



Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development

ANNUAL REPORT

2022

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Halifax

ISSN: **2562-6523**

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Honourable Keith Bain
Speaker
House of Assembly
Province House
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development, I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Committee for the period from September 2021 to August 2022 of the Sixty-Fourth General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

John White, MLA for Glace Bay-Dominion
Chair
Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development

Halifax, Nova Scotia
2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	iii
Membership	iii
Membership Changes	iii
Procedures and Operations	iv
Notices, Transcripts and Reports	iv
Research Material	iv
Acknowledgements	v
PUBLIC HEARINGS	
December 7, 2021	1
Organizational/Agenda Setting	
January 25, 2022	3
Active Transportation	
Department of Natural Resources & Renewables	
Department of Public Works	
February 22, 2022	5
Protecting Employment in the Transition from Coal	
Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration	
Nova Scotia Power	
IBEW Local 1928	
Clean Foundation	
March 22, 2022	6
Renewable Energy: Progress Towards Targets	
Department of Natural Resources and Renewables	
May 24, 2022	7
Small Woodlots and the Value of the Ecological Forestry	
Department of Natural Resources and Renewables	
Nova Scotia Woodlot Owners & Operators	
Western Woodlot Services Cooperative	
The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq	
June 28, 2022	8
Nova Scotia Parks System	
Department of Natural Resources and Renewables	

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Motions	9
Appendix B – Documentation	11

INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development, an all-party committee of the House of Assembly, was struck in the First Session of the Sixty-Fourth General Assembly. Pursuant to Rule 60(2)(d) of the *Province of Nova Scotia Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly*:

(2)(d) The Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee is established for the purpose of considering matters relative to natural resources and economic development including agriculture, aquaculture, business, energy, the environment, fisheries, forestry, infrastructure, marketing, mines, public works, science, technology, tourism, trade and transportation 1987 R. 60(2); am 1993; am. 1996; am. 2018

MEMBERSHIP

There shall be no more than nine members of the Legislative Assembly appointed to this committee. The current membership of the Natural Resources and Economic Development is as follows:

Tom Taggart MLA – Chair
Colchester-North

Ronnie LeBlanc, MLA
Clare

Dave Ritcey, MLA – Vice-Chair
Truro -Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River

Carmen Kerr, MLA
Annapolis

Kent Smith, MLA
Eastern Shore

Gary Burrill, MLA Halifax
Chebucto

Trevor Boudreau, MLA
Richmond

Lisa Lachance, MLA Halifax
Citadel – Sable Island

Chris Palmer, MLA
Kings-West

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Gary Burrill, MLA for Halifax Chebucto, replaced Claudia Chender, MLA for Dartmouth South, in July 2022.

PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

The Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee traditionally meets once a month. These meetings are usually held on the fourth Tuesday of the month in the Legislative Committee Room, 1700 Granville Street, Granville Level, One Government Place.

Because of physical distancing protocols observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting on January 25, 2022, meeting was held by video conference.

NOTICES, TRANSCRIPTS AND REPORTS

NOTICES

Notices of committee meetings are sent to all members of the committee, caucus office staff, legislative staff and Communications Nova Scotia. The notices are also posted in Province House and are on the Nova Scotia Legislature website at the following address:

<https://nslegislature.ca/get-involved/calendar/>

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts of the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee meetings are available from the Legislative Library in Province House, the Legislative Committees Office or on the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee web page at:

<https://nslegislature.ca/legislative-business/committees/standing/natural-resources-and-economic-development/archive/natural-resources-and-economic-development>

REPORTS

All reports of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development are compiled by the Legislative Committees Office and forwarded to committee members for consideration. Upon completion of the review and approval of the report, the Chair tables the report with the Speaker of the House of Assembly or with the Clerk of the House of Assembly.

RESEARCH MATERIAL

All research for the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee is compiled by the Legislative Library in consultation with the committee clerk. Research material is provided to members and caucus staff prior to the meeting date. A copy of this material is also made available to the witnesses appearing before the committee, to the Legislative Library in Province House and to Hansard Reporting Services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The committee wishes to extend its gratitude to all witnesses for their time and co-operation. Special appreciation is extended to the Legislative Committees Office; Hansard Reporting Services; Legislative Television and Broadcast Services; and the Nova Scotia Legislative Library.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Agenda-setting was held. The committee agreed to the following topics as put forward by motion:

- Nova Scotia Park System
- Renewable Energy: Progress Towards Targets
- Active Transportation
- Small Woodlots and the Value of Ecological Forestry
- Protecting Employment in the Transition from Coal
- Rural Economic Recovery After Covid-19

The committee discussed the rotation and limit of topics.

That the government caucus will get three regular or emergency topics per six-meeting rotation, the Official Opposition will get two regular or emergency topics per six-meeting rotation, and the third party will get one regular or emergency topic per six-meeting rotation.

- Moved by Trevor Boudreau, MLA
- Carried

The committee discussed the structure of questioning the witnesses.

That the Chair could keep a list of questions and go through that list in order of parties, so could recognize the governing party first, the Official Opposition and then the third party in order of that list.

- Moved by Claudia Chender, MLA
- Carried

Correspondence:

Acknowledgment of the email from a constituent on agenda topic suggestions:

- Email from Janet Maybee with suggestions for committee topics at the agenda-setting. This was distributed to committee members on December 6, 2021.

DOCUMENTATION

No documents/information were requested.

TRANSCRIPT

A transcript of this meeting can be found online at the following address:

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Hansard Transcript \(nslegislature.ca\)](https://www.nslegislature.ca/hansard)

WITNESSES

Department of Natural Resources and Renewables

Karen Gatien, Deputy Minister

Keith Collins, Executive Director of Sustainable and Renewable Energy

Jonah Bernstein, Director – Clean Transportation

Department of Public Works

Bonnie Rankin, Executive Director of Strategic Infrastructure and Priority Policy

Diane Saurette, Executive Director of Finance, Strategic Capital Planning

Gregory Sewell, Director, Community Transportation

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Poll:

Committee agreed to an email poll to meet virtually as a result of public health directives.

