



Ministry of
Environment
and Parks

Estimates Debates 2025

Prepared for:

Honourable Tamara Davidson

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ENV ESTIMATES CONTACT LIST

NAME	ROLE	NUMBER
DEPUTY MINISTER'S OFFICE		
Responsibilities: All		
Kevin Jardine	Deputy Minister	250-361-6753
Jennifer Meadows	Director, Executive Operations	250-507-0063
Sara Nicoll	a/Manager, Executive Operations	778 974-2752
CORPORATE SERVICES FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES SECTOR		
Responsibilities: Budget		
Ranbir Parmar	Assistant Deputy Minister and Executive Financial Officer	250-213-8119
James Pittman	Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director	250 208-6616
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT		
Scott McKenzie	Communications Director	250 893-4126
Nigel McInnis	Communications Manager	250 896-4320
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION (Formerly BCPRST)		
Responsibilities: Parks Future Strategy, Campsite Expansion and Parks Foundation, Recreation Sites and Trails, Conservation Officer Service (now COS and Parks and Recreation Program)		
Jim Standen	Assistant Deputy Minister	250-888-7299
John Hawkings	Executive Lead, Parks and Recreation Program & covering ED North Regional Operations	604 815-8866
Bob Austad	ED, Coast Area Regional Operations	250-889-5462
Sydney Martin	ED, Stewardship, Planning & Infrastructure	778 679-6202
Rumon Carter	ED, Visitor and Operational Support Services	250-896-2329
Jennie Aikman	ED, South Area Regional Operations	778-875-8494
Cam Schley	Chief Conservation Officer	250-847-0432
Launa Murai	Issues Manager	250-208-5933
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION		
Responsibilities: Spills, Waste, Regulatory regime, Extended Producer Responsibility, <i>Environmental Management Act (EMA)</i> , <i>Integrated Pest Management Act (IPMA)</i> , EMA and IPMA Compliance and Enforcement		
Kathryn Forge	Assistant Deputy Minister	778-584-4250
Deb Epps	ED, Authorizations and Remediation Branch	250-713-2906
Sonya Sundberg	ED, Environmental Policy and Initiatives Branch	250-213-1843
Pader Brach	ED, Environmental Emergencies Branch	250-812-2253
Robyn Roome	ED, Environmental Monitoring and Analysis Branch	250-354-5347
Brady Nelless	ED, Compliance & Environmental Enforcement Branch	778-349-6051
Kara Charlton	Director, Corporate and Strategic Initiatives	250-883-8163
Abbey Askin	Manager, Divisional Operations	250-213-5173
STRATEGIC SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION		
Responsibilities: Intergovernmental Relations, Corporate Planning, Legislation, Indigenous Partnerships, Service Transformation, Corporate support for Estimates.		
Amy Avila	Assistant Deputy Minister	778-679-3522
Lisa Paquin	ED, Strategic Policy	778-698-4419
Kelsey Singbeil	ED, Service Transformation	250-883-4029
Amy Avila (covering)	ED, Indigenous Partnerships & Engagement	778-679-3522
Kira Stevenson	Estimates Lead	778-698-4401
Cheryl Tromp	Manager, Divisional Operations / Estimates Support	250-978-9822

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE		
Responsibilities: <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> , Compliance and Enforcement, Indigenous Relations		
Alex McLennan	Associate Deputy Minister	250-415-6297
Chris Trumpy	Assistant Deputy Minister	250-415-7754
Julie Chace	ED, Strategic Services and Compliance	778-677-6365
Mirella Standbridge	ED, Corporate Services	250-514-8413
Sarah Plank	ED, Communications & Engagement	250-208-9621
Sabrina Loiacono	Manager, Executive Operations	778-698-9290

Members of the Legislative Assembly – Feb 2025

B.C. NDP Caucus (47)

MLA	Constituency
Eby, David (Hon.) (K.C.)	Premier and President of the Executive Council , Vancouver-Point Grey
Anderson, Brittny (Hon.)	Minister of State for Local Governments and Rural Communities , Kootenay Central
Anderson, George	Parliamentary Secretary for Transit , Nanaimo-Lantzville
Arora, Rohini	Deputy Chair of the BC Government Caucus , Burnaby East
Bailey, Brenda (Hon.)	Minister of Finance , Vancouver-South Granville
Beare, Lisa (Hon.)	Minister of Education and Child Care , Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows
Begg, Garry (Hon.)	Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General , Surrey-Guildford
Blatherwick, Jennifer	Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity , Coquitlam-Maillardville
Boyle, Christine (Hon.)	Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation , Vancouver-Little Mountain
Brar, Jagrup (Hon.)	Minister of Mining and Critical Minerals , Surrey-Fleetwood
Chandra Herbert, Spencer (Hon.)	Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport , Vancouver-West End
Chant, Susie	Parliamentary Secretary for Senior' Services and Long Term Care , North Vancouver-Seymour
Choi, Paul	Parliamentary Secretary for Asia-Pacific Trade , Burnaby South-Metrotown
Chouhan, Raj	Speaker of the Legislative Assembly , Burnaby-New Westminster
Chow, George (Hon.)	Minister of Citizens' Services , Vancouver-Fraserview
Davidson, Laanas (Tamara) (Hon.)	Minister of Environment and Parks , North Coast-Haida Gwaii
Dhir, Sunita	Parliamentary Secretary for International Credentials , Vancouver-Langara
Dix, Adrian (Hon.)	Minister of Energy and Climate Solutions and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs , Vancouver-Renfrew
Elmore, Mable	Vancouver-Kensington
Farnworth, Mike (Hon.)	Minster of Transportation and Transit and House Leader , Port Coquitlam
Gibson, Diana (Hon.)	Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation , Oak Bay-Gordon Head
Glumac, Rick (Hon.)	Minister of State for Trade , Port Moody-Burquitlam
Greene, Kelly (Hon.)	Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness , Richmond – Steveston
Higginson, Stephanie	Chair of the Government Caucus , Ladysmith-Oceanside
Kahlon, Ravi (Hon.)	Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs , Delta North
Kang, Anne (Hon.)	Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills , Burnaby Centre
Krieger, Nina	Parliamentary Secretary for Arts and Film , Victoria-Swan Lake

Lajeunesse, Dana	Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility , Juan de Fuca-Malahat
Lore, Grace (Hon.)	Minister without portfolio , Victoria-Beacon Hill
Ma, Bowinn (Hon.)	Minister of Infrastructure , North Vancouver-Lonsdale
Malcolmson, Shelia (Hon.)	Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction , Nanaimo-Gabriola Island
Morissette, Steve	Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Development , Kootenay-Monashee
Neill, Randene (Hon.)	Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship , Powell River-Sunshine Coast
Osborne, Josie (Hon.)	Minister of Health , Mid-Island-Pacific Rim
Parmar, Ravi (Hon.)	Minister of Forests and Deputy Government House Leader , Langford-Highlands
Phillip, Amshen (Joan)	Parliamentary Secretary for Community Development and non-Profits , Vancouver-Strathcona
Popham, Lana (Hon.)	Minister of Agriculture and Food , Saanich South
Rotchford, Darlene	Parliamentary Secretary for Labour and Military Liaison , Esquimalt-Colwood
Routledge, Janet	Government Whip , Burnaby North
Sandhu, Harwinder	Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture , Vernon-Lumby
Shah, Amna	Parliamentary Secretary for Mental Health and Addictions , Surrey City Centre
Sharma, Niki (Hon.) (K.C.)	Attorney General and Deputy Premier , Vancouver-Hastings
Sunner, Jessie	Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives , Surrey-Newton
Toporowski, Qwulti'stunaat (Debra)	Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health , Cowichan Valley
Whiteside, Jennifer (Hon.)	Minister of Labour , New Westminster-Coquitlam
Wickens, Jodie (Hon)	Minister of Children and Family Development , Coquitlam-Burke Mountain
Yung, Terry (Hon.)	Minister of State for Community Safety and Integrated Services , Vancouver-Yaletown

Conservative Party of B.C. (44)

MLA	Constituency
Rustad, John	Leader of the Conservative Party of B.C. , Nechako Lakes
Banman, Bruce	Whip , Abbotsford South
Bhangu, Harman	Critic for Transportation , Langley-Abbotsford
Bird, Rosalyn	Critic for Citizens' Services , Prince George-Valemount
Block, Lynne	Critic for Education , West Vancouver-Capilano
Boulton, Amelia	Critic for Children and Family Development , Penticton-Summerland
Chan, Hon (陳瀚生)	Critic for Climate Solutions and Climate Readiness , Richmond Centre
Chapman, Brent	Critic for Transit and ICBC , Surrey South
Clare, Sheldon	Deputy Whip , Prince George-North Cariboo

Davis, Pete	Critic for Mining, Critical Minerals and Columbia Treaty , Kootenay-Rockies
Day, Brennan	Critic for Rural Health and Seniors' Health , Courtenay-Comox
Dew, Gavin	Critic for Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation , Kelowna-Mission
Dhaliwal, Mandeep	Critic for Paternal Rights and Sports , Surrey North
Doerkson, Lorne	Assistant Deputy Speaker , Cariboo-Chilcotin
Gasper, Reann	Critic for Child Care, Children and Youth with Support Needs , Abbotsford-Mission
Giddens, Kiel	Critic for Labour , Prince George-Mackenzie
Halford, Trevor	Critic for Environment and Parks , Surrey-White Rock
Hartwell, Sharon	Critic for Rural Communities and Rural Development , Bulkley Valley-Stikine
Hepner, Linda	Critic for Housing , Surrey-Serpentine
Kindy, Anna	Critic for Health , North Island
Kooner, Steve	Critic for Attorney General , Richmond-Queensborough
Loewen, Kristina	Critic for Rural Housing and Building Code , Kelowna Centre
Luck, Tony	Critic for Municipal Affairs and Local Government , Fraser-Nicola
Maahs, Heather	Critic for Children and Family Development – Indigenous Self-government in Child and Family Services , Chilliwack North
McCall, Macklin	Critic for Emergency Management , West Kelowna-Peachland
McInnis, Scott	Critic for Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation , Columbia River-Revelstoke
Milobar, Peter	Critic for Finance , Kamloops Centre
Mok, Lawrence	Critic for Skills Training and International Credentials , Maple Ridge East
Neufeld, Korky	Critic for Post-Secondary Education , Abbotsford West
Neufeld, Larry	Critic for Natural Gas and LNG , Peace River South
Paton, Ian	Critic for Agriculture, Fisheries and Agricultural Land Commission , Delta South
Rattée, Claire	Critic for Mental Health and Addictions , Skeena
Stamer, Ward	Critic for Forests , Kamloops-North Thompson
Sturko, Elenore	Critic for Solicitor General and Public Safety , Surrey-Cloverdale
Tepper, Bryan	Critic for Community Safety and Integrated Services , Surrey-Panorama
Toor, Jody	Caucus Chair , Langley-Willowbrook
Van Popta, Misty	Critic for Infrastructure and Construction , Langley-Walnut Grove
Warbus, Á'a:líya (A'aliya)	House Leader , Chilliwack-Cultus Lake
Wat, Teresa	Critic for Tourism, Arts, Culture, Anti-Racism and Trade , Richmond-Bridgeport
Williams, David	Critic for BC Hydro and Electricity Self-Sufficiency , Salmon Arm-Shuswap
Wilson, Donegal	Critic for Water, Land, Resource Stewardship and Wildlife Management , Boundary-Similkameen

B.C. Green Caucus (2)

MLA	Constituency
Valeriote, Jeremy	Interim Leader of the BC Green Caucus, West Vancouver-Sea to Sky
Botterell, Rob	Saanich North & The Islands

Independent (3)

MLA	Constituency
Armstrong, Tara	Kelowna-Lake Country-Coldstream
Brodie, Dallas	Vancouver-Quilchena
Kealy, Jordan	Peace River-North



January 16, 2025

Honourable Tamara Davidson
Minister of Environment and Parks
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Davidson:

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Environment and Parks at a critical time for our province. Serving as a member of the executive council is a privilege and responsibility which I am confident you will fulfill with integrity and a commitment to the people of our province.

British Columbians have trusted us with a mandate to deliver for them in ways that make a tangible difference in their daily lives. They expect us to listen and learn from people of different perspectives – and work together to make things better for everyone.

Specifically, we will tackle the challenges people worry about at the kitchen table:

- **Grow the economy by creating good jobs across British Columbia.** We will collaborate with businesses, workers, and communities to attract investments in both new and traditional sectors as well as emerging sectors of the economy. This approach will bring certainty for business, security for workers, and generate the wealth needed to support the essential services British Columbians rely on.
- **Reduce costs for families** including by helping people access homes they can afford through support for first-time homebuyers, increasing the supply of rental housing stock, and stronger measures to crack down on housing speculation.

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**Office of the
Premier**

Web Site:
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Mailing Address:
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Location:
Parliament Buildings
Victoria

- **Strengthen health care** by expanding access to family doctors and recruiting and training more health professionals, ensuring that every British Columbian can access the care they need, no matter where they live. We will also increase access to addictions treatment and provide help for people whose struggles require intensive supports.
- **Make our neighbourhoods and communities safer** by working with law enforcement and social agencies to address street disorder, crack down on organized crime, and do all we can to ensure repeat offenders stay behind bars.

Our commitment to take action on climate change remains foundational and will be key to a healthy and prosperous BC for future generations.

Underlying all this work is our partnership with Indigenous peoples. Advancing reconciliation, implementing the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and working in partnership with First Nations rights-holders to advance shared interests is the responsibility of every Minister.

