



Strategic Plan

2014-17



2014

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Message From the Minister

I am pleased to provide the strategic plan for the Department of Environment and Conservation for the period of April 01, 2014 to March 31, 2017.

The Department of Environment and Conservation is a category 1 government entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* and, as such, must plan at the outcomes level. In developing this plan, careful consideration was given to the strategic directions of Government, the Department's mandate and fiscal resources. These directions represent the desired physical, social or economic outcomes for the province.

This Strategic Plan outlines actions required by the department to fulfill these outcomes. The strategic directions are found in Appendix A. These directions have been communicated to officials in the department as well as to the entities for which I am responsible.

This plan focuses on strategic issues with outcomes relating to natural heritage, and environmental protection. These issues will help the department achieve the mission it has set out for March 31, 2017.

As the minister, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the specific goals and objectives contained herein.



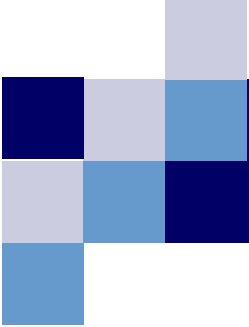
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry French". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Hon. Terry French
Minister



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Plan at a Glance

Mission

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have reduced the adverse impacts of human activities on the environment and improved the health of our ecosystems.

Goals

Issue 1: Natural Heritage

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced management of natural heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have commenced implementation of improvements to enhance the protection of the province's natural heritage.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have commenced monitoring to track progress towards stewardship of Newfoundland and Labrador's natural heritage.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have continued to implement improvements to enhance the protection of the province's natural heritage.

Plan at a Glance

Issue 2: Environmental Protection

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced efforts to improve environmental stewardship and environmental sustainability.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have implemented approaches to enhance management and assessment of impacted sites and air quality.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have continued to build upon its leadership efforts and collaboration in the areas of impacted sites and water quality.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced its efforts in the environmental protection of land, air and water in Newfoundland and Labrador.





Departmental Overview

The Department of Environment and Conservation is a category 1 government entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* and is responsible for the protection and enhancement of the environment, management of the province's wildlife, inland fish, water, parks, and Crown land resources. The department is also the lead on government sustainable development initiatives and is responsible for implementing programs with respect to government's response to climate change. The department has three branches:

Environment Branch:

This branch is responsible for the divisions of Environmental Assessment, Pollution Prevention, and Water Resources Management.

Lands Branch:

This branch is responsible for the divisions of Crown Lands Administration, Land Management, and Surveys and Mapping.

Natural Heritage Branch:

This branch is responsible for the divisions of Parks and Natural Areas, Wildlife, and the Institute for Biodiversity, Ecosystem Science and Sustainability.

In addition to the above branches, the department has a Policy and Planning Division, a Communications Unit and a Sustainable Development and Strategic Science Division.

Mandate

The mandate of the Department of Environment and Conservation is derived from the *Department of Environment and Conservation Notice*, under the *Executive Council Act* on matters related to:

- The protection, enhancement and conservation of the quality of the natural environment including water, air and soil quality; and the conservation, development, control, improvement and proper utilization of the water resource of the province;
- Crown lands;
- The management, preservation, control, protection and development of provincial parks as defined in the *Parks Act*; provincial interests in all national parks established in the province by the Government of Canada; and wilderness and ecological reserves as defined in the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*;
- Matters related to the management, preservation, protection and development of wildlife and inland fisheries;
- The *Wildlife Act* on matters related to wildlife reserves and Salmonier Nature Park; and,
- The *Pippy Park Act* on matters related to Pippy Park.



Reporting Entities

Under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, a number of government entities also prepare plans and annual reports. Entities which report to the Minister include:

- Multi-Materials Stewardship Board;
- Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board;
- Species Status Advisory Committee;
- Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council;
- C.A. Pippy Park Commission; and
- Caribou Resource Committee.

Legislation

The department's work is informed by the following Acts and their corresponding regulations:

Environmental Protection Act

Water Resources Act

Wild Life Act

Provincial Parks Act

Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act

Endangered Species Act

Lands Act

Land Surveyors Act

Geographical Names Board Act

National Parks Lands Act

Pippy Park Commission Act

Service NL administers certain aspects of enforcement under the *Environmental Protection Act* and the *Water Resources Act*. The Department of Justice also administers select enforcement activities under the *Wild Life Act*, the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*, and the *Endangered Species Act*.

