Chief Electoral Officer Report
Adaptations for the 52nd General Election
October 14, 2025

Elections
Newfoundland & Labrador

House of Assembly
Newfoundland and Labrador
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

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November 10, 2025

Honourable Paul Lane
Speaker
Main Floor, East Block
Confederation Building
St. John's, NL

Dear Speaker:

In accordance with section 10(3) of the Elections Act, 1991 please find enclosed my report detailing the adaptations made by the Chief Electoral Officer in the administration of the October 14, 2025 Provincial General Election.

Sincerely,

Travis Wooley, CPA (CA)
Chief Electoral Officer (Acting)

Enclosures

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Introduction

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for administering elections in accordance with the Elections Act, 1991 (the Act). Within the Act there is a provision by which the Chief Electoral Officer may make adaptations, extend the time for doing an act, increase election officers or polling stations, or otherwise adapt a provision of the act to respond to emergencies, or legislatively unusual or unforeseen circumstances. Specifically section 10.(1) of the Act states:

> **10. (1)** Where during the course of an election it appears to the Chief Electoral Officer that, by reason of a mistake, miscalculation, emergency or unusual or unforeseen circumstance, a provision of this Part does not accord with the exigencies of the situation, the Chief Electoral Officer may, by particular or general instructions, extend the time for doing an act, increase the number of election officers or polling stations or otherwise adapt a provision of this Part to the execution of its intent, to the extent that he or she considers necessary.

In the conduct and administration of the 2025 General Election there were two instances where the 10.(1) provision was necessary to respond to legislatively unforeseen circumstances. In each instance the adaptations were carefully implemented to address specific circumstances for a limited set of electors, and to ensure electors could fully and accessibly participate in the democratic process

Disruption of Postal Services

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer uses Canada Post as the primary provider of mail delivery services for Vote-By-Mail Special Ballots within Newfoundland & Labrador, and throughout Canada. In the evening of Thursday, September 26,2025 a cross-Canada labour disruption abruptly began at Canada Post and all mail services ceased. At that time approximately 120 Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot kits were in the mail system, with a further 1,500 approved Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot kits ready for distribution. In accordance with sections 86.3 (3) and 86.3 (4) all these electors had been considered to have voted by Special Ballot in the election:

> **86.3 (3)** Once an elector's application to vote by special ballot has been accepted, a special ballot kit shall be issued to the elector after the close of nominations.
>
> **86.3 (4)** An elector who is issued a special ballot kit may only vote by special ballot.

For those approximately 120 electors that had their Vote-By-Mail Special Ballots effectively trapped in the mail system, there was no legislative mechanism to allow them to vote in another manner, as they had been deemed to have voted. Because of this legislatively unforeseen circumstance, the Chief Electoral Officer, through provision 10.(1), adapted Sections 86.3 (3) and 86.3 (4) and cancelled the Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot applications for these specific electors, which allowed them to vote in another manner in the election. These electors could now vote in-person or request a new Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot kit delivered via a messenger or courier service. The original Vote-By-Mail Special Ballots in the mail system were considered void.

There were a further 1,500 electors that had requested a Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot kit prior to the postal disruption with approved Special Ballot applications ready for distribution. The labour disruption by Canada Post was abrupt and without notice. Had these electors been aware of an impending labour disruption at Canada Post they may not have chosen to request a Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot application. Because of this legislatively unforeseen circumstance, the Chief Electoral Officer, through provision 10.(1) adapted Sections 86.3 (3) and 86.3 (4) and allowed these specific electors to cancel their Special Ballot applications, at their request, so that the electors could vote in-person instead. Staff within the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer contacted each of these electors directly and confirmed the response of each elector. For those electors that did not respond by September 30, 2025, their original Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot was delivered directly to the elector via courier or messenger service. The Election Management System in use by the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer monitored all in-person Special Ballot voting and Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot voting to prevent electors from voting multiple times. Any duplicate Special Ballot voting kits were rejected during adjudication procedures.

Throughout the election, 20,500 Special Ballot applications were approved, and 20,130 Special Ballots were adjudicated and counted as part of the final count, representing a 98.2% return rate on Special Ballot voting. This high rate of return could not have been achieved without the procedural adaptations that were made for those electors specifically impacted by the labour disruption at Canada Post.

