



Conservation & Forestry in New Brunswick

Survey Report



September 2020

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Methodology & Logistics

Overview & Reporting

The following represents the results of a September 2020 telephone survey of N=500 eligible voters, 18 years of age or older from New Brunswick, conducted by Oraclepoll Research Ltd.

The Survey was commissioned by the Conservation Council of New Brunswick and the Atlantic Salmon Federation. This report contains the executive findings from the current survey.

Study Sample

A total of N=500 interviews were completed, with residents throughout the province. All respondents were screened to ensure that they were residents of New Brunswick, that they were 18 years of age or older and eligible to vote in the province. The sample was stratified to ensure a representative breakdown by regions. The adjacent table provides a breakdown of the total sample by area.



Moncton	N=105	21%
Saint John	N=72	14%
Fredericton	N=85	17%
North	N=100	20%
Rest	N=138	28%
Total	N=500	100%

A randomized dual sample frame database was used that was inclusive of cellular and land line telephone numbers.

Logistics

The poll was conducted by telephone with live person-to-person operators at the Oraclepoll call centre facility using computer-assisted techniques of telephone interviewing (CATI) and random number selection (RDD). A total of 20% of all interviews were monitored and the management of Oraclepoll Research supervised 100%.

Initial calls were made between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Subsequent callbacks of no-answers and busy numbers were made on a (staggered) daily rotating basis up to 5 times (from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) until contact was made. In addition, telephone interview appointments were attempted with those respondents unable to complete the survey at the time of contact. If no contact was made at a number after the fifth attempt, the number was discarded and a new one supplanted it.

Survey interviews took place between the days of September 1st and September 3rd, 2020.

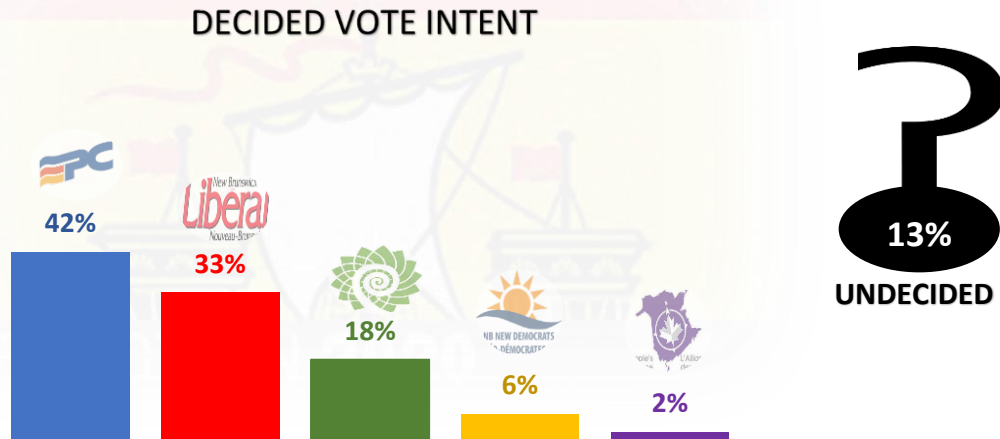
Confidence

The margin of error for the N=500 sample is $\pm 4.4\%$ 19/20 times. Error rates vary and are larger for geographic and demographic sub-samples of the survey population. Results displayed in some tables and graphs may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Vote Intent

The vote intent question (Q12) was asked at the end of the survey. Below are presented the results from decided voters, with the undecideds shown separately (13%).

"If a provincial election were held today, which party and their candidate would you most likely vote for or be leaning towards?"



The Progressive Conservative Party has the backing of 42% of decided voters, while the Liberals trail in second with 33%. With the backing of 18%, the Greens are in third spot, while 6% stated they would vote NDP and 2% the People's Alliance. The number of undecided voters sits at 13%.

