

Southwest  
New Brunswick  
Service Commission

2023 Annual Report

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## Joint Message from the Chair and Chief Executive Officer

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### **Dear Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission Stakeholders:**

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff of the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission, we are pleased to present the annual report for the year 2023. We are proud of the progress we have made this year and are committed to continuing to provide quality services to the region.

2023 started with a new Board of Directors consisting of 8 members: the mayors of the Village of McAdam, newly expanded Municipal District of St. Stephen, the Rural Community of Campobello, the expanded Town of Saint Andrews, the newly formed Rural Community of Eastern Charlotte, the Village of Grand Manan, the newly formed Rural Community of Fundy Shores, and the chair of the new Rural District 10 advisory committee.

This new, slimmer Board of Directors were tasked with overseeing the creation of a new strategic plan for the commission that would include newly mandated services as a result of New Brunswick local governance reform, including regional economic development, regional tourism promotion, recreation planning and collaboration, community development, and regional transportation. Also included was the creation of a new public safety committee for the region. The timeline for the strategic plan was an extremely quick 6 months, of which the first 2 or 3 were spent forming advisory committees and securing a consultant to facilitate the plan. As monumental as this task was, the plan was completed and adopted by the Board in July.

Some changes were made at the landfill facility after a significant fire that included the acquisition of more robust on-site firefighting and early fire detection equipment. The gas collection system was again expanded and enhanced, as the result was more destruction of greenhouse gas emissions with plans to continue to improve the system.

The planning and building inspection department continued to process high amounts of building permits in 2023. They also saw the uptake of enforcement services for dangerous and unsightly premises by some communities, resulting in the welcome demolitions and clean-up of problem properties in the region.

The newly mandated services began to grow legs throughout 2023, and were a large part of the new strategic plan. Various associated committees were formed and dozens of meetings occurred in a very short time to contribute to the plan. Towards the end of the year, staff were able to start executing

the plan, including the start of a new regional tourism brand and many other initiatives in community and economic development.

SNBSC ended the year once again in a healthy financial position, ready to deliver the new Provincial mandates, continue our progress and continuous improvement in our other services, and able to deliver these services in a meaningful way for our residents. We would like to acknowledge the financial inputs and efforts from various provincial government departments and crown corporations including Department of Environment and Local Government, Department of Justice and Public Safety, Regional Development Corporation, Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, WorkingNB, ACOA, our partnerships with Horizon Health and the Department of Health, and all our community partners and stakeholders. It would be an understatement to say that without this support, the task of delivering our services would be insurmountable for just our local governments alone.

We would like to sincerely thank all Board and committee members for their leadership and dedication to our mission: to excel at the provision of regional services that increase the economic and environmental success of our communities and the quality of life for the residents of the region. We also sincerely thank each and every staff member for their resilience and commitment, especially during this time of fundamental change to our organization.

The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission is proud of the progress we have made in 2023. We remain committed to providing quality services to the communities we serve and to working towards a sustainable future for Southwest New Brunswick and we look forward to continuing to serve our communities in the years to come.

Sincerely,

**Ken Stannix**

Chair, Board of Directors

**Hollis Bartlett**

Chief Executive Officer

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## Values and Priorities

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The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission continues to operate in accordance with the guiding principles outlined in the 2013 document Report to the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission: Priority Setting Workshop Outcome and Findings – Part I and II, which was unanimously endorsed by the Board of the day.

The Commission's key values, as identified in that document, are as follows:

- Honest, trustworthy;
- Accountable, responsible, open, transparent;
- Integrity;
- Risk-taking, innovative, visionary;
- Making a difference, Leadership

The Board took on the task of creating a new strategic plan in 2023, which resulted in new mission statement.

**OUR VISION:** Southwest New Brunswick is a vibrant and sustainable region with an exceptional quality of life, economic success, and community co-operation.

**OUR MISSION:** Excel at the provision of regional services which increase the economic, social, and environmental success of our communities and the quality of life of our residents.

The new strategic plan also yielded new Core Values and Operating Principles:

**1. Outcome-Driven**

Decisions will be outcome driven. We strive to help communities attain the outcomes they are seeking, such as improved health and wellbeing. We will focus on indirect benefits as well, such as enhanced community cohesion and green environments that will serve generations to come.

**2. Quality and Relevance**

SNBSC is committed to facilitating its members to offer safe recreation experiences of the highest possible quality, while addressing the unique needs and capacities of each community, and the economic situation of individuals, families and communities.

### 3. **Evidence-Based Decisions**

SNBSC is committed to “fact based” decision-making— getting the best evidence and using it to guide policy and practice. SNBSC integrates the best available research evidence with practitioner expertise and the characteristics, needs, capacities, values and preferences of those who are affected.

### 4. **Partnerships and Collaboration**

SNBSC relies on and nurtures partnerships and collaboration among:

- a. Public, not-for-profit and private providers of recreation and parks experiences, Public and private planners and developers
- b. All orders and levels of government (local, regional, provincial, federal and in Aboriginal communities)
- c. Multiple sectors and disciplines that influence well-being and share common goals

### 5. **Innovation**

SNBSC values innovation and recognizes the benefits of ingenuity, the co-creation of new policies or services with its members, and the creation and implementation of new ideas in design, program concepts, research and learning.

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## Governance

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As prescribed by the legislation that created the Regional Service Commissions, the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission has an 8-member Board of Directors which cumulatively speaks for the entire region and all its residents. Irrespective of the location they come from, Board members are duty bound to come to the Board table to work in the best interest of the region as a whole.