Over this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- In order to protect key services that British Columbians rely on, work with the Minister of Finance to review all existing Ministry of Environment and Parks programs and initiatives to ensure programs remain relevant, are efficient, grow the economy, and help keep costs low for British Columbians. This is important in the context of current Provincial budget constraints.
- Find ways to increase access for families to British Columbia's parks in a cost-efficient manner.
- Work across ministries and with Indigenous leadership and business leaders to support work to recognize Indigenous rights and title, protect our precious environment for future generations, and support predictable and sustainable economic growth in our province to benefit all British Columbians.
- Direct the Environmental Assessment Office to work with key permitting ministries to develop specific measures that will expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects. Bring proposed measures forward for Cabinet review within six months.
- Support BC's energy transition and climate targets by directing the Environmental Assessment Office to proceed with the exemption of wind power from *Environmental Assessment Act* provisions. Further, exempt other relevant classes of projects from environmental assessment where the assessment is duplicative, delays projects with environmental advantages, or offers only limited value while impeding projects that will benefit the province as a whole.

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As you are aware, we have established an accord with the BC Green Caucus that supports our shared commitment to ensuring stable governance focused on delivering progress and tangible outcomes for British Columbians. The commitments in that accord complement the direction in these mandate letters.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The work we have ahead takes place in a profoundly challenging geopolitical environment. Close friends and neighbours to our south are contemplating imposing draconian tariffs on our products that would hurt both Americans and Canadians. Our allies internationally face governmental instability. Hate and racism are on the rise around the world. Artificial intelligence breakthroughs with unclear implications and astonishing potential are announced daily. Global inflation, snarled supply chains, and war are threatening global economic growth and prosperity as well as the transition to a low-carbon economy.

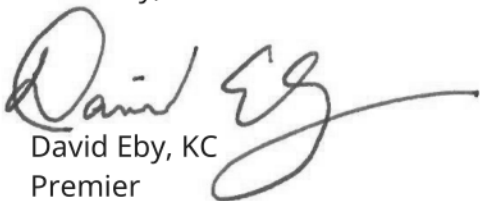
We have an obligation to protect and defend British Columbians, as well as seize opportunities, in these uncertain times.

The good news is that we have everything we need to succeed, and we will succeed. British Columbia's people – our workers, entrepreneurs, business leaders, artists, and innovators – are among the most talented in the world. We are home to world-class educational institutions and public services. Our natural beauty is unmatched, we have internationally envied resources, and we are one of the most diverse places on the planet. Your job is to help us leverage these advantages in perilous times.

Use this mandate letter to guide your work, and do not be afraid to challenge assumptions, or be innovative, bold and aggressive in achieving the goals set out for you and your Ministry by the people of this province.

Thank you for joining me in the work ahead.

Sincerely,


David Eby, KC
Premier

Ministry of Environment and Parks

Budget Briefing
Fiscal 2025/26

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MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS (ENV)

Title	Contact	Private Office phone	Cell phone	Key Responsibilities/ Issues ¹
Deputy Minister	Kevin Jardine	250-387-5429	250-361-6753	All
EFO / ADM, Corporate Services	Ranbir Parmar	778-698-3756	250-213-8119	Budget
Associate Deputy Minister EAO	Alex MacLennan		250-507-6361	Environmental Assessment projects, process, fees, review
ADM, Environmental Protection Division	Kathryn Forge	778-584-4250	250-952-3334	Compliance and enforcement, contaminated sites and land remediation, environmental emergency program, extended producer responsibility, integrated pest management
ADM, Conservation and Recreation	Jim Standen	250-387-1288	250 888-7299	Environmental enforcement, Conservation Officer Service, BC Parks, Rec Sites & Trails
Executive Lead, Recreation Strategy and Service Transformation	John Hawkings	250-468-3918	604-815-8866	Outdoor recreation and guide recreation management service delivery
Lead, Strategic Services	Amy Avila	778-698-7296	778-679-3522	Indigenous partnerships, intergovernmental relations, business transformation, regulatory effectiveness, and sector integration,

				strategic policy and legislation.
Director, Communications (GCPE)	Scott McKenzie	778-698-7596	250-893-4126	All
Chief Financial Officer	James Pittman	778-698-5787	250-208-6616	Budget



Ministry of
Environment and
Climate Change
Strategy

Budget 2025

March 2025

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Ministry Budget 2024/25 – 2027/28

	2024/25 Restated	Change	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Ministry Operations					
Environmental Protection	31,989	491	32,480	32,480	32,480
Conservation & Recreation	100,741	439	101,180	101,215	101,215
Executive & Support Services	28,529	221	28,750	28,750	28,750
Sub-Total	161,259	1,151	162,410	162,445	162,445
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074	269	17,343	17,343	17,343
Sub-Total	17,074	269	17,343	17,343	17,343
Park Enhancement Fund SA	12,989	44	13,033	13,033	13,033
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135	2,555	28,690	28,690	28,690
TOTAL Ministry	217,457	4,019	221,476	221,511	221,511

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Budget 2025 Highlights

- Budget 2025 is increased by \$4.019M over the restated 2024/25 budget. Changes include:
 - Increase of \$2.555M for the Sustainable Environment Fund to match expenses to expected forecast
 - Increase of \$1.436M to salary and benefits for the Shared Recovery Mandate
 - Increase of \$0.373M for Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure to enhance existing asset maintenance and replacement program
 - Increase of \$0.174 for salaries and benefits for the Minister Office
 - Decrease of (\$0.519M) for Conservation Officer staffing

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Budget 2025 Changes by Core Business

				Changes from 2024/25 Restated				
				Budget 2025 Decisions			Budget 2023 & 2024 Decisions	
	2024/25 Restated	2025/26 Estimates	Change	Sustainable Environment Fund	Share Recovery Benefit	Minister Office	Conservation Officer Staffing	Outdoor Rec Infrastructure
Ministry Operations								
Environmental Protection	31,989	32,480	491		462			
Conservation & Recreation	100,741	101,180	439		554		(489)	373
Executive & Support Services	28,529	28,750	221		107	174	(30)	
Sub-Total	161,259	162,410	1,151	-	1,123	174	(519)	373
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074	17,343	269		269			
Sub-Total	17,074	17,343	269	-	269	-	-	-
Park Enhancement Fund SA	12,989	13,033	44		44			
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135	28,690	2,555	2,555				
TOTAL Ministry	217,457	221,476	4,019	2,555	1,436	174	(519)	373

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Fiscal Plan Comparison

Fiscal Plan Comparison (\$000)	2024/25 Restated	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Budget 2023 - Baseline	244,251	217,311	217,346	217,346
ReOrg ENV to ECS	- 27,516			
Vehicle Transfer from ENV to WLRS	- 96			
LBIS trasfer from FOR to ENV	818			
Sustainable Environment Fund Adjustment		2,555	2,555	2,555
Ministers Office		174	174	174
Shared Recovery Mandate		1,436	1,436	1,436
Budget 2024 Total Budget	217,457	221,476	221,511	221,511

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Minister's Office

	2024/25	2025/26	
Minister's Office Budget	Restated	Estimates	Change
Ministry Operations			-
Salary and Benefits	512	656	144.00
Legislative Salaries	60	60	-
Travel	60	90	30.00
Information Systems	8	8	-
Office Expenses	18	18	-
Total Budget	658	832	174

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Capital Budget

3 year Capital Budget (\$000)	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Ministry Operations				
Centralized Assets				
Land Acquisition	6,950	2,000	2,000	2,000
Land Improvements	30,565	26,614	26,614	26,614
Vehicles	4,384	1,840	1,840	1,840
Office Equipment	10	10	10	10
Specialized Equipment	2,777	2,092	2,092	2,092
Centralized Assets Total	44,686	32,556	32,556	32,556
Ministry Operations Total	44,686	32,556	32,556	32,556
Park Enhancement Fund				
Land Improvements	300	300	300	300
Specialized Equipment	100	100	100	100
Park Enhancement Fund Total	400	400	400	400
Ministry Total	45,086	32,956	32,956	32,956

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Ministry of Environment & Parks Budget 2025 Highlights

- The Ministry budget of **\$221.476M** in 2025/26 is made up of the Ministry Operations vote, the Environmental Assessment Office vote, and two special accounts.

Ministry Operations

- Budget 2025 includes a **\$1.151M increase** over the restated 2024/25 Estimates budget:
 - **\$0.373M increase** for Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure to enhance existing asset maintenance and replacement programs (Budget 2023 decision)
 - **\$1.297M increase** to salary and benefits for the Shared Recovery Mandate
 - **\$0.519M decrease** for conservation officers due to a reduction in one-time costs in 2024/25 related to the 10 additional officers funded through *Budget 2024* such as training and other onboarding costs.
- The Ministry Operations budget (Vote 24) in 2025/26 is **\$162.410; \$1.151M or 0.71%** higher than the restated 2024/25 budget.

Environmental Assessment Office

- The budget for the Environment Assessment Office (Vote 25) in 2025/26 is **\$17.343M** – this represents an increase of **\$0.269M** over the restated 2024/25 budget.
 - **\$0.269M increase** to salary and benefits for the Shared Recovery Mandate (incl. Budget 2023 and 2024 decisions)

Special Accounts

- The budget for the Park Enhancement Fund is **\$13.033M**
 - **\$0.044M** to salary and benefits for the Shared Recovery Mandate (incl. Budget 2023 and 2024 decisions)
- The budget for the Sustainable Environment Fund is **\$28.690M**
 - **\$2.555M** increase to match expenses to expected forecast

Capital

- The capital budget is **\$32.956M** in 2025/26.
 - **(\$9.586M)** for land improvements and specialized equipment for Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure.
 - **(\$2.544M)** for Vehicles and specialized equipment for Conservation Officers

Ministry of Environment and Parks

2025/26 – 2027/28 Service Plan

March 2025



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Environment and Parks 2025/26 – 2027/28 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

Honourable Tamara Davidson
Minister of Environment and Parks
March 4, 2025

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Strategic Direction

In 2025/26, the Government of British Columbia will continue to prioritize delivering the services and infrastructure needed for people to build good lives in strong communities.

To support this objective, Government will focus on growing the economy, responding to the threat of tariffs, creating good paying jobs, improving affordability, strengthening health care and education, and making communities safer.

Government will also continue deepening relationships with Indigenous Peoples while advancing implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan.

This 2025/26 service plan outlines how the [Ministry of Environment and Parks](#) will support the government's priorities and selected action items identified in the [Minister's January 2025 Mandate Letter](#).

Purpose of the Ministry

Under the [Ministry of Environment Act](#), the Ministry of Environment and Parks has responsibilities for the protection, management, and conservation of British Columbia's water, land, air, and living resources. Other ministries in the natural resource sector also have responsibilities in these areas in accordance with their own legislation and mandates.

The ministry delivers its mandate through several other key pieces of legislation including the Environmental Management Act, the Integrated Pest Management Act, the Park Act, the Protected Areas of British Columbia Act, and the Environmental Assessment Act. A full list of provincial legislation can be found at [BC Laws](#).

The ministry administers the province's parks and protected areas, and recreation sites and trails; monitors and enforces compliance with environmental laws and regulations; manages discharge to the environment from human activities; and protects B.C.'s biodiversity, ecosystems, native species, and natural habitats in parks and protected areas. It acquires, manages, and analyzes environmental and climate data to provide a robust platform for decision-making across the province. It administers the provincial environmental assessment process through the [Environmental Assessment Office](#).

The ministry delivers services directly through staff, based in regional offices across the province, as well as through partnerships and agreements with First Nations, local governments, the federal government, and stakeholder groups.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: Effective protection of the environment

The ministry is responsible for the effective protection of British Columbia's water, land, and air. The ministry works with First Nations partners to advance this goal. The ministry also seeks opportunities to continually improve the systems that govern natural resource decision-making.

Objective 1.1: Strong environmental regulation, compliance, and enforcement

The ministry strives to protect the environment by managing risks to British Columbia's water, land, and air. It does this by setting robust regulatory requirements, verifying compliance, taking enforcement action where required, and evaluating environmental quality through air and water monitoring and assessment. It also promotes shared environmental stewardship and collaborative partnerships with First Nations.

Key Strategies

- Continue to pursue phase 1B of the B.C. government's new public interest bonding policy by developing a new regulatory framework that ensures owners of large industrial projects have the necessary financial resources in place so that they – not British Columbians – pay the full cost of environmental clean-up if their projects are abandoned.
- Work across the ministry and the Natural Resource Sector, and with First Nations and stakeholders, to implement service transformation initiatives to streamline permit application, submission and reporting, while upholding environmental protection. Continue to engage with First Nations to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into service and digital transformation initiatives.
- Work with industry, First Nations, the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO), and the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals to reduce timelines for mining approval permits across B.C. This will ensure that B.C. mining permit approval timelines are competitive with international jurisdictions with responsible mining standards and are dramatically reduced from current permit wait times for mining-related project proposals, while maintaining B.C.'s world-leading environmental standards.
- Continue collaboration across the Natural Resource Sector and with First Nations to enhance compliance and enforcement activities through open, transparent, and risk-based decision-making. By ensuring timely enforcement actions, the ministry protects the environment and supports a predictable regulatory framework that maintains a level playing field for all businesses operating within the sector.
- Continue collaborating with First Nations in implementing environmental quality objectives, monitoring compliance at regulated sites, reviewing applications for authorizations, and monitoring environmental quality.

Objective 1.2: Advance circular economy and clean communities

In a circular economy resources are never disposed, but instead are reused, recycled and reintroduced as new products. Circular approaches help eliminate waste for a cleaner, healthier future. The ministry advances a circular, clean economy through strong environmental leadership, innovative and future-focused policy and regulatory frameworks, targeted funding programs, and robust environmental monitoring, reporting, and enforcement.