	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
18-34	29%	24%	33%	12%	2%
35-44	41%	23%	24%	9%	3%
45-54	32%	53%	13%	1%	1%
55-64	52%	30%	12%	4%	1%
65+	65%	16%	14%	4%	2%

	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
Under \$50,000	29%	28%	33%	8%	2%
\$50,000-\$74,999	35%	37%	23%	3%	2%
\$75,000-\$99,999	51%	29%	13%	4%	2%
\$100,000+	75%	12%	8%	3%	2%

	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
Male	53%	25%	15%	5%	2%
Female	31%	40%	20%	7%	1%

PC support is strongest with older residents (55+), with higher earners, males, and English speakers. The Liberals do best with those 45-54, middle-income earners (\$50,000-\$74,999), females and French language voters. The Green Party is most favoured by younger residents, earners in the lower income brackets and is attracting more females and Francophones.

	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
English	52%	24%	15%	6%	2%
French	22%	50%	24%	4%	-

Top of Mind Voting Issues

Respondents were first asked an open-ended or unaided question about what they consider to be the most important issue to them as a voter when they cast a ballot on September 14th.

Q1. “The New Brunswick general election is scheduled to be held on September 14th of this year. What issue will be most important to you as a voter when you cast a ballot?”

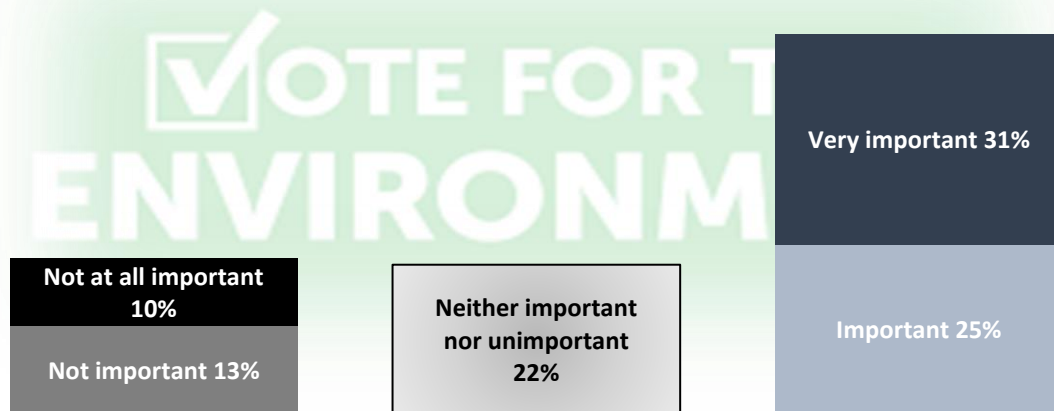
<i>Covid 19</i>	36%
<i>Health care (cuts)</i>	22%
<i>Jobs / employment / unemployment</i>	10%
<i>Economy</i>	8%
<i>Unsure</i>	6%
<i>Environment / climate change</i>	3%
<i>Finances / budgets / deficits</i>	3%
<i>Affordable housing</i>	2%
<i>Education</i>	2%
<i>Language / French language services</i>	2%
<i>Poverty / rising cost of living</i>	2%
<i>The Election</i>	1%
<i>Drugs / addictions</i>	1%
<i>Taxation</i>	1%
<i>Seniors issues</i>	1%
<i>Crime</i>	1%
<i>Roads / highways</i>	<1%

Most (36%) named a group of issues related to the covid-19 pandemic, while the second most referenced item was health care, including cuts, at 22%. Economic concerns followed with 10% citing jobs or employment and 8% the economy in general, with other pocketbook issues including affordable housing (2%) and poverty. Three percent referenced the environment/climate change, 3% fiscal concerns, 2% education and 2% French language issues. The remaining responses from 1% related to the Election, drug control, taxes, senior’s issues, crime, and roads.

Conservation, the Environment & Voting

Next, respondents were asked two questions about voting and the environment. In the first, they rated the importance of conservation and the environment when casting a ballot and then in an unaided question they were asked about what they considered to be the top environmental issue in the province.

