




Volunteers on call
Every day, every season



NBGSARA 2024 Year in Review



ON CALL 24/7/365

North West GSAR

Acadie-Chaleur GSAR

Miramichi GSAR

Tri-County GSAR

Greater Fundy GSAR

River Valley GSAR

Charlotte County GSAR

York Sunbury SAR

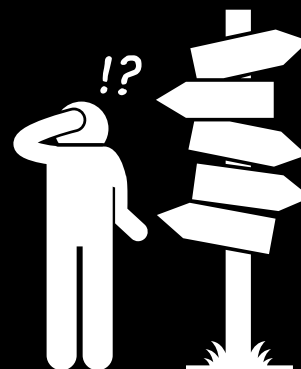
Carleton GSAR

In New Brunswick, ground search and rescue (GSAR) services are carried out by dedicated and trained volunteers.

Available round the clock, every day of the year, these skilled individuals generously offer their time, commitment, and skills, along with their personal equipment, without charge to both the residents of NB and the individuals they assist. NBGSARA takes pride in supporting the 310+ GSAR members in New Brunswick, making up 9 groups throughout the province.



If you or someone you know is lost, call 911 immediately.



WHO ARE WE?



NBGSARA teams deliver professional-level emergency response, training, and public education, with limited resources and no paid staff.

In 2024 alone, our volunteers contributed more than 53,000 hours of service valued at over \$1.95 million if delivered by paid staff. That represents an extraordinary return on investment for New Brunswickers, made possible only through the commitment of our volunteers and the support of our communities.

By sustaining and strengthening this model, we can continue to deliver professional, cost-effective search and rescue services across the province

THE HISTORY

The groundwork for NBGSARA was laid in 1983 at the request of the RCMP, when community members came together to form a trained search and rescue team in the Fredericton area. Over time, that original provincial team evolved into one of nine regional teams.

To ensure a united voice and provincial coordination, a new association was created to represent all teams, support training, and advocate for Ground Search and Rescue across New Brunswick. Today, NBGSARA remains a trusted partner to law enforcement and emergency services, dedicated to the safety and well-being of New Brunswickers.

**Making Every
Hour Count**

**Incident Response
7,835 Hours
35 Police Files
86 Callouts**



**16,071 Hours
Training & Exercises**

**28,533 Hours
Admin, Fundraising &
Prevention**



**2439 Youth & 153 Adults
Trained in Adventure Smart**

**41 Project Lifesaver Clients
across 2 regions**



My Thanks

As I reflect on the past year, I am struck by the unwavering dedication of our volunteers. All ordinary people doing extraordinary work. In 2024, our teams contributed **53,815** hours, an increase of over **6,000** hours compared to 2023. That's more than **\$1.95 million** in donated time alone, a remarkable testament to the value of volunteer search and rescue in New Brunswick.

Our **incident hours alone, 9,217, rose by nearly 350 person hours** reflecting the growing demand for our services. Training hours increased to 16,065, ensuring our teams remain ready for whatever challenges come their way. And in the vital "everything else" category, community outreach, equipment maintenance, leadership, and prevention work we logged an incredible 28,533 hours, up almost 4,000 hours from last year. Every hour represents a commitment to keeping our communities safe and our preparedness.

In 2024, we answered the call in every season, from multi-day winter deployments like the Nova Scotia Snowstorm Response, to large-scale wilderness searches such as Wards Creek and Doaktown. We also continue to see the power of collaboration with RCMP, fire services, emergency management, and the public all working together to bring loved ones home.

This report is more than numbers. It tells the story of countless hours spent in service: searching in the cold and dark, training in the rain, teaching prevention to children, or ensuring our equipment is ready when the call comes. Our volunteers do this not for recognition, but because they care. I want to thank every SAR volunteer, every supporting agency, and every community member who has stood behind us this year. Together, we are stronger, more capable, and better prepared to serve.



This year marked important steps forward in strengthening Ground Search and Rescue across our province. Through the federal Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund (SARNIF), NBGSARA, in partnership with our colleagues in Prince Edward Island, we secured support for training, recruitment, and retention. This joint initiative means more opportunities to grow our volunteer base and enhance the skills of our members, without the added burden of fundraising for every training activity. The result is stronger, better-prepared teams ready to respond when needed most.

At the same time, we were proud to contribute to the provincial review of search and rescue in New Brunswick into 2025. This process, led by the Government of New Brunswick, has brought together stakeholders to examine what is working well and where improvements can be made. Our province is fortunate to have an incredible network of trained volunteers and the trust of law enforcement partners. We are optimistic that, with continued collaboration, this review will lead to a more sustainable system with the resources needed to support volunteers and enhance public safety.