Displaced Electors Due to Wildfire in Carbonear – Trinity – Bay De Verde Electoral District

In the weeks leading up to the October 14, 2025, General Election, many communities in the Conception Bay North area were under evacuation orders and alerts due to a devastating wildfire. Thousands of individuals were displaced to temporary shelters and lodging throughout the electoral district, and throughout the province. Prior to September 15, 2025, which was the date that the writs of election were issued, there was still significant uncertainty regarding when residents could return to their communities. The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer held meetings with the Provincial Emergency Operations Command and local Election Officials and determined that electors were primarily displaced in nearby communities within the electoral district, as well as in the St. John's metro area. In response, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer enacted a contingency plan to allow displaced individuals various voting opportunities to ensure that they could continue to exercise their right to vote despite the ongoing emergency. This contingency plan included Vote-By-Mail Special Ballot Voting, in-person Special Ballot Voting, and in-person Advance Poll Voting; all of which are voting options that are available within the existing legislation.

On polling day, electors must vote in their electoral district, and at their assigned polling place in accordance with section 81. (1) and 81. (8) of the Elections Act, 1991.

81. (1) The poll shall be held in 1 or more polling stations established for each polling division in premises of convenient access, being public buildings if possible, with an outside door for admittance of electors, and having, if possible, another door through which electors may leave after voting.

81. (8) During the hours prescribed by subsection (7), each deputy returning officer shall, in the polling station for which he or she has been appointed, receive the votes of the electors qualified to vote at the polling station.

Given that certain electors were displaced from their communities, and a displaced elector's reasonable access to a polling location from a displaced community could be a barrier to voting, the Chief Electoral Officer determined that for specific polling divisions in the Carbonear – Trinity – Bay De Verde electoral district, specific electors could vote at multiple polling places on polling day, October 14, 2025. Through provision 10. (1) the Chief Electoral Officer adapted sections 81. (1) and 81. (8) to address the legislatively unforeseen circumstance of electors being displaced due to a natural disaster on polling day and allowed those specific electors to vote at other select polling locations on polling day.

These procedural adaptations were available to electors residing in polling divisions 10, 11, 12 and 13 in the electoral district of Carbonear – Trinity – Bay De Verde. The polling division maps and boundary descriptions are included as **Appendix A** of this report. On polling day, October 14, 2025, electors from those specific polling divisions could vote at any of the following locations:

- Ronanye Law Office (66 Powell Drive, Carbonear)
- Ronnie Johnson Community Center (Main Road, Western Bay)
- John Hoskins Community Centre (575 Main Street, Old Perlican)
- Elections NL Headquarters, 24 Stavanger Drive, St. John's

