New Brunswick Nature
Survey Report

oraclepoll
R E S E A R C H

July 2024

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Methodology & Logistics

Overview

The following represents the results of a July 2024 telephone survey of N=400 eligible voters, 18 years of age or older from New Brunswick, conducted by Oraclepoll Research Ltd. The Survey was commissioned by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – New Brunswick Chapter(CPAWS-NB) and the Atlantic Salmon Federation.

Reporting

This report contains the executive findings from the current survey. A separate Excel report contains the results by each individual question and a crosstabulation of the findings by area and demographics.

Study Sample

A total of N=400 interviews were completed, with residents across 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.

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 call-backs 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.

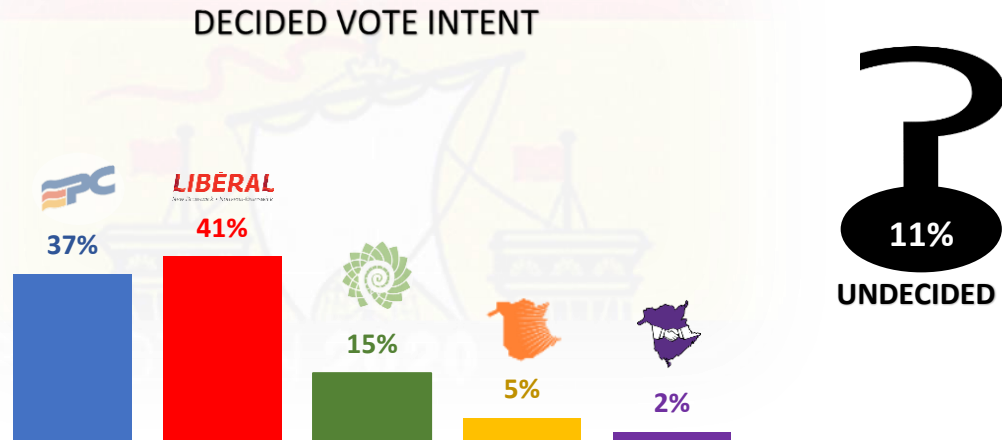Interviews took place between the days of July 3rd and July 9th, 2024.

Confidence

The margin of error for the N=400 sample is ±4.9% 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

Respondents were first asked about their provincial vote intent. Below are presented the results from decided voters, with the undecided's show separately (11%).

Q1. If a provincial election were held today, which party and their candidate would you most likely vote for or be leaning towards?

DECIDED VOTE INTENT

PC 37% LIBÉRAL 41% Green 15% NDP 5% PA 2%

11% UNDECIDED

The Liberal Party has the backing of 41% of decided voters, while the PCs trail in second at 37%. With the support of 15%, the Greens are in third spot, while 5% stated they would vote NDP and 2% the Peoples Alliance. The number of undecided voters sits at 11%.

	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
18-34	16%	43%	28%	9%	3%
35-44	21%	46%	22%	8%	3%
45-54	30%	54%	11%	4%	1%
55-64	67%	22%	5%	3%	2%
65+	73%	13%	10%	2%	2%

	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
Under $50,000	29%	32%	29%	8%	2%
$50,000-$74,999	27%	47%	22%	1%	3%
$75,000-$99,999	49%	32%	10%	6%	3%
$100,000+	60%	30%	4%	4%	2%