Let's continue to build on this momentum as we look ahead to 2025. Because no one plans to get lost or need rescue, but we'll always be there when they do.

Bradley Parker
President, NBGSARA

Learn more about us

**83% of New Brunswick is forested.
We cover it all.**

More than just hikers

Lost or injured hikers are commonly linked to search and rescue operations; however, GSAR groups play a vital role in various other circumstances as well. This includes conducting urban searches for individuals with dementia, performing wellness checks door-to-door during civil emergencies, and providing assistance with evacuations.

How do we do it?

Our volunteers are essential, dedicating their time away from family and work at a moment's notice to travel to remote regions of the province and make a life-saving difference.

Members invest their evenings and weekends in training to meet provincial standards for GSAR and to obtain certifications from relevant authorities.

Currently, only police forces and NB EMO have the ability to activate GSAR teams in New Brunswick.



Our Volunteers

Every GSAR volunteer in New Brunswick supplies their own personal clothing and equipment, such as backpacks, boots, and jackets suitable for all seasons. This showcases their commitment and preparedness for the challenges that come with search and rescue operations.

The personal gear provided by each volunteer represents a substantial investment, ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 per individual. It's truly commendable that they use their own equipment, ensuring their readiness for any scenario. We are grateful for their dedication and generosity.



Training

Members of NBGSARA undergo training according to the CSA Z1620-15 standard for Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) in Canada. This training encompasses a variety of topics, including:

- Navigation
- Hazards
- Search tactics
- Lost person behavior
- Field Team Leadership
- SAR Incident Management

Beyond these foundational requirements, a diverse array of additional training opportunities is available, focusing on specializations such as:

- Rope Rescue
- K9
- Marine
- Project Lifesaver

In addition to this standard training, each member is required to complete the Incident Command System (ICS) 100 course. This course provides a standardized framework for incident management, facilitating seamless integration with the numerous organizations we collaborate with during searches.

Furthermore, all members must possess standard first aid certification and successfully pass a criminal record check.

How a Search Happens

GSAR operations are initiated upon requests from:

- Local Police
- RCMP
- NB Emergency Measures Organization
- Other agencies may request GSAR through any of the above entities



Once activated, a Search Manager gathers essential information to customize the response effectively. Key details, such as the individual's intended destination and personal profile, whether they are a hiker, a person with dementia, or feeling despondent, are vital. With over 30 different subject categories, each search requires a specific strategy.

While many incidents are resolved swiftly, others demand significant efforts, often involving multiple GSAR teams and extending over several days.



Photo of a large training exercise

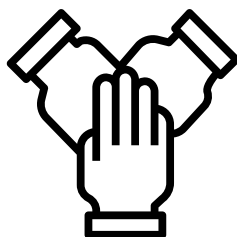
Better Together

The collaborative spirit of New Brunswick's 9 GSAR teams extends beyond the teams and includes many different organizations. This includes:

Municipal police agencies, park staff, Provincial and local EMO, Fire Departments, Canadian Military, Coast Guard, First Nations, Conservation Officers, DNR, and Transportation and Infrastructure's RADCOM and highway maintenance teams to name just a few.



This collaborative approach, guided by the Incident Command System (ICS) and supported by tools like RADCOM's TMR network, allows for the seamless integration of various agencies, fostering efficient and effective responses that save lives.



Prevention: Building Resilience in Communities

Education and Outreach: Our dedicated volunteers engage with communities through a variety of educational programs, workshops, and public events aimed at raising awareness about safety practices and emergency preparedness. From school presentations to community fairs, we work tirelessly to impart life-saving skills and knowledge to individuals of all ages.



An entire elementary school trained in Hug-A-Tree. That's over 350 students now trained in how NOT to become lost in the woods, and what to do should they become lost!

Every year, NBGSARA Outdoor Educators gave presentation to New Brunswickers of all ages, from schools, scouts, cadets, 4H, and ATV clubs

Request a presentation today
presenter.adventuresmart.ca/request



Prevention: Protecting those who wander

Project Lifesaver continues to be one of the most impactful community safety programs we support. Using proven radio-frequency technology, the program provides rapid location of individuals who are prone to wandering due to cognitive conditions such as dementia or autism.

This year, we are proud to highlight a significant milestone: a second Ground Search and Rescue team in New Brunswick has launched Project Lifesaver in their community. This expansion means more families now have access to peace of mind and critical support when time is of the essence in the Miramichi area in addition to Fredericton.

NB GSARA remains committed to supporting and promoting the growth of Project Lifesaver throughout the province. With every new team that joins the program, we extend our reach and strengthen our ability to protect vulnerable community members.



Supporting our Volunteer Professionals

How is SAR funded?