Q2. “How important will conservation and environment issues be to you as a voter? Please use a scale from one not at all important to five very important.”



Fifty-five percent said environmental issues are important (25%) or very important (31%) compared to 23% unimportant, while 22% expressed a neutral opinion. Decided Green voters were most likely to answer important or very important (95%), followed by Liberals (63%), New Democrats (54%), undecideds (53%) and to a lesser extent PC's (36%).

environment

When asked about what they considered to be the most pressing environmental issue, climate change was cited by almost four in ten (38%) – extreme weather and flooding were named by another 4%. Waterway protection followed at 11%, next by pollution (9%), forest management or protection (7%), waste (4%) and water quality (3%).

Q3. “What do you consider to be the most important environmental issue facing New Brunswick?”

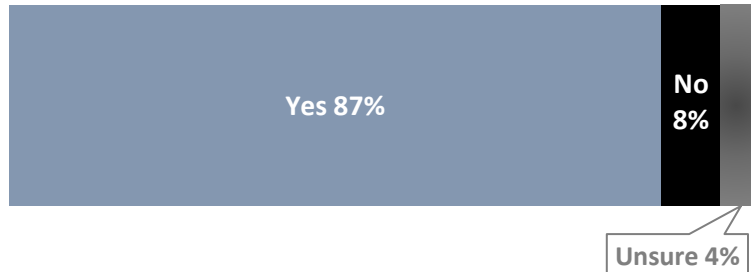
Climate change	38%
Unsure	19%
Protecting waterways (lakes, rivers, streams)	11%
Pollution (in general)	9%
Protecting forests (logging, clear cutting, herbicides)	7%
Waste management (recycling, landfills)	4%
Water quality	3%
Extreme weather	2%
Endangered species	2%
Flooding	2%
Plastics / chemicals / toxic substances	2%

Protected Areas – Percentages

Two questions were then asked about protected land in New Brunswick. The first questioned voters if they felt the government should honour its commitment to increase protected areas to 10% by the end of this year. The second asked if the government should meet a 25% target by the year 2025.

10% by 2020

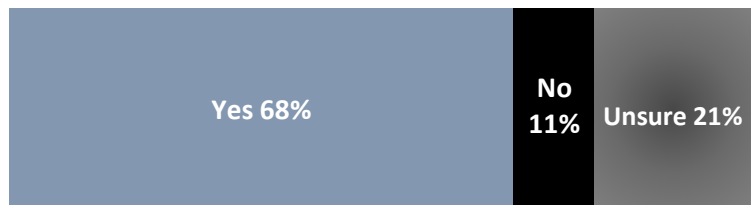
Q4. “Governments around the world are responding to environmental challenges like climate change and habitat destruction by increasing protected areas. The New Brunswick government promised to increase protected areas from 4.6 to 10% of land in the province by the end of 2020. After the election, should the next New Brunswick government follow through on this promise?”



There is a very high level of support (87%) for meeting the 10% target by years end. This includes backing from all Green and NDP voters (100%), most Liberals (92%), more than eight in ten undecided voters (81%), 80% of PC's and 57% of People's Alliance.

25% by 2025

Q5. “The Government of Canada has committed to protecting 25% of Canada's land mass by 2025. Should the New Brunswick government contribute to Canada's goal by protecting 25% of land in this province?”