	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
Male	44%	37%	12%	3%	3%
Female	30%	45%	17%	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 making less than $75,000, females and French speakers.
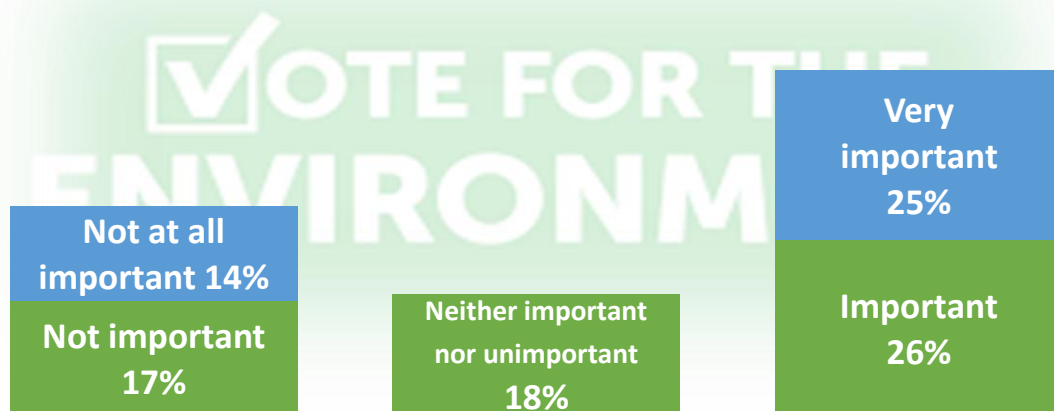
	PC	Lib	Green	NDP	PA
English	45%	35%	12%	6%	3%
French	21%	54%	21%	4%	-

Conservation, the Environment & Voting

Next, respondents were asked to rate the importance of conservation and the environment when casting a ballot. A five-point rating scale from one not at all important to five very important was used.

Q2. How important will conservation and environment issues be to you as a voter?

Fifty-one percent said environmental issues are important (26%) or very important (25%) compared to 31% total unimportant, while 18% expressed a neutral opinion of neither important nor unimportant.
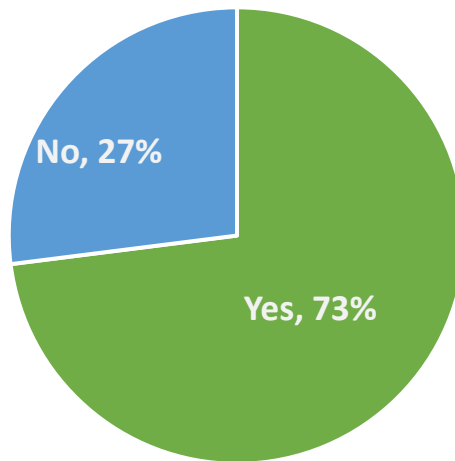
Decided Green voters were most likely to answer important or very important (90%), followed by Liberals (64%) and New Democrats (58%). A lower 46% of undecided and 21% of PC voters answered important or very important.

Protected Areas

The following statement about protected areas was first read to all respondents after which they were asked four specific questions about protected lands in New Brunswick. In the first probe they were asked about their awareness of the increase in protected areas in the province from 4.9% to 10%.

"Around the world, governments and communities are responding to environmental challenges such as climate change and wildlife habitat destruction by creating protected areas. Protected areas include parks and other land designations that typically restrict industrial activities, while allowing recreation and other sustainable uses."
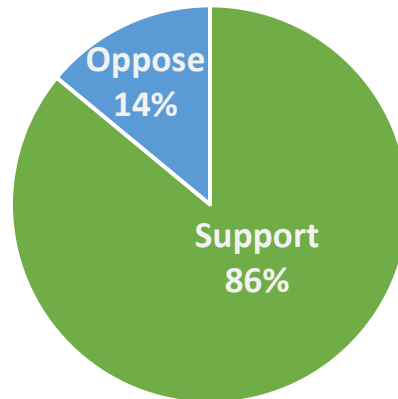
Q3. In 2022, New Brunswick increased its protected areas from 4.9% to 10% of the province's land. Were you aware of this expansion?

Nearly three-quarters of respondents said they were aware of the increase in protected areas in 2022.

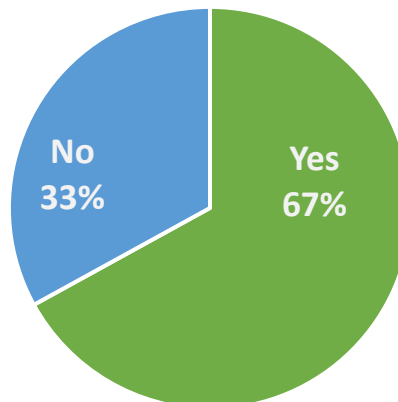In the next question, respondents were asked if they support or oppose this increase in protected areas.