Key Strategies

- Reduce municipal solid waste and build a circular economy through regional solid waste management plans, partnership with the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG), promotion of organics recycling, food and plastic waste prevention initiatives, and continuous improvement and expansion of extended producer responsibility programs.
- Continue to implement the Single-Use Plastic and Waste Prevention Regulation to reduce and prohibit the use of plastic and single-use items while encouraging the use of durable, reusable alternatives. The regulation includes restrictions on single-use plastic shopping bags, oxo-degradable plastic packaging, food service ware, and food service accessories (such as lids and utensils).
- Continue to support B.C. businesses, organizations, and First Nations to reduce plastic waste through the Plastics Action Fund. Approximately \$8 million in remaining funding will be awarded in 2025 to successful B.C.-based projects that provide innovative solutions to recycle and reuse plastic.
- Continue the multi-phased implementation of recycling new products under the Extended Producer Responsibility Five-Year Action Plan. The next phase includes adding products such as mattresses, single-use compressed cannisters, refillable propane and spray foam tanks, fire extinguishers, automotive containers, batteries, and medical sharps.
- Continue to support First Nations and local governments to increase organics processing infrastructure, expand organics collection, and reduce food waste. This will increase the diversion of organic materials from landfills and help First Nations and local governments achieve their waste reduction goals and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

Performance Measure

Performance Measure	2021/22 Baseline	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target
1.1 Per capita municipal solid waste disposal (kg per person) ¹	506	480	470	460	450

Data source: Ministry of Environment and Parks, manually compiled.

¹ Kg per person data is based on the calendar year. The 2025/26 target is based on calendar year 2025, 2027/28 target is based on calendar year 2027, etc.

Goal 2: Sound management of protected areas system, recreation site and trail networks

The ministry is responsible for the effective management and conservation of British Columbia's recreation sites, trails, and parks. B.C.'s protected areas system consists of over 14 million hectares, or 14 percent of the provincial land base. Many of these areas are important for the conservation of the province's environment and biodiversity. The ministry also promotes shared environmental stewardship and collaborative partnerships with First Nations.

Objective 2.1: Provide high-quality responsible recreation experiences through sound management of the protected areas system, recreation sites and trail networks.

BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC are among the principal providers of outdoor recreation opportunities for British Columbians. They protect and manage a wide variety of outstanding parks and recreation areas, ensuring these natural spaces and diverse environments are preserved for future generations.

Key Strategies

- Continue to create new camping opportunities, recreation sites, trails, and protected areas. Improve infrastructure and ensure provincial parks and recreation sites remain accessible and affordable for British Columbians.
- Continue efforts to upgrade high-priority infrastructure to a universal design standard, with a focus on toilet and parking facilities, as well as trails to park features in high use parks and parks near urban centres.
- Support safe co-existence between people and bears in protected areas. Guided by a strategy, efforts will focus on facility upgrades, bear safety education, and attractant management.

Objective 2.2: Protect and steward the natural environment and advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

The B.C. protected areas system includes representative and special natural places that are set aside for world-class conservation, outdoor recreation, education, and scientific study. The Parks and Recreation Program partners with First Nations communities, local governments, community groups, non-profit organizations, academics and many other partners on hundreds of projects that nurture our common interests in stewardship, management and appreciation of these special places.

Key Strategies

- Manage parks and protected areas for ecological health, biodiversity, and landscape connectivity.

- Emphasize the expression of Indigenous Peoples' history and culture as a component of BC Parks' broader effort on the path of reconciliation.
- Support the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship to implement the Framework Agreement to meet government's commitment to protect at least 30 percent of terrestrial areas in B.C. by 2030.
- Support Indigenous guardian programs through the Conservation Officer Service guardian training, guardian participation in the annual Park Ranger Training Program, and the continuation of the Indigenous Guardian Shared Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) pilot with BC Parks and the Kitasoo/Xai'xais and Nuxalk Nations.

Performance Measure

Goal 2 is new this year after the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy became the Ministry of Environment and Parks. A new performance measure for this goal is still under development and will be reflected in next year's Service Plan (2026/27).

Goal 3: Protect the environment and support a sound economy and the well-being of B.C. communities and First Nations through environmental assessments

The Environmental Assessment Office (the EAO) comprehensively reviews major development proposals to promote economic, environmental, and social well-being objectives, as outlined in the [Environmental Assessment Act](#) (the Act). These reviews include engaging with the public and seeking consensus with First Nations. The assessments inform decision-making on whether proposed projects should be approved to proceed, and if so, what measures are necessary to reduce or eliminate potential adverse effects. Once a project is approved, the EAO also ensures that the project maintains compliance with conditions and the required mitigation measures are in place.

Objective 3.1: Deliver predictable, timely, and effective environmental assessments according to the Act

Predictability and timeliness help government attract responsible resource projects and investments to British Columbia. The environmental assessment (EA) process requires extensive analysis of the environmental, health, cultural, social and economic effects of a project to inform sound decisions. Effective EAs are the result of working in partnership with First Nations and various parties to identify which projects have unacceptable risks or impacts, which projects with benefits should move forward, and what conditions and requirements should be applied to project approvals to protect the environment and communities.

Key Strategies

- Support proponent readiness and reduce the likelihood of issues arising late in the process by providing guidance materials that provide clear and comprehensive

instructions on how to submit complete project proposals and necessary documents at each phase of environmental assessment.

- Use digital tools to efficiently manage assessment processes to meet legislated timelines and facilitate meaningful public participation.
- Work closely with permitting agencies to improve coordination and reduce overlap. Develop specific measures for Cabinet review to expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects.
- Prioritize within the legislative review the identification of novel approaches to EA and opportunities to exempt certain classes of projects from EAs, where appropriate, to ensure projects can be built quickly, responsibly and efficiently.
- Strengthen partnerships and develop collaboration agreements with First Nations to set clear roles, responsibilities and processes in assessments.

Objective 3.2: Ensure approved projects are built and maintained in compliance with their certificate

Maintaining a robust compliance and enforcement program, in coordination with relevant agencies and First Nation partners, ensures compliance with conditions and mitigation measures required of projects with potential for significant negative impacts, and monitors that positive outcomes are fostered for British Columbians.

Key Strategies

- Build compliance oversight partnerships with First Nations.
- Utilize a variety of enforcement tools such as fines, enforcement orders and compliance agreements to ensure project compliance.
- Design a strategy to work closely with other compliance and enforcement agencies to improve coordination and effective oversight.

Performance Measure

Performance Measure	2023/24 Baseline	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target
3.1 Legislative Timeline Compliance Rate ^{1,2} – Percentage of legislated timelines met within the environmental assessment processes, excluding proponent requested delays. ^{1,2}	91%	90%	90%	90%	90%

Data source: EPIC.track

¹ In accordance with the Interpretation Act, if a legislated timeline falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, it is deemed to be met if completed on the next business day.

² The Minister's decision is excluded from this KPI, as it falls outside the scope of action of the EAO.

Financial Summary

(\$000s)	2024/25 Restated Estimates ¹	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Operating Expenses				
Environmental Protection	31,989	32,480	32,480	32,480
Conservation and Recreation	100,741	101,180	101,215	101,215
Executive and Support Services	28,529	28,750	28,750	28,750
Sub-Total	161,259	162,410	162,445	162,445
Park Enhancement Fund	12,989	13,033	13,033	13,033
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135	28,690	28,690	28,690
Total	200,383	204,133	204,168	204,168
Capital Expenditures				
Executive and Support Services	44,686	32,556	32,556	32,556
Park Enhancement Fund	400	400	400	400
Total	45,086	32,956	32,956	32,956

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2024/25 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2025/26 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Financial Summary: Environmental Assessment Office

(\$000s)	2024/25 Restated Estimates ¹	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Operating Expenses				
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074	17,343	17,343	17,343
Total	17,074	17,343	17,343	17,343

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2024/25 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2025/26 Estimates.

Appendix A: Minister Mandate Letter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

The mission of the Ministry of Environment and Parks is to provide leadership in ensuring our natural legacy for future generations and to support positive economic outcomes for British Columbia.

MINISTRY SUMMARY

(\$000)

	Estimates 2024/25 ¹	Estimates 2025/26
VOTED APPROPRIATIONS		
Vote 24 — Ministry Operations.....	161,259	162,410
Vote 25 — Environmental Assessment Office.....	17,074	17,343
STATUTORY APPROPRIATIONS		
Park Enhancement Fund Special Account.....	12,989	13,033
Sustainable Environment Fund Special Account.....	26,135	28,690
OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>217,457</u>	<u>221,476</u>
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ²	45,086	32,956
LOANS, INVESTMENTS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS ³	—	—
REVENUE COLLECTED FOR, AND TRANSFERRED TO, OTHER ENTITIES ⁴	—	—

NOTES

¹ For comparative purposes, figures shown for the 2024/25 operating expenses; capital expenditures; loans, investments and other requirements; and revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities are restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2025/26 *Estimates*. A reconciliation of restated operating expenses and capital expenditures is presented in Schedule A.

² A listing of estimated capital expenditures by ministry is presented in Schedule C.

³ A summary of loans, investments and other requirements by ministry is presented in Schedule D.

⁴ A summary of revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities by ministry is presented in Schedule E.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

SUMMARY BY CORE BUSINESS

(\$000)

	2024/25	2025/26 ESTIMATES		
	Net	Gross	External Recoveries	Net
OPERATING EXPENSES				
Core Business				
Environmental Protection.....	31,989	34,696	(2,216)	32,480
Conservation and Recreation Division.....	100,741	101,535	(355)	101,180
Executive and Support Services.....	28,529	28,752	(2)	28,750
Environmental Assessment Office.....	17,074	18,244	(901)	17,343
Park Enhancement Fund Special Account.....	12,989	13,533	(500)	13,033
Sustainable Environment Fund Special Account.....	26,135	28,690	—	28,690
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	217,457	225,450	(3,974)	221,476
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES				
	Capital Expenditures	Capital Expenditures	Receipts and P3 Liabilities	Net
Core Business				
Executive and Support Services.....	44,686	32,556	—	32,556
Park Enhancement Fund Special Account.....	400	400	—	400
TOTAL	45,086	32,956	—	32,956

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

Estimates
2024/25Estimates
2025/26

VOTE 24 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS

This vote provides for the programs, operations, and other activities described in the voted appropriations under the following core businesses: Environmental Protection, Conservation and Recreation Division, and Executive and Support Services.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Voted Appropriation

Environmental Protection.....	31,989	32,480
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Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for clean, healthy, and safe water, land, and air for all living things; administering the *Sustainable Environment Fund Act*; setting emission and discharge standards; monitoring and reporting on ambient air and water quality; reducing and removing contaminating toxins and waste; managing pesticide use; responding to high-risk environmental emergencies; and administering extended producer responsibility programs. This sub-vote also provides for the provision of laboratory services to ministry-related vote activities, and to other public and private sector entities on a cost recovery basis. Activities also include the acquisition, collection, analysis, interpretation, inventorying, and reporting of data and activities related to emissions and discharges into the environment. Transfers are provided for activities concerned with protecting and managing the environment. Eligible costs are recovered from the Sustainable Environment Fund. Costs may also be recovered from special accounts, ministries, other entities within government, other levels of government, organizations, and individuals for activities described within this sub-vote.

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION

Voted Appropriation

Conservation and Recreation Division.....	100,741	101,180
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Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for the planning and protection of natural spaces, including provincial parks and protected areas and recreation sites and trails, as well as natural resource law enforcement and public safety services related to human-wildlife conflicts, regulated activities, and emergency management. This sub-vote provides for acquisition, planning, management, administration, and utilization of areas for recreation and conservation. This includes the planning, protection, inventory, maintenance, and restoration of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in BC Parks and protected areas, recreation sites and trails, and reconciliation efforts with Indigenous Peoples through joint stewardship, cultural acknowledgement, and other government-to-government partnership activities; wildfire planning, prevention, and awareness; initiation of compliance and enforcement activities; provision of commercial and non-commercial recreational opportunities; development and maintenance of provincial park and recreation site facilities supporting public use of the front country, back country, and marine areas; promotion and management of recreation services; monitoring and reporting on park attendance, visitor satisfaction, and land status and condition; provision of information, marketing, education, community engagement, volunteers, and stewardship activities; promotion of use and awareness of the protected areas system; and fundraising from external sources to support program delivery. Transfers are provided for stewardship, information and education, and management and administration of parks and protected areas by third parties. This sub-vote also provides for activities related to upholding British Columbia and Canada laws and supporting the continuous improvement in compliance with requirements established by government to protect the environment, the province's natural resources, and related human health and safety, including education and promotion, inspections, investigations, and enforcement of standards for the protection of fish, wildlife, habitat, and the environment. This sub-vote also provides for monitoring, compliance, and enforcement of environmental standards for natural resources management for government and revenue policies; managing public safety issues related to emergency management, regulated activities, human/wildlife conflicts, and predator/livestock issues; combating natural resources crimes; and enforcing rules governing the use of forest service recreation sites, trails, and fire bans. This sub-vote also provides for legislation and policy development and implementation. Costs may be recovered from special accounts, ministries, other entities within government, other levels of government, agencies, organizations, licensees, and individuals for activities described within this sub-vote.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates 2025/26
EXECUTIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES		
Voted Appropriations		
Minister's Office.....	658	832
Corporate Services.....	27,871	27,918
	<u>28,529</u>	<u>28,750</u>
Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for the office of the Minister of Environment and Parks and executive support, including the deputy minister's office, strategic services, and Indigenous partnerships. This sub-vote provides executive direction and corporate administration to the ministry; finance, administrative, and strategic human resources; facilities; information and privacy; revenue collection; and trust fund management for ministry operations, programs, and clients. This sub-vote also provides for corporate service transformation; strategic and business planning; systems planning; corporate policy development; coordination of legislation and intergovernmental relations; developing and maintaining relationships with Indigenous Peoples, including through reconciliation activities and Indigenous partnerships; program evaluation; economic and regulatory impact analysis; and regulatory effectiveness. Transfers are provided for activities concerned with access, protection, and management of the environment. Costs may be recovered from special accounts, ministries, other entities within government, other levels of government, organizations, and individuals for activities described within this sub-vote.		
VOTE 24 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS	161,259	162,410

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

Estimates
2024/25Estimates
2025/26

VOTE 25 — ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE

This vote provides for the programs, operations, and other activities described in the voted appropriation under the following core business: Environmental Assessment Office.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE

Voted Appropriation

Environmental Assessment Office.....	17,074	17,343
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Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for the administration and continuous improvement of an objective, publicly accessible, and neutrally administered process under the *Environmental Assessment Act*. The process assesses environmental, economic, social, cultural, and health effects of major projects proposed in British Columbia; identifies means for preventing or reducing adverse effects; and regulates certified projects to ensure compliance with legally-binding project conditions. The Environmental Assessment Office promotes sustainability and supports reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia. The Environmental Assessment Office also facilitates public participation in environmental assessments and coordinates assessments with other governments, including Indigenous nations, and with other provincial ministries and agencies. Where projects have proceeded successfully through the process, the Environmental Assessment Office leads compliance and effectiveness monitoring, audit, and management, often in collaboration with other government agencies. Costs may be recovered from ministries, other entities within government, other levels of government, organizations, businesses, and individuals for activities described within this sub-vote.