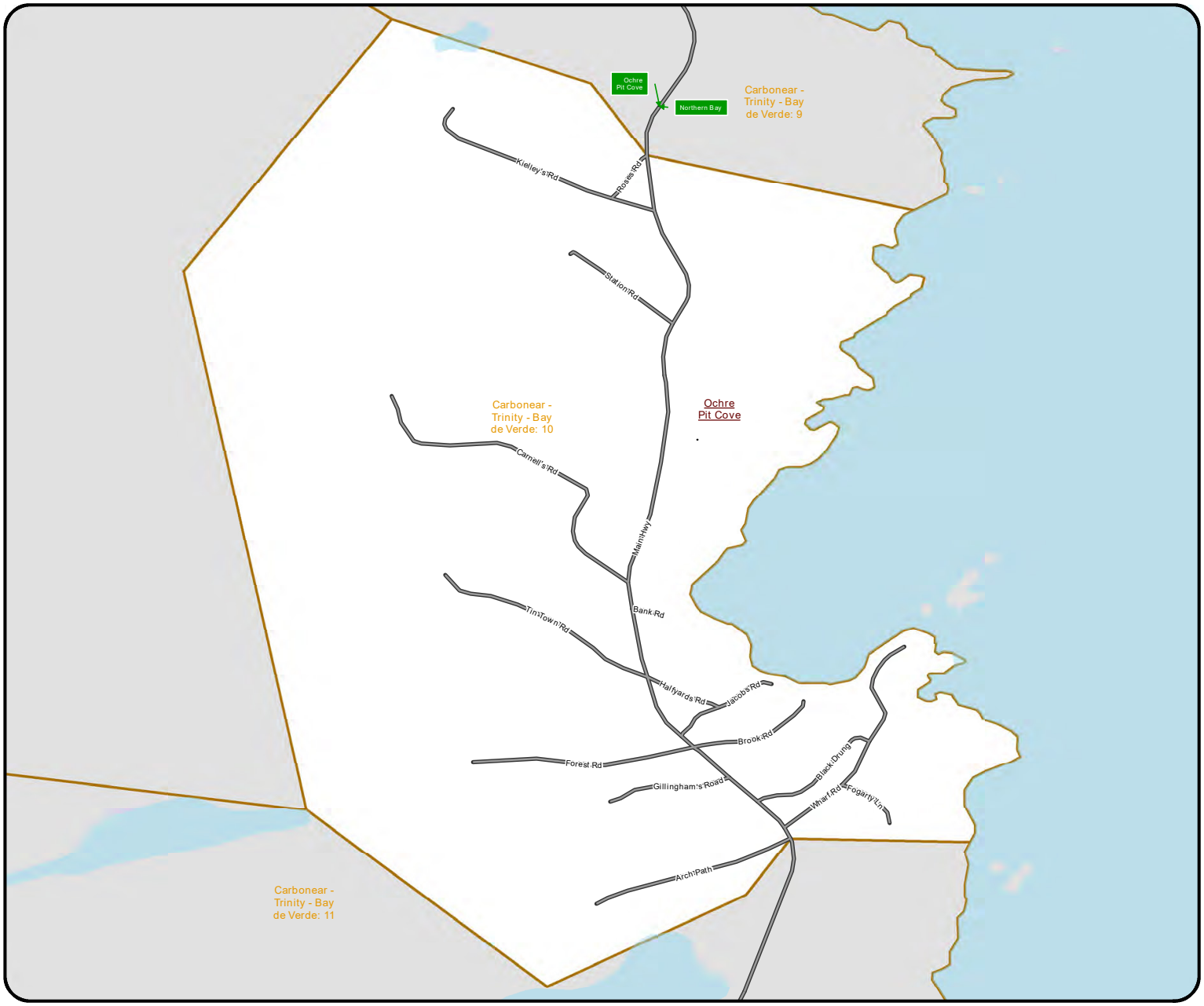
To ensure that eligible electors did not vote at more than one of the polling stations above, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer used technology at the polling stations to record electors that had voted in an Election Management System. This system automatically reported back to all other terminals at the polls which electors had voted to ensure that an elector attempting to cast a duplicate vote would be flagged before another vote was cast. While these precautions were in place to prevent duplicate voting, Election Officials at the polls observed that this scenario did not occur.

On polling day, October 14, 2025, a total of 320 electors eligible to vote used these adapted procedures to cast their vote. While the majority of those electors cast their vote at the Ronnie Johnson Community Center, the alternate polling locations provided those displaced electors a convenient option to cast their vote. Voting information for displaced electors in polls 10, 11, 12, and 13 of the Carbonear – Trinity – Bay De Verde electoral district is included as **Appendix B** of this report.

Contingency Planning

As part of the planning and preparation of election events the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer assesses the risks of operational impacts due to weather, logistics, technology, vendors, and other factors. These operational risks are mitigated through various contingency measures including the use of an integrated Election Management System, reserve stock of election materials, supplies, and equipment, and robust training programs for election officials. While the provisions of section 10.(1) allow the Chief Electoral Officer to make adaptations due to legislatively unforeseen circumstances, it is this contingency planning and preparation that ultimately responds to unexpected events or emergencies. These contingency measures provide flexibility for operational resources and plans to allow the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer to respond to unexpected events and emergencies, while maintaining our commitment to administering a fair election and ensuring equitable access to voting.