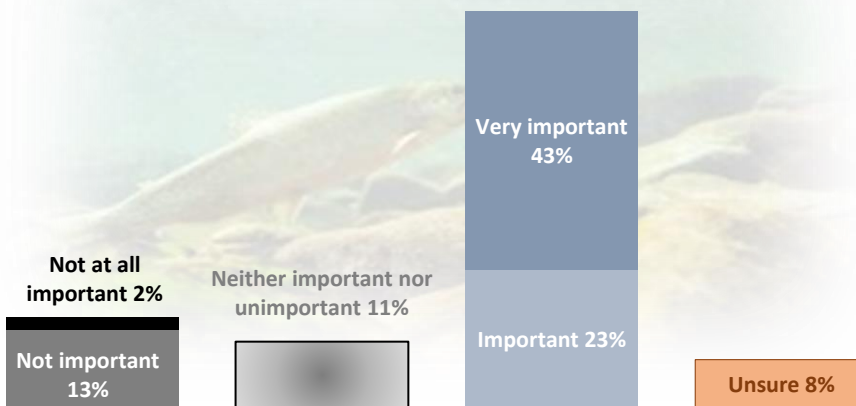


Support is also strong for protecting one quarter of land in the province at 68%, with opposition only at 11%, while 21% are unsure. All Green voters support the plan (100%) as do 89% of NDP, 83% of Liberal, 52% of undecided, 47% of PC and 42% of People's Alliance backers.

Critical Habitat & Outdoor Recreation

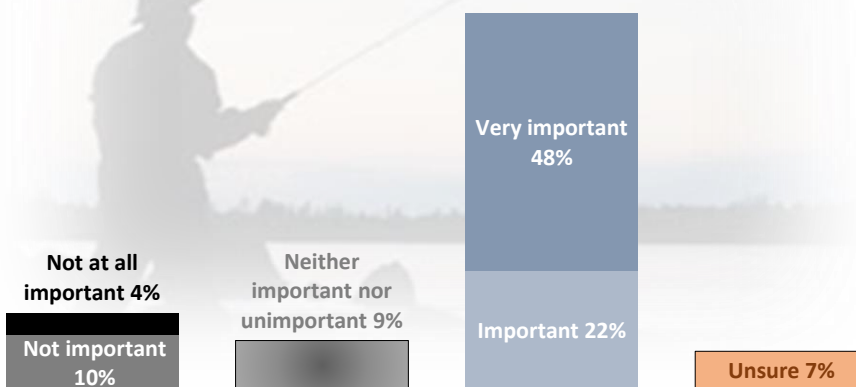
Next, respondents were asked to rate the importance (using a five-point rating scale from 1-not at all to 5-very important) of safeguarding habitats in future protected areas and ensuring enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities in these areas.

Q6. "How important is it to you that future protected areas in New Brunswick safeguard critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including rivers, lakes, and mature forests? Please use a scale from one not at all important to five very important."



Sixty eight percent said it is important (23%) or very important (43%) to ensure that critical habitats are made safe in future protected areas, compared to only 15% that feel its is unimportant. Nineteen percent were unsure (8%) or held a neutral opinion (11%).

Q7. "How important is it to you that future protected areas provide enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities, like angling, hiking, foraging, paddling and hunting for New Brunswickers? Please use a scale from one not at all important to five very import"



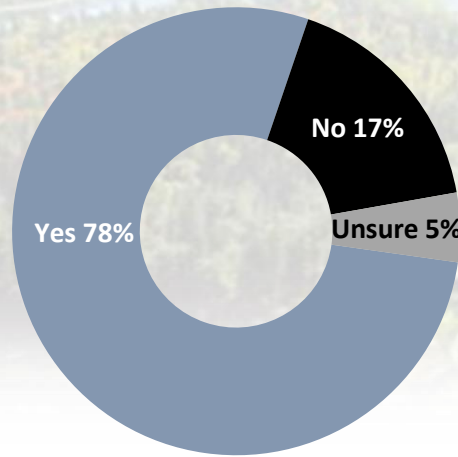
A higher 70% hold that it is important (22%) or very important (48%) to ensure that enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities are protected, while the unimportant rating drops to 14%. Sixteen percent were neutral (9%) or unsure (7%).

Restigouche Waterway Park

A brief description was read to voters about a proposed provincial park along the Restigouche River. They were then asked if the next government of New Brunswick should follow through and establish this as parkland.

Q8. “The New Brunswick government has drafted plans for a new provincial park that would protect 20,000 hectares of land along 235 kilometers of the Restigouche River in northern New Brunswick. Do you think the next government should proceed to establish this park?”

