Conservation Council *of* New Brunswick
Conseil de conservation *du* Nouveau-Brunswick

Questions About Fracked "Natural" Gas Development in New Brunswick

Conservation Council of New Brunswick
Sample questions | October 2026

Context

The Government of New Brunswick is reviewing the province's fracking moratorium to decide whether the conditions behind it should change. The review considers potential economic benefits, risks to health and the environment, Indigenous rights and public views.

The Conservation Council of New Brunswick has put together a list of questions everyone should ask their MLA, the Premier, and the Department of Natural Resources about fracked gas development, including whether they support fracking, oppose it, or are undecided.

Use them at open houses and public meetings, or in letters, emails, phone calls and other conversations with government representatives. Choose the questions that matter most to you and your community, and ask for clear, evidence-based answers about affordability, drinking water, health, jobs, climate change and public costs.

Whatever our views on fracking, we all deserve to understand the potential benefits and risks and to have our say before decisions are made.

Energy independence

1. When government talks about "energy independence," what exactly does it mean? How much of New Brunswick's energy needs could locally produced gas meet, and for how long?

2. If the goal is Canadian energy independence, would government only allow Canadian-owned and controlled companies to drill?

3. Would companies be required to supply New Brunswick first, or would companies control production and sell the gas wherever they receive the highest price?

4. How many wells, pipelines, compressor stations and other facilities would be needed to deliver the benefits government is suggesting? Where would they be located around Sussex and neighbouring communities?

5. Where is the gas currently being produced in New Brunswick being sold? How much is sold in New Brunswick and to whom? Does the government control where the gas is sold and how much it costs?

Affordability

6. What evidence shows that producing more gas here would lower household energy bills? Would the price reflect local production costs or prices in the wider gas market?

7 If producing more natural gas here would make energy more affordable, why hasn't government required companies already producing gas in New Brunswick to sell it only to New Brunswick customers and at affordable prices?

8. Fracked gas is a commodity, and government does not control its market price. How, then, can government claim that expanding production here would make food and electricity more affordable? What evidence supports that claim, and what would ensure any savings reach households rather than increase company profits?

9. For a New Brunswick household that does not use natural gas, what would the actual savings be? How much, how soon, and through what mechanism?

10. Who would pay for new pipelines, electricity connections, road upgrades and other infrastructure? Would those costs appear on our taxes or power bills?

11. Has the government compared those costs and potential savings with investing the same public money in insulation, heat pumps, renewable energy and storage? Which approach would help more households, especially those struggling to pay their bills?

Water Supply?

12. How much water would each well require, where would it come from, and how would private wells, farms and streams be protected during dry periods?

13. What independent water testing would take place before drilling begins? Would nearby residents receive ongoing testing at **no cost**, with the results made public?

14. Where would fracking wastewater go? Which facilities could safely handle it, what contaminants would they remove, and who would verify the results?

15. How would government assess the combined effects of multiple wells, roads, pipelines and compressor stations on farmland, forests, wetlands and the Kennebecasis watershed?

16. If a household's well becomes contaminated or loses water, who would provide an immediate replacement and who would pay for the water and for how long? Would residents have to prove the company was responsible before receiving help?

17. If a homeowner / landowner's water becomes unusable, how will the government compensate the homeowner for the loss of the selling price of the home/land?

Health and quality of life

18. What independent evidence supports the government's confidence that expanded development would protect our health? Will the review include research from other places where fracking occurs, alongside New Brunswick evidence?

19. Government describes existing gas extraction near Sussex as safe. What long-term water, air and health monitoring supports that statement, and can residents see the results?

20. What protections would apply to homes, schools, daycares and farms near wells and compressor stations? How would setbacks account for children, seniors and people with respiratory conditions?

21. How would truck traffic, noise, lights, odours and air emissions be monitored and controlled? Who could residents contact, and how quickly would government respond?

22. Research in northeastern B.C. has linked nearby oil and gas wells with higher levels of certain air pollutants in homes. How would government protect indoor and outdoor air quality here?

23. An Alberta study found links between living near fracked wells and some pregnancy and birth complications. How will government address these findings, even if similar research has not been done in New Brunswick?

24. A Pennsylvania study linked nearby shale gas development with more asthma attacks. What protections would be in place for children and people with asthma or other breathing problems here?

Greenhouse gas and climate change

25. How much greenhouse gas pollution would more fracking create, from drilling and methane leaks to burning the gas, including gas sold outside New Brunswick?

26. Who would independently check for methane leaks, make the results public and ensure companies fix them, even after wells close?

27. How would more fracking affect New Brunswick's ability to meet its climate targets?

28. If government says gas would reduce climate pollution, what evidence supports that claim? Does it include methane leaks and the risk of delaying cleaner energy?

29. How would fracked gas compare with energy efficiency, heat pumps, renewable power and storage in terms of climate pollution, cost and reliability?

30. Will government include the costs of climate change to our homes, farms and communities, such as flooding and extreme weather, when weighing the benefits and costs of more fracking?

Royalties jobs and public costs

31. How much has existing gas production near Sussex generated in annual royalties, and what measurable benefits have New Brunswickers and communities near the existing wells received?

32. What are the projected royalties from expansion under low, medium and high gas prices? Will government publish the assumptions and an independent review of those estimates?

33. How much of our tax money would go toward subsidizing fracked gas development through grants, tax breaks, infrastructure or other public support? After those costs are deducted, how much would New Brunswickers actually gain from royalties and other revenues?

34. After subsidies, tax incentives, infrastructure, monitoring and enforcement costs, road repairs and potential health and cleanup costs, what would the net public benefit be?

35. How many permanent jobs would go to local residents, at what wages, and for how many years? How many projected jobs would be temporary or filled by workers from elsewhere?

36. Would Sussex and neighbouring communities receive a guaranteed share of revenues to cover local costs and improve services? What would make that commitment enforceable?

37. Would companies have to set aside **enough money** before drilling to cover well closure, restoration and long-term problems, even if they go bankrupt?

38. Abandoned gas wells are a problem in Alberta and elsewhere, how would the government ensure that New Brunswickers are not left paying for industry pollution?

39. Oil and gas companies are not paying taxes in Alberta and elsewhere; how would the government ensure that municipalities in New Brunswick receive their fair share?

40. Oil and gas companies in British Columbia and elsewhere have avoided paying royalties; how would the government ensure that this does not happen in New Brunswick?

Community say and lasting benefits

41. What say would residents and local governments have over the location and scale of development? Could a community refuse it, and how would Indigenous and treaty rights be respected?

42. What findings would lead government to keep the moratorium? Is it prepared to conclude that expansion is not in the public interest?

43. Ten or twenty years from now, how would we know this decision had improved life in Sussex and across New Brunswick? What measurable commitments would government make on affordability, health, water quality and lasting local prosperity?

The central question

What independently verified evidence shows that expanding fracked gas development would leave people in Sussex and across New Brunswick better off, after all public costs and risks are counted, and who would be accountable if the promised benefits do not materialize?