### 2023 Board Members:

|                                   |                                             |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ken Stannix, Chair</b>         | Mayor, Village of McAdam                    |
| <b>John Craig, Vice Chair</b>     | Mayor, Rural Community of Eastern Charlotte |
| <b>Jim Tubbs, Member-at-large</b> | Advisory Committee Chair, Rural District 10 |
| <b>Allan MacEachern</b>           | Mayor, Municipal District of St. Stephen    |
| <b>Harvey Matthews</b>            | Mayor, Rural Community of Campobello        |
| <b>Brad Henderson</b>             | Mayor, Town of Saint Andrews                |
| <b>Bonnie Morse</b>               | Mayor, Village of Grand Manan               |
| <b>Denny Cogswell</b>             | Mayor, Rural Community of Fundy Shores      |

In order to ensure that all jurisdictions can have consistent representation at Board meetings, the provincial government has stipulated that all Deputy Mayors can act as an Alternate for their mayor at meetings of the Board. They were:

|                          |                                                    |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Taylor Gallant</b>    | Deputy Mayor, Village of McAdam                    |
| <b>David Hatt</b>        | Deputy Mayor, Rural Community of Eastern Charlotte |
| <b>Sheena Young</b>      | Advisory Committee, Rural District 10              |
| <b>Ghislaine Wheaton</b> | Deputy Mayor, Municipal District of St. Stephen    |
| <b>Kyle Fletcher</b>     | Deputy Mayor, Rural Community of Campobello        |
| <b>Kate Akagi</b>        | Deputy Mayor, Town of Saint Andrews                |
| <b>Roger Fitzsimmons</b> | Deputy Mayor, Village of Grand Manan               |
| <b>Susan Farquharson</b> | Deputy Mayor, Rural Community of Fundy Shores      |

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## Committees

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The Commission's new structure, and diminished number of Directors meant a new committee structure had to be formed. With the exception of PRAC and the Landfill committee, the previous standing committees were eliminated in favour of the use of Committee-of-the-whole to gain efficiency in governance. In addition, a new Public Safety committee was formed in accordance with legislation. The new standing committee structure of the Commission is now:

- Committee-of-the-whole (replaces previous executive, human resources, finance and audit committees)
- Landfill / Solid Waste (previously known as Technical Advisory Committee)
- Property Review Adjustment Committee (PRAC)
- Public Safety

In addition, several advisory committees were established primarily to seek input on the strategic planning process, but will remain in place for ongoing assistance with each division. These committees include members of the public, subject matter experts and others who bring relevant information on the subject at hand.

They include:

- Regional Tourism Promotion
- Regional Economic Development
- Community Development
- Recreation
- Transportation

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## Annual Report from PRAC Chair to SNBSC Board

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I would like to extend a thanks to all PRAC Members for their continued service over the past year. While 2023 showed PRAC had a decreased workload, 2021 and 2022 were record-breaking years for PRAC. In the Winter of 2023, the Rural Community of Campobello began to utilize the planning services of PRAC as they disbanded their PAC, but the community has since had no development files needing to be handled by PRAC.

PRAC would also like to extend its thanks to the SNBSC Board of Directors for increasing the individual meeting per diem for PRAC members. We appreciate it as it recognizes the sometimes difficult and complex task of being involved in and preparing for PRAC meetings. This is not an easy volunteer role, but our motivation to stay involved to date has been to make sure good development decisions take place in the region on a fair and transparent basis.

In 2023, PRAC met ten (10) times. During our meetings, PRAC handled a total of twenty-nine (29) applications or files, this was twenty-nine (29) less files than 2022 (see the +1 or -1 to compare with 2022):

- Gave its views on five (5) planning by-laws or rezonings for municipal Councils; -5
- Gave its views on one (1) public road subdivision layout to a municipal Council; 0
- Gave its views on zero (0) rural planning regulations for the Minister; -1
- Four (4) terms and condition applications; +3
- Nine (9) variance applications; +3
- Zero (0) legal non-conforming use applications; -1
- Zero (0) similar to or compatible with applications; -3
- Two (2) temporary use authorization applications; 0
- Thirty-two (8) type-2 subdivision applications (lots with no public road frontage); and, -26
- Zero (0) subdivision plan rejections for unsuitable lots. -1

Sincerely,



Sam Walsh, PRAC Chair

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## Mandates and Progress

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The Province's Department of Environment and Local Government clearly defined the structure and mandate for all regional service commissions. It should be noted that, prior to the local governance reforms, the Province did not grant the commissions the authority to force fundamental changes or add services within their regions beyond the pre-existing planning and solid waste services. Any such initiatives required the voluntary participation of the service providers themselves and the approval of the SNBSC Board.

In 2023, the Commission planned, prepared for, and implemented all of the new mandates.

The Commission's mandates now include:

- solid waste
- land use planning
- community development
- economic development
- recreation cost-sharing
- tourism promotion
- public safety committee

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## Solid Waste Management

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The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission continues to provide solid waste services to our region via the Hemlock Knoll Solid Waste Facility. The facility also provides services to customers in the Saint John River Valley (Western Valley RSC) as well as to our customers in eastern Maine.

### Major 2023 projects

Ongoing waste cell construction: Subgrade preparation of Cell 13.



One of our major projects for 2023 was the subgrade preparation of Cell 13. The cell subgrade and exposure of the existing liner tie in was completed in the summer. The completion of the subgrade is the creation of the basic shape of the landfill cell. Exposing the edge of existing liners of neighboring cells allows for connection to the new cell creating a complete liner under the entire landfill cell area site.

### Ongoing Landfill Capping:

Final capping completed on cell 10 and south slope cell 11.



Capping of the landfill is done to control or limit the flow of rainwater infiltration into the waste cells, thus creating additional leachate. A combination of intermediate and final capping was performed on various parts of the landfill. Parts of the waste cells that waste will be added to in the near future are capped with intermediate cover. Parts of the landfill that are not going to receive waste in the foreseeable future are final capped. Intermediate cap consists of permeable gravel.

The final cap is an engineered specification of a gravel layer followed by screened clay layers then covered with topsoil then seeded for slope stabilization.