Nearly eight in ten or 78% support the establishment of this park, with results highest among the youngest 18-34 (98%), 35-44 (80%) and 45-54 (85%), while lower with 55-64 (64%) and those 65+ (35%). All Green voters (100%), most NDP (92%), Liberal (90%) and undecided’s (83%) back the idea as did a lesser but still majority the People’s Alliance (57%) and Progressive Conservatives (56%).



Top of Mind Forest Likes & Concerns

Two unaided or open questions were asked about the most liked aspects of forests in the province and what concerns people the most.

Q9. “What do you like the most about New Brunswick’s forests?”

<i>Natural beauty / pristine</i>	30%
<i>Trees / greenspace / foliage</i>	24%
<i>Unsure</i>	16%
<i>Protected areas</i>	11%
<i>Recreational activities (fish, hike etc.)</i>	10%
<i>Wildlife / species</i>	4%
<i>Lakes / streams / rivers</i>	3%
<i>Economic opportunities / jobs / logging</i>	3%

Themes related to natural beauty, protected greenspaces, and other attributes than can be enjoyed were recalled.

Concerns most focused-on logging activities including clear cutting and herbicides. Climate change was also a concern as was a lack of protection for spaces, waterways, and species.

Q10. “What concerns you about the state of New Brunswick’s forests?”

<i>Logging / forestry</i>	18%
<i>Impact of climate change</i>	14%
<i>Unsure</i>	13%
<i>Clear cutting</i>	11%
<i>Lack of protection / protected spaces</i>	10%
<i>Herbicide / glyphosate usage</i>	9%
<i>Nothing</i>	7%
<i>Waterway protection</i>	5%
<i>Protection of species / endangered</i>	5%
<i>Fires</i>	4%
<i>Pollution / waste / trash</i>	3%
<i>Commercial activity (tourism, roads, etc.)</i>	2%

Public Land Considerations

Voters were asked to rate the importance of five areas that may be considered when decisions about the future uses of public land are being made. A five-point rating scale from 1-not at all important to 5-very important was used and the table below combines the total unimportant (1-not at all important & 2-not important) and total important (4-important & 5-very important) scores.

Q11. “How important is it to you that decisions about future uses of public land consider each of the following? For each category use a scale from one, meaning not at all important, to five, meaning very important.”

	Total unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Total important	Unsure
A. Recreation or tourism	3%	7%	84%	6%
B. Fish & Wildlife	6%	5%	81%	8%
C. Economy	15%	21%	54%	10%
D. Water quality	6%	6%	80%	7%
E. Needs of the Forestry industry	18%	25%	44%	13%

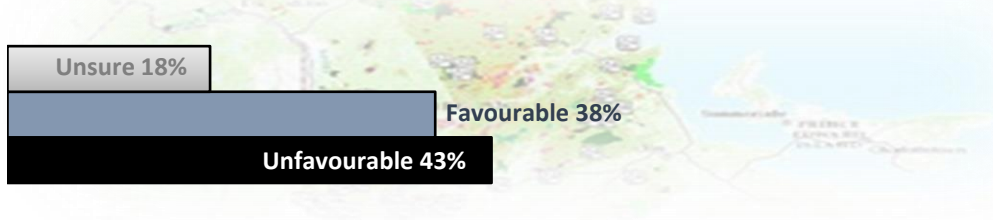
The highest level of importance at 84% was placed on considerations related to recreation or tourism. This was closely followed by issues around fish and wildlife at 81% and water quality at 80%. The economy was rated as important or very important by a fewer people (54%), but only 15% said it was not important or not at all important. This wait and see attitude was also evident with respect to the needs of the forestry industry as 44% said this was important, 18% unimportant and one quarter were neutral.

Opinions of Forest Management

The following descriptive statement was first read to respondents after which they were asked two questions: one about industrial forest management in the province and the other about the use of herbicides.

