale clearcutting. We covered the glyphosate hearings extensively and **summarized** many of the presenters’ arguments, including posting **videos of presentations** on our social media channels. When a last-minute hearing was added in September 2021, following a complaint from J.D. Irving co-CEO Jim Irving, **we reported on Irving getting the final say at committee**, including his defense of glyphosate by saying the chemical was ubiquitous—even on “the piece of toast you had for breakfast.” The committee’s recommendations, included in its November 2021 report to the legislature, **failed to deliver the significant forest management changes** we and many presenters called for, but

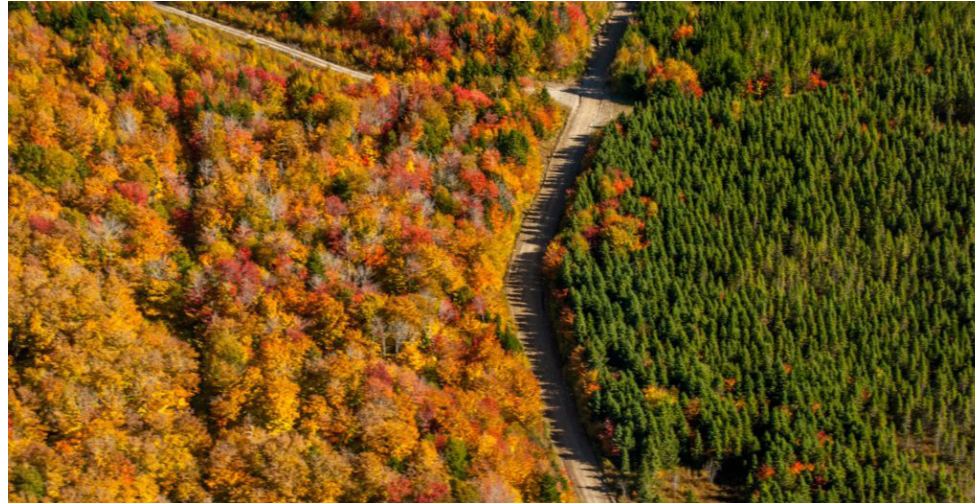
2022 Herbicide Spraying Hotspots in N.B.



Our map warning citizens of herbicide spraying hotspots during the 2021-22 spraying season was among our most popular and widely-shared social media posts.

it contained some positive moves: a call for wider spray buffer zones around homes and waterways, for example. In addition to producing **our annual herbicide spraying hotspot maps**, we reported on two significant court decisions, **one in Canada**, and **one in the U.S.**, where high courts in both countries ordered regulators to re-evaluate their glyphosate renewals amid **growing**

controversy and evidence of its harmful effects on people, animals, plants and insects. Support diversification and value-added processing within New Brunswick’s forest products sector; and, (6) Ensure that private woodlots provide a proportional share of the wood supply and promote productivity from private woodlots through stronger management, pricing and marketing measures.

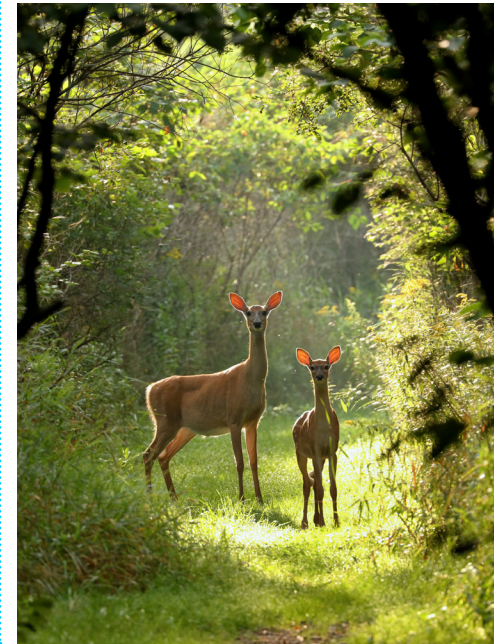
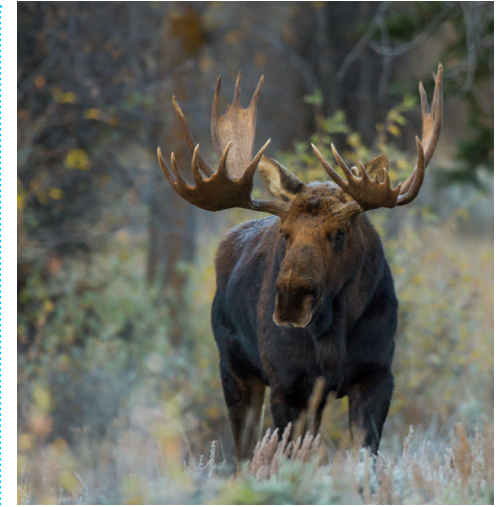