VOTE 25 — ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE

17,074

17,343

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

STATUTORY DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

Estimates
2024/25Estimates
2025/26

STATUTORY APPROPRIATIONS

These statutory appropriations provide for the programs, operations, and other activities of the following special accounts: Park Enhancement Fund and Sustainable Environment Fund.

PARK ENHANCEMENT FUND

Statutory Appropriation

Park Enhancement Fund special account.....	12,989	13,033
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Statutory Appropriation Description: This statutory appropriation provides for the Park Enhancement Fund special account which is governed under the *Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act*.

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT FUND

Statutory Appropriation

Sustainable Environment Fund.....	26,135	28,690
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Statutory Appropriation Description: This statutory appropriation provides for the Sustainable Environment Fund which is governed under the *Sustainable Environment Fund Act* and regulations.

MINISTRY GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY

GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION

Salaries and Benefits	119,789	121,432
Operating Costs	75,416	77,822
Government Transfers	10,200	10,200
Other Expenses	40,861	43,386
Internal Recoveries	(24,835)	(27,390)
External Recoveries	(3,974)	(3,974)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES.....	217,457	221,476

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

SPECIAL ACCOUNTS¹

(\$000)

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates 2025/26
PARK ENHANCEMENT FUND SPECIAL ACCOUNT		
This account was created by the <i>Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act</i> in 2008. It provides for enhanced management, facilities, and services benefiting parks and protected areas, including increased information, education, and interpretation programs; higher levels of natural and cultural resource assessment, management, research, and restoration; additional capital investments supporting the conservation and recreation goals of the ministry; improved volunteer program support; supplementary recreation program delivery; regional systems planning for conservation and recreation; and development and production of promotional, educational, and partnership products. Transfers are provided to support the programs, services, and activities provided for in this account. Revenues are received from ministries, other levels of government, organizations, businesses, licensees, and individuals; from stumpage from tree removal in parks and protected areas; from the sale or licensing of promotional and educational goods and services; from park reservation service charges; from the sale of BC Parks license plates; from donations, bequests, contributions from agreements under the Act; and earnings on account balances.		
SPENDING AUTHORITY AVAILABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FISCAL YEAR ².....	24,839	24,350
OPERATING TRANSACTIONS		
Revenue.....	12,900	12,900
Expense.....	(13,489)	(13,533)
Internal and External Recoveries.....	500	500
Net Revenue (Expense).....	(89)	(133)
FINANCING TRANSACTIONS		
Receipts.....	—	—
Disbursements.....	—	—
Capital Expenditures.....	(400)	(400)
Net Cash Source (Requirement).....	(400)	(400)
PROJECTED SPENDING AUTHORITY AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR ².....	24,350	23,817

NOTES

¹ A Special Account is an account in the General Fund where the authorization to spend money from the account is located in an Act other than the *Supply Act*.

² The Spending Authority Available at the Beginning of the Fiscal Year 2024/25 is based on the 2023/24 *Public Accounts*. The Projected Spending Authority Available at the End of the Fiscal Year represents the cash and temporary investments projected to be available at the end of each fiscal year.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

SPECIAL ACCOUNTS¹

(\$000)

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates 2025/26
SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT FUND		
This account was created in 1990 by the <i>Sustainable Environment Fund Act</i> and subsequent amendments. It provides for the protection of the air, land, and water; and for environmental renewal by preventing pollution, controlling pollutants and administering remediation activities under the <i>Environmental Management Act</i> , the <i>Integrated Pest Management Act</i> , and related regulations. Revenue is derived from environmental levies, fees, and licences; and from contributions from the federal government, other organizations, and individuals. Expenses represent transfers provided to the Ministry of Environment and Parks for administration and development of policies, legislation, regulations, standards and criteria for discharges and emissions; monitoring and understanding of the receiving environment; education and encouragement of activities to prevent pollution; enforcement of waste reduction; air and water quality; administering contaminated sites, hazardous waste management, and soil and water remediation projects. Transfers are also provided to local governments, other organizations, and individuals to assist in waste management and to support various environmental protection initiatives.		
SPENDING AUTHORITY AVAILABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FISCAL YEAR ².....	12,261	14,816
OPERATING TRANSACTIONS		
Revenue.....	28,690	29,190
Expense.....	(26,135)	(28,690)
Net Revenue (Expense).....	2,555	500
FINANCING TRANSACTIONS		
Receipts.....	—	—
Disbursements.....	—	—
Capital Expenditures.....	—	—
Net Cash Source (Requirement).....	—	—
PROJECTED SPENDING AUTHORITY AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR ².....	14,816	15,316

NOTES

¹ A Special Account is an account in the General Fund where the authorization to spend money from the account is located in an Act other than the *Supply Act*.

² The Spending Authority Available at the Beginning of the Fiscal Year 2024/25 is based on the 2023/24 *Public Accounts*. The Projected Spending Authority Available at the End of the Fiscal Year represents the cash and temporary investments projected to be available at the end of each fiscal year.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

(\$000)

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VOTE 24 Ministry Operations

Description	Total 2024/25 Operating Expenses	50	51	52	54	Total Salaries and Benefits	55	57	59	60	63	65	67	68	69
Environmental Protection	31,989	34,383	294	8,833	—	43,510	—	881	—	6,409	556	1,418	—	—	1,003
Conservation and Recreation Division	100,741	45,311	208	11,627	—	57,146	—	1,176	—	2,384	1,079	1,948	—	19	21,221
Executive and Support Services	28,529	3,401	13	888	60	4,362	—	168	1,509	170	933	1,424	—	—	58
Minister's Office	658	504	—	152	60	716	—	90	—	—	8	18	—	—	—
Corporate Services	27,871	2,897	13	736	—	3,646	—	78	1,509	170	925	1,406	—	—	58
Total	161,259	83,095	515	21,348	60	105,018	—	2,225	1,509	8,963	2,568	4,790	—	19	22,282

VOTE 25 Environmental Assessment Office

Description	Total 2024/25 Operating Expenses	50	51	52	54	Total Salaries and Benefits	55	57	59	60	63	65	67	68	69
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074	9,739	62	2,480	—	12,281	1	496	645	852	125	160	—	—	3
Total	17,074	9,739	62	2,480	—	12,281	1	496	645	852	125	160	—	—	3

Statutory Appropriations

Description	Total 2024/25 Operating Expenses	50	51	52	54	Total Salaries and Benefits	55	57	59	60	63	65	67	68	69
Park Enhancement Fund special account	12,989	3,216	100	817	—	4,133	—	—	—	3,250	700	—	—	—	3,450
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	39,124	3,216	100	817	—	4,133	—	—	—	3,250	700	—	—	—	3,450

70	72	73	75	Total Operating Costs	77	79	80	Total Govt Transfers	81	83	85	Total Other Expenses	86	88	Total Internal Recoveries	89	90	Total External Recoveries	Total 2025/26 Operating Expenses
863	—	1,315	18	12,463	195	—	4,447	4,642	—	—	714	714	(26,632)	(1)	(26,633)	(26)	(2,190)	(2,216)	32,480
676	—	15,773	—	44,276	195	—	265	460	—	—	91	91	(436)	(2)	(438)	(2)	(353)	(355)	101,180
2,491	—	3,949	691	11,393	48	—	—	48	—	—	13,267	13,267	(317)	(1)	(318)	(1)	(1)	(2)	28,750
—	—	—	—	116	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	832
2,491	—	3,949	691	11,277	48	—	—	48	—	—	13,267	13,267	(317)	(1)	(318)	(1)	(1)	(2)	27,918
4,030	—	21,037	709	68,132	438	—	4,712	5,150	—	—	14,072	14,072	(27,385)	(4)	(27,389)	(29)	(2,544)	(2,573)	162,410

70	72	73	75	Total Operating Costs	77	79	80	Total Govt Transfers	81	83	85	Total Other Expenses	86	88	Total Internal Recoveries	89	90	Total External Recoveries	Total 2025/26 Operating Expenses
2	—	5	1	2,290	2,400	—	1,150	3,550	—	—	124	124	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(900)	(901)	17,343
2	—	5	1	2,290	2,400	—	1,150	3,550	—	—	124	124	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(900)	(901)	17,343

70	72	73	75	Total Operating Costs	77	79	80	Total Govt Transfers	81	83	85	Total Other Expenses	86	88	Total Internal Recoveries	89	90	Total External Recoveries	Total 2025/26 Operating Expenses
—	—	—	—	7,400	200	—	1,300	1,500	—	—	500	500	—	—	—	(500)	—	(500)	13,033
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	28,690	—	—	28,690	—	—	—	—	—	—	28,690
—	—	—	—	7,400	200	—	1,300	1,500	28,690	—	500	29,190	—	—	—	(500)	—	(500)	41,723

**Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Budget 2024 Estimates Summary**

(\$000s)	Fiscal 2023/24 Restated				Fiscal 2024/25								Fiscal 2025/26								Fiscal 2026/27										
	Fiscal Neutral				Fiscal Neutral				Budget 2024 Decisions				Fiscal Neutral				Budget 2024 Decisions				Fiscal Neutral				Budget 2024 Decisions						
	(1)	(2)	(3)		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Estimates 2023/24	C&E Re-Orig	Industrial Decarbonization	CARD Creation	Restated Estimates 2022/23	2024/25 Opening Balance	C&E Re-Orig	Industrial Decarbonization	CARD Creation	COS Uplift	LGCAP Acceleration	SRM	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Opening Balance	C&E Re-Orig	Industrial Decarbonization	CARD Creation	COS Uplift	LGCAP Acceleration	SRM	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Opening Balance	C&E Re-Orig	Industrial Decarbonization	CARD Creation	COS Uplift	LGCAP Acceleration	SRM	2026/27 Estimates		
Environmental Protection	24,977	4,963			29,940	26,307	4,963					719	31,989	26,336	4,963						719	32,018	26,336	4,963						719	32,018
Conservation & Recreation	-			89,986	89,986	-			96,261	1,999		863	99,123	-				96,635	1,510		863	99,008	-				96,635	1,545		863	99,043
BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails	69,601			(69,601)	-	75,466			(75,466)				-	75,840				(75,840)				-	75,840				(75,840)			-	
Compliance and Enforcement	25,997	(5,612)		(20,385)	-	26,407	(5,612)		(20,795)				-	26,407	(5,612)			(20,795)				-	26,407	(5,612)			(20,795)			-	
Climate Action	42,942		813		43,755	42,585		813			(23,886)	352	19,864	42,585		813				(23,886)	352	19,864	42,585		813				(23,886)	352	19,864
CleanBC Program for Industry	6,463		(813)		5,650	6,474		(813)					5,661	6,474		(813)					5,661	6,474		(813)						5,661	
Executive & Support Services	29,702	649			30,351	-							-	-							-	-								-	
Minister's Office					-	822						28	850	822							28	850	822						28	850	
Corporate Services					-	29,377	649			372		168	30,566	29,347	649			342		168	30,506	29,347	649			342		168	30,506		
	199,682	-	-	-	199,682	207,438	-	-	-	2,371	(23,886)	2,130	188,053	207,811	-	-	-	-	1,852	(23,886)	2,130	187,907	207,811	-	-	-	-	1,887	(23,886)	2,130	187,942
Environmental Assessment Office					-								-								-									-	
Environmental Assessment Office	16,392				16,392	16,655						419	17,074	16,655							419	17,074	16,655						419	17,074	
	16,392	-	-	-	16,392	16,655	-	-	-	-	-	419	17,074	16,655	-	-	-	-	-	-	419	17,074	16,655	-	-	-	-	-	419	17,074	
Statutory Appropriations																															
Park Enhancement Fund SA	12,920				12,920	12,949						40	12,989	12,949							40	12,989	12,949						40	12,989	
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135				26,135	26,135							26,135	26,135								26,135	26,135							26,135	
	39,055	-	-	-	39,055	39,084	-	-	-	-	-	40	39,124	39,084	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	39,124	39,084	-	-	-	-	-	40	39,124	
Total Ministry	255,129	-	-	-	255,129	263,177	-	-	-	2,371	(23,886)	2,589	244,251	263,550	-	-	-	-	1,852	(23,886)	2,589	244,105	263,550	-	-	-	-	1,887	(23,886)	2,589	244,140

Notes:

- 1) Internal re-org to remove Compliance & Enforcement Core Business, and distribute branches to other core business (EPD and ESS - Strategic Services)
- 2) Correct Budget to reflect Industrial Decarbonization under Climate Action as it should have been
- 3) Creation of new Conservation and Recreation division, which combines Comp & Enforcement with BC Parks, Rec Sites and Trail under one Core Business
- 4) Budget uplift for Conservation Officers, to add 10 new FTEs, and related operating costs
- 5) Decision to accelerate payments made under the Local Government Climate Action Program - same total funding provided; but distributed in FY24 instead of out years
- 6) Increases related to Shared Recovery Mandate for Unionized and Excluded staff salaries/benefits