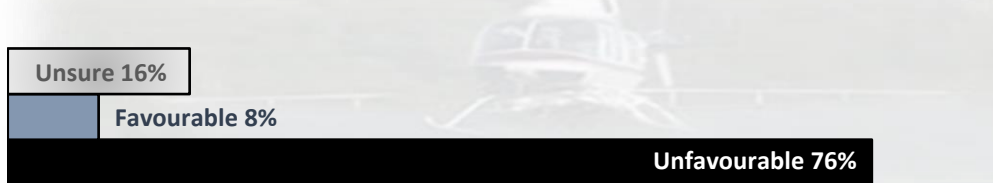
“The vast majority of wood harvesting on public forest land in New Brunswick is done by clear cutting. Softwood trees are replanted, and the herbicide glyphosate is used in some areas to kill native hardwood species that regrow quickly.”

Q12. “Do you have a favourable or unfavourable opinion of industrial forest management in New Brunswick?”



Voters are split on their opinion of industrial forest management in the province with 43% having an unfavourable and 38% a favourable opinion. Eighteen percent did not know or were unsure.

Q13. “Do you have a favourable or unfavourable opinion on the use of herbicides in forestry?”



Only 8% have a favourable view on the use of herbicides in forestry. More than three quarters have an unfavourable opinion and 16% were unsure.

Forestry Commitments & Impact

A series of five questions were asked where respondents were presented with various scenarios or possible commitments as they relate to forest management. For each, they were asked if the commitment would lead to them having a more or less favourable view of a party (or no impact).

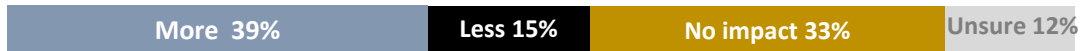
Q14. “If a provincial party in this election committed to following through on the promise to increase protected land in New Brunswick from 4.6 to 10% would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?”



Q15. “If a provincial party committed to protecting 25% of New Brunswick’s land by 2025 would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?”



Q16. “If a provincial party committed to review the Crown Lands and Forests Act to establish a new sustainable forestry regime in New Brunswick would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?”



Q17. “If a provincial Party committed to reducing the size of allowable clear cuts and extent of industrial forestry operations on Crown forest, would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?”



Q18. “And if a provincial Party committed to banning the use of herbicides in forestry, would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?”



Keeping the promise to increase protected land in New Brunswick from 4.6 to 10% was the commitment that would most lead to a favourable outcome for a Party (81%), next followed by banning the use of herbicides in forestry (75%). Almost two thirds or 65% would also have a more favourable opinion of a Party that committed to protecting 25% of New Brunswick’s land by 2025 and an almost equal 64% would hold a Party in a more favourable light if it reduced the size of allowable clear cuts.

Results by Question

Q1. The New Brunswick general election is scheduled to be held on September 14th of this year. What issue will be most important to you as a voter when you cast a ballot?

	N	%
Covid 19	180	36.0
Health care (cuts)	109	21.8
Jobs / employment / unemployment	48	9.6
Economy	40	8.0
Unsure	32	6.4
Environment / climate action	15	3.0
Finances / budgets / deficits	13	2.6
Affordable housing	12	2.4
Education	10	2.0
Language / French language services	8	1.6
Poverty / rising cost of living	8	1.6
The Election	6	1.2
Drugs / addictions	5	1.0
Taxation	5	1.0
Seniors issues	4	.8
Crime	3	.6
Roads / highways	2	.4
Total	500	100.0

Q2. How important will conservation and environment issues be to you as a voter? Please use a scale from one not at all important to five very important.

	N	%
Not at all important	49	9.8
Not important	63	12.6
Neither important nor unimportant	110	22.0
Important	125	25.0
Very important	153	30.6
Total	500	100.0

Q3. What do you consider to be the most important environmental issue facing New Brunswick?			
		N	%
	Climate change	190	38.0
	Unsure	97	19.4
	Protecting waterways (lakes, rivers, streams)	55	11.0
	Pollution (in general)	44	8.8
	Protecting forests / management (logging, clear cutting, herbicides)	36	7.2
	Waste management (recycling, landfills)	20	4.0
	Water quality	17	3.4
	Extreme weather	12	2.4
	Endangered species	12	2.4
	Flooding	9	1.8
	Plastics / chemicals / toxic substances	8	1.6
	Total	500	100.0

“Governments around the world are responding to environmental challenges like climate change and habitat destruction by increasing protected areas. The New Brunswick government promised to increase protected areas from 4.6 to 10% of land in the province by the end of 2020.”