Landfill gas system: Gas collection, ongoing flaring, and system maintenance. Two additional wells were connected to the collection system.



Landfill gas (LFG) produced from the decomposition of waste is collected and destroyed by the LFG collection and flare system. The system consists of wells drilled into the waste to collect the gas, a piping system to carry the gas to the flare and a waste gas flaring system to destroy the gas.

Other projects: A section of filter media was replaced on one of the filter beds



Liquid run off from the waste placed in the lined containment cells is called leachate. The leachate is collected and piped to the leachate treatment system. The leachate treatment system uses a system of aerated basins and filters to remove contaminants from the leachate. The filters must be refurbished from time to time as the wood chip media breaks down and sand becomes clogged with fines.

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## Waste Reduction

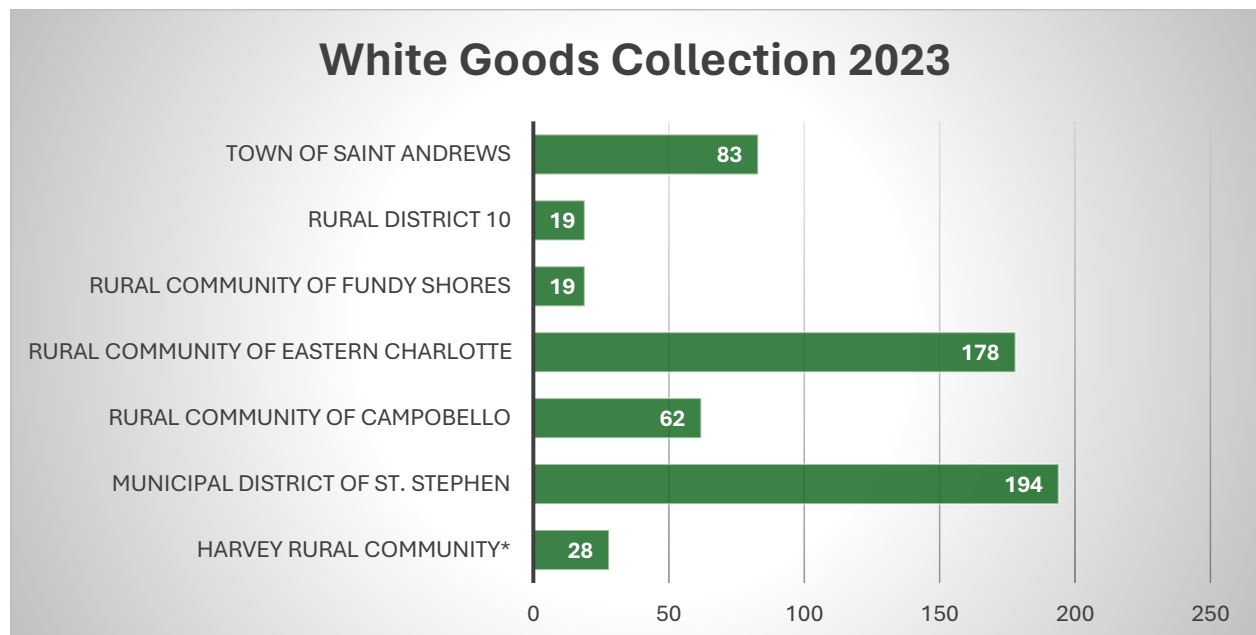
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In 2023 Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission was one of 13 municipalities and organizations to be awarded the Carton Council of Canada's Community Education Award Program. These awards were based on carton recycling information we provided throughout the month of October 2023. During this time, we encouraged carton recycling on our social media pages, website, and visited 7 schools in our regions presenting different waste reduction processes.

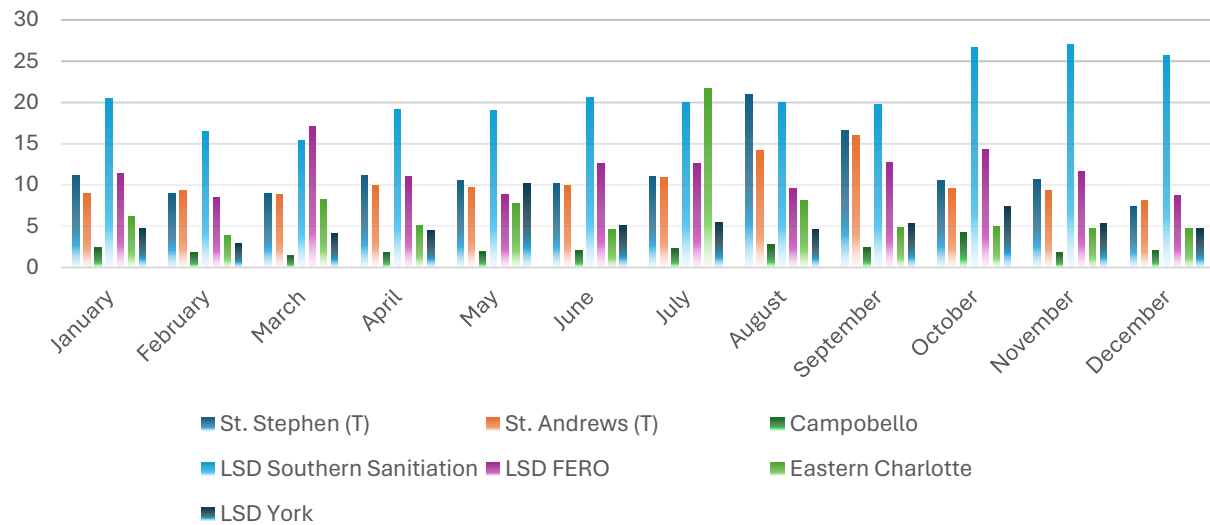
In September Hemlock Knoll Landfill hosted its first Household Hazardous waste open house, we invited residents from our region to visit us at 5749 Route 3, Lawrence station to learn more about the process of handling hazardous waste, general waste reduction practises and tour our facility We completed site tours and collected about 270 gallons of assorted HHW .