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy Budget 2024 Year over Year Comparison (OPERATING)													
(\$000s)	Restated 2024/25 Estimates Ending Balance	Fiscal 2025/26						Fiscal 2026/27			FISCAL 2027/28		
		Budget 2023 Decisions		Budget 2024 Decisions	Budget 2025 Decisiosn			Budget 2024 Decisions	Budget 2025 Decisiosn		Budget 2025 Decisiosn		
		Permitting	Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure	Conservation Officer Services Uplift	Sustainable Environment Fund Adj	Ministers Office	Shared Recovery Mandate	2025/26 Estimates	Conservation Officer Services Uplift	N/A	2026/27 Estimates	N/A	2027/28 Estimates
Environmental Protection	31,989	29			-		462	32,480			32,480		32,480
Conservation & Recreation*	100,741	1	373	(489)			554	101,180	35		101,215		101,215
Climate Action	-	-						-			-		-
CleanBC Program for Industry	-	-						-			-		-
Executive & Support Services	-	-						-			-		-
Minister's Office	658	-				174		832			832		832
Corporate Services	27,871	(30)		(30)			107	27,918			27,918		27,918
	161,259	-	373	(519)	-	174	1,123	162,410	35	-	162,445	-	162,445
Environmental Assessment Office													
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074						269	17,343			17,343		17,343
	17,074	-	-	-	-	-	269	17,343	-		17,343		17,343
Statutory Appropriations													
Park Enhancement Fund SA	12,989						44	13,033			13,033		13,033
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135				2,555			28,690			28,690		28,690
	39,124	-	-	-	2,555	-	44	41,723	-	-	41,723	-	41,723
Total Ministry	217,457	-	373	(519)	2,555	174	1,436	221,476	35	-	221,511	-	221,511

Note amounts are year to year incremental changes and does not reflect full budget decisions

* Conservation and Recreation was previously 2 Core Businesses: BC Parks, Recreation Sites And Trails; and Compliance and Enforcement

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Ministry of Environment and Parks
2025/26 Budget changes by Core Business (\$000)

	2024/25		2025/26		2026/27		2027/28
	Restated	Change	Estimates	Change	Plan	Change	Plan
Ministry Operations							
Environmental Protection	31,989	491	32,480	-	32,480	-	32,480
Conservation & Recreation	100,741	439	101,180	35	101,215	-	101,215
Executive & Support Services	28,529	221	28,750	-	28,750	-	28,750
Sub-Total	161,259	1,151	162,410	35	162,445	-	162,445
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074	269	17,343	-	17,343	-	17,343
Sub-Total	17,074	269	17,343	-	17,343	-	17,343
Park Enhancement Fund SA	12,989	44	13,033	-	13,033	-	13,033
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135	2,555	28,690	-	28,690	-	28,690
TOTAL Ministry	217,457	4,019	221,476	35	221,511	-	221,511
Percent Change			1.85%		0.02%		0.00%

2025/26 Changes Include - Increase of \$4.019M

Budget 2025 Decisions:

- 2.555 M increase for Sustainable Environment Fund
- 1.436 M increase to salary and benefits for the Shared Recovery Mandate
- 0.174 M increase to Ministers Office Salaries and Benefits

Budget 2024 Decisions:

- 0.519 M decrease in Conservation Officer staffing

Budget 2023 Decisions:

- 0.373 increase for Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure to enhance existing asset maintenance and replacement programs
- 4.019 Total Change

2026/27 Changes Include - Increase of \$0.035M

Budget 2024 Decisions:

- 0.035 M increase for additional staff required to meet commitments in First Nations Agreements

2027/28 No changes

Ministry of Environment and Parks
Operating Budget - 2024/25 Restated to 2025/26
by Group Account Classification (GAC) and Votes (\$000)

Group Account Classification (GAC)	2024/25 Restated	2025/26 Estimates	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Ministry Operations				
Salaries and benefits	103,688	105,018	1,330	1.28%
Operating costs	65,726	68,132	2,406	3.66%
Government transfers	5,150	5,150	-	0.00%
Other expenses	14,102	14,072	(30)	-0.21%
Recoveries	(27,407)	(29,962)	(2,555)	9.32%
Ministry Operations Total	161,259	162,410	1,151	1%
Environmental Assessment Office				
Salaries and benefits	12,012	12,281	269	2.24%
Operating costs	2,290	2,290	-	0.00%
Government transfers	3,550	3,550	-	0.00%
Other expenses	124	124	-	0.00%
Recoveries	(902)	(902)	-	0.00%
Environmental Assessment Office Total	17,074	17,343	269	2%
Special Accounts				
Salaries and benefits	4,089	4,133	44	1.08%
Operating costs	7,400	7,400	-	0.00%
Government transfers	1,500	1,500	-	0.00%
Other expenses	26,635	29,190	2,555	9.59%
Recoveries	(500)	(500)	-	0.00%
Special Account Total	39,124	41,723	2,599	7%
Grand Total	217,457	221,476	4,019	2%

All Votes & Special Accounts	2024/25 Restated	2025/26 Estimates	Increase (Decrease)	% Increase (Decrease)
Salaries and Benefits	119,789	121,432	1,643	1%
Operating Costs	75,416	77,822	2,406	3%
Government Transfers	10,200	10,200	-	-
Other Expenses	40,861	43,386	2,525	6%
Recoveries	(28,809)	(31,364)	(2,555)	9%
	217,457	221,476	4,019	2%

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
3 Year Capital Budget (\$000)

Spending by Asset Types	2024/25 Estimates	Change	2025/26 Estimates	Change	2026/27 Plan	Change	2027/28 Plan
Ministry Operations							
Centralized Assets							
Land Acquisition	6,950	(4,950)	2,000	0	2,000	0	2,000
Land Improvements	30,565	(3,951)	26,614	0	26,614	0	26,614
Vehicles	4,384	(2,544)	1,840	0	1,840	0	1,840
Office Equipment	10	0	10	0	10	0	10
Specialized Equipment	2,777	(685)	2,092	0	2,092	0	2,092
Centralized Assets Total	44,686	(12,130)	32,556	0	32,556	0	32,556
Ministry Operations Total	44,686	(12,130)	32,556	0	32,556	0	32,556
Park Enhancement Fund							
Land Improvements	300	0	300	0	300	0	300
Specialized Equipment	100	0	100	0	100	0	100
Park Enhancement Fund Total	400	0	400	0	400	0	400
Ministry Total	45,086	(12,130)	32,956	0	32,956	0	32,956
Percent Change			(26.9%)		-		-

2025/26 Changes Include - Decrease of \$12.130M

Budget 2024 Decisions:

- 4.950 M decrease to **Land Acquisition** for Park Facility Maintenance Program (return to base envelope)
- 3.951 M decrease to **Land Improvements** for Campsite Expansion (return to base envelope)
- 1.681 M decrease to **Vehicles** for Back country Facilities (return to base envelope)
- 0.290 M decrease to **Specialized Equipment** for BC Parks (return to base envelope)
- 0.863 M decrease to **Vehicles** for Conservation Officer Services (return to base envelope)
- 0.238 M decrease to **Specialized Equipment** (Budget 2021 decision provided 3 year funding FY22-24, return to base)
- 0.157 M decrease to **Specialized Equipment** for Conservation Officer Services firearms and radios (return to base envelope)
- 12.130 Total changes

2026/27 no changes

Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy
3 Year Revenue Projections
2024/25 Restated to 2027/28
(\$000s)

Revenues by Core Business	2024/25 Restated	Change	2025/26 Estimates	Change	2026/27 Planned	Change	2027/28 Planned
Ministry Operations							
BC Parks							
Park Use Permit Fees	2,100	(150)	1,950	-	1,950	-	1,950
Backcountry Permits and Other Park Revenues	255	(204)	51	-	51	(39)	12
BC Parks Total	2,355	(354)	2,001	-	2,001	(39)	1,962
Other Revenues							
Miscellaneous Revenues	250	-	250	-	250	-	250
Other Revenues Total	250	-	250	-	250	-	250
Ministry Operations Total	2,605	(354)	2,251	-	2,251	(39)	2,212
Environmental Assessment Office							
EAO							
Fees, Licences, and Permits	1,200	(200)	1,000	-	1,000	-	1,000
EAO Total	1,200	(200)	1,000	-	1,000	-	1,000
Environmental Assessment Office	1,200	(200)	1,000	-	1,000	-	1,000
Special Accounts							
Park Enhancement Fund							
Park Licence Plates Sales	13,000	(4,970)	8,030	-	8,030	-	8,030
Discover Camping - External parties' contributions	5,200	(800)	4,400	-	4,400	-	4,400
Successions and Gifts	50	450	500	-	500	-	500
Miscellaneous Revenues	1,116	(646)	470	-	470	-	470
Park Enhancement Fund Total	19,366	(5,966)	13,400	-	13,400	-	13,400
Sustainable Environment Fund							
Discharges Fees	21,370	-	21,370	-	21,370	-	21,370
Diapers PST	6,500	500	7,000	-	7,000	-	7,000
Pesticides - Exams, Licences, and Permits	700	-	700	-	700	-	700
Miscellaneous Revenues	120	-	120	-	120	-	120
Sustainable Environment Fund Total	28,690	500	29,190	-	29,190	-	29,190
Special Accounts Total	48,056	(5,466)	42,590	-	42,590	-	42,590
Grand Total	51,861	(6,020)	45,841	-	45,841	(39)	45,802
	Total % Change		-11.6%				

Client 301 – Park Enhancement Fund (PEF):

All Client 301 Stobs for FY26-FY28 have been adjusted to align with current Budget Chart of Accounts (BCOA) values. A PEF Estimates Adjustment Template was not submitted, as a result the FY26-FY28 forecast will remain unchanged from Budget 2024.

Climate Action - Greenhouse Gas Emissions Offsets: Program has moved to Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions (ECS).

Version 1 - PEA & GEU & LGL separated

Ministry of Environment - Headcount by Classification

Based on CHIPS data at January 31, 2025

Classification		MO	DMO	SP	EPD	CARD	EAO	Rec Strat	PEF	Grand Total	% of Total Staff
Senior Executive (DM & ADM)	Excluded		1	1	1	1	2			6	0.6%
Management (AL, BL, SL)	Excluded		4	7	38	44	40	1		134	13.3%
Chief of Staff, Sr Exec (Band A), Ministerial & Exec Assistants (Sched A)	Excluded	2	1			1	1	1		6	0.6%
Legal Counsel - LGL	Excluded									0	0.0%
Union - GEU	Included		9	16	239	411	68	1	12	756	74.9%
Union - PEA	Included				102	3			1	106	10.5%
Ministerial Support Staff	Excluded	1								1	0.1%
Grand Total		3	15	24	380	460	111	3	13	1009	100%
% of Total Staff		0.3%	1.5%	2.4%	37.7%	45.6%	11.0%	0.3%	1.3%	100%	

Version 2 - PEA & GEU & LGL combined

Ministry of Environment - Headcount by Classification

Based on CHIPS data at January 31, 2025

Classification		MO	DMO	SP	EPD	CARD	EAO	Rec Strat	PEF	Grand Total	% of Total Staff
Senior Executive (DM & ADM)	Excluded		1	1	1	1	2			6	0.6%
Management (AL, BL, SL)	Excluded		4	7	38	44	40	1		134	13.3%
Chief of Staff, Sr Exec (Band A), Ministerial & Exec Assistants (Sched A)	Excluded	2	1			1	1	1		6	0.6%
Union	Included		9	16	341	414	68	1	12	861	85.3%
Ministerial Support Staff	Excluded	1							1	2	0.2%
Grand Total		3	15	24	380	460	111	3	13	1009	100%
% of Total Staff		0.3%	1.5%	2.4%	37.7%	45.6%	11.0%	0.3%	18.0%	100%	

Note:

CARD includes BC Parks, Recreation Sites & Trails, and Conservation Officer Services

Ministry of Environment & Parks – Estimates Briefing

STAFF BY CLASSIFICATION and CORE BUSINESS

Classification	MO	DMO	SP	EP	CAR	PEF	Rec Strat	EAO	Total
Coop and Interns									0
Aboriginal Youth Intern Prog									0
Coop Education Train Progm Lv1									0
Coop Education Train Progm Lv2									0
Work Able Intern Prog									0
Coop and Interns Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clerks, Administrative and Financial Officers									0
Administrative Coordinator									0
Administrative Officer (PO)R27								28	28
Administrative Officer R15		2		3	2	2		3	12
Administrative Officer R18				5	4			3	12
Administrative Officer R21		1		5	1	1		8	16
Administrative Officer R24			1	6	6	4		4	21
Administrative Officer R27				1	12	1		4	18
Office Assistant R9									0
Clerk R12	1	2		6	13			6	28
Clerk R15		1	1	4	8				14
Clerk R9					1			2	3
Clerk Stenographer R12			1	4					5
Clerk Stenographer R9		1	1	7	9			1	19
Financial Officer R14									0
Financial Officer R21									0
Financial Officer R24									0
Clerks, Administrative and Financial	1	7	4	41	56	8	0	59	176
DM and ADMs									
Assist Deputy Minister Non-OIC									0
Assistant Deputy Minister 1			1		1			1	3
Associate Deputy Minister								1	1
Deputy Minister 1									0
Deputy Minister 2		1							1
DM and ADMs Total	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	5
Management Band 1-6									
Band 1		1						2	3
Band 1 MS									0
Band 2				2	1		1	1	5
Band 2 MS	1								1
Band 3		2	1	9	10			6	28
Band 3 MS	1								1

Band 4		1	2	18	27			24	72
Band 5			3	8	5			5	21
Band 6			1	2	1			2	6
Management Band 1-6 Total	2	4	7	39	44	0	1	40	137
Biologists									
Biologist R21									0
Biologist R24				18	9				27
Biologist R27				11					11
Biologist R30				8					8
Biologists Total	0	0	0	37	9	0	0	0	46
Communications Officers									
Communications Officer R15		1							1
Communications Officer R18		1							1
Communications Officer R21				1	1				2
Communications Officer R24									0
Communications Officer R27								1	1
Communications Officers Total	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	5
Conservation Officers									
Conservation Officer R18									0
Conservation Officer R21									0
Conservation Officer R24					92				92
Conservation Officer R27					3				3
Conservation Officer R30				1	24				25
Conservation Officers Total	0	0	0	1	119	0	0	0	120
Economists									
Economist R21					2				2
Economist R24									0
Economist R27				1					1
Economist R30					1				1
Economists Total	0	0	0	1	3	0		0	4
Information Systems									
Information Systems R13									0
Information Systems R18					2	1			3
Information Systems R21									0
Information Systems R24					2			1	3
Information Systems R27			2	1					3
Information Systems R30									0
Information Systems Total	0	0	2	1	4	1	0	1	9
Laboratory Officers and Assistant									
Laboratory Assistant R11									0