APPENDIX A
DISPLACED COMMUNITIES



Provincial Electoral District

of:

Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde

Poll Number: 10 of 47

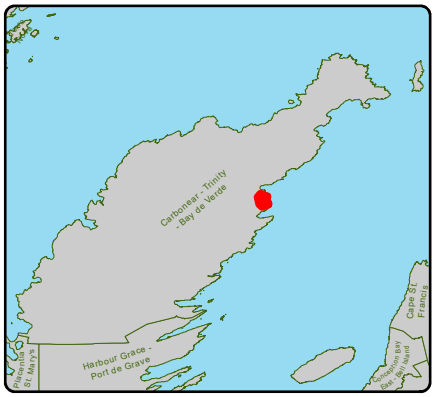
Number of Registered Electors: 121

Information valid as of November 1, 2023.

Poll Description

OCHRE PIT COVE: The community of Ochre Pit Cove including Arch Path; Bank Road #1; Bank Road #2; Beach Road; Black Drung; Brook Road; Carnell's Road; Fogerty's Drung; Forest Road; Gillingham's Road; Halfyard's Road; Jacob's Road; Kielley's Road; Main Highway (Also known as Route 70); Old Station Road; Roses Road; Tin Town; and Wharf Road.

Poll Location



Legend

Municipal Boundary

District Boundary (2015)

