

2024-2025



Annual Report

**Wolastoqey Nation
in New Brunswick**

35 Dedham St. Suite 202
Fredericton N.B. E3A 2V2
506-459-6341 | wnnb.wolastoqey.ca

About Us

Our role is to provide technical support and advice to the Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey Communities in New Brunswick on matters that relate to Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey constitutionally protected Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Our mandate is to ensure Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey Communities can be properly consulted and advocated for, in a way that upholds Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey constitutionally protected Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

The Wolastoqiyik Wəlastəkwiyyik

The Wolastoqiyik / Wəlastəkwiyyik are the Indigenous people of the Wolastoq / Wəlastək watershed and adjacent areas. Our traditional territory encompasses lands as well as marine and fresh waters from the Bay of Fundy in the south to the St. Lawrence River in the north. This large territory includes parts of the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Québec as well as northeastern Maine in the United States. The Wolastoqiyik/Wəlastəkwiyyik are also sometimes known as “the Maliseet”, a name given to us by our Mi’kmaq neighbours.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

The Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick (WNNB) continues to provide us, the elected leadership of the six communities along the Wolastoq in New Brunswick (Matawaskiye (Madawaska), Neqotkuk (Tobique), Wotstak (Woodstock), Biliik (Kingsclear), Sitansisk (Saint Mary's), and Welamukotuk (Oromocto) with key technical research, analysis, and advice on lands and resource Resources, as it has since 2017. With the help of the WNNB staff, the Wolastoqey Chiefs have been able to defend the interests of the Wolastoqiyik on numerous Rights-based issues, affirming the value of Indigenous knowledge and respect for the Rights of the Wolastoqiyik to the lands, waters, and resources we have protected since time immemorial.

WNNB's efforts to ensure that the Wolastoqiyik is properly consulted by governments and the private sector on projects that may have an impact on the environment, access to resources, and the rights and title of the Wolastoqiyik is more important than ever. Our communities must have the ability to respond in a timely and informed manner. Facilitating mutually beneficial relationships that respect our inherent Rights, culture, needs, and aspirations is critical for us to meet our collective goals.

With the election of a new government in New Brunswick, we are beginning to see a more genuine commitment to implementing a government-to-government relationship in keeping with the Peace and Friendship Treaties; we hope to continue to develop an ongoing relationship with the provincial government grounded in the principles of mutual respect and collaboration. One of the first acts that demonstrates the new government's desire to build a climate of mutual respect and collaboration in New Brunswick has been the negotiation of new tax-revenue-sharing agreements with the Wolastoqiyik, which have just been signed. This reverses the unilateral abolition by the previous provincial government of our previous tax-revenue-sharing agreements. We appreciate the new government's commitment to negotiating new agreements and are proud of the fact that we were able to arrive at new agreements that will benefit both the Wolastoqiyik and all New Brunswickers.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

This report contains updates on the various files from our technical team. We encourage you to reach out to your community's Resource Development Consultation Coordinator (RDCC) to connect you with WNNB staff if you have additional questions or require further information.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Chief Shelley Sabattis for her years of service and dedication to WNNB. Chief Shelley served as Welamukotuk Chief from 2015 to 2025 and was committed to her community and its members. Chief Shelley always made time to be present with meaningful contributions. Again, WNNB's board of directors would like to acknowledge Chief Shelley for her years of service and we wish her well.

Woliwon | Wəliwən

Chief Patricia Bernard

Chief Allan Polchies Jr.

Chief Gabriel Atwin

Chief Ross Perley,

Chief Tim Paul

Chief Scott Paul



A MESSAGE FROM OUR NIHKANATPAT

Reflecting on WNNB's accomplishments over the past year, I am proud of the momentum we are building. Together, we continue to advocate for ourselves as Rightsholders in this province, at the Nation and community levels.

We can't do this alone. Our WNNB team is incredible and I thank everyone for their contributions to our ongoing work. I am also fortunate to support a Board of Chiefs who provide great leadership to our collective work.

We welcome Chief Scott Paul of Welamukotuk to the Board. I know he will provide wisdom and guidance to the members of his community. In welcoming Chief Scott, I want to acknowledge and thank Chief Shelley for her contributions, particularly in negotiating a new revenue sharing agreement for our communities.

We go far when we go together.

As each year passes, our organization grows and evolves. We centre our work in coordinating and providing technical support and advice to advance our constitutionally protected Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

Our Nation continues to move in the right direction as we meet our goals and set new ones. I am excited to be a part of this growth. Let's continue to work together for our Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey communities to ensure a bright future for all.