Natural, mixed-wood Acadian forest versus large-scale monoculture plantation in New Brunswick. A comprehensive [April 2022 study](#) found that forestry practices, including clearcutting and softwood plantations, are primarily to blame for an 80 per cent decline in bird populations in Atlantic Canada over the last 20 years. Photo: Deborah Carr

Crown Forest Reform

Underlying all our work on forest conservation is advocating for an update to the 40+ year old Crown Lands and Forests Act. In discussions with the Minister, department officials, and in the media, we continued to push for desperately-needed [Crown forestry reform toward ecological forestry](#), a management model that strikes a better, fairer balance between the needs of industry, private woodlot owners and First Nations, habitat protection, and recreational forest uses such as hiking, canoeing, hunting and fishing. Our province is one of the most rural

in Canada and New Brunswickers are confronted everyday with the reality of our current industrial forest practices. Every time [large forestry companies clear cut, we lose habitat for birds](#), moose, deer, flying squirrels and others. Measures such as forest management reform, new protected natural areas, and safeguarding moose and deer grounds will help our communities become more resilient in the face of climate change and dramatic species declines. Polling we conducted with allies in February 2022 made it clear that [New Brunswickers are with us](#): 75 per cent of respondents said they support establishing ecological forest management in N.B.





Movement on Protecting Species At Risk

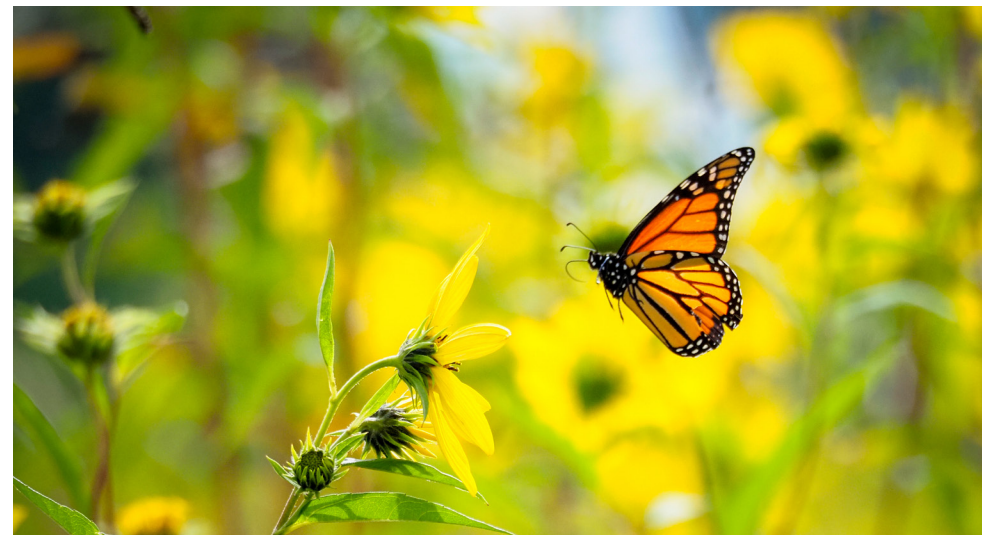
Sometimes you need the carrot, other times the stick. The Conservation Council and key allies used the latter in spring 2021 and it, finally, seemed to get through to the province. We're talking of course about the notice Ecojustice sent to the Minister of Natural Resources, on our and our allies' behalf, that [our organizations would take the Minister to court](#) over his department's failure to fulfill its legal duties under the *Species At Risk Act*.

For years, there had been zero movement on the provisions laid out in the act, including assessing vulnerable flora and fauna and developing restoration plans for species where possible. Indeed, regulations under N.B.'s *Species at Risk Act* were as rare as some of the endangered birds, plants, insects and animals the legislation was designed to protect.