N

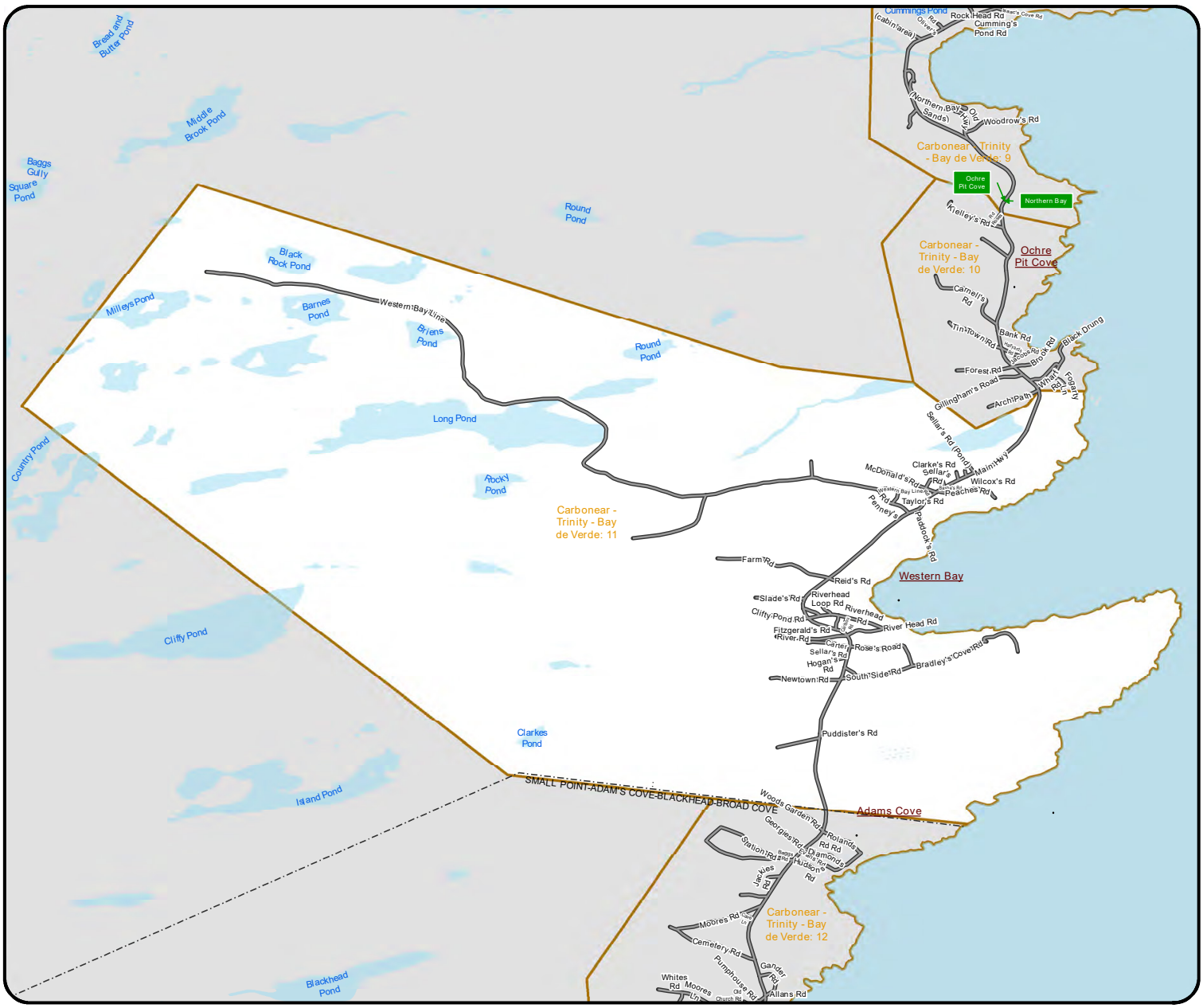
1:10,243

Elections Newfoundland & Labrador

Newfoundland & Labrador

Poll ID: 6-10

Date: 11/3/2023



Provincial Electoral District

of:

Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde

Poll Number: 11 of 47

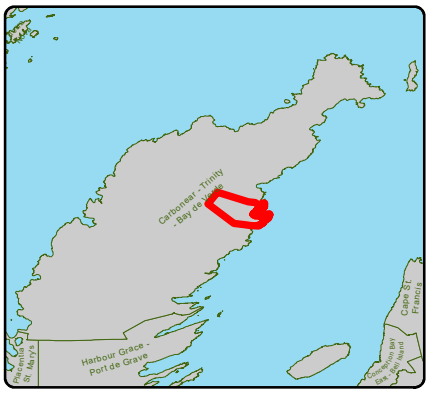
Number of Registered Electors: 275

Information valid as of November 1, 2023.

Poll Description

WESTERN BAY: The community of Western Bay including Basha's Road; Bradley's Cove Road; Caribou Road; Carter Sellar's Road; Cemetery Road; Clarke's Road; Clifty Pond Road; Country Road; Farm Road; Fitzgerald's Road; Forest Road; Hogans Road; Main Highway; McDonalds Road; Newtown Road; Paddocks Road; Peaches Road; Penney's Road; Puddester's Road; Reids Road; River Road; River Head Road; Roses Road; Sellars Road; Slades Road; Southside Road; Station Road; Taylor's Road; Western Bay Line Road; and Wilcox Road.

Poll Location



Legend

Municipal Boundary

District Boundary (2015)