Q4. Do you support or oppose this increase in protected areas?

Support among voters for the expansion of protected areas is high at 86%.

In the next question, respondents were asked if New Brunswick should protect 30% of land in the province by 2030.
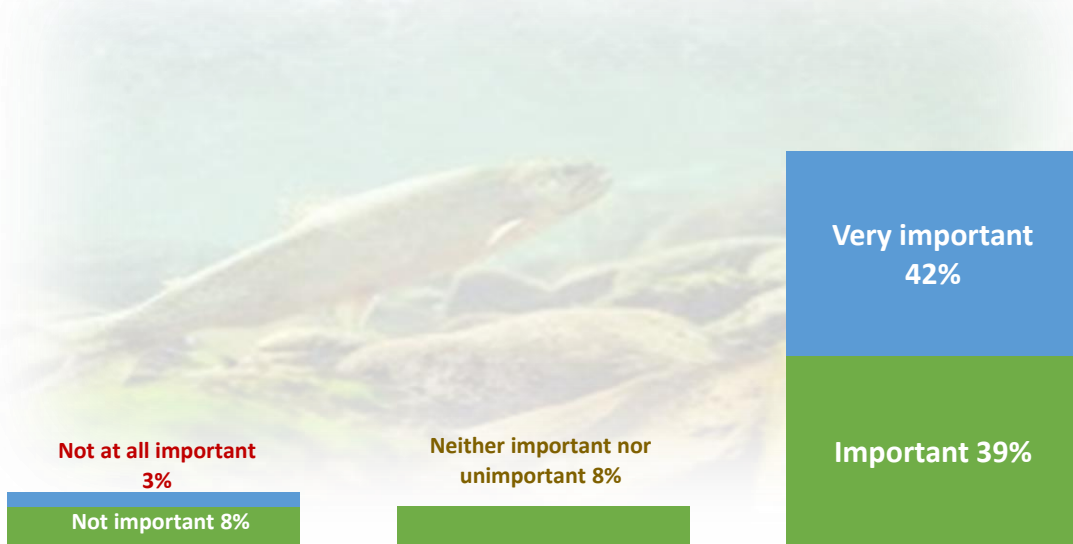
Q5. Canada has committed to protect 30% of Canada's land by 2030. Do you think New Brunswick should contribute to this national goal by protecting 30% of land in the province?

In addition, a two-thirds majority are of the opinion New Brunswick should contribute to the federal goal by protecting 30% of land.

Next, respondents were asked to rate the importance (using a five-point rating scale from 1-not at all to 5-very important) of protected areas safeguarding habitats for native fish species.

Q6. How important is it to you that new protected areas safeguard habitat for native fish species like Atlantic Salmon and Brook Trout? Please use a scale from one not at all important to five very important.

Not at all important 3%

Not important 8%

Neither important nor unimportant 8%
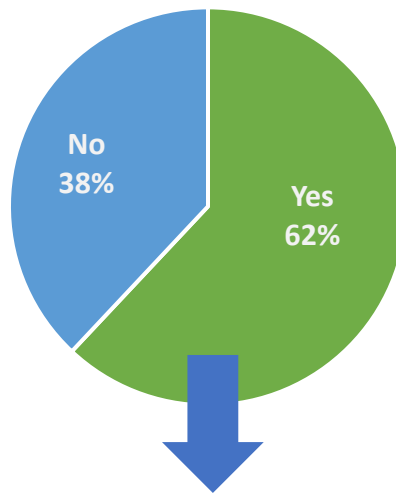
Very important 42%

Important 39%

Eighty-one percent said it is important (39%) or very important (42%) that protected areas safeguard habitat for native fish species like Atlantic Salmon and Brook Trout. This compares to only 11% that feel its is unimportant, while 8% held a neutral opinion of neither important nor unimportant.