But then, in February 2022, there was a sighting: amid pressure from our groups, the government posted [the first regulations under SARA since 2013](#), followed by [more regulations in June 2022](#). Our team profiled the species included in the regulations and we continue to keep pressure on the department to fulfill its outstanding SARA duties.



Olive-sided flycatcher

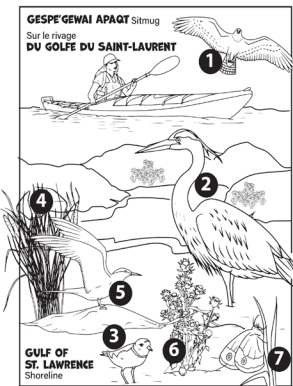


Monarch butterfly

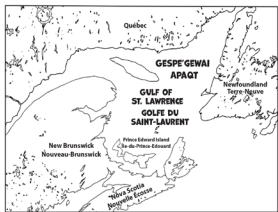


Learning Outside

No other facet of the Conservation Council's work was disrupted as greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic as our **Learning Outside** project. We are happy to report that, while still dogged by occasional cancellations and pandemic challenges, this period saw the return to near-normal levels of school visits by our enthusiastic team.



- 1 Ni'kmawes'u
Le Balbuzard pêcheur
Osprey
- 2 Alanj tm'gwatignej
Le grand héron
Great blue heron
- 3 Jijwikaate'j
Le pluvier siffleur
Piping plover
- 4 Jugo'tse'l
L'ammophile
Marram grass
- 5 Kloqntiej
La sterne pierregarin
Common tern
- 6 Kesa'luejijik
L'aster du Golfe St-Laurent
Gulf of St. Lawrence aster
- 7 Mimiges
Le satyre fauve des maritimes
Maritime ringlet



Our trilingual educational Gulf of St. Lawrence colouring sheets are just some of the materials and activities offered on our Learning Outside website.

Our **Learning Outside** project aims to forge the vital connection between children and the natural world by **encouraging teachers to take their students outside** with the help of our curriculum-supporting activities that incorporate New Brunswick's seasons, flora and fauna, and, where possible, unique outdoor features of the school grounds.

The Learning Outside team took advantage of the 'off season' (during students' summer vacation) to strengthen our collaborations and partnerships. We worked with Nature NB on a plan to develop educational signage and activities for the Lincoln Community Wetland Trail

(which leads through the Lincoln Wetland Nature Preserve and the extensive property of Lincoln Elementary Community School). During the summer and throughout the year, we continued our work with the Great Minds Think Outside program (GMTO), a collaborative effort that provides hands-on, outdoor, experiential professional learning sessions for teachers covering the why's, how's and what's of teaching outside. Our team helped plan and co-facilitated seven GMTO sessions (including a school garden



Since launching in 2011, our Learning Outside project has introduced thousands of students and hundreds of teachers to the power of nature as our best classroom.

session), contributed to several conference presentations and participated in a number of workshops and planning meetings.

When the **2022 academic year began**, our Learning Outside team was thrilled to get back to school visits, engaging both students and teachers in the power of nature to inspire curriculum-based lessons that foster deeper learning opportunities for students and a lifelong passion for the natural world. We ran activities including the debut of our new fish printing

activity as part of our comprehensive Atlantic salmon module, the ever-popular pollinators and pollination module, and investigating animal adaptations. During the 2021-2022 school year, our team met with 14 classes (286 students), ranging from Kindergarten through Grade 7. We continued to develop, refine, and improve the project's engaging and informative curriculum-based activities for a range of grade levels. We also made these resources available to teachers and parents through the **new Learning Outside website**.



The Year Ahead

Expect to see and hear more from us as we continue building momentum toward greater citizens' engagement and sustaining—and growing—our capacity on campaigns, policy, and critical research. You will see fresh creations from our artist collective as we expand this inspiring work into more communities. You will see thoughtful, evidence-based policy proposals and recommendations from our program experts. You will see our research further empower the environmental movement across the province, Atlantic region and country. And always, at every step, you will share in the progress and victories we earn in pursuit of the Conservation Council's mission of fostering a thriving natural environment, healthy people, and sustainable communications.