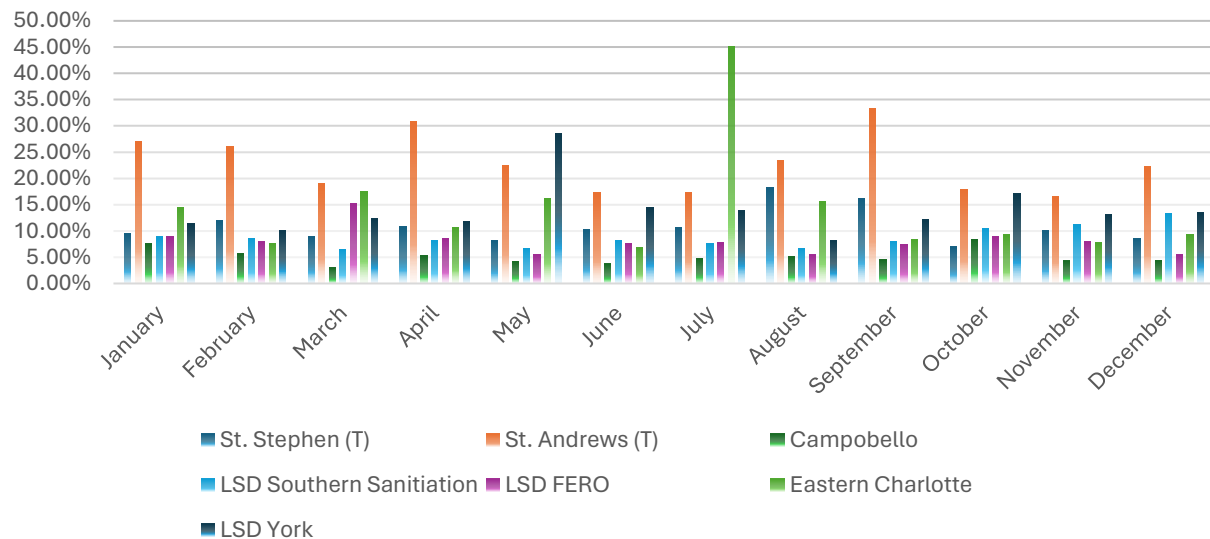
The 2023 White Goods program was very successful, with **584 online requests** we recycled **932 appliances**.