Q4. After the election, should the next New Brunswick government follow through on this promise?			
		N	%
	Yes	437	87.4
	No	41	8.2
	Unsure	22	4.4
	Total	500	100.0

Q5. Should the New Brunswick government contribute to Canada’s goal by protecting 25% of land in this province?			
		N	%
	Yes	340	68.0
	No	55	11.0
	Unsure	105	21.0
	Total	500	100.0

Q6. How important is it to you that future protected areas in New Brunswick safeguard critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including rivers, lakes, and mature forests?

	N	%
Not at all important	9	1.8
Not important	67	13.4
Neither important nor unimportant	54	10.8
Important	113	22.6
Very important	216	43.2
Unsure	41	8.2
Total	500	100.0

Q7. How important is it to you that future protected areas provide enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities, like angling, hiking, foraging, paddling and hunting for New Brunswickers?

	N	%
Not at all important	22	4.4
Not important	50	10.0
Neither important nor unimportant	44	8.8
Important	109	21.8
Very important	239	47.8
Unsure	36	7.2
Total	500	100.0

“The New Brunswick government has drafted plans for a new provincial park that would protect 20,000 hectares of land along 235 kilometers of the Restigouche River in northern New Brunswick.”

Q8. Do you think the next government should proceed to establish this park?

	N	%
Yes	390	78.0
No	83	16.6
Unsure	27	5.4
Total	500	100.0

Q9. What do you like the most about New Brunswick's forests?		
	N	%
Natural beauty / pristine	148	29.6
Trees / greenspace / foliage	122	24.4
Unsure	78	15.6
Protected areas	54	10.8
Recreational activities (camping, fishing, hunting, canoeing etc.)	50	10.0
Wildlife / species	18	3.6
Lakes / streams / rivers	16	3.2
Economic opportunities / job creation / logging	14	2.8
Total	500	100.0

Q10. What concerns you about the state of New Brunswick's forests?		
	N	%
Logging / forestry	92	18.4
Impact of climate change	69	13.8
Unsure	65	13.0
Clear cutting	53	10.6
Lack of protection / protected spaces	48	9.6
Herbicide / glyphosate usage	43	8.6
Nothing	37	7.4
Waterway protection	23	4.6
Protection of species / endangered	23	4.6
Fires	21	4.2
Pollution / waste / trash	16	3.2
Commercial activity (tourism, roads, etc.)	10	2.0
Total	500	100.0

Q11. How important is it to you that decisions about future uses of public land consider each of the following? For each category use a scale from one, meaning not at all important, to five, meaning very important.

Q11a. Recreation or tourism		
	N	%
Not at all important	5	1.0
Not important	12	2.4
Neither important nor unimportant	34	6.8
Important	180	36.0
Very important	238	47.6
Unsure	31	6.2
Total	500	100.0

Q11b. Fish & Wildlife		
	N	%
Not at all important	18	3.6
Not important	14	2.8
Neither important nor unimportant	26	5.2
Important	139	27.8
Very important	265	53.0
Unsure	38	7.6
Total	500	100.0

Q11c. Economy		
	N	%
Not at all important	27	5.4
Not important	47	9.4
Neither important nor unimportant	107	21.4
Important	139	27.8
Very important	128	25.6
Unsure	52	10.4
Total	500	100.0

Q11d. Water quality			
		N	%
	Not at all important	11	2.2
	Not important	21	4.2
	Neither important nor unimportant	32	6.4
	Important	154	30.8
	Very important	246	49.2
	Unsure	36	7.2
	Total	500	100.0

Q11e. Needs of the Forestry industry			
		N	%
	Not at all important	37	7.4
	Not important	52	10.4
	Neither important nor unimportant	127	25.4
	Important	99	19.8
	Very important	120	24.0
	Unsure	65	13.0
	Total	500	100.0

”The vast majority of wood harvesting on public forest land in New Brunswick is done by clear cutting. Softwood trees are replanted, and the herbicide glyphosate is used in some areas to kill native hardwood species that regrow quickly.”