Many sources, including hundreds of small, individual donations, power our work. This wide range of support allows us to be fully independent as New Brunswick's leading environmental advocate. Thank you to our generous funders:

Atlantic Mariculture

Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation

Atlantic Salmon Federation

Coastal Restoration Fund

Department of Fisheries and Oceans

Echo Foundation

Energy Mix Productions Inc.

Environment Funders Canada

Environmental Trust Fund PNB

NB Wildlife Trust Fund

Nature Canada

OMISTA Credit Union Staff

Passamaquoddy Recognition Group Inc.

Pembina Institute/European Climate Foundation

Province of Quebec

Schad Foundation

Tamarack Institute

The Pew Charitable Trusts

Trottier Foundation

*A special thank you to the following artists in our From Harm to Harmony community-engaged artist collective who donated a portion of their **2021-22 art sale** proceeds to our work:*

Gary Crosby

Danielle Manuel

Heather Marmura

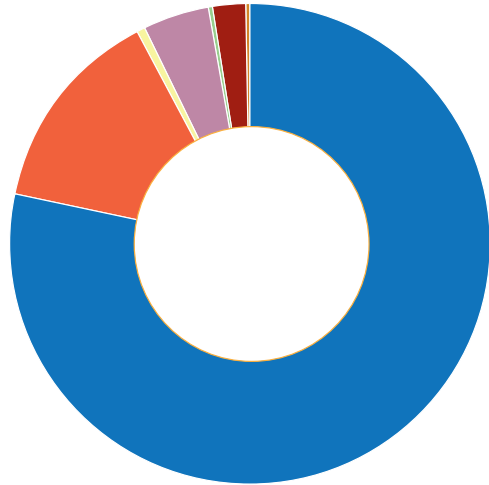
Caroline Simpson

Danielle Smith



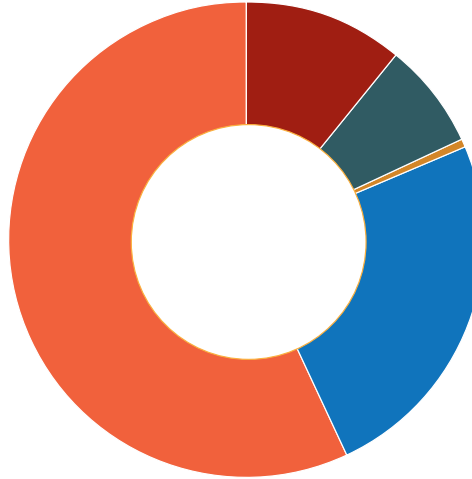


Fiscal Year 2022



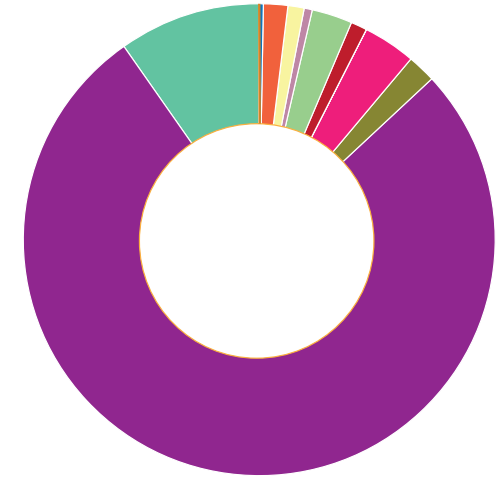
Revenue

Projects	\$568,907
Donations	\$102,294
Memberships	\$3,547
Project Admin	\$31,069
Sales and Service	\$2,353
Wage Subsidies	\$16,030
Investment	\$1,590
Total	\$725,790



Income by Programs & Projects

Biodiversity	\$63,155
Forest Conservation	\$40,000
Freshwater Protection	\$3,740
Marine Conservation	\$138,284
Sustainable Energy	\$323,728
Total	\$568,907



Expenses

Amortization	\$1,618
Bank charges	\$1,355
Building & Property	\$12,842
Dues & Subscriptions	\$7,641
Equipment Purchase/Rentals	\$3,130
Fundraising	\$21,580
Investment counsel fees	\$6,712
Member Services	\$518
Office, occupancy	\$27,076
Professional Fees	\$12,893
Project expense	\$563,521
Salaries and wages	\$70,419
Total	\$729,305

*This statement should be read in conjunction with our audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2022.