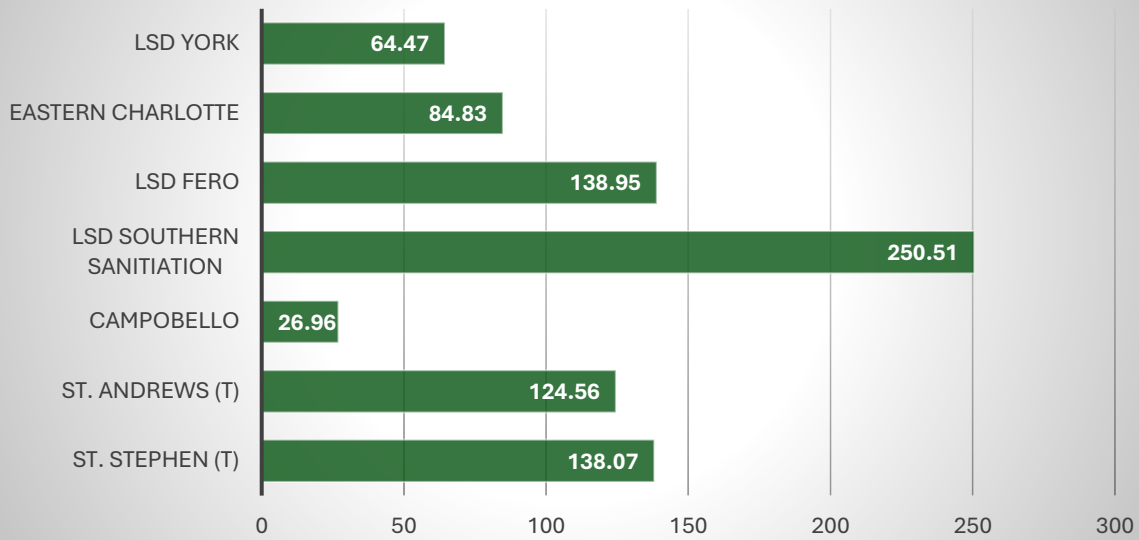
## 2023 RECYCLING TONNAGE - MONTHLY



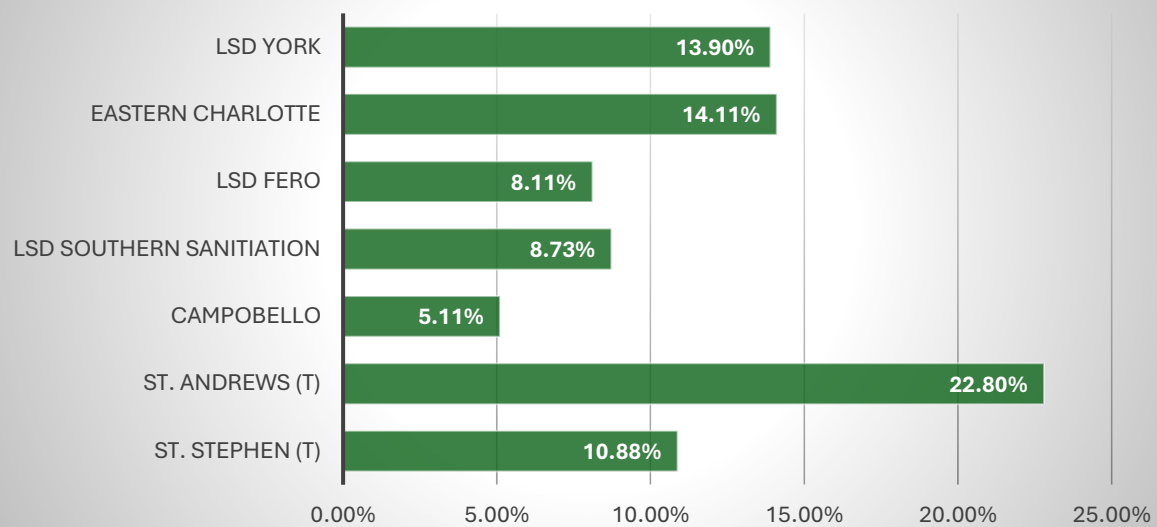
## 2023 DIVERSION RATE - MONTHLY



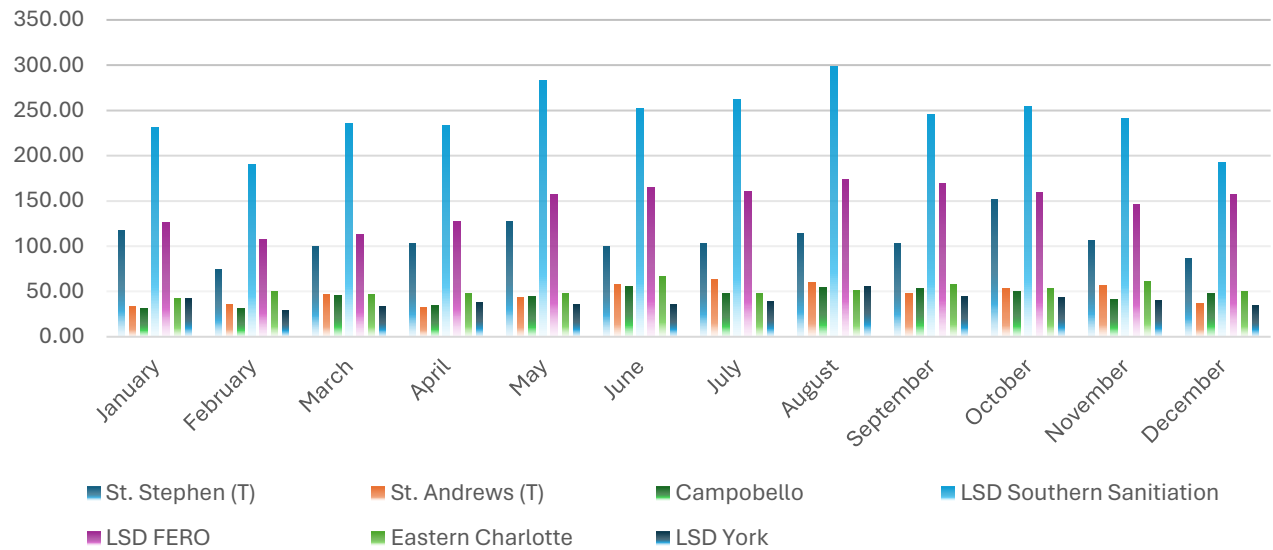
## 2023 Overall Recycling Tonnage



## 2023 Diversion Overall



## 2023 WASTE TONNAGE - MONTHLY



## Recycling Facebook Performance

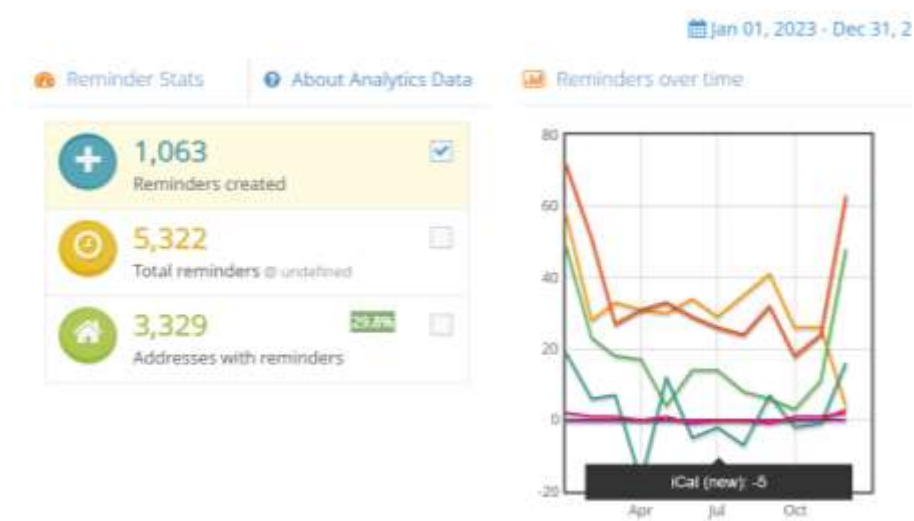


## Mobile App/Website Stats

### Calendar Stats:



### Calendar Reminder Stats:



## Mobile App Stats:



## Website Traffic Stats:

| Type          | Views | URL                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| calendar      | 30002 | <a href="https://southwestrecycles.com/">https://southwestrecycles.com/</a>                                                                                   |
| calendar      | 13783 | <a href="https://snbsc.ca/">https://snbsc.ca/</a>                                                                                                             |
| wizard        | 5876  | <a href="https://southwestrecycles.com/">https://southwestrecycles.com/</a>                                                                                   |
| wizard        | 1416  | <a href="https://snbsc.ca/">https://snbsc.ca/</a>                                                                                                             |
| calendar      | 717   | <a href="https://www.snbsc.ca/">https://www.snbsc.ca/</a>                                                                                                     |
| tabbed_widget | 134   | <a href="https://www.townofsaintandrews.ca/">https://www.townofsaintandrews.ca/</a>                                                                           |
| calendar      | 128   | <a href="https://snbsc.ca/solid-waste/recycling/collection-calendar">https://snbsc.ca/solid-waste/recycling/collection-calendar</a>                           |
| calendar      | 22    | <a href="https://southwestrecycles.com/solid-waste/recycling/collection-calendar">https://southwestrecycles.com/solid-waste/recycling/collection-calendar</a> |
| wizard        | 13    | <a href="https://snbsc.ca/solid-waste/recycling/recycling-guide">https://snbsc.ca/solid-waste/recycling/recycling-guide</a>                                   |
| calendar      | 4     | <a href="https://www.snbsc.ca/solid-waste/recycling/collection-calendar">https://www.snbsc.ca/solid-waste/recycling/collection-calendar</a>                   |