Forest Management

All respondents were first asked if they have concerns about the state of New Brunswick's forests. The 62% or n=248 that answered yes were then asked in an open-ended or unaided probe to explain their concerns.

Q7. Do you have concerns about the state of New Brunswick's forests?

Q7B. What are your concerns?	
Logging / forestry	21%
Impact of climate change	17%
Lack of protection / protected spaces	14%
Clear cutting	13%
Herbicide / glyphosate usage	9%
Protection of species / endangered	7%
Fires	6%
Waterway protection	6%
Unsure	4%
Pollution / waste / trash	2%
Commercial activity (tourism, roads, etc.)	2%

More than six in ten or 62% have concerns about the state of forests, with their main concerns being related to commercial activity including logging and clear cutting, impacts of climate change and the lack of protected spaces. Other concerns related to herbicide spraying and the protection of species and waterways.

Respondents then rated the importance of five areas or factors related to the management of forests in New Brunswick. 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.

Q8. How important do you think the following factors are to the management of New Brunswick's forests?

	Unsure	Total unimportant	Neutral	Total important
A. Recreation or tourism	2%	6%	8%	84%
B. Hunting & fishing	3%	12%	11%	74%
C. Providing for timber and paper products	3%	11%	26%	59%
D. Protecting rivers, streams, and lakes for water quality, and to prevent floods	2%	7%	5%	86%
E. Protecting diverse forest for fish, wildlife and endangered species	2%	6%	3%	89%

Highest rated in terms of total importance at 89% was protecting forests for fish, wildife and endangered species, closely followed by protecting rivers, streams and lakes at 86% and for recreation or tourism at 84%. Hunting and fishing rated lower at 74% and lowest scored at 59% was for providing for timber and paper products.

Marine Conservation

A descriptive statement about marine ecosystems and marine protected areas was first read. Respondents were then asked to rate how important the health and protection of coastal waters around the province is to them.

"Marine ecosystems in Canada face threats from climate change. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are spaces that are legally protected to restore marine life and prohibit development and heavy industry but allow recreation and some kinds of fishing (such as for lobster)."

Q9. How important is the health and protection of the coastal waters around New Brunswick to you? Please use a scale from one not at all important to five very important.

Very important 49%

Important 40%

Not at all important 1%

Not important 3%

Neither important nor unimportant 7%

Eighty-nine percent said the health and protection of coastal waters around the province is important (40%) or very important (49%), compared to only 4% that claim it is not at all or not important.

In the next question, respondents were asked if New Brunswick should work with the Federal Government to create marine protected areas around New Brunswick.

Q10. Canada has committed to protecting 30% of its ocean by 2030. Do you support New Brunswick working with the Federal Government to create marine protected areas around NB?

Strongly support	**43%**	85% Total Support
Somewhat support	**42%**	
Somewhat oppose	7%	
Strongly oppose	7%	
Unsure	2%	

On the issue of New Brunswick working with the Government of Canada to protect 30% of its oceans, total support is at 85%.

Respondents then rated the importance of three areas or factors related to priorities for marine protected areas in the coastal waters around New Brunswick. 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 are the following factors to you as priorities for marine protected areas in the coastal waters around New Brunswick?

	Unsure	Total unimportant	Neutral	Total important
A. Protecting communities from storm surges and the effects of extreme weather	-	4%	4%	92%
B. Protecting coastal spaces from development, such as saltmarshes, mudflats, kelp and eelgrass beds	3%	5%	10%	82%
C. Protecting safe refuges and the food chain needed for marine fish, whales, birds and endangered species to survive	2%	5%	7%	86%

Highest rated in terms of total importance at 92% was protecting communities from storm surges and the effects of extreme weather, while a strong 86% said it is important or very improtant to protect safe refuges and the food chain. While lower rated there were still more than eight in ten or 82% that felt it important to protect coastal spaces from development.