Dr. John Cloutier
WNNB Nihkanatpat | Executive Director

Fisheries Department



TEAM

Dr. Colin Curry, Fisheries Lead Biologist

colin.curry@wolastoqey.ca

Kianna Bear-Hetherington, Fisheries Technician

kianna.bh@wolastoqey.ca

Kaleb Zelman, Fisheries Analyst

kaleb.zelman@wolastoqey.ca

Jodi Paul Doiron, Fisheries Technician

jodi.pd@wolastoqey.ca

Walter Brooks Jr., Fisheries Technician

walter.brooksjr@wolastoqey.ca

CONSULTATION FILES UPDATE

Scott Falls Dam Refurbishment

Scott Falls is a concrete and earthen dam on the West Branch Musquash River system in southwest New Brunswick. It was built in the 1920s to supply water to a hydroelectric station on the East Branch Musquash River through a penstock. While NB Power decommissioned the hydroelectric station in the 1970s, the dam itself remained, and ownership was transferred to the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources (DNRED). In 2011 a dam safety review concluded that the dam was at risk of failure. The province began exploring options to address this, and in 2018 approached WNNB and the communities about removing the dam. However, after encountering opposition from local communities, they reversed course and opted to refurbish the dam (it would remain a dam-only, with no hydroelectric generation). There is currently no fish passage at the dam, and in choosing this course of action, the province will have to get a Fisheries Act Authorization (FAA) from Fisheries and Oceans Canada. DNRED approached WNNB with a new plan to refurbish the dam in 2022.



Scott Falls Dam Refurbishment cont'd.

WNNB is firmly opposed to the refurbishment of the dam because it perpetuates existing impacts to fishing Rights and it would create new impacts on Rights. We maintain that removing the dam would be more beneficial to migratory fish species including Atlantic salmon, American eel, and sea-run brook trout. Our analysis indicates that the proposed fishway would be of little benefit to these species due to insufficient flows in the summer and fall. In addition, the province has not presented a viable habitat offsetting plan – a requirement of their FAA – nor have they presented a plan to accommodate impacts to Wolastoqey fishing rights. There are several other fish passage barriers in the Musquash system, and both the province and DFO have been hesitant to address these barriers.

After the provincial election in 2024, the government indicated to WNNB that they were re-evaluating the decision. To date we have not received an update from the province on how they intend to move forward. However, the status quo is unacceptable. Were the dam to fail it could create additional fish passage issues and interfere with Rights-based fishing. The area downstream of Scott Falls is an important sweetgrass harvesting area and could be at risk if the dam fails. WNNB will continue to push the province to move forward with dam removal, restore fish habitat, and create a plan for addressing other fish passage barriers in the Musquash system.

Mactaquac Life Achievement Project (MLAP) – Fish Passage

The Mactaquac Dam Hydroelectric Facility, completed in 1968, needs repairs due to the expansion of the concrete that the dam is made of. Rather than remove (which was the preference given by the Wolastoqey communities) or rebuild the dam, NB Power has opted to pursue “Life Achievement” which proposes substantial work to allow the dam to operate for the 100 years it was originally intended to.



Mactaquac Life Achievement Project (MLAP) – Fish Passage cont'd.

WNNB was successful in getting NB Power to commit to fish passages for species beyond Atlantic Salmon and Gaspereau, including American eel, American Shad, Sea Lamprey and brook trout. WNNB was also successful in getting NB Power to commit to creating and adaptive fish passage management plan. This plan will result in the establishment of fish passage objectives that protect fish species on the Wolastoq and work toward restoring and maintaining Wolastoqey fishing Rights on the river. It will result in better tracking of fish movement on the river and stronger responses from NB Power and DFO should fish passage objectives be missed. WNNB, DFO and NB Power are also developing a Collaborative Agreement to replace the existing DFO-NB Power protocol agreement. This will provide the Wolastoqiyik with a much stronger voice in the management of NB Power's other hydroelectric facilities on the river and their impacts on fish and fish habitat. WNNB is currently reviewing proposals by NB Power and their contractor (Kleinschmidt) for upstream fish passage that are still in an early design stage.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Elver index development

Juvenile American eels (elvers) return to the waters of the Maritimes every spring in great numbers. In recent years a lucrative fishery has emerged around elvers, and Wolastoqey communities have had licensed access since 2022. The elvers are captured while returning to rivers in the Maritimes and sold live to growers in Asia who raise the eels to adulthood in captivity, after which they are processed for food.



Elver index development cont'd.

While the number of elvers returning to the Maritimes has apparently remained stable and perhaps increased in recent years, this conclusion is based on data from a single index river in Nova Scotia. To gain a better picture of what elver returns look like in our region and make better management decisions in the fishery, WNNB is trying to establish a second index river in southwest New Brunswick. This area includes the Wolastoq, which contains the most area of potential eel habitat of any watershed in the Maritimes.