Q12. Do you have a favourable or unfavourable opinion of industrial forest management in New Brunswick?			
		N	%
	Favourable	192	38.4
	Unfavourable	217	43.4
	Unsure	91	18.2
	Total	500	100.0

Q13. Do you have a favourable or unfavourable opinion on the use of herbicides in forestry?			
		N	%
	Favourable	41	8.2
	Unfavourable	384	76.8
	Unsure	75	15.0
	Total	500	100.0

Q14. If a provincial party in this election committed to following through on the promise to increase protected land in New Brunswick from 4.6 to 10% would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?

		N	%
	More	407	81.4
	Less	8	1.6
	No impact	71	14.2
	Unsure	14	2.8
	Total	500	100.0

Q15. If a provincial party committed to protecting 25% of New Brunswick's land by 2025 would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?

		N	%
	More	324	64.8
	Less	46	9.2
	No impact	91	18.2
	Unsure	39	7.8
	Total	500	100.0

Q16. If a provincial party committed to review the Crown Lands and Forests Act to establish a new sustainable forestry regime in New Brunswick would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?

		N	%
	More	196	39.2
	Less	76	15.2
	No impact	166	33.2
	Unsure	62	12.4
	Total	500	100.0

Q17. If a provincial Party committed to reducing the size of allowable clear cuts and extent of industrial forestry operations on Crown forest, would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?

	N	%
More	319	63.8
Less	53	10.6
No impact	85	17.0
Unsure	43	8.6
Total	500	100.0

Q18. And if a provincial Party committed to banning the use of herbicides in forestry, would you have a less favorable opinion of them, more favourable, or would it have no impact?

	N	%
More	377	75.4
Less	21	4.2
No impact	95	19.0
Unsure	7	1.4
Total	500	100.0

Q19. If the Provincial Election were held today, which of the following Parties and their candidate would you most likely vote for or be leaning towards at this time?

	Frequency	VOTE	DECIDED VOTE
PC	182	36.4	41.7
Liberal	143	28.6	32.8
Green	78	15.6	17.9
NDP	26	5.2	6.0
People's Alliance	7	1.4	1.6
Sub-Total	436	87.2	100.0
Undecided	64	12.8	
Total	500	100.0	

“The following questions are of a personal nature and involve the collecting of demographic data. This information is statistically important for this survey and please be assured once again that all individual responses are kept in strict confidence.”

D1. Do you participate in outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, camping, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, or hunting?			
		N	%
	Yes	331	66.2
	No	169	33.8
	Total	500	100.0

D2. What is the language that you speak most often at home?			
		N	%
	English	319	63.8
	French	181	36.2
	Total	500	100.0

D3. Do you reside in an urban or rural community?			
		N	%
	Urban	262	52.4
	Rural	238	47.6
	Total	500	100.0

D4. Which of the following age categories are you in?			
		N	%
	18-34	101	20.2
	35-44	94	18.8
	45-54	105	21.0
	55-64	89	17.8
	65+	63	12.6
	Refused	48	9.6
	Total	500	100.0

D5. What is your annual combined family income before taxes?			
		N	%
	Under \$50,000	130	26.0
	\$50,000-\$74,999	105	21.0
	\$75,000-\$99,999	94	18.8
	\$100,000+	68	13.6
	Refused	103	20.6
	Total	500	100.0

D6. Gender			
		N	%
	Male	240	48.0
	Female	260	52.0
	Total	500	100.0