Location of Offices

The department's headquarters are in Corner Brook (Natural Heritage), Howley Building (Lands) and Confederation Building (Environment) in St. John's. The department has additional offices in Clarenville, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and St. John's. The department is also responsible for Salmonier Nature Park and several other provincial parks and reserves located throughout the province. The Institute for Biodiversity, Ecosystem Science and Sustainability (IBES) is located in Corner Brook with the Wildlife Division.

The Department of Environment and Conservation website is www.gov.nl.ca/env

Staffing

On April 01, 2014, the department's staff complement consisted of 348 employees, which includes permanent (211), temporary (32), seasonal (103) and contractual (2) employees. 63% percent (221) of employees are male and 37% percent (127) are female. Staff by region is indicated as follows:

Region	Staff
Avalon	177
Central East	26
Central West	19
Western/Northern Peninsula	111
Labrador	15
Total Employees	348

Budget

The department's gross expenditure budget for 2014-15 is \$38,851,900 with planned related revenue of approximately \$8,872,000 for a net expenditure of \$29,979,900.





Lines of Business

The Department of Environment and Conservation provides the following lines of business:

Crown land resource:

The Department of Environment and Conservation is responsible for the administration and management of the province's Crown land resources. In particular, the department:

- maintains a map and air photo library service;
- maintains the Provincial Crown Lands Registry;
- investigates adverse land claims;
- reviews and inspects legal surveys;
- prepares legal documents of title for all dispositions of Crown land;
- produces and distributes topographic base maps for provincial departments and agencies;
- provides the geodetic reference system for legal and engineering surveys and topographic mapping;
- provides new aerial photography; a repository/archive of provincial aerial photography; and scanning/printing services;
- produces Crown title maps;
- develops land use management plans;
- maintains the Land Use Atlas;
- enforces lands legislation and addresses incidents of unauthorized occupation of Crown land;
- coordinates within government the inter-departmental review of Crown land development through the Inter-departmental Land Use Committee (ILUC);
- develops land use policy; and
- administers the leasing, sales and transfers of Crown land.

Geomatics duties and functions:

The Department of Environment and Conservation is responsible for the administration and management of the geomatics duties and functions, including:

- the central data-store and on-line base layers for GIS applications;
- standards and consultation services in geomatics;
- federal/provincial collaboration in geomatics (Building the Canadian Geospatial Data Infrastructure (CGDI) under the Canadian Geomatics Accord);



Provincial parks, ecological and wilderness reserves, natural areas, and Canadian Heritage rivers


The department is responsible for:

- the management and administration of provincial parks (the Newfoundland T'Railway Provincial Park is jointly managed by a special T'Railway Council) under the *Provincial Parks Act*;
- designation and management of wilderness and ecological reserves under the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*;
- development and implementation of biodiversity monitoring programs and maintenance of ecological integrity in protected areas;
- development and implementation of environmental education programs within select provincial parks and wilderness/ecological reserves;
- implementation of protection measures for Canadian Heritage Rivers in the province;
- negotiation of the land transfer to the federal government for National Parks; and,
- issuance of various permits for provincial parks, ecological and wilderness reserves.

Wildlife and inland fish

The department protects, manages and conserves the province's biodiversity, wildlife resources and wildlife habitat. This includes:

- determining the status of species in the province according to the National Accord for the Conservation of Species at Risk to which the province is a signatory;
- developing and implementing stewardship agreements to support the recovery of species at risk;
- identifying, designating and developing recovery strategies for species at risk according to the *Endangered Species Act*;
- developing and implementing strategies for the conservation of biodiversity;
- designating and managing wildlife areas;
- administering the Salmonier Nature Park - a wildlife rehabilitation, interpretation and research facility;
- developing management plans for consumptive species which are then published in the annual hunting and trapping guide;
- issuing hunting and trapping licenses;
- developing policies and guidelines regarding wildlife utilization;
- issuing Newfoundland and Labrador Guide licenses;
- providing education, awareness and training programs such as firearm safety, hunter and trapper education courses;
- implementing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, including providing assistance in the development of agreements to support wetland and coastal stewardship initiatives;
- developing long term landscape level planning to minimize conflicts between wildlife and other land uses;
- permitting for the non-consumptive use, possession, importation and export of wildlife and parts thereof;

- 
- collecting scientific information to provide input into the sustainable management of wildlife, including inland fish populations, and habitat; and,
 - utilizing education, awareness and stewardship programs and initiatives to foster appropriate attitudes, respect, behavior and appreciation towards our wildlife and habitat.