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## Local & Regional Planning

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### Providing Services to Whole Region

In 2023, the SNBSC Planning Division began providing land use planning services to every local government in the region. This included the Village of Grand Manan and the Rural Community of Campobello, as well as the Musquash area of Fundy Shores. What made this geographical expansion of the service area easier was the roll-out of a comprehensive digital permit platform, developed by SNBSC Planning staff. All applications are now available in a digital, mobile-friendly form that can be accessed by residents and developers in the exact same manner from anywhere in the region. It has significantly reduced in-person visits to the planning office, even from residents who live nearby the office. Telephone support is offered directly by SNBSC staff to help people fill out the digital form.

SNBSC's application portal was first developed as a pilot in early 2022. It has since become a model for the rest of the province as SNBSC has fielded requests from three other regional service commissions to help them develop a replica of our software. The trend in North America is towards making more building and planning services available online. SNBSC's portal has made permit processing faster for planning staff because it has effectively reduced the need for document filing and repetitious data-entry on paper forms or on spreadsheets.

### High Permit Volume

|                         | Totals for SNBSC Planning Per Year |               |               |               |               |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Year                    | 2019                               | 2020          | 2021          | 2022          | 2023          |
| Construction Value (\$) | 18,336,855.00                      | 33,532,155.00 | 59,162,088.00 | 44,950,431.00 | 48,713,629.00 |
| Building Permits        | 190                                | 173           | 292           | 253           | 335           |
| Development Approvals   | 200                                | 425           | 299           | 267           | 335           |
| Subdivision Approvals   | 35                                 | 64            | 67            | 107           | 100           |

The volume of building and development that SNBSC Planning Division approved increased in 2023. While development and building permits are up significantly, the construction values did not increase substantially. Note: of the 335 building permits received and reviewed for zoning, 87 were issued by a contract building inspector for the Municipal District of St. Stephen and 9 by the Rural Community of Campobello. In 2023, SNBSC approved the construction of 215 new dwelling units.

## **Adapting to Major Changes in Planning Legislation**

2023 was a year of major changes to planning across the Province of New Brunswick. The most consequential changes to local governance in a generation also occurred in tandem with the significant changes to planning law. The Statements of Public Interest Regulation (SPIs) came into effect on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Since that date, all planning documents and development decisions must meet the SPIs as a test whether they serve the best long-term interests of the public. One important example for this region is that PRAC/PACs can no longer approve new private access subdivisions that have inadequate access or emergency egress due to risk of forest fires or other natural hazards. In the past, only public streets had to meet these standards; private streets used to be exempt as there were no standards or tests that they had to meet, and a private developer or lot purchaser assumed all the risk.

By 2028, all local governments and the rural district will require a new municipal or rural plan that implement local policy with respect to the high-level requirements of the SPIs. The local government members in this region have the benefit of utilizing the SNBSC Planning Division, as it has built up its capacity to create new plans with each community by this fast-approaching deadline. The schedule for SNBSC Planning Division, subject to Council approvals and community consultations, will allow every community in the region to have a new plan before 2028 without the need to hire any external consultants or agencies. In 2023, SNBSC Planning Division helped McAdam to adopt a new rural plan which is now in-effect. After community consultations in 2023, SNBSC Planning Division also drafted a rural plan for Fundy Shores. Both plans meet targets established by the SPI regulations as well as community goals for conservation, business development, and housing development.

## **Regional Planning & GIS Services**

SNBSC's Planning Division continues to provide highly valuable, region-wide planning data for all communities in Southwest NB. The Board's strategic plan for SNBSC Planning included building geographic information systems (GIS) technical capacity to assist municipalities with their decision-making on infrastructure and community master planning. SNBSC Planning Division hired a skilled Planning & GIS Technician to meet this strategic objective. One significant efficiency that SNBSC Planning Division has achieved with regional-scale planning, is the creation of background study maps for the whole region as opposed to redoing the same effort in each local government territory. Previously, when each local government worked with its own planning consultant, this effort would have been replicated at a significant cost to each community when their plan was updated.

## **Planning Support for Housing Objectives**

In 2023, SNBSC modified the role of one of its planners to add the job description of ‘Housing Specialist.’ The reason for this is that community planning intersects with most aspects of housing development from a local government perspective and there was an opportunity to develop expertise within SNBSC’s Planning Division on other housing-related issues, such as finding funding sources. One example of this was when the Housing Specialist supported every local government with drafting a housing accelerator fund (HAF) application to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) as this fund was designed to improve local government planning regulations on housing. While CMHC disappointedly rejected all HAF grant requests in the region, the Housing Specialist has been able to help local governments to find and navigate other funding opportunities for housing and has served as an invaluable resource to non-profit developers. The role will continue to be used to meet strategic objectives established by the Board of Directors of SNBSC on housing as well as research for the SNBSC Planning Division regarding best-practices for planning and encouraging housing development.