In 2024, WNNB took the first steps toward establishing this index through test-fishing on several tributaries to the Wolastoq, as well as other rivers draining into the Bay of Fundy. Based on our learnings from 2024, WNNB employed new methods to capture elvers in 2025, specifically the use of eel ramps. Eel ramps allow us to passively collect elvers and other eel life stages. Combined with data from commercial harvesters, the ramps will allow us to gather information on eel returns in a sustainable fashion. Although weather conditions and tidal fluctuations introduced many challenges, we were able to fine tune the operation and successfully catch elvers toward the end of the season.

WNNB intends this to be a long-term project. American eels do not migrate back to the Sargasso Sea to spawn for ten or more years, so impacts from elver fishing may not be immediately noticeable. It is therefore crucial that we also understand the abundance and survival of adult eels in our waters.

Monitoring contaminants in the Bay of Fundy using Blue Mussels

Wolastoquey communities have expressed concerns about the health of ocean ecosystems where they fish for lobster, scallop and other seafood.



Monitoring contaminants in the Bay of Fundy using Blue Mussels cont'd.

To investigate this, WNNB has been studying contaminants using blue mussels as an indicator. Using an indicator allows us to look at conditions over a long period of time, as opposed to the “snapshot” we’d get from a water sample. Mussels also stay put, so they are a better indicator of local conditions than species which can move a long way, such as lobster.

From 2021-2023, we deployed these mussels in Saint John Harbour. After weighing and measuring the mussels, they were placed in “socks” and suspended underwater at five different sites within the Harbour. The deployments were usually carried out between early August and early November, so we could use community vessels and knowledgeable crews. After being in the water for about 3 months the mussels are retrieved, re-weighed and measured, and submitted for contaminant analysis. So far we have looked at trace metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

While we did not notice major differences in contaminants between sites or years in the Harbour, the mussels did show significant accumulation of certain metals across all sites. In 2024 WNNB focused on identifying new locations to deploy mussels, focusing on locations in Passamaquoddy Bay, Maces Bay and the Musquash Marine Protected Area. Mussels will be deployed in these areas over the next 3 years to establish a broader baseline for the Bay of Fundy. This information will allow us to track changes in the Bay of Fundy in the future and aid us in assessing the impact that present and future development may have on Wolastoquey fishing rights.

The project has also been a great opportunity to train our members on laboratory and field methods in marine research. To date at least 9 community members have participated in the work. WNNB will look to provide more opportunities for members to learn and participate in the next phase of the project.



Brothers Islands Project

The Brothers Islands – Indian Island and Goat Island – are Wolastoqey reserve lands shared by Kingsclear (Bilijk), Madawaska (Matawaskiye), Tobique (Neqotkuk), and Woodstock (Wotstak), with a process underway to include St. Mary's (Sitansisk) and Oromocto (Welamukotuk). These islands sit at the mouth of the Kennebecasis River and hold deep cultural, historical, and ecological importance for our people. The project also looks toward Burnt Island, which is currently federally owned, with the long-term goal of bringing it back under Wolastoqey stewardship.

In 2025, the WNNB Fisheries team began the Brothers Islands Project to strengthen Wolastoqey stewardship of these islands and surrounding areas. While the islands already have reserve status, this project is about ensuring their ongoing care and use are guided by Wolastoqey laws, values, and knowledge. The vision is to protect the ecological health of the islands, honor their cultural significance, and create space for healing, learning, and intergenerational connection on the land and waters.

Looking ahead, the project will move into a community engagement phase. In 2025-2026, we will hold sessions across Wolastoqey communities to gather ideas and priorities, and we will host a larger nation gathering on Treaty Day, June 4, 2026. These moments will be important steps in shaping a shared vision that honors our responsibilities as caretakers and protects the Brothers Islands and surrounding areas for future generations.

Ethnohistory Department



TEAM

Dr. Jason Hall, Ethnohistorian Lead

jason.hall@wolastoqey.ca

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Working with WNNB's Consultation Coordinator Ian Peach, to create The Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey Rights Manual, an educational booklet about topics such as Wolastoqey Rights and history as well as environmental and systemic racism. Wolastoqi/Wəlastəkwi youth and WNNB staff have distributed over 2,000 copies of the Manual to Wolastoqey communities and the general public. Staff are now working on a second edition that includes artwork from Wolastoqi/Wəlastəkwi artists Percy Sacobie and Natalie Sappier. Jason also gave presentations on Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey rights and history to communities members as well as to the staff of Port Saint John in March and April. This work was undertaken as part of the Wolastoqey Rights Matter Project that Jason helped secure funding for to support greater awareness of and respect for Wolastoqey rights.