Environmental assessments

The department coordinates the provincial environmental assessment process for new development, which includes:

- reviewing proposed undertakings;
- gathering background information concerning the environmental impacts of the proposals;
- analyzing information according to a well-defined set of environmental assessment procedures;
- providing recommendations to the minister as to whether a project can proceed in an environmentally-acceptable manner; and,
- conducting select surveillance on projects released from the environmental assessment process.

Air, soil and water pollution

The department is responsible for the prevention of pollution of the province's air, water and soil ecosystems. Responsibilities include:

- preparing and issuing Certificates of Approval and licenses for:
 - industrial operations;
 - waste management systems (in collaboration with Service NL Centre);
 - waste dangerous goods transporters;
 - pesticide vendors, operators and applicators; and
 - heating oil storage tank inspectors;
- developing policies, guidelines, protocols, and regulations;
- developing training material and providing training;
- enforcing Certificates of Approval, license conditions and legislation through:
 - inspections, other than those done by Service NL Centre;
 - the development of environmental monitoring programs in collaboration with industry;
 - audits of the environmental monitoring programs;
 - audits of environmental laboratories; and,
 - the monitoring of criteria air contaminants;
- designating impacted sites and auditing risk assessments based on environmental site assessments;
- providing technical advice and outreach;
- managing remediation of industrial and military impacted sites that are the responsibility of government; and,
- maintaining a registry of impacted sites.



Water Resources Management

The department ensures that the province's water resources are protected, conserved and enhanced to provide the greatest possible sustainable benefits to the province. Responsibilities include:

- designation of protected water supply areas and protected wellheads;
- monitoring and analysis of chemical water quality of community water supplies;
- issuance of well driller licenses;
- inspection of water well structures in accordance with requirements of the *Well Drilling Regulations*;
- comprehensive training for municipal water operators of community water and wastewater systems;
- hydrologic modeling;
- investigation of water-related problems and complaints;
- overseeing inspections of dams;
- granting of water rights;
- maintenance of a water rights registry;
- issuance of permits for community water and sewage systems, extensions and alterations;
- monitoring and inspection of community water and wastewater systems;
- provision of technical assistance on community water and sewage, hydrology, hydraulics, and environmental design of water related structures;
- maintenance of various online water quality and quantity databases and GIS resources;
- conducting studies on groundwater resources, flooding, water resource impacts and water use;
- flood risk mapping; and,
- hurricane alerts.

Climate Change

The department works in collaboration with the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency in responding to climate change. The department is responsible for:

- implementation of some elements of the provincial Climate Change Action Plan; and Atlantic Climate Adaptation Solutions (ACAS) Program;
- administration of the Newfoundland and Labrador Green Fund; and Administration of Regional Adaptation Collaboratives; and,
- creation of stakeholder awareness on greenhouse gas reduction strategies and climate change impacts and adaptation.

Values

Accountability:

Each employee accepts responsibility for his/her own actions and contributions and follows through on requests and commitments.

Efficiency:

Each employee uses resources in an effective and timely manner.

Leadership:

Each employee will carry out responsibilities and make decisions to advance the conservation of the environment and natural heritage.

Professionalism:

Each employee will be responsible for maintaining professional competencies required for his/her position and demonstrates excellence and high quality performance.



Primary Clients and Vision

Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Department of Environment and Conservation are:

- the general public;
- municipalities;
- large industries such as the pulp and paper companies, mining or oil refining companies;
- businesses involved in such areas as pesticide application, waste management, heating oil, refrigeration services, among others;
- the engineering and waste management consultant community;
- the academic community and student populations;
- environmental non-governmental organizations;
- consumptive wildlife users, guides, outfitters and others involved in the wildlife industry;
- tourists; and,
- the federal government and other provincial departments.