Laboratory/Hlth Science Of R15				2					2
Laboratory/Hlth Science Of R21									0
Laboratory/Hlth Science Of R24				3					3
Laboratory/Hlth Science Of R30				2					2
Laboratory Officers and Assistant T	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
Licensed Science Officers									
Licensed Sc Off Agrologist 2				4					4
Licensed Sc Off Agrologist 3				16					16
Licensed Sc Off Agrologist 4				10					10
Licensed Sc Off Engineer 1				1					1
Licensed Sc Off Engineer 3				3					3
Licensed Sc Off Engineer 4									0
Licensed Sc Off Forester 2									0
Licensed Sc Off Forester 4						1			1
Licensed Sc Off Geologist 3									0
Lic Sc Off (Geoscientist) 3				3					3
Lic Sc Off (Geoscientist) 4				6					6
Licensed Sc Off Other 2				2	1				3
Licensed Sc Off Other 3				16					16
Licensed Sc Off Other 4				6					6
LSO 3 -Designated Profssnl Eng				22	2				24
LSO 4 -Designated Profssnl Eng				13					13
LSO 5 -Designated Profssnl Eng									0
Licensed Science Officers Total	0	0	0	102	3	1	0	0	106
Park Assistants									
Park Assistant R12					5				5
Park Assistant R6									0
Park Assistant R9									0
Park Assistants Total	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	5
Planning Officer									
Planning Officer R24					1				1
Planning Officer R27					10				10
Planning Officer R30					3				3
Planning Officer Total	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	14
Policy Analysts									
Policy Analyst - Science R24									0
Policy Analyst - Science R27			10	15	3	1			29
Policy Analyst - Science R30				3					3
Policy Social/Info/Health R27				1	1		1	6	9
Policy Analysts Total	0	0	10	19	4	1	1	6	41
Science and Research Officers									
Research Officer R18					1				1

Research Officer R21									0
Research Officer R24				1					1
Research Officer R27									0
Science Officer R30									0
Scientific/Tech Off R15 - Res					2				2
Scientific/Tech Off R18 - Res				3	22				25
Scientific/Tech Off R21 - Res				4	28				32
Scientific/Tech Off R24 - Res				19	11				30
Scientific/Tech Off R27 - Res				12	37				49
Scientific/Tech Off R30 - Res				4	12				16
Scientific/Technical Off R11									0
Scientific/Technical Off R15					2			1	3
Scientific/Technical Off R18					22				22
Scientific/Technical Off R21				9					9
Scientific/Technical Off R24				59	46	1			106
Scientific/Technical Off R27				11	11	1			23
Scientific/Technical Off R30				9	2				11
Science and Research Officers Total	0	0	0	131	196	2	0	1	330
Executive Assistants									
Executive Lead							1		1
Executive Administrative Asst					1			1	2
Senior Executive Assistant		1							1
Executive Assistants Total	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	4
Librarian R27									0
Grand Total	3	15	24	380	460	13	3	111	1009

Ministry of Environment & Parks

Summary Roll-up of Headcount by Division/Branch

	Head count				
Core Business	2023/24 Actual	Change	2024/25 Actual	Change	2025/26 Forecast
Environmental Protection	424	(44)	380		380
Conservation and Recreation	527	(67)	460	0	460
BC Parks	353	(49)	304		304
Conservation Officer Service	174	(18)	156		156
Climate Action	128	(128)	0		0
Rec Strategy	1	2	3		3
Strategic Policy	30	(6)	24		24
Minister's Office	5	(2)	3		3
Deputy Minister's Office	18	(3)	15		15
Total Ministry Operations	1,133	-248	885	0	885
Environmental Assessment Office	118	(7)	111		111
Park Enhancement Fund	8	5	13		13
Total Ministry	1,259	-250	1,009	0	1,009

Forecasted 2025/26:

Ministry of Environment & Parks
Overtime Costs (STOB 5010) Comparisons
(\$000s)

Program	2020/21 Actuals to Dec 31st ⁽¹⁾	2021/22 Actuals to Dec 31st ⁽¹⁾	2022/23 Actuals to Dec 31st ⁽¹⁾	2023/24 Actuals to Jan 31st ⁽¹⁾	2024/25 Actuals to Jan 31st ⁽¹⁾
EP	158	156	163	182	201
ES	22	7	7	-	-
Parks	67	75	92	130	-
COS	1,154	999	1,012	999	-
C & R	-	-	-	-	713
CA	-	3	3	3	-
EAO	15	91	91	91	52
PEF		1	1	2	7
ESS		1	1	1	0
Total	1,416	1,333	1,370	1,408	973

Notes:

(1) A proportion of the overtime costs will be recovered at year end.

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

Advice/Recommendations

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

Advice/Recommendations

Official Opposition MLA Bullet Requests February 1, 2024 - March 24, 2025 (BY MLA)					
ID	MLA	Subject	Action	Received	Closed
411235	Bond, Shirley	MLA BOND BULLETS: Renshaw trail closures	Bullets	2024/07/03	2024/07/11
410266	Clovechok, Doug	MLA BULLETS: MLA Request received via ParkInfo - Whiteswan Lake length of stay and maintenance Issues	Bullets	2024/04/26	2024/05/09
412054	Davies, Dan	MLA DAVIES BULLETS: ^{Personal Information} motorcycle accident caused by oil spill	Bullets	2024/08/27	2024/09/04
414526	Day, Brennan	MLA DAY BULLETS: Memorial Bench Program	Bullets	2025/02/06	2024-02-14
409697	de Jong, Michael	MLA BULLETS: MLA De Jong: Matsqui Prison Chemical Spill	Bullets	2024/04/03	2024/04/11
412227	Lee, Michael	MLA LEE BULLETS: Request for Expedited Review of Protocol 9 (P9) Application – Site ID 29001, Application ID 15204	Bullets	2024/09/05	2024/09/12
409423	Letnick, Norm	MLA BULLETS: Environmental Protection notice Sandher Fruit Packers 3231 Old Vernon Rd	Bullets	2024/03/18	2024/03/18

410248	Merrifield, Renee	MLA BULLETS: Hunting in Myra-Bellevue Park	Bullets	2024/04/25	2024/05/02
410082	Milobar, Peter	MLA BULLETS: Case file re single use plastics	Bullets	2024/04/17	2024/04/22
410407	Milobar, Peter	MLA BULLETS: Park Use Permit Application Denial	Bullets	2024/05/06	2024/05/16
411124	Milobar, Peter	MLA MILOBAR BULLETS: requesting updates on RAPP files	Bullets	2024/06/25	2024/07/02
410811	Morris, Mike	MLA BULLETS: Site disclosure/building permit (on old gas station) application update	Bullets	2024/06/05	2024/06/13
410735	Ross, Ellis	MLA BULLETS: City of Terrace lumber mill seeking location on a portion of the closed landfill site	Bullets	2024/05/30	2024/06/11
409425	Shypitka, Tom	MLA BULLETS: MLA Shypitka BC Parks Moyie Park Boat Launch	Bullets	2024/03/18	2024/04/03
410597	Stewart, Ben	MLA BULLETS: all inclusive play space for children of all abilities in BC Parks.	Bullets	2024/05/22	2024/06/03
411644	Stewart, Ben	MLA STEWART BULLETS: \$2 bag tax	Bullets	2024/07/23	2024/07/26
411652	Stewart, Ben	MLA STEWART BULLETS: Friends of Fintry Caretaker Suite	Bullets	2024/07/24	2024/07/25
410795	Stone, Todd	MLA BULLETS: Lack of alternatives to single use plastic rings to keep cans of beer together at liquor stores	Bullets	2024/06/04	2024/06/06
412397	Stone, Todd	MLA STONE BULLETS: Possible environmental problem at McDonald Creek Provincial Park	Bullets	2024/09/17	2024/09/17
412092	Sturdy, Jordan	MLA STURDY BULLETS: Constituent Concerns regarding Joffre Lakes Park	Bullets	2024/08/28	2024/09/17
408347	Tegart, Jackie	The MO has requested, "Would you please connect with our conservation officers in the area to follow up on this report?" (I note, the MLA request is to have a CO in the Fraser-Nicola region contact a constituent concerning burning debris.)	Bullets	2024/02/07	2024/02/15
408948	Tegart, Jackie	MLA BULLETS: Coquihalla Canyon Provincial Park/Othello Tunnels	Bullets	2024/02/26	2024/03/05

409830	Tegart, Jackie	MLA BULLETS: Coquihalla Canyon Provincial Park Othello Tunnels	Bullets	2024/04/08	2024/04/17
410643	Tegart, Jackie	MLA BULLETS: Alleged sewage dumping in the District of Lillooet	Bullets	2024/05/24	2024/05/29
410723	Tegart, Jackie	MLA BULLETS: Hydrometric Gauging Station - Basque area of the Thompson River	Bullets	2024/05/29	2024/06/03
410736	Tegart, Jackie	MLA BULLETS: Dumping into pond and creek that flows into Fraser River	Bullets	2024/05/30	2024/06/03
410827	Tegart, Jackie	MLA BULLETS: Coquihalla Canyon Provincial Park/Othello Tunnels - park repair and impact on private property	Bullets	2024/06/05	2024/06/13
411164	Tegart, Jackie	MLA TEGART BULLETS: Report of sewage discharge	Bullets	2024/06/26	2024/07/12
411179	Tegart, Jackie	MLA TEGART BULLETS: Opening of Othello Tunnels in July and additional information regarding surrounding park	Bullets	2024/06/26	2024/06/28
411653	Tegart, Jackie	MLA TEGART BULLETS: Issues at Nicola Lake	Bullets	2024/07/24	2024/07/30
412035	Tegart, Jackie	MLA TEGART BULLETS: Nicola Lake Contamination follow-up inquiry	Bullets	2024/08/23	2024/08/30
412066	Tegart, Jackie	MLA TEGART BULLETS: Water testing at Seton Lake	Bullets	2024/08/26	2024/08/28
412302	Tegart, Jackie	MLA TEGART BULLETS: Landstrom road watercourse	Bullets	2024/09/12	2024/09/12
414622	Wilson, Donegal	MLA WILSON BULLETS: Cathedral Lakes Provincial Park Bridge Replacement	Bullets	2025/02/13	2025-02-18
414710	Stamer, Ward	MLA STAMER BULLETS: Land Application Plan submitted by Jamieson Creek Ranch/SYLVIS (concerns re. biosolids spread)	Bullets	2025-02-21	2025-03-03
414807	McCall, Macklin	MLA MCCALL BULLETS: damage at Bear Creek Provincial Campground	Bullets	2025-02-25	2025-03-03
414816	McInnis, Scott	MLA MCINNIS BULLETS: RAPP report of burning in Kimberley Nature Park	Bullets	2025-02-25	2025-03-03

Official Opposition MLA Correspondence February 1, 2024 - March 24, 2025 (BY MLA)						
ID	MLA	Subject	Issue	Action	Received	Notes
410322	Ashton, Dan	Info note for MGH on the status of a permit to dredge the Marina of the Narramata Yacht Club. MLA Ashton has connected with our office and asked if there is anything holding this back.	Permits	Info Note	2024/04/30	Redirected to WLRS on April 30.
412150	Bernier, Mike	The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) has initiated an environmental assessment (EA) process for Rocky Creek Metallurgical Coal Mine Project	Environmental Assessment	Signature	Internally Generated	Letter via email under Associate DM Arend's signature. No files. Cross-referenced by EAO to 412151.
409109	Bond, Shirley; Milobar, Peter; Oakes, Coralee (and Katrine Conroy, NDP)	Caribou Recovery Heli-Skiing Restrictions (MLAs and HeliCat Canada)	Park Access	Internally Generated / FYI/File	2024-07-11	No correspondence was sent out for this file. Initiated by BC Parks staff - direction changed after reached minister's office and file closed as no further direction was received from BC Parks.

408373	Bond, Shirley	RE: Recreation access to Kakwa Provincial Park. MLA Bond requesting Minister Heyman intervene in road access impasse.	Park Access	Draft Response	2024/02/08	Minister response to MLA Bond sent Feb. 27, 2024.
408736	Bond, Shirley	RE: Closure of Renshaw Snowmobiling Area	Recreation Sites and Trails Closures	Draft Response	2024/02/20	Minister response to MLA Bond sent Mar. 21, 2024.
410761	Bond, Shirley	Comments and concerns re: Dore River Armouring Project.	Erosion	FYI/File	2024/05/24	FYI filed with the CU. The incoming was addressed to WLRS Minister and ENV Minister was cc'd.
410012	Davies, Dan	RE: Fort Nelson Rotary Club Annual Fishing Derby. MLA-Davies is requesting Minister reinstate access to Muncho Lake for the 2024 Father's Day Fishing Derby.	Marine Protected Areas	Draft Response	2024/04/15	Minister response to MLA Davies sent May 3, 2024.
413864	Hartwell, Shannon	MLA Notification letter for Launch of the Initial Public Input for Atlin/Áa Tlein Téix'i Park and Willison Creek – Nelson Lake/Sít' Héeni Conservancy management planning	Policy and Planning	Draft Response	Internally Generated	Internally generated notification letter under Minister signature sent Jan. 8, 2025.

