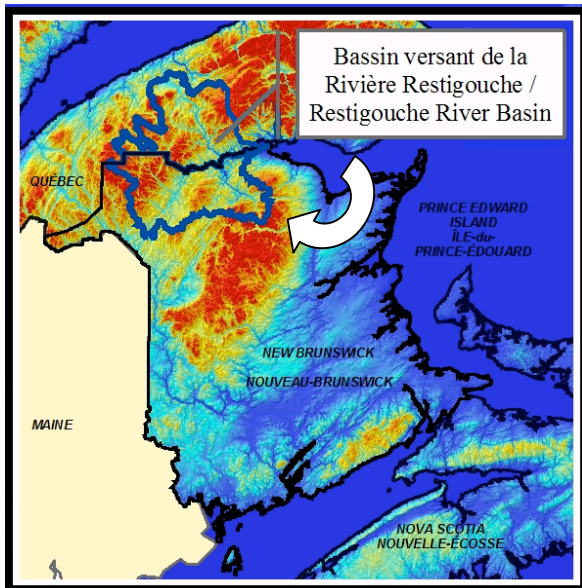


Fact Sheet : Restigouche River Watershed



Location

The Restigouche River Watershed is located in Eastern Québec and Northern New-Brunswick. The New-Brunswick portion of the watershed represents 60% of the 10 000 km² total area. In the New-Brunswick, the Restigouche River is located within the Restigouche, Madawaska and Victoria counties of New Brunswick. Five major tributaries are included in the Restigouche River Watershed: the Matapedia, Upsalquitch, Patapedia, Kedgwick and Little Main rivers. The main stem is flowing easterly direction before emptying into the Baie des Chaleurs.



Physical Setting and Climate

The Restigouche River flows through the Appalachian mountain range, characterized by ancient mountains shaped into plateaus and valleys. This region is considered to have a northern temperate cool climate. The average summer temperatures are 14 to 15°C and winter temperatures average around -11 to -12 °C. The Restigouche watershed receives about 1000 mm of precipitation annually.



...a story to tell

The Restigouche River's name is thought to be from a Mikmaq language meaning "he who disobeys his father". The Restigouche was an important route for aboriginals to travel from the Baie des Chaleurs to the St-John River.



Successive ethnic groups called the area home, from Mikmaq, Loyalists fleeing the American war of independence (Scottish) to Irish, Acadians, British and finally French Canadians. The estuary played host to come the most important battle opposing French and British, when British destroyed the chance the French Navy had of re-supplying Quebec city. Thereafter, people discovered the importance of the river's salmon stocks and began to fish the Restigouche commercially and recreationally, when millionaires bought land and rights to sections of the Restigouche to built comfortable camps and fishing lodges. Founded in 1880, the Restigouche Salmon Club remains the oldest private fishing club in Canada.

During the winters and springs from the 50's to the 70's, the Restigouche served another purpose, that of the log drive. The forest industry being very present in the region, loggers used the river as a means of transporting wood.



Loggers and log driving

The river is now part of the Canadian Heritage River System. It received this designation, among other reasons, due to the mostly intact nature surrounding it, its story and the numerous recreational activities it has to offer.

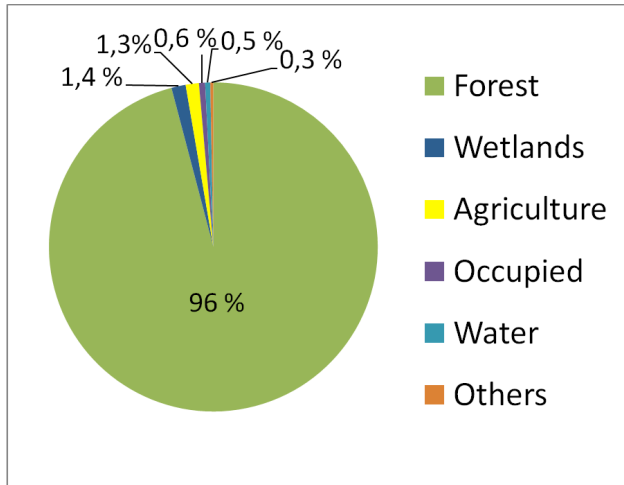


Fact Sheet : Restigouche River Watershed



Land use in the Restigouche watershed

Land use in the Restigouche watershed is predominantly forested land.



The ecosystem

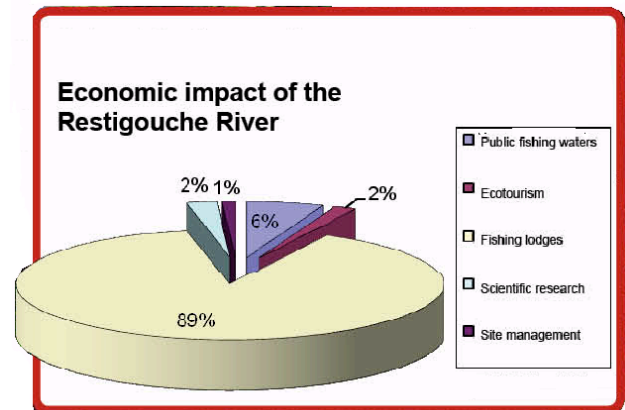
The Acadian Forest that covers the region contains diverse woodlands composed mainly of maple, pine, spruce, balsam fir, birch and aspen. The sharp ridges along its valleys are dominated by giant Eastern white pine.



Those who appreciate wildlife can be considered spoiled by the numerous animal species found in the region. One can observe, among others, deer, moose, red foxes, black bears, coyotes, beavers, lynx, ruffed grouse and various duck species. It is also an area where one of North America's most majestic birds, the bald eagle, can be seen regularly. Nonetheless, the Restigouche is most widely known for its Atlantic Salmon and is one of Canada's leading salmon rivers. Some salmon can weigh upwards of 50 pounds.

Importance of the Restigouche River

The economic activities on the Restigouche River and its tributaries represents around 400 jobs and 15 millions dollars annually in the salmon fishing lodges, ecotourism, public fishing and management and research programs.



The fishing lodges are a mainstay of the region's tourism based economy. The watershed's 24 lodges generate many jobs such as guides, wardens, cooks, waiters and maintenance staff and generates millions more indirectly through taxes, leases, vehicle maintenance and repair, food services, etc.

The salmon is also a source of food fisheries for Quebec Listuguj and New-Brunswick Eel River Bar First Nations.

The challenges

Salmon stock decrease, conflict between users, forest activities, invasive species and climate changes are some of the challenges that the ecosystem is facing in this new century. To reduces conflicts, orientate and manage programs and help to restore the habitat, the Restigouche River Watershed Council (RRWMC) as been created in 2002. It involves different stakeholders such as First Nations, Fishing lodges, outfitters, ecotourism business, municipalities, forest company and public.

To learn more about the Restigouche Watershed, visit the Restigouche River Watershed Management Committee Website: twww.restigouche.org