N

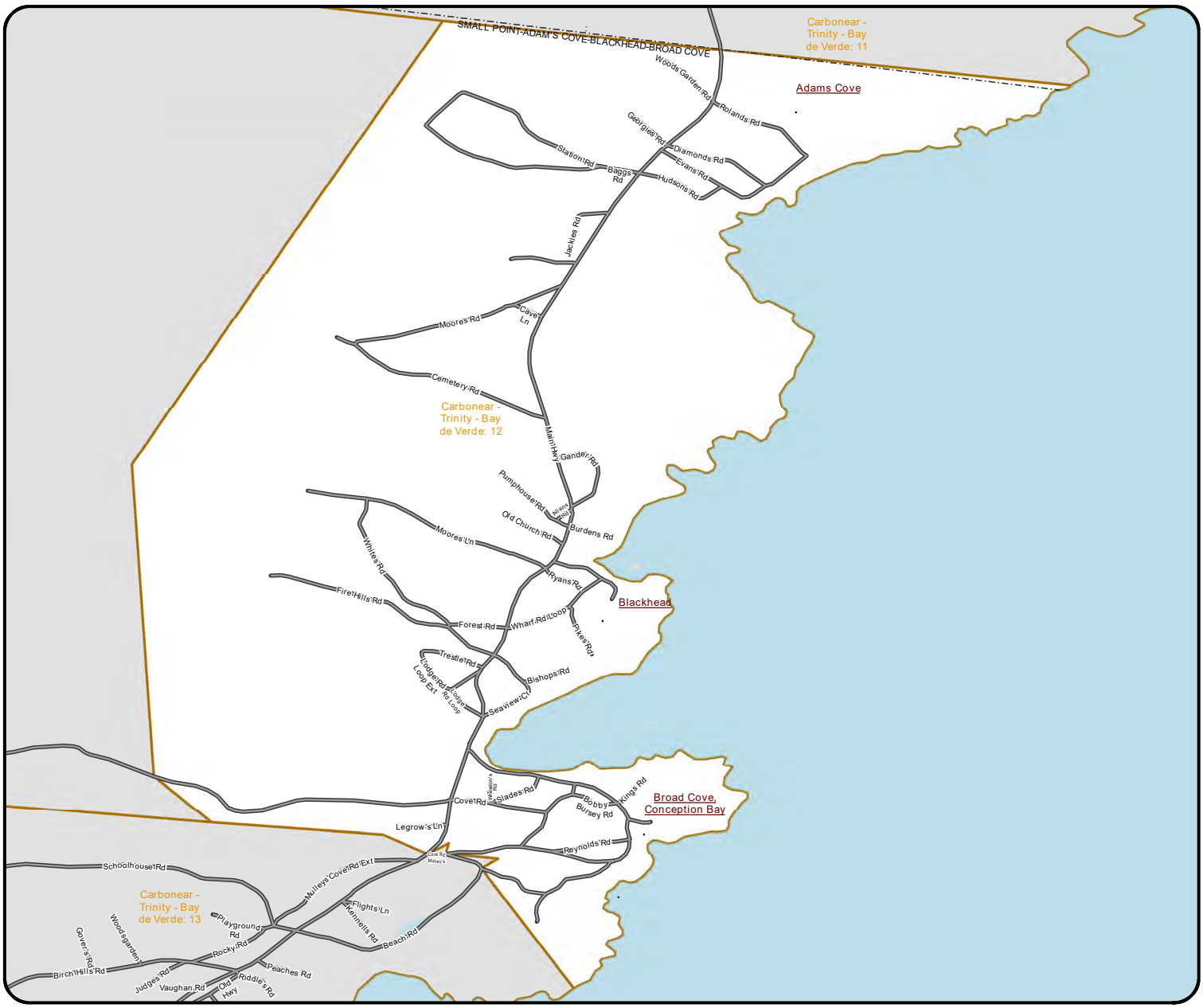
1:39,587

Elections Newfoundland & Labrador

Newfoundland & Labrador

Poll ID: 6-11

Date: 11/3/2023



Provincial Electoral District

of:

Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde

Poll Number: 12 of 47

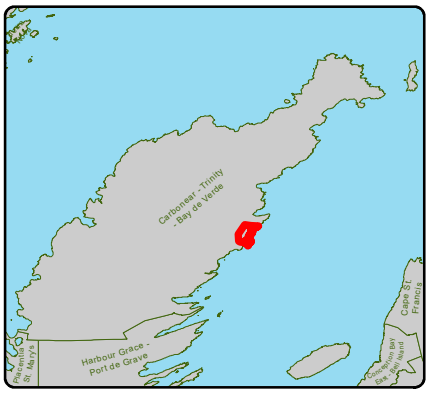
Number of Registered Electors: 230

Information valid as of November 1, 2023.

Poll Description

BROAD COVE (Conception Bay), BLACKHEAD, and ADAMS COVE: The town of Broad Cove (Conception Bay) including Beach Road; Bobby Bursey Road; Cove Road; King's Road; LeGrows Lane; Lodge Loop Road; Main Highway (Also known as Route 70); Mulley's Cove Road; Mulley's Cove Road Extension; Reynold's Road; School House Road; Sea View Crescent; Slades Road; Station Road; Swamp Hill Road; and Trestle Road. The town of Blackhead including Bishop's Road; Burdens Lane; Fire Hill's Road; Forest Road; Forest Hill Road; Gander Road; Main Highway (Also known as Route 70); Moores Lane; Old Church Road; Peaches Road; Pike's Road; Pumphouse Road; Ryan's Road; School Road; Taylor Road; Wharf Road; and White's Road. The town of Adams Cove including Baggs Lane; Baggs Road; Cave Lane; Chris Road; Cove Road; Diamonds Road; Evans Road; Georgie's Road; Hudson's Road; Jack's Lane; Jackies Road; Main Highway (Also known as Route 70); Moore's Road; Roland's Road; Station Road; and Wood's Garden Road.