413857	Kindy, Anna	MLA Notification letter for Draft Tahsish Park Management Plan - MLA Notification letter for Launch of the Initial Public Input for Atlin/Áa Tlein Téix'i Park and Willison Creek – Nelson Lake/Sít' Héeni Conservancy management planning Parks	Policy and Planning	Draft Response	Internally Generated	Internally generated notification letter under Minister signature sent Jan. 8, 2025. MLA Kindy confirmed that she would like to be kept informed.
410086	Merrifield, Renee	Follow up from Committee Debate on Bill 9-2024: Protected Area of BC Act Amendments	Protected Areas	Info Note	2024-04-17	Briefing material for MLA Merrifield as per her request during Committee Debate, dated April 18, 2024.
409754	Merrifield, Renee	Minister offered to have staff provide an in-person briefing with the MLA during Committee of the Whole debates on our sections of Bill 9 (Misc) re: Calculation of park area figures	Parks	Meeting Request	2024/04/04	Minister offered to have staff provide an in-person briefing with the MLA during Committee of the Whole debates on our sections of Bill 9 (Misc) re: Calculation of park area figures. All info regarding this meeting is found in 410086.

410086	Merrifield, Renee	Follow up from Committee Debate on Bill 9-2024: Protected Area of BC Act Amendments	Protected Areas	Info Note	2024/04/17	Info Note created for MLA Merrifield.
411032	Milobar, Peter	Report of Land Misuse on Jamieson Creek Forest Service Road	Compliance and Enforcement	FYI/File	2024/06/17	This incoming sent to both ENV and FOR Ministers. The COS confirmed this is best for FOR and/or the Thompson-Nicola Regional District to reply.
409629	Milobar, Peter	Concerns regarding loss of agricultural lands on the North Thompson River due to erosion.	Erosion	FYI/File	2024/03/21	The incoming sent to AF Minister; ENV Minister cc'd. WLRS Minister replied July 17.
411010	Milobar, Peter	RE: Frolek Cattle Co. Ltd.'s Park Use Permit # 102139	Park Use Permits	Draft Response	2024/06/18	Staff response to MLA Milobar on July 3. Staff responded because they were statutory decision maker.
408297	Morris, Mike	The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) has initiated an environmental assessment (EA) process for Summit Lake PG LNG Project (Summit Lake LNG) proposed by JX LNG Canada Ltd. (JX LNG)	Environmental Assessment	Signature	Internally Generated	Sent to MLA Morris Feb. 15, 2024. Cross-referenced by EAO to 412151.

410980	Oakes, Coralee	Urgent Measures Needed to Prevent Shutdown of Atlantic Power in Williams Lake	BC Hydro	FYI/File	2024/05/22	FYI filed with the CU. The incoming included EMLI Minister, which was the Ministry responsible.
410727	Sturdy, Jordan	Request for Intervention: Hurley Snowmobile Trail. The Pemberton Valley Snowmobile Club (PVSC) has applied for a tenure to operate a road grooming service for Hurley Valley Forest Service Road (FSR)	Recreation Sites and Trails Maintenance	Draft Response	2024/05/29	Minister response to MLA Sturdy July 4, 2024.
412507	Sturdy, Jordan	Bowen Island Cougar concern	Human-Wildlife Conflicts	FYI/File	2024/09/23	MLA Sturdy's office forwarded concerns from Bowen Island constituent. ENV received the same incoming and the constituent was responded to via an ADM response on Nov. 13, 2024 (CLIFF
410377	Tegart, Jackie	MLA BULLETS: MLA Tegart: Release Notice Application - Xaxli'p	Permits	Materials	2024/04/23	DMO confirmed May 5, 2024, with the MO that the release letter was signed and sent.

410395	Tegart, Jackie	Restoration of Alexandra Bridge	TACS Issue	External Redirect w/o Letter	2024/04/29	Addressed to multiple Ministers, including ENV and TACS. TACS confirmed they would respond. TACS Minister responded June 11, 2024 and ENV Minister was
413841	Warbus, Á'a:líya	Toxic spills in Hope Slough - Writer, an MLA, is responding to email sent to MTD from Debora Soutar - Cliff 413572. Part of Hope Slough batch number 413570.	Local Government Issue	FYI/File	2024/11/30	MLA Warbus responded to a constituent and cc'd ENV Minister. The writer was responded to via batch ADM response Dec. 30 (CLIFF Batch Header 413570; Batch Member
415191	Doerkson, Lorne	Letter from MLA Lorne Doerkson - 'On Thursday, March 6, 2025, a constituent of Cariboo-Chilcotin was raided by the BC Conservation Officer Service. My constituent is now facing \$100,000 of damage to his home and property.'	Conservation Officer Service	Draft Minister Response	2025-03-17	Draft under Minister signature is with COS to edit. With due date 2025-04-04.

Green MLA Bullet Requests February 1, 2024 - March 24, 2025 (BY MLA)						
ID	MLA	Author Type	Subject	Action	Received	Closed
408479	Olsen, Adam	MLA-Green	MLA BULLETS: Question regarding dogs in Burgoyne Bay Park	Bullets	2024/02/13	2024/02/23
409499	Olsen, Adam	MLA-Green	MLA BULLETS: MLA Olsen: Burgoyne Bay - Hawthorn Tree Removal	Bullets	2024/03/21	2024/04/03
411675	Olsen, Adam	MLA-Green	MLA OLSEN BULLETS: Bamberton inquiry	Bullets	2024/07/25	2024/07/30

Green MLA Correspondence February 1, 2024 - March 25, 2025 (BY MLA)						
ID	MLA	Subject	Issue	Action	Received	Notes
414048	Botterell, Rob	Re: the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Board meeting to determine whether to move forward with Tier 1 of their Long-Term Biosolids Management Strategy. This option includes the development of a demonstration facility for advanced thermal processing of biosolids, and eliminates the need for land applications of biosolids. MLA Botterell is in support and welcomes the opportunity to discuss what steps might be taken to update Provincial policies on land application of	Meeting Request	Meeting Request	2025/01/09	Scheduled for Feb. 27 at 11am; MTD and KJ attending.
408770	Olsen, Adam	Re: a request for a briefing from staff regarding the Recycling Product Stewardship Program. MLA Olsen was informed that there was an update coming with respect to the stewardship program and wants to know how it will relate to the recycling depots on the Southern Gulf Islands.	Recycling	Meeting Request	2024-02-20	Meeting occurred with EPD staff April 8, 2024.
409885	Olsen, Adam	Concerns re: the Organic Matter Recycling Regulation and the Capital Regional District Biosolids Disposal Plan.	Bio-solids	Draft Response	2024/04/09	Minister response to MLA Olsen, May 14, 2024.

408721	Olsen, Adam	Re: a request for a briefing from staff regarding the Recycling Product Stewardship Program. MLA Olsen was informed that there was an update coming with respect to the stewardship program and wants to know how it will relate to the recycling depots on the Southern Gulf Islands.	Meeting Request	Meeting Request	2024/02/16	MO requested verbal briefing attended by EPD staff, MLA Olsen and SA Reamick Lo.
413822	Valeriote, Jeremy	Re: a request for a meeting with Minister Davidson for some time in January to discuss the Squamish camping options and park expansion.	Meeting Request	Meeting Request	2024/12/18	MO offered dates and times in early January for Minister meeting (January 6-9).

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Conservation and Recreation Division Reorganization
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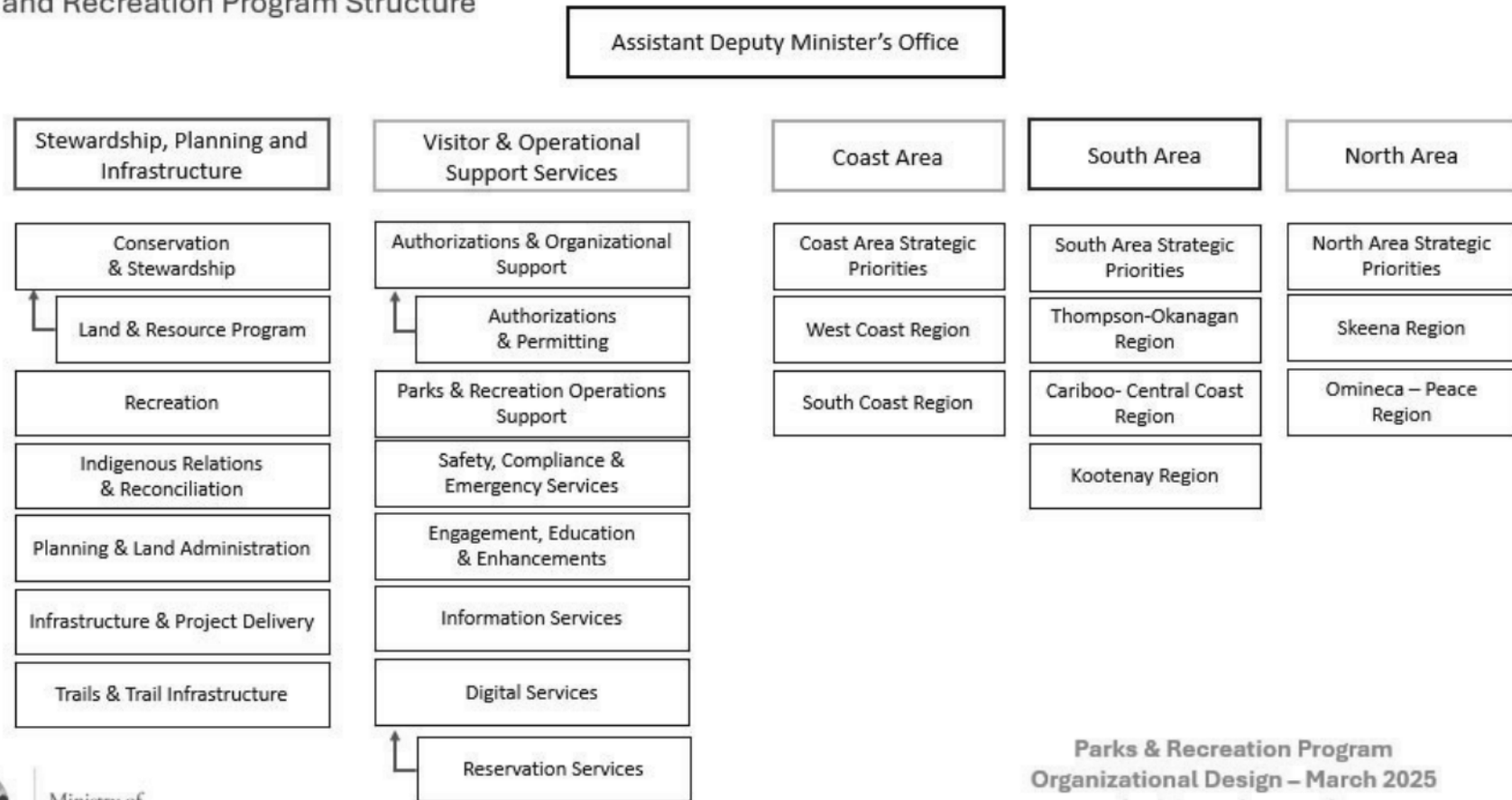
KEY FACTS

BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails Reorganization:

- On January 13, 2025, Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) and BC Parks were reorganized into the Parks and Recreation Program (PRP) within the Conservation and Recreation Division (CARD) in the Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV). Transitioning the two programs will take 1-2 years.
- Following the 2022 Natural Resource Sector (NRS) reorganization which aligned RSTBC and BCP into CARD, the Recreation Strategy and Service Transformation (RSST) project was initiated to develop a collaborative, cross-government *Shared Vision and Strategy for Outdoor Recreation in B.C.* which includes the strategic realignment of BC Parks and RSTBC into a single agency.
- The strategic alignment of RSTBC and BC parks into a single agency positions the program to meet the growing public demand for exceptional outdoor recreation experiences and to fulfill government priorities related to community economic development, reconciliation, conservation, and modernized land-use planning.
- Key outcomes of the reorganization include:
 - Providing operational clarity at the field level to focus provision of the valued services visitors expect in our parks, recreation sites and trails.
 - Assigning strategic capacity to address key mandate commitments including conservation and stewardship, reconciliation and economic development.
 - Better assessment of public interests and sector priorities for outdoor recreation and the strategic provision of opportunities across the full spectrum of outdoor experiences.
 - Alignment of PRP Regional operations with existing NRS boundaries to enable program staff to fully participate in NRS governance structures (e.g. RMC's).
- About the Parks and Recreation Program (PRP):
 - Through BC Parks and RSTBC, PRP provides 20,000 campsites and 28,000km+ of actively managed trails across 1050 parks and protected areas and 2283 recreation sites.
 - PRP's FY25 budget was \$76.004 million (BCP and RSTBC combined)
 - PRP has 568 staff (as of March 1, 2025, including temporary and auxiliary appointments).

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister,
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-387-1288

Conservation and Recreation Division Parks and Recreation Program Structure



**Parks & Recreation Program
Organizational Design – March 2025
for internal use only**

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Visitor Use Management
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KEY FACTS

Visitor Use Management:

- Increasing visitor use concentrated at several key parks creates noticeable impacts on visitor experience, safety, conservation values, and First Nation access and relationships with the land.
- In response to the pressures of increased use, the Parks and Recreation Program has developed and implemented visitor use management tools and planning processes across the Province.
- Visitor use management supports appropriate public access to recreation opportunities, while ensuring the long-term viability of the resources and values that are unique to an area.
- Strategies include the development of Visitor Use Management plans like those developed in the Sea to Sky region in partnership with Squamish Nation, Lílwat Nation, and N'Quatqua, including the Pipi7íyekw¹ (Pippy yook)/ Joffre Lakes Provincial Park Visitor Use Management Plan; the implementation of the Day Use Pass to manage capacity; monitoring initiatives to assess the success of these tools; as well as responsible recreation initiatives to manage and change visitor behaviour.
- Day-use passes have been deployed as a visitor use management intervention since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.
- The pass is currently used to manage visitor use in four parks: Garibaldi, Joffre Lakes, Golden Ears, and Mount Seymour. Analysis of visitor use data helps identify where and when passes are needed to manage use.
- The Parks and Recreation Program continues to monitor and analyze visitor use. In 2024, visitor use monitoring was conducted in five parks: Joffre Lakes, Garibaldi, Golden Ears, Cultus Lake, and Chilliwack Lake. This work established crowding thresholds in high-use areas of each park, to better inform capacity management at these parks.