NBGSARA on behalf of the 9 teams negotiated and maintains Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with each police agency in NB as well as NB EMO. Direct expenses such as fuel and batteries are paid for by the activating agency.

NBGSARA teams do not bill our subjects.

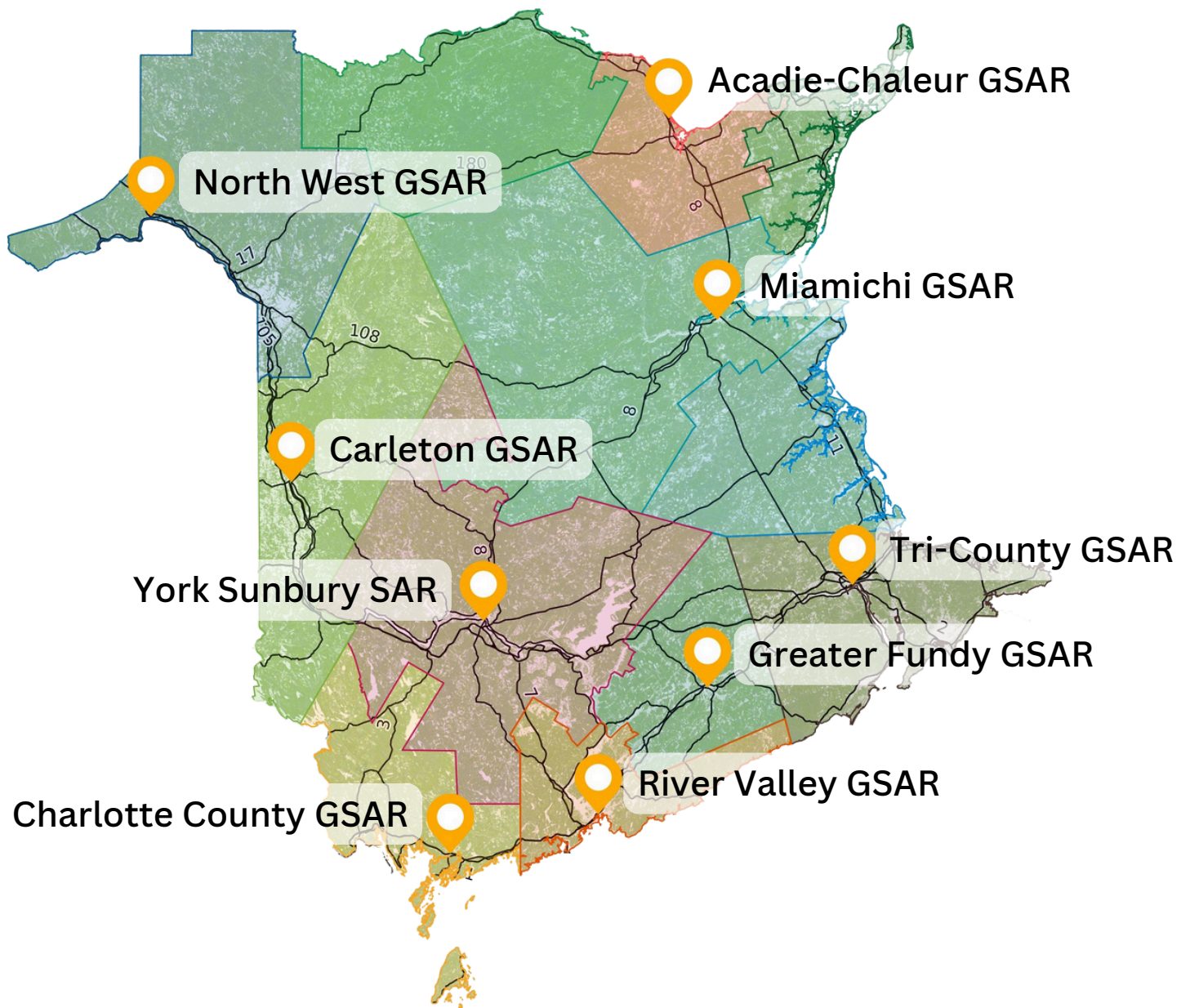
Each team is responsible for fundraising for their preparedness and training needs, including equipment or vehicle purchase and maintenance.

NBGSARA funds the mandatory liability insurance for teams, crucial software for mapping and team management, meetings, and cross team training events when funds are available.

Sponsorship Opportunities

If your organization is looking for ways to support GSAR volunteers, consider offering pro-deal discount to GSAR members for merchandise or services.

We are also looking for grow our sponsor program with partners willing to offer long term financial or in-kind support. If you are interested in a unique recognition and promotion opportunity, please reach out



**Learn more at sarnbres.ca
email: info@sarnbres.ca**

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