Poll Location



Legend

Municipal Boundary

District Boundary (2015)

N

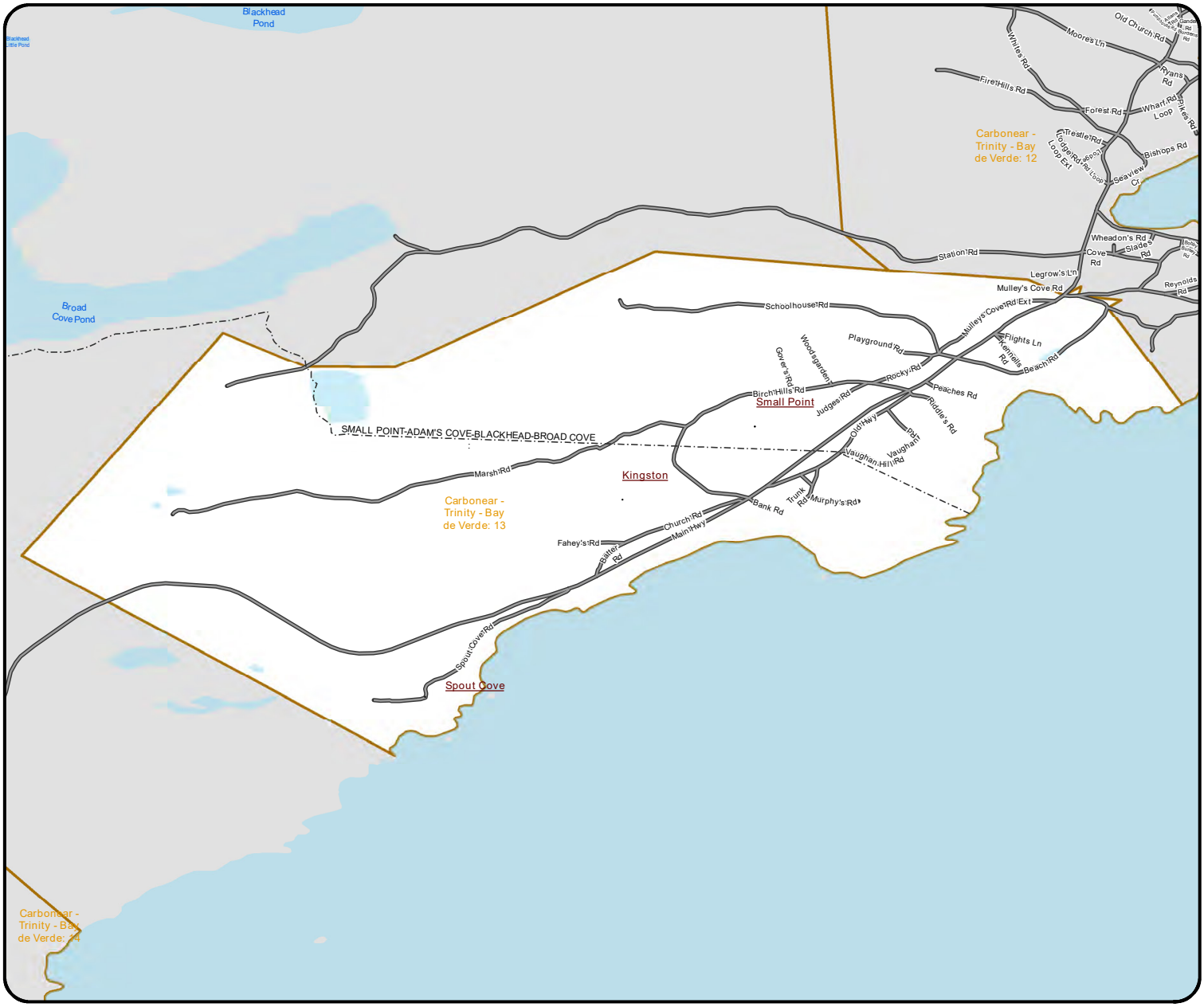
1:16,088

Elections Newfoundland & Labrador

Newfoundland & Labrador

Poll ID: 6-12

Date: 11/3/2023



Provincial Electoral District

of:

Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde

Poll Number: 13 of 47

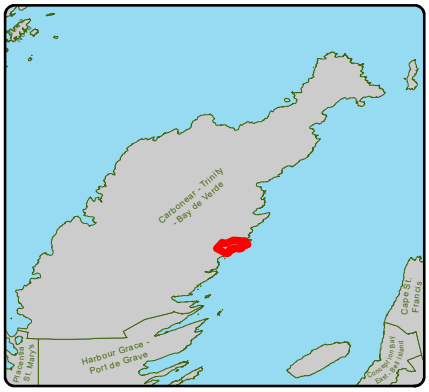
Number of Registered Electors: 134

Information valid as of November 1, 2023.

Poll Description

KINGSTON, SMALL POINT and SPOUT COVE: The community of Kingston including Bank Road; Batter Road; Church Road; Fahey's Road; Main Highway (Also known as Route 70); Marsh Road; Murphy's Road; Old Highway; Track Road; and Trunks Road. The town of Small Point including Back Road; Beach Road; Birch Hill Road; Cove Road; Flight's Road; Gover's Road; Judges Road; Kennells Road; King's Road; Main Highway (Also known as Route 70); Mulley's Cove Road; Old Highway; Peaches Road; Playground Road; Riddles Road; Rocky Road; School House Road; Vaughn Road; Vaughn's Hill Road; and Woodgarden. The community of Spout Cove.

Poll Location



Legend

Municipal Boundary

District Boundary (2015)

N

1:19,873

Elections Newfoundland & Labrador

Newfoundland Labrador

Poll ID: 6-13

Date: 11/3/2023

APPENDIX B
INFORMATION FOR DISPLACED ELECTORS

Elections
Newfoundland & Labrador

NEWS RELEASE

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer
September 29, 2025

Voting Information for Displaced Electors in Conception Bay North

Elections Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to ensuring that all eligible voters impacted by the Conception Bay North wildfires can cast their ballot in the Carbonear-Trinity-Bay De Verde district, even if they are displaced from their permanent residence.

Displaced electors have several voting options in the General Election:

1. Early Voting at Any Returning Office
All electors can vote for their home district by special ballot at any of the 70+ Elections NL offices throughout the province until Tuesday, October 7 at 6 p.m. In addition, a Special Ballot voting day will be announced for the Salem Community Centre shortly.

2. Advance Poll Voting in the District
On Advance Poll Day (October 7), electors can vote at any advance poll location within the Carbonear-Trinity-Bay De Verde district.

3. Election Day Voting for Displaced Electors
On Election Day (October 14), displaced electors from the following communities (polls):

Ochre Pit Cove (Poll 10),
Western Bay (Poll 11),
Broad Cove (Poll 11),
Blackhead (Poll 11),
Adams Cove (Poll 12),
Kingston (Poll 13),
Small Point (Poll 13), and;
Spout Cove (Poll 13)

may vote at any of the following locations:

Ronayne Law Office (66 Powell Drive, Carbonear),
John Hoskins Community Centre (575 Main Street, Old Perlican),
Ronnie Johnson Community Centre (Main Road, Western Bay), or;
Elections NL Headquarters (24 Stavanger Drive, St. John's).

All other electors in the district must vote at their assigned polling station.

4. Vote-By-Mail
Displaced residents can request a Vote-By-Mail kit to be sent to their temporary address using an alternative service. The ballot will be counted in their home district of Carbonear-Trinity-Bay De Verde. Applications are accepted until Thursday, October 2 at 8 p.m. Electors are responsible for meeting all associated deadlines.

Elections
Newfoundland & Labrador

NEWS RELEASE

Voting for First Responders
First responders and volunteers who are away from their home districts supporting wildfire recovery efforts can vote by Special Ballot at the nearby Elections NL offices in Carbonear and Adams Cove, or any of the other 70+ Elections NL offices in the province. In addition, a Special Ballot voting day will be held at the Salem Community Centre with dates and times announced shortly.

For more information, please contact Elections Newfoundland and Labrador toll-free at 1-877-729-7987 or visit the Elections Newfoundland and Labrador website: www.elections.gov.nl.ca.

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