Finishing 2 historical reports on Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey relationships with salmon and black ash and threats to their survival that WNNB has been distributing at community events. He also helped Thomas Herbreteau edit a short booklet about salmon and black ash harvesting that is based on interviews with community members undertaken by Ave Dersch and Logan Perley. All of this work was undertaken as part of WNNB's Cumulative Effects Project, which used different types of evidence to co-produce information about pre-industrial baseline populations of two cultural keystone species to the Wolastoqiyik/Wəlastəkwiyyik: Atlantic salmon and black ash.



DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Researching historical information about Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey land use to assist communities in negotiations with Public Service and Procurement Canada over the potential return of federal properties in downtown Edmundston, Woodstock and Fredericton to Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey ownership and control. Jason is currently working on another report to assist with similar negotiations over a property (the Old Custom's Building) in Saint John.

Regularly providing technical support for many of WNNB's consultation files. For instance, Jason participated in WNNB's review of the Mactaquac Life Achievement Project, and raised strong concerns about the Project's potential impacts upon rights and Heritage Resources. He also shared information about the existence of a historic Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey cemetery at the base of Currie Mountain that helped communities convince the City of Fredericton that a proposed plan to install a boat launch in that area needed to be cancelled to protect the site.

Providing historical information and analysis to communities and their legal teams to help support the Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey Title Claim, and other initiatives to restore lands and resources back under Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey control.

Assisting with preparing WNNB's Indigenous Land Use Studies (IRLUs) to help document Wolastoqey/Wəlastəkwey use and occupancy of lands and resources, and show how proposed development projects may have an impact upon the exercise of rights (hunting, fishing, plant harvesting etc.) as well as the lands, waters, and living creatures that sustain rights and culture. This past year, Jason provided research support as well as interview training to the Wolastoqi/Wəlastəkwi co-researchers who have been conducting interviews with land users to help develop an IRLU focused upon Base Gagetown.

Forestry Department



TEAM

Seth McDonald, Forestry Engagement Lead

seth.mcdonald@wolastoqey.ca

Laura Underhill, Nutokehkikemit

(Land/Forestry Teacher of Traditional Knowledge)

laura.underhill@wolastoqey.ca

Doreen Paul, Nutokehkikemit

(Land/Forestry Teacher of Traditional Knowledge)

doreen.paul@wolastoqey.ca

Ruby Sappier, Forestry Engagement Coordinator

ruby.sappier@wolastoqey.ca

Nathan Tremblett, Forester

nathan.tremblett@wolastoqey.ca

REPORT

Relationship with the AV Group

WNNB is continuing the work laid out in the MOU signed with The AV Group. A key topic at present is discussion of a transfer of land back to the Nation from the AV Group's industrial freehold land. These lands vary; some have water access, mature trees, and proximity to more populated areas. Which lands are selected for transfer is up to communities and this will require consultation.

The AV Group has also provided WNNB their 5-year block layout and 3-year road layout for their upcoming forestry operations. We will be getting this information to communities during the roadshows that will be occurring in mid-November, as well as when we have the community engagement sessions.



Maple Sugar Strategy Accommodations

Conversations about accommodations for the Wolastoqiyik have been going on since 2024 with no conclusion as of yet. The Government of New Brunswick has been engaging with this file in a poor way and has been presenting unsuitable accommodations to WNNB, such as accommodations that would financially burden communities and unnecessarily consume resources. WNNB is continuing to advocate for the accommodation package to be developed collaboratively and be responsive to the Nation's interests, in the hope that a suitable resolution will be made.

Lands acquired with Environment and Climate Change Canada funding

Activities to effectively manage the lands that the Wolastoqiyik purchased with funds provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada in 2024-25 have begun. WNNB is mapping out and collecting data on the lands purchased for the Nation, including forest species composition, understory, medicinal plants, wildlife activity, accessibility points. WNNB is also beginning to develop silviculture strategies, based on community feedback we acquired during community consultations on land acquisition, for these lands. Implementing the strategies will begin with the "Allendale property", which is nearest to Bilijk. WNNB has also met with the Southern New Brunswick Forest Products Marketing Board, which, among other activities, subsidizes silviculture activities on privately-held land bases, which would include the lands acquired by the Wolastoqiyik.