Vision

The vision of the Department of Environment and Conservation is a clean, sustainable environment and healthy, resilient ecosystems in perpetuity for the social, physical, cultural, biological and economic well-being of the province.





Mission

The mission of the Department is the reduction of adverse, human-induced impacts on the environment and the improvement of the health of our ecosystems. In achieving this mission, the Department recognizes that environmental issues are extremely complex with origins beyond the scope of the province's jurisdiction. While these realities do represent challenges, the Department will actively work towards achieving our mission through initiatives that are within our sphere of control. This includes appropriate regulations, enforcement practices and techniques, monitoring practices and techniques, and scientific measures.

The Department articulated the current mission statement in the previous 2011-14 Strategic Plan. The mission statement represents the key longer-term result that the Department is working towards consistent with the strategic directions of government. Eco-sustainability is a key component in these directions as big game management, wilderness preserves, impacted sites cleanup, and climate change have been highlighted as priority areas for government. Informed by government's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability, the mission statement identifies the priority focus areas of the Department continuing into 2014-17, including parks and natural areas, wildlife management, impacted sites, water quality and waste management. The work of the Department is continuous; as such, work commenced under previous plans may coincide with or be realized during the course of the current plan or in forthcoming plans. The Department will report on the mission and associated indicators in the 2016-17 Annual Report.

Mission Statement: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have reduced the adverse impacts of human activities on the environment and improved the health of our ecosystems.

Measure: Will have reduced the impacts of human activities on the environment

Indicators:

- Introduced air quality standards for industry leading to improved air quality
- Improved public access to drinking water quality and boil water advisory information
- Conducted comprehensive scientific studies and operational activities to enhance the management of caribou and moose populations
- Improved scientific knowledge of the health of wildlife populations
- Enhanced municipal climate adaptation tools
- Decreased sites with contaminants



Strategic Issues

Issue 1: Natural Heritage

The natural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador is of great importance to the people of the province and its protection is an essential component of the Department of Environment and Conservation's mandate. Our natural heritage is the total of the province's wildlife, plants, ecosystems, and associated geological landscapes. The mission of Natural Heritage is to protect large wilderness areas, representative areas of all provincial eco-regions, and areas that contain rare natural phenomena, in order to preserve the diversity and distinctiveness of the Province's rich natural heritage and to support an ecologically sustainable future for the benefit of present and future generations. Over the next three years, the Department will work to enhance the management and stewardship of the Province's natural heritage. This supports Government's Strategic Direction of Environmental Sustainability: Enhanced management of our Province's natural environment and will address the focus areas of: parks and natural areas, and wildlife management.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced management of natural heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Measure: Enhanced management of natural heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador

Indicators:

1. Improved scientific knowledge and management of big game populations and their status.
2. Worked with the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC) to develop and assess proposals for protected areas.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have commenced implementation of improvements to enhance the protection of the province's natural heritage.

Measure: Commenced implementation of improvements to the protection of the province's natural heritage

Indicators:

1. Reported publicly on the status of the George River caribou herd to Aboriginal groups and stakeholders
2. Released conclusions of the Newfoundland Caribou Strategy initiative and responded to recommendations
3. Implemented a Five Year Moose Management Plan .
4. Advanced the development of a UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination package for Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve
5. Continued to pursue policy options related to wetlands

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have commenced monitoring to track progress towards stewardship of Newfoundland and Labrador's natural heritage.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have continued to implement improvements to enhance the protection of the province's natural heritage.



Issue 2: Environmental Protection

The Department of Environment and Conservation has the mandate to protect and mitigate human impacts upon the environment of the province. The department leads key initiatives and strategic approaches through the implementation of methodologies which preserve, protect and improve the quality of land, air and water in the province both now and into the future. Environmental protection provides for the development of plans, programs, standards and activities concerning environmental emergencies, waste management, petroleum storage, industry, pollution prevention, air emissions, environmental science, pesticides and impacted sites. The department provides environmental stewardship for the province in the way it initiates changes to current regimes and practices, through adoption of the latest scientific, evidence-based approaches to managing the land, air and water. At the same time, the department continues to do the work it had previously undertaken, ensuring continuity in its management role in accordance with Government's Strategic Direction of Environmental Sustainability and will address the focus areas of: water and air quality, and remediation of impacted sites.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced efforts to improve environmental stewardship and environmental sustainability.