## **Building Inspection & Enforcement**

In 2023, SNBSC Planning Division responded to the strategic plan directive to enhance enforcement services to the region. To meet this objective, SNBSC hired a new Planning & Compliance Assistant that has been responsible for all administrative work related to enforcement, including tracking, and monitoring all active enforcement files, updating the data base and land gazette, and drafting orders under the guidance of building inspectors or development officers. This added capacity has allowed for building and development officials to increase their capacity to take on additional enforcement responsibilities in 2023, including providing dangerous or unsightly premises enforcement services in three new communities: Grand Manan, Fundy Shores, and Eastern Charlotte. Due to the cost-structure of the fee-for-service contract, SNBSC limited to providing direct dangerous or unsightly premises by-law enforcement services only to local governments that are utilizing SNBSC’s building inspection services.

## **Civic Addressing**

In 2023, SNBSC Planning Division responded to the request for assistance from several local government partners who had civic addressing responsibilities downloaded to them by the Department of Public Safety. SNBSC Planning Division relies on civic addressing as part of the development approval process. A civic address is one of the pre-requisites required for permit issuance. In order to continue providing uninterrupted development services to Grand Manan, Fundy Shores, and Campobello, SNBSC Planning developed a digital, user-friendly [Civic Address Request form](#) which residents can use to make their civic address requests. SNBSC planning staff now are able to assign the civic numbers and communicate them to NB 911.

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## Regional Economic & Workforce Development

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The inaugural year of the regional economic and workforce development mandates saw enhanced collaboration and coordination on regional strategic focus, business growth, and workforce development activities and supports.

Collaboration with the region's chamber of commerce's delivered combined educational offerings, resulting in quarterly sessions offered to many of Southwest's 2,100 businesses in areas such as financial support, marketing, and mental health in the workplace. The chambers were also key partners in all other workforce and business events and training offerings for the region.

SNBSC hosted three job fairs for regional employers and the workforce. The first was held in March in St. Stephen and saw 100 participants with career offerings from 30 employers. A second was held in Saint Andrews in May, with more than 100 participants and 20 businesses showcased. A third 'pop-up' fair was held in St. Stephen in November for 10 employers, and another 100 potential employees attending.

A Youth Opportunities Expo was hosted in partnership with the Multicultural Association of Charlotte County. Approximately 220 students attended the event at the Algonquin Resort in Saint Andrews, from all regional high schools. Students participated in several workshops and had the opportunity to speak with 20 regional employers about career options.



*Participants at the Youth Opportunities Expo*

SNBSC, through a contract with Practical Human Resource Solutions, supported more than 25 businesses with human resources and immigration support. Quarterly training sessions were delivered to the regional human resources community in areas of Human Rights, Training, and Attraction, and Retention.

Business settlement services were provided to a large new employer in the region, which included assistance with recruitment, advertising, and partner connections. Several other businesses were supported with financial program advice, and connections to appropriate partners.

Finally, the Southwest Workforce Development Strategy was developed in 2023. It was developed in partnership with WorkingNB, ACOA, ONB, and NBCC and led by the Stiletto Agency. The work was informed by an in-depth analysis of stakeholder engagement from across the region, and a scan of

workforce data. It will steer the workforce development mandate for the next five years and will focus on four key areas:

- **Attraction and Retention**
- **Mindset and Education**
- **Support and Advocacy**
- **Agility and Data Collection/Analysis**



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## Community Development

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Under the Community Development mandate, we are intended to work with regional partners to identify how we may be able to support improvements in areas such as affordable housing, social inclusion, and healthy communities. The primary goal is to build collaboration, coordination, and a stronger cooperative approach, so that efforts and investments in the region are delivered effectively and to a greater overall impact. Amid implementing new mandates and local governance reforms in 2023, our efforts focused primarily on building understanding, alignment, and collaboration.

We have been collaborating closely with regional Horizon Health Community Developers and Community Capacity & Resilience Coordinator as a Regional Community Development team. Additionally, SNBSC departments (Economic Development, Community Development, Planning, Recreation, and Tourism) have been working together where priorities and expertise overlap.

On a provincial level, SNBSC has a partnership with the Economic & Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC). Through this partnership, Community Development supports the provincial poverty reduction priorities as Southwest NB's Community Inclusion Network and as the regional conduit for ESIC's Community Action & Transportation grants.

### **2023 Activities**

- Community Development Strategic Planning – An initial strategic plan for Community Development was created.
- Network Development and Communication - Through network newsletters, workshops and meeting up with residents, non-profits, and municipalities across the region we've been supporting pathways for communication, understanding and collaboration.
- ESIC Community Action & Transportation Grant Funding – We help facilitate this funding to support community projects that relate to the Overcoming Poverty Together (OPT3) priority areas and will have a measurable impact on people living in poverty.
- Horizon Health Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for Southwest NB – We supported this process all through 2023, which included Initiation, Planning, and Learning phases.
- Regional Resilience – We collaborate with the Regional Resiliency committee and provide admin support for the Regional Resilience funding into Southwest NB.

## 2023 Highlights

- ESIC Community Action and Transportation funding supported 12 projects, leveraging over \$100,000k in ESIC funding for total projects value of around \$390,000.
- Projects included: After-school skating, Recreation library expansion, School Food program support, Peer support expansion for addiction recovery, Youth Leadership training, supporting inclusion for Summer Kids Program and Our Amazing Place race.
- Community Transportation funding supported Charlotte Dial A Ride, who provided 8000+ rides for those without access to transportation for medical, work/training, Social and basics needs.

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## Regional Tourism Promotion

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In 2023, SNBSC was given the opportunity to become the Regional Destination Marketing office for Southwest New Brunswick. To achieve this, several stakeholder meetings and sessions were held to set the course for this brand-new service, and then a 5-year strategic plan was developed. Once the blueprint for the new service offerings was created, SNBSC faced the challenging task of creating a refreshed brand that represented all the offerings of the entire region, not just the Bay of Fundy and its coastal communities.