Energy Department



TEAM

Andrew Uraih, Energy Department Lead

andrew.uraih@wolastoqey.ca

Thomas Lewey, Energy Associate

thomas.lewey@wolastoqey.ca

REPORT

Building the Indigenous Supply Chain Supporting SMR Development and Deployment in New Brunswick project, funded by Natural Resources Canada

WNNB and the North Shore Mi'kmaq Tribal Council are engaged in a three-year collaborative initiative aimed at positioning First Nations communities in New Brunswick at the forefront of the emerging Small Modular Reactor (SMR) industry. The Year 1 report was completed in early 2025 and comprises a comprehensive assessment of supply chain and logistics opportunities within the SMR sector. It also identifies potential avenues for both existing and emerging Indigenous businesses, highlights capacity gaps, and outlines the resources required to strengthen Indigenous business participation in the development and deployment of SMRs in New Brunswick. The second year project will be a New Brunswick Indigenous Business Landscape Analysis and SMR Supply/Logistics Chain Gap Analysis, while the third year project (2026-27) will be the development of a Growing the New Brunswick Indigenous SMR Supply Chain Strategic Plan. All of this work will contribute to the ultimate goal of growing elements of the SMR supply chain in New Brunswick under First Nations ownership.

Consultation Department



TEAM

Ian Peach, Consultation Lead

ian.peach@wolastoqey.ca

Jeremy Underhill, Guardian

jeremy.underhill@wolastoqey.ca

Marissa Kennedy, Guardian

marissa.kennedy@wolastoqey.ca

Vicky Sabattis, Indigenous Archaeology Monitor

victoria.sabattis@wolastoqey.ca

Dallas Tomah, Indigenous Archaeology Monitor

dallas.tomah@wolastoqey.ca

CONSULTATION FILES UPDATE

Spruce Lake Industrial Park expansion, Saint John

The Government of New Brunswick has engaged WNNB over the last several months to get input on the proposed expansion of the Spruce Lake Industrial Park in the Lorneville neighbourhood of Saint John. The government proposes to expand the industrial park to make it “development-ready” for future industrial development, though there are not as yet any businesses ready to occupy any sites. Originally, the expansion area was to be open to any industries but, after citizen push-back, heavy industry will now be excluded from the expansion area. It has also come to our attention that there is some old-growth forest in the location of the proposed expansion area, which has caused additional controversy over the expansion plan.



Spruce Lake Industrial Park expansion, Saint John cont'd.

WNNB sent the provincial government's Regional Development Corporation a letter on November 26, 2024 citing WNNB's preliminary concerns about the project and requesting further discussions. As a result, two meetings were held with representatives from WNNB, the Regional Development Corporation, the provincial Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) and Dillon Consulting, who is working for the Regional Development Corporation on this project, in January, April, and July of 2025. WNNB raised concerns about impacts on the Mill Creek elver fishery, the size of buffers near water features, WNNB involvement in deciding on which projects should be approved for compensation for the destruction of wetlands because of this project, the leaching of various contaminants into the water in sediments disturbed by the construction of the expansion area, and the risk to Wolastoqey archaeological resources from construction.

WNNB sent a second letter to the Regional Development Corporation on September 3, 2025, reiterating what we had previously told provincial officials about our concerns, including the impact of transferring Crown land to private landholders (in this case, the City of Saint John) on the Wolastoqey title claim, the requirement that all proponents that propose to take up space in the expansion area meet with WNNB in advance and secure agreement for their proposed projects, and the need for the government to meet with WNNB to discuss the protection of the old-growth forest habitat. We await a response to this recent letter.



Edmundston-Madawaska International Bridge

The provincial Department of Transportation and Infrastructure has been overseeing the construction of a new bridge between Edmundston and Madawaska, Maine and new space for the Canada Border Services Agency border crossing. Construction of the new bridge should be completed by the end of July and WNNB has been monitoring this construction project throughout.

As well, the Department has agreed to have two sculptures of Wolastoqey cultural significance on the site of the new border crossing. WNNB is in the process of hiring Shane Perley-Dutcher from Negotkuk to create these sculptures and will receive funds from the Department to cover the costs.

Request for input on United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples implementation (UNDRIP) – Justice Canada

Justice Canada has reached out to request the input of the Wolastoqiyik on priority issues for implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the Government of Canada. To date, WNNB has created a Citizens' Guide to the UN Declaration and plain-language summaries of the articles of the Declaration, all of which are available to Wolsatoqey community members at the Annual General Assembly, as well as by contacting WNNB. WNNB has also planned two contests to encourage community members to provide their creative input on what is most important for the federal government to do to implement the UN Declaration – an art contest for youth aged 12 to 18 and a photo contest for community members aged 16 and up; the rules for both of these contests, as well as the prizes available to the winners and runners-up will be available at the Annual General Assembly and by contacting WNNB.



Request for input on United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples implementation (UNDRIP) – Justice Canada cont'd.

As well, we will be creating a survey to get community input on how the Government of Canada should go about implementing the UN Declaration and will organize one or more engagement meetings to foster discussion with and receive feedback from community members on the implementation of the UN Declaration. The information we collect from community members will form the core of a report to Justice Canada on Wolastoqey recommendations for the Government of Canada's implementation of the UN Declaration; this report will be transmitted to Justice Canada in the winter or spring of 2027.

