

Natural Resources and Energy Press Release
Protected Areas Strategy committee report presented
July 5, 2000
FREDERICTON, N.B.-

The Protected Areas Strategy Stakeholder's Committee has reached a consensus and presented its report to Natural Resources and Energy Minister Jeannot Volpé

"The committee, whose members represent a range of interests, was able to reach consensus on the specific boundaries and land uses for the protected sites." Volpé said.

"We are still looking at protecting over 150,000 hectares of land," the minister said. "I think the hard work of the committee has paid off. Not only have they developed solutions that reduce the impact on both the forestry and mining industries, they have also succeeded in identifying sites that represent the enduring features and biological diversity of the province. "

The minister said the report will be released publicly once he has reviewed it and has brought it forward to government.

In 1997, the Department of Natural Resources and Energy (DNRE) commissioned Dr. Louis LaPierre to develop a proposal for a protected areas strategy for New Brunswick. LaPierre's proposal was made public in the fall of 1998, and during the winter of 1999 public hearings were held and hundreds of submissions were received. LaPierre presented his final report to DNRE last fall.

One of LaPierre's 50 recommendations called for the establishment of a stakeholder committee to review his findings and recommendations. Volpé invited stakeholder groups to participate, and a 12-member committee began meeting in January 2000. The committee includes: the New Brunswick Mining Association, NB Sub-Licence Forestry Alliance, NB Protected Natural Areas Coalition, the NB Prospectors and Developers Association, the New Brunswick Wildlife Federation, La Coalition Stillwater, NB Forest Products Association and the Nature Trust of New Brunswick. It also includes two representatives from the Department of Natural Resources and Energy.

"The stakeholders committee worked hard over the last six months and on behalf of the people of New Brunswick, I would like to thank them for their efforts,"

Volpé said.

New Brunswick is committed to establishing a network of protected areas by the year 2005. Interim protection is already in place for the eight candidate sites recommended by LaPierre.

"This process is part of a new vision for Crown land management which involves a greater participation of the public," Volpé said. "There was a clear will from the population for strong actions to preserve our environment for generations to come, and we have listened."

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