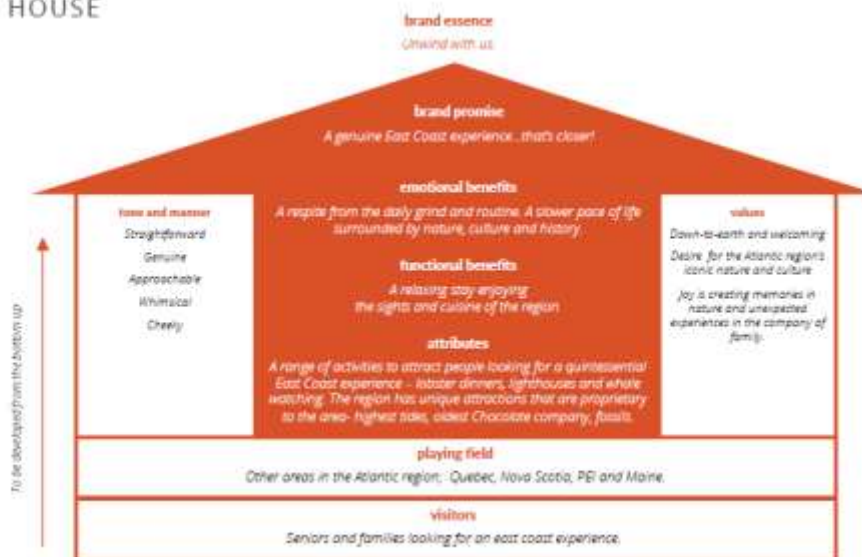
With the opportunity to build on the past success of the region's tourism sector but aligned with the organization's new strategic priorities, the first important step in establishing the RDMO and implementing the strategic plan was to reevaluate Southwest's unique brand position and undertake the development of a brand strategy for Southwest New Brunswick. The brand strategy was completed at the end of the year, setting the organization up to continue developing the other critical elements of the new service, such as website development and executing compelling campaigns to invite people to discover our region and enjoy an unforgettable East Coast vacation in the following year.

The brand strategy has defined our brand story, homed in on our target audience, and shaped the emotional and physical benefits, brand promise, and brand essence. The below Brand House strategy synopsis is the foundation of the Visit Southwest New Brunswick Brand and will be communicated through our Brand platforms.

**“Southwest New Brunswick has everything you need in an East Coast holiday.”**

**“The East Coast is here”**

### BRAND HOUSE



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## Recreation

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Last year, we embarked on developing the 2023-2028 Regional Recreation Strategic Plan to provide a framework for future service delivery and collaborations in the region. The priorities of the strategic plan include:

1. Establishing a dedicated focus and resources on Southwest New Brunswick's trails to foster trail tourism in the region.
2. Supporting residents in having access to safe, outdoor recreational activities, including improved access to water-based activities.
3. Fostering and promoting the growth of arts and culture opportunities in the region.
4. Increasing efforts to better utilize and access existing recreation infrastructure, such as Anglophone South School District facilities, before contemplating constructing new recreation infrastructure.
5. Working with partners to discover and trial new opportunities to support access to recreation and sport for community members in Southwest New Brunswick, focusing on historically underrepresented populations, low-income individuals, and those who face discrimination due to their background, identity, or disability.
6. Support initiatives that promote physical activity so that individuals and communities can benefit from lifelong participation in recreational experiences from early childhood to old age.

We are proud to report that we have made significant progress towards completing the regional signature trail, The Coastal Link. Our focus in the past year has been on completing substantial upgrades to the Spruce Lake segment of the trail. We are pleased to announce that we have achieved this project. We are now left with the Musquash Estuary crossing as the final off-road greenway section and the shared road connector links to connect all of our communities.

We are grateful for the support we have received from the Federal Active Transportation Fund, the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, and the Trans Canada Trail for implementing the trail across the region. SNBSC successfully secured \$836,000 dollars through these programs, enabling us to make significant progress toward the Trail's Completion.

In addition to our work on the Coastal Link Trail, we have progressed towards our other strategic plan goals. Working with multi-sectoral partners, SNSBC supported the trial of new opportunities to support access to recreation and sport for all community members in Southwest New Brunswick in a project led by the University of New Brunswick and supported by All in Research & Innovation,

Tourism Heritage and Culture and Economic and ESIC. Our region was one of 2 regions selected for prototyping methods to reimagine access to sport, recreation, and leisure, and to create a sense of belonging and dignified access to sport, recreation and leisure for equity-owned people of NB. Year one results and funding of the multi-year project can be found here. [Year one Report\\_ Reimagining access to Sport and Recreation](#)

We thank our partners, volunteers, and stakeholders for their ongoing support. It is through your generosity and dedication that we are able to make progress toward our vision. We remain committed to our goals and look forward to continuing our journey with you.

## 2023 Meeting Attendance & Expenses

| Community         | Member                  | Attended | Total Per Diem | Expense |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------------|---------|
| Campobello        | Harvey Matthews         | 12/13    | \$3630         | \$1951  |
| Eastern Charlotte | John Craig              | 13/13    | \$4160         | \$1454  |
| Fundy Shores      | George (Denny) Cogswell | 13/13    | \$4440         | \$1902  |
| Grand Manan       | Bonnie Morse            | 12/13    | \$3600         | \$676   |
| McAdam            | Ken Stannix             | 13/13    | \$7910         | \$2269  |
| Rural District    | Jim Tubbs               | 13/13    | \$4390         | \$564   |
| Saint Andrews     | Brad Henderson          | 10/13    | \$3184         | \$276   |
| St. Stephen       | Allan MacEachern        | 13/13    | \$4320         | \$121   |

**Note:**

Per diems & expenses include board meetings, committee meetings & PRAC where applicable

“Attended” refers to Board meetings only

“Expense” refers to mileage and any other eligible claimed expenses