Measure: Built upon previous efforts to improve the protection of land, air and water.

Indicators:

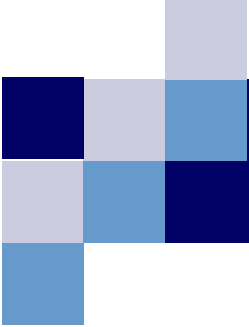
1. Demonstrated leadership role within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on site remediation.
2. Worked with the Department of Finance to design an impacted sites liability assessment program.
3. Improved collection of information on impacted sites in Newfoundland and Labrador.
4. Increased resources applied to impacted sites.
5. Enhanced training for water quality management and provided broader testing for semi-private and public wells.
6. Collaborated with industry to enhance air quality monitoring in Labrador.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have implemented approaches to enhance management and assessment of impacted sites and air quality.

Measure: Enhanced assessment of impacted sites and air quality.

Indicators:

1. Assessed ways in which the Department can support impacted site remediation
2. Implemented an impacted sites liability assessment program to allow for proper PS 3260 accounting standards for environmental liabilities.
3. Installed an air quality monitoring station in Labrador.



Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have continued to build upon its leadership efforts and collaboration in the areas of impacted sites and water quality.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced its efforts in the environmental protection of land, air and water in Newfoundland and Labrador.





Appendix A: Strategic Directions

Strategic Directions are defined in the *Transparency and Accountability Act* as the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by government through platform documents, throne and budget speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to consider these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The Strategic Directions related to the Minister of Environment and Conservation are provided. Each Strategic Direction is comprised of a number of components or focus areas. These focus areas will be addressed through the various planning processes of the department and the department's entities. The governing bodies of each entity reporting to the minister will also review the components of each strategic direction and implement those that are appropriate for their particular entity.



Appendix A: Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction # 1: Environmental Sustainability

Outcome:

Enhanced management of our Province's natural environment

Focus areas:

Parks and Natural Areas, Crown Land Management, Wildlife Management, Remediation of impacted sites, Water and air quality, Climate Change

Components	Entity	Addressed in Strategic Plan	Addressed in Operational Plan	Addressed in Work Plan
Parks and Natural Areas	ENVC	X		
Crown Land Management	ENVC		X	
Wildlife Management	ENVC	X		
Remediation of impacted sites	ENVC	X		
Water and air quality	ENVC	X		
Climate Change	ENVC			X



Appendix A: Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction #2: Waste Management

Outcome:

Increase the amount of waste that is diverted from landfills.

Focus area:

Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy, Management of hazardous wastes, Organic waste management and Recycling

Components	Entity	Addressed in Strategic Plan	Addressed in Operational Plan	Addressed in Work Plan	Other Entity
Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy	ENVC		X		X
Management of hazardous wastes	ENVC				X
Organic waste Management & Recycling	ENVC				X



Appendix B: The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council

The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC) is a category 3 entity in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. WERAC is established pursuant to the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act* and has a mandate to advise Government on the establishment and termination of wilderness and ecological reserves within the province. WERAC has recently been reconstituted and will prepare a plan in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

Mandate

The *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act* provides for an Advisory Council to advise government on the establishment, management and termination of wilderness and ecological reserves within the province. The Council's duties include consultation proceedings with interested government departments, other governments, industry stakeholders, the general public, and other bodies on the suitability of areas for the establishment of a reserve, and preparation of a report to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on the advisability of the establishment of a reserve.



Appendix C: Caribou Resource Committee

The Caribou Resource Committee is a mechanism for stakeholder input on the social, economic, and ecological aspects of the Caribou Strategy for Island caribou and is a category three entity in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. The Caribou Resource Committee has concluded its mandate. If any further activity is required of the committee, an activity plan will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

Mandate

The Caribou Resource Committee participated in the implementation of the Caribou Strategy by representing the interest of relevant government departments and various stakeholder groups during the work on the Caribou Strategy. In addition, the Caribou Resource Committee acts as a conduit taking information from the Committee to the representative departments and stakeholder groups, while also providing an opportunity for comment from these same groups.

**Department of Environment and Conservation
Strategic Plan 2014-17**