Approval of Witness Change:

Committee received two written requests to amend the witness for the topic of Protecting Employment in the Transition from Coal.

That we accept the changes in the witnesses as recommended by the initial list

- Moved by Carman Kerr, MLA
- Carried

Next Meeting:

The committee discussed meeting virtually in February, as a result of the current public health directives.

That the next meeting of the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee take place virtually

- Moved by Kent Smith, MLA
- Amended by Claudia Chender, MLA
- Carried

TRANSCRIPT

A transcript of this meeting can be found online at the following address:

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Hansard Transcript \(nslegislature.ca\)](http://nslegislature.ca)

WITNESSES

Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration

Ava Czapalay, Deputy Minister

Nancy Hoddinott, Senior Executive Director – Skills and Learning Branch

Nova Scotia Power

Peter Gregg, President and CEO

Mark Sidebottom, Chief Operating Office

IBEW Local 1928

Jim Sponagle, Business Manager

Clean Foundation

Scott Skinner, CEO

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Next Meeting:

The Committee discussed returning the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development to in-person meetings.

That the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development return to an in-person meeting.

- Moved by Kent Smith, MLA
- Carried

DOCUMENTATION

No documents/information were requested.

TRANSCRIPT

A transcript of this meeting can be found online at the following address:

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Hansard Transcript \(nslegislature.ca\)](https://www.nslegislature.ca/hansard)

WITNESSES

Department of Natural Resources and Renewables

Karen Gatien, Deputy Minister

Keith Collins, Executive Director, Clean Energy

David Miller, Director, Clean Electricity

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

There was no committee business.

DOCUMENTATION

No documents/information were requested.

TRANSCRIPT

A transcript of this meeting can be found online at the following address:

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Hansard Transcript \(nslegislature.ca\)](https://www.nslegislature.ca/hansard)

WITNESSES

Department of Natural Resources and Renewables

Karen Gatien, Deputy Minister
Heidi Higgins, Manager, Forest Inventory

Nova Scotia Woodlot Owners & Operators

Andrew Kekacs, Executive Director

Western Woodlot Services Cooperative

Patricia Amero, General Manager and Registered Professional Forester

The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq

Angie Gillis, Associate Executive Director
Troy Robichaud, Senior Research Advisor, Environment & Natural Resources

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Correspondence:

Response to a request for information from the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables from the January 25th meeting.

Acknowledgment of a meeting request by an organization:

- Email from the Canadian Franchise Association

DOCUMENTATION

No documents/information were requested. (Chair requested for the witness to table an invitation to a tour)

TRANSCRIPT

A transcript of this meeting can be found online at the following address:

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Hansard Transcript \(nslegislature.ca\)](https://www.nslegislature.ca/hansard)

WITNESSES

Department of Natural Resources and Renewables

Karen Gatien, Deputy Minister

Peter Geddes, Executive Director

Matt Parker, Director, Parks, Outreach, and Service Delivery

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Committee discussed when they would conduct their next agenda-setting.

The decision was to have agenda-setting on September 27th. If witnesses attend the meeting, then the meeting would go from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. If witnesses are not in attendance, then the meeting would go from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested by the committee and has been received from the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables:

- Director Matt Parker offered to give a follow-up on MLA Trevor Boudreau's inquiry regarding upgrades to Battery Park.

TRANSCRIPT

A transcript of this meeting can be found online at the following address:

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Hansard Transcript \(nslegislature.ca\)](https://www.nslegislature.ca/hansard)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - MOTIONS

The following is a list of motions introduced by the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development:

December 7th, 2021

An agenda-setting was held. The committee agreed to the following topics as put forward by motion:

- Nova Scotia Park System
- Renewable Energy: Progress Towards Targets
- Active Transportation
- Small Woodlots and the Value of Ecological Forestry
- Protecting Employment in the Transition from Coal
- Rural Economic Recovery After COVID-19

That the government caucus will get three regular or emergency topics per six-meeting rotation, the Official Opposition will get two regular or emergency topics per six-meeting rotation, and the third party will get one regular or emergency topic per six-meeting rotation.

- Moved by Trevor Boudreau, MLA
- Carried

That the Chair could keep a list of questions and go through that list in order of parties, so could recognize the governing party first, the Official Opposition and then the third party in order of that list.

- Moved by Claudia Chender, MLA
- Carried

January 25th, 2022

Committee received two written requests to amend the witness for the topic of Protecting Employment in the Transition from Coal.

That we accept the changes in the witnesses as recommended by the initial list.

- Moved by Carman Kerr, MLA
- Carried

The committee discussed meeting virtually in February, as a result of the current public health directives.

That the next meeting of the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee take place virtually.

- Moved by Kent Smith, MLA

- Amended by Claudia Chender, MLA
- Carried

February 22nd, 2022

The Committee discussed returning the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development to in-person meetings.

That the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development return to an in-person meeting.

- Moved by Kent Smith, MLA
- Carried

APPENDIX B – DOCUMENTATION

The following is a list of documents and information requested and received by the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development:

December 7th, 2021

The following correspondence was received from a constituent and acknowledged at the meeting:

- Email from Janet Maybee with suggestions for committee topics at the agenda setting. This was distributed to committee members on December 6th, 2021.

June 28th, 2022

The following information was requested by the committee and has been received from the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables:

- Director Matt Parker offered to give a follow-up on MLA Trevor Boudreau's inquiry regarding upgrades to Battery Park.

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