Environmental Impact Department



TEAM

Gordon Gray, Impact Assessment Lead
gordon.gray@wolastoqey.ca

REPORT

Juniper Organics project

Juniper Organics proposes to develop peatlands 850, 851 and 852 (McKiel Bogs) located 17km Northeast of the Village of Juniper. WNNB has been given direction to oppose peat development in the province. It is a non-renewable resource that stores a great deal of carbon, so its development is a mark against climate resilience; peat bogs sometimes store thousands of years of carbon in the form of moss that does not decompose and piles up over time. Peat bogs have been one of the few features that have been developing in the region as long as the Wolastoqiyik have. Reclamation of these as ecological features is impossible, because they develop so slowly and last so long.

Peat bogs were also likely sites for portages, village and camp sites. This is because of the nature of the water (low pH, highly acidic) which kills water born sickness and parasites. caribou also frequented peat bogs because they are composed of moss, which was a staple of their diets. The caribou themselves were a major component of Indigenous diets in the region before caribou became extirpated (removed from the area) from the province.



Juniper Organics project cont'd.

Because of the low pH of the water and anoxic conditions (no air), decomposition of the moss does not happen so it stores the carbon associated with the vegetation. The same principle works with all organics in that fall in the peat. This makes peat bogs a hot spot for archaeology. Despite Indigenous peoples' close association with peat bogs and their ability to preserve organics, there have been very few archaeological finds in and around peat bogs in the province, but this is likely a case where absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

WNNB stands against peat development for all these reasons – our longstanding relationship with peat bogs, the lack of archaeological mitigations associated with the development, and the irresponsible continuation of destroying non-renewable ecosystems promoting the continuation of the climate crisis we all face. Despite our continued resistance, these projects continued to get approved. Peat seems to be something the province wants to continue to exploit

- Brighton Mountain Wind Farm

J.D. Irving is proposing a to construct a 58-turbine wind farm capable of producing 350 megawatts near Juniper, New Brunswick. While wind projects are typically energy projects that the Nation has advanced, the problem with this project, in particular, is that the consultation on it was limited, late, and, we suspect, designed to minimize the impacts of the project on the Wolastoqiyik.

This is a large project that is housed within J.D. Irving freehold at Deersdale. This land is often gated and hard to access. Because the project almost entirely occurs on freehold land, the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) decided that there were no impacts to rights and made this project a notification-only project. The facts, however, fly in the face of this; for example:



Juniper Organics project cont'd.

1. Archaeological concerns abound – no matter the status of land tenure, this area has historically been used. An abundance of registered archaeological sites exist within its bounds. Road building, tree grubbing, and all other forms of ground disturbance represent potential impacts which they will have to account for should anything be run into. For this reason, the proponent is being careful and trying hard to avoid areas of elevated potential.
2. Potential impacts to salmon (and other fish) through construction and sedimentation to 3 major watercourses (N. Becaguimec, W. Nahswaak, and S.W. Miramichi) – these rivers represent 3 important fish-bearing ecosystems that could be affected if sediment control structures fail, there are unwanted leaks and spills, and the installation of culverts and other passages for the new roads or old roads being upgraded cause migration delays (20km new roads/ 95km upgraded with many culvert upgrades or new culverts put in place)
3. 161 ha of wetlands disturbed – despite somewhat limited access, freehold lands are still available for the Wolastoqiyik to exercise Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Wetlands are often home to many of our medicines, and the destruction or damaging of these can be seen as an impact to rights.
4. JDI lands are also listed in the Wolastoqey Title claim and there has been no account or even acknowledgement of that fact anywhere throughout the registration document prepared by JDI or by GNB in their faulty assessments of potential impacts to rights

Despite these concerns, consultation remains at the lowest level of “notification”.



Saint John Pulp and Paper Modernization

The Irving Pulp & Paper Mill is located at Reversing Falls in Saint John, New Brunswick. The project is an upgrade of the existing multiple-effects evaporators, recovery boiler, and steam turbines and electricity generators will be replaced with modern best-available technology. The refurbishment of Mill is in the order of \$1 billion. This is one of several modernizations the pulp and paper mill in Saint John has gone through. This project is problematic largely because the adverse impacts to Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are not encountered in the project footprint and so do not fit the typical mould of EIA review, highlighting problematic component studies, and suggesting recommended avoidances, fixes or accommodations.

The project area is already heavily disturbed, so there are limited archaeological concerns. While there will be new construction, there is not really anything being bothered that is not already affected. There will be a minor uptick in air pollution output, but also some improvements to the general quality of the pollution; it will produce more, but the more produced will not be as bad. There will be no vegetation clearing to speak of (associated strictly with the project). Thus, the Valued Ecological Components that the EIA highlights are not in question.

There is the issue that the recovery boiler is the bottleneck in the mill's production, so building a bigger, better recovery boiler means that they can process more trees (~1.5 x more yield). As such, the project implicates the whole forest management regime. They are trying to use more of the tree to meet this need. They are saying that the forests they have managed are also now producing more usable wood than they would have 50+ years ago. Some new areas, however, will have to be cut to meet the expanded capacity of the mill. This is where the impact lays, as more Crown lands are cut so more Crown lands will be managed more intensely. Both JDI lands and Crown lands are implicated in the Wolastoquey Title Claim.



Saint John Pulp and Paper Modernization cont'd.

The lack of consultation in forestry, and no say in how Crown lands are managed is the crux of why the Title claim was filed. JDI, however, states that they do not want to talk about forestry with this project, despite the direct tie. GNB does not acknowledge this issue either, because it is not covered in the EIA itself. There has been very little uptake on conversations beyond what they want to talk about.

Project Trends worth noting:

There does appear to be a turn in project types that is of interest. Power generation projects, whether New Nuclear projects, solar projects, or wind, is on the rise over the last 4 years or so, and this past year and a half has seen its fair share.

Advanced Small Modular Reactors

NB Power plans to construct and operate an advanced small modular reactor (SMR) on the Lepreau Peninsula in New Brunswick. This project is the commercial demonstration of a nuclear technology that will provide 100 to 150 megawatts of electricity to the New Brunswick grid.

Technically registered in 2023, the aSMR development is still in the comprehensive review process. Portions of the component studies are still under way. We have been engaged on archaeology and defining the Valued Ecological Components that will be considered in project development. The archaeology program, led by the NB Museum, has found several artifacts. One artifact was found during geotechnical investigations, on the eastern side of the Project Development Area (PDA), and several were found during the larger investigation of high-potential polygons situated more in the central and western portions of the project.



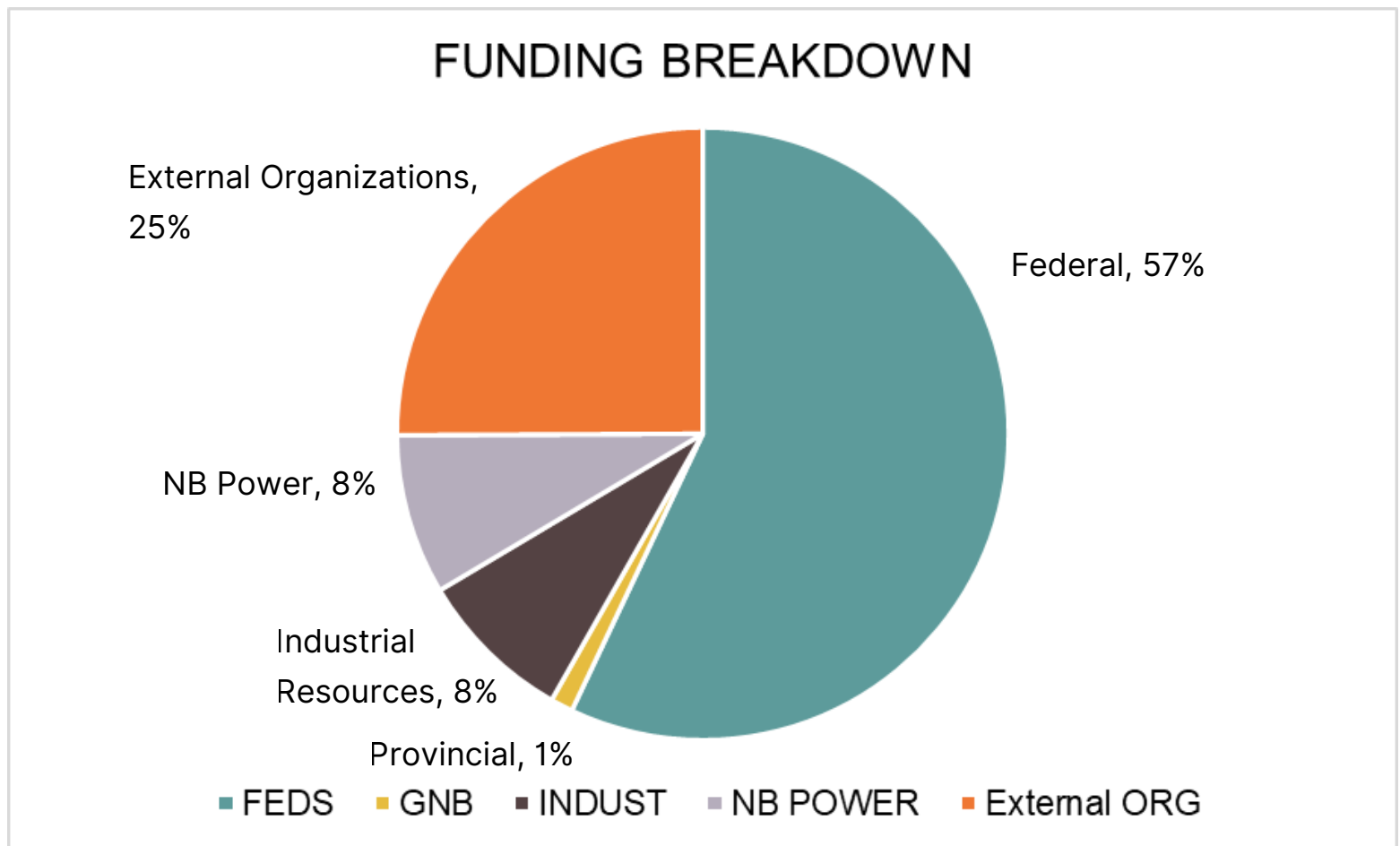
Advanced Small Modular Reactors cont'd.

This project is a pilot which may allow for additional Arc reactors, Moltex reactors, or other unknown nuclear projects to be housed on the Point Lepreau Peninsula; the archaeological program is ambitious. They aim to clear the entire area for future Impact Assessments of developments yet unknown. We appreciate the NBMuseum's use of our Nations certified Indigenous Archaeological Field Technicians. It has, however, been something of an issue getting information and a meeting with the NBMuseum itself. Both parties need to work on clearer lines of communication and establishing a protocol for how information flows through the hired consultant to the WNNB, to the RDCCs and out into the community. Currently the bulk of the information we receive is second hand from NBPower itself.

For the Valued Ecological Components, WNNB has added unique flora – essentially we were made aware that there was a somewhat unique ecosystem down in Point Lepreau where, essentially, the soil is less than ideal; when soil is marginal, trees and other vegetation might grow a bit slower than usual. In this circumstance, the vegetation is Dwarf Spruce. The problem here is that most Impact Assessments will not account for what looks to be a regular, maybe even stunted spruce, so it is not on any provincial or federal listing that warrants it. Because it is old growth-type forest, however, it also will have an old growth-type understory, which is unique enough in spruce forests in this province. It is common practice to harvest spruce forests every 50 years or so, so we do not typically see old growth-style forests or understories, which may house unique plants and medicines that could be destroyed in development.

Funding Breakdown

The following outlines the funding sources that enable WNNB to carry out its initiatives.



Our Team

ADMIN & GOVERNANCE

Dr. John Cloutier, Nihkanatpat
Executive Director

Mason Perley, Senior Advisor

Edward Perley, Elder in Residence

Steven Plume, Engagement Coordinator

Darryl Pelletier, GIS Technician

Billy Weale, Communications Coordinator

Jennifer Miles, Human Resources Director

Stephanie Robichaud, Office Administrator

Jacquelynn McCoy, Finance Director

Adam Lloyd, Finance Clerk

FORESTRY

Seth McDonald, Forestry Engagement Lead

Laura Underhill, Nutokehkikemit

(Land/Forestry Teacher of Traditional
Knowledge)

Doreen Paul, Nutokehkikemit

(Land/Forestry Teacher of Traditional
Knowledge)

Ruby Sappier, Forestry Engagement
Coordinator

Nathan Tremblett, Forester

ENERGY

Andrew Uraih, Energy Department Lead

Thomas Lewey, Energy Associate

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Gordon Gray, Impact Assessment Lead

ETHNOHISTORY

Dr. Jason Hall, Ethnohistorian Lead

FISHERIES

Dr. Colin Curry, Fisheries Lead Biologist

Kianna Bear-Hetherington, Fisheries Technician

Kaleb Zelman, Fisheries Analyst

Jodi Paul Doiron, Fisheries Technician

Walter Brooks Jr., Fisheries Technician

CONSULTATION

Ian Peach, Consultation Lead

Jeremy Underhill, Guardian

Marissa Kennedy, Guardian

Vicky Sabattis, Indigenous Archaeology
Monitor

Dallas Tomah, Indigenous Archaeology
Monitor

WOLIWON | NEWIWEW



Phone |

(506) 459-6341

Email |

admin@wolastoqey.ca

Website |

wnnb.wolastoqey.ca

Address |

35 Dedham St Suite 202
Fredericton NB E3A 2V2