2024-25 Day-Use Passes

In the 2024 summer season, several operational shifts occurred:

- Visitor capacity was managed to 500 visitors a day at Joffre Lakes, this capacity limit was established with the Lílwat Nation and N'Quatqua First Nation.
- Three closure periods were introduced at Joffre Lakes to allow exclusive space

¹Pronunciation of Pipi7íyekw [pronunciation on First Voices](#).

for Líl'wat Nation and N'Quatqua to connect with the land and carry out traditional, sustenance, cultural and spiritual practices.

- Pass requirements at Golden Ears were reduced to Friday through Monday each week, better aligning with peak periods of demand. The season, however, commenced much earlier to accommodate a parking lot closure.
- BC Parks' day-use pass booking portal provides up to date park information to park visitors. This adds predictability to park visitor's trip planning and important information specific to the park area.
- [Day-use pass reports](#) were published providing the public with information on pass usage.

2025-26 Day-Use Pass Plans

- Day-use pass requirements will continue at Joffre Lakes, Garibaldi, Golden Ears, and Mount Seymour Provincial Parks in 2025-26.
 - Closure periods at Joffre Lakes are currently being reviewed with the local First Nations. Passes will be required when the park reopens to the public.
 - In preparation of the 2025 season, pass requirements at DUP parks are being reviewed based on visitor trends to align with peak periods of demand.
- The Parks and Recreation Program continues to work with Cypress Mountain Resort to manage capacity through traffic management, while exploring the deployment of the Day Use Pass.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Mandate Commitments
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KEY FACTS

Mandate 1 – Program Review:

- The Ministry of Environment and Parks is reviewing all of its programs and initiatives to ensure parks and recreation programs and services meet British Columbian's expectations, are efficiently and effectively delivered, and keep costs low for residents.
- The Ministry has a head start on this work, having initiated in 2023 a review of its model for delivering provincial parks and recreation services, the first time this has been conducted in over 40 years.
- Through this review, the Ministry is integrating BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC, formerly separate programs, into a unified service delivery and financial model, enhancing efficiency, responsiveness, and sustainability amid increased visitor demands, climate impacts, and reconciliation commitments.
- Additionally, in 2024 the Ministry kicked off a Parks & Recreation Digital Transformation Program. Through this portfolio of projects, the Ministry will be deploying modernized products to enable the delivery of its updated operating model, enabling people to experience and be effective stewards of public outdoor places in British Columbia – safely, seamlessly, enjoyably – from computer to campground.

Mandate 2 – Find ways to increase access for families to British Columbia's parks in a cost-efficient manner:

- Through its Commitment to Inclusion, released in 2023, BC Parks is actively working towards fulfilling its vision of a provincial parks system that is welcoming and meaningfully accessible to everybody.
- The Commitment came with time limited funding to upgrade park facilities to accessible standards, work that will continue in the coming year, so that more people and families can experience the benefits of being in nature.
- BC Parks and Recreation is investing \$1.2M per year between 2023/24 and 2027/28 to build and upgrade accessible and universally designed facilities. This funding is targeted at accessing meaningful experiences in priority parks with an emphasis on washrooms, parking facilities, and circulation routes to main park features in front country parks.
- BC Parks works closely with the BC Parks Foundation to increase access to parks for diverse families across the province, primarily through "Spark" grants; inclusive interpretive programming and events in parks; interactive interpretive trails; and virtual resources and tours on discoverparks.ca.

- BC Parks and Recreation is growing its adaptive outdoor recreation program focused on B.C. communities and families, delivering \$100,000 in funding through the Park Enhancement Fund, enabling policy updates, events, equipment partnerships, and volunteer opportunities.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2024) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	BC Parks Overview General and Budget
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Inclusion:

- **Accessibility:** BC Parks is upgrading parks near communities to be meaningfully accessible. A \$6M investment over 5 years (\$1.2M/year) starting in 2023/24 is expediting high priority facility upgrades to an accessible, universal design. This funding is targeted at accessing meaningful experiences in priority parks with an emphasis on toilet and parking facilities, and routes to main park features in frontcountry parks.
 - Frontcountry accessibility audits conducted in 2018/19 found no parks are fully accessible. While new facilities are currently being built to accessible standards, the vast majority of BC Parks' existing infrastructure requires facility investment to ensure parks are accessible to everyone.
 - BCP committed to improve accessibility in all frontcountry campgrounds and day use areas in the 2017 Futures Strategy, and most recently in BC Parks' Commitment to Inclusion.
 - BCP acknowledges that some people and groups have been excluded from BC Parks due to both visible and invisible barriers. To address these barriers, we created BC Parks' Commitment to Inclusion in collaboration with diverse community partners. This is BCP's pledge to work toward a provincial parks system that is welcoming and meaningfully accessible to everybody. The Commitment to Inclusion outlines how we will prioritize inclusion and build a foundation for the work ahead.

Recreation – Attendance, Revenue, and Budget:

- BC Parks offers approximately 13,000 campsites – 11,000 vehicle-accessible campsites & approximately 2,000 walk in/backcountry with 79 group sites and picnic areas available for reservation. Recreation areas include 145 boat launch areas and approximately 6,000 kilometers of hiking trails.
- BC Parks' attendance for the 2024-25 fiscal year is estimated to be 28.4 million visits, representing approximately 1% average annual growth since the 2018-19 fiscal year.
- Attendance is an estimate of the total number of visits to provincial parks and includes camping, day use and boating statistics from 600+ data collection points in parks around the province.
- Park visitation reflects the contribution of parks to the Government's priorities of promoting healthy communities and creating a strong tourism sector.
- Reservation fees cover the cost of operating BC Parks' camping reservation service.
- Recreation User Fee revenues help to offset the cost of park operations. In Agreements where revenues exceed costs, surplus revenues are directed to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. In Agreements where costs exceed revenues, the Province pays a top-up payment to the Park Operator called a deficiency payment.
- BC Parks' Recreation User Fee revenue (retained by Park Operators) has grown 2% annually since the 2020 fiscal year. However, additional payments to Park Operators from BC Parks' vote budget (30% of total costs) are still necessary to address fully the costs of delivering services to the public.

Recreation Attendance Data

Attendance Type	Average Attendance (Person-Days) 2019-20, 22- 23, 2023-2024	Attendance (Person- Days), 2024-25 (Estimated)	5yr Avg. Annual Growth Rate
Camping	3,463,381	3,749,535	2%
Day Use	22,590,206	24,546,837	3%
Boating	162,611	160,333	-1%
Total Attendance	26,212,198	28,456,704	2%

**Notes: Numbers are rounded and may not add to totals. Attendance and Revenue data from 2020 and 2021 is not available due to failings of BC Parks' previous digital and data service provider (November 2019 – 2021/22) and their inability to report accurate attendance data, which was a partial reason for that relationship being severed. A new system, built by the internal development team referenced elsewhere in this submission, is now in place to accurately collect attendance data. A comparison is provided using 2020-24 averages. 2024-25 data has not yet been fully verified; final totals may differ.*

Campsite Expansion Program (2017-2021):

- BC Parks and BC Recreation Sites and Trails jointly delivered a 5-year, \$22.9 million program to add over 1,700 new campsites to high demand locations.
- 2021/22 was the final year of the program, 183 campsites were added to our system in regions with the highest demand.
- The project delivered over 920 new campsites in BC Parks from 2017 – 2021, concluding with BC Parks' first full-service campground with 92 sites that opened in December 2021 in Manning Park named Skyview.

Recreation Expansion Program (2021-2026):

- BC Parks is entering the final year of a \$21.59M Recreation Expansion Program to add new campsites and new and refurbished trails in high demand locations.
- At completion, the project is expected to deliver more than 300 new campsites, 30km of refurbished trails and 3km of new trails in high demand locations around the province.
- New properties have been acquired under the program including two properties at Tribune Bay and a waterfront property on Okanagan Lake. A third property adjacent to Mount Robson also has a purchase agreement in place.

Camping Reservations Program:

- The BC Parks reservation service offers camping bookings in 184 frontcountry campgrounds, 63 backcountry campgrounds and 34 marine sites.
- There are approximately ~7,500 frontcountry campsites available for reservations, including 79 group sites, 30 cabins and 7 limited entry backcountry destinations.
- Of the ~11,700 campsites BC Parks manages a significant proportion remain available on a first-come-first-served (FCFS) basis. In campgrounds that have reservations, most maintain some FCFS sites. In response to demand, reservations are required during peak season and many popular parks.
- In 2024, to meet growing demand, BC Parks added reservations at 41 frontcountry campsites and 4 backcountry campgrounds. 41 existing campsites were electrified.
- Over ~59,000 reservations have been made so far in 2025. (Numbers as of Jan 1, 2025-March 1, 2025))

- Following two years of failings by the previous vendor, in March 2022 BC Parks re-launched its reservation service in partnership with Camis, a Canadian technology company specializing in camping reservation systems.
- More than 424,000 reservations were made in the 2024 season – an increase of 3.5% since 2023.
- 79% of reservations in 2024 were made by BC residents.
- The camping reservation program received and processed \$24.7M in camping fees in 2024 – 5 year (transferred to Park Operators) – representing a moderate increase from the previous year, when fees collected totalled \$23.6M
- The reservation portion of these fees are first used to cover the costs of the outsourced reservation service, with any excess reinvested into BC Parks through the Park Enhancement Fund (PEF). In the 2024, BC Parks collected \$5.34M of these fees, with \$3.74M allocated to service provider costs.
- Approximately 99% of reservations are made online each year. The remainder are made via a call centre operated by the same camping reservation services contractor.

First Nations:

- The Ministry values strong relationships with First Nations regarding the management of protected areas.
- BCP is directly involved with **at least** 40 Collaborative Management Agreements, 12 broader Strategic Engagement Agreements and/or Reconciliation Protocols **and is currently engaged in negotiations at 10 active Treaty tables with First Nations.**

First Nations Park Operators:

- Of the 60 private contractors operating 85 park operating agreements on BC Parks' behalf, 16 BC Parks are operated by 16 First Nation governments or businesses.
- In 2024/25, the total contract value of First Nations Park Operator services is forecast to be approximately \$1.7 million. The cumulative contract value is \$11.1M.
- This represents 3% of BCP' total Park Operator (PO) costs.

Intergovernmental Communications

Park Enhancement Fund:

- The Park Enhancement Fund (PEF) is a dedicated and protected account that supports BC Parks in earning revenues and attracting donations which can be reinvested in enhancements to the provincial parks system.
- Details on the PEF are found in Estimates Note #08 and information regarding the BC Parks Foundation in #09.

Park Ranger Staffing:

- Park Rangers have statutory authorities granted under the Park Act, supported via significant and continuing formal training. Park Rangers typically operate in Regional Operations. 139 of these positions are regular and 62 are seasonal.
- In 2022/23 the number of seasonal staffing positions declined, but staffing capacity was in fact increased with the addition of 16 new full-time positions and longer seasonal Park Ranger terms of six months.

Number of BC Parks Positions with Park Ranger Authority – 2024/25

Staffing Position	Regular Positions	Seasonal Positions	Total Positions
PPA Section Head	14	0	14
Area Supervisor	50	0	50
Recreation Services Officer	8	0	8
Community Liaison Officer	1	0	4
Senior Park Ranger	52	0	52
Park Ranger	6	62*	68
Other Positions	6	0	6
Total	139	62	201

*Actual work term is a minimum of 7.5 months for seasonal Park Rangers for 2024/25.

Total BC Parks Staffing (vacancies have not been counted):

	2024/25
Regular Positions – Park Ranger Status (6 in VOSS)	139
Regular Positions – No Ranger Status	59
Seasonal Positions – Park Ranger Status.	62
Seasonal Positions – No Ranger Status	52
Regional Operations Branch Total FTEs	312
Stewardship, Planning, and Infrastructure Total FTEs	71
Visitor and Operational Support Services Total FTEs (-6 with Ranger Status counted above in regional ops)	59
ADMO	3
Total BC Parks FTE Count	445

Current Parks and Protected Areas System

- Since the establishment of Strathcona, the first provincial park, in 1911, the BC Parks managed system has grown to over 1000 protected areas, covering over 14 million hectares, 14.7% of the province land base. BCP now manages 1,050 parks, conservancies, ecological reserves, recreation areas and protected areas (see table below)
- The Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database reports that 15.6% of the Province is protected. This number includes the BC Parks system, federally protected lands, private conservation lands, Wildlife Management Areas, and environmental non-governmental organization lands.

Designation	Number	Area (ha)
<u>Class A Parks</u>	630	10,718,924
<u>Class B Parks</u>	2	3,778
<u>Class C Parks</u>	13	484
<u>Recreation Areas</u>	2	5,929
<u>Conservancies</u>	169	3,143,935
<u>Designations under the <i>Environment and Land Use Act</i></u>	86	387,064
<u>Ecological Reserves</u>	148	160,302
Total	1,050	14,420,416

Budget Overview:

- Budget 2025 includes a \$0.646 million increase over the 2024/25 Estimates budget for BCP. This increase comprises of:
 - \$0.373 million increase for Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure to enhance existing asset maintenance and replacement programs (Budget 2023 decision).
 - \$0.273 million increase to salary and benefits for the Shared Recovery Mandate

Capital Investment:

- Base Capital budget for 25/26 is \$23.98M
- In 2023/24, BCP received \$6M over 5 years (\$1.2M/year) to upgrade high-priority infrastructure to an accessible standard. Infrastructure upgrades are focused on toilet and parking facilities as well as trails to park features, in parks close to urban centers.
- BCP capital budget for 2024/25 decreased by \$0.035M from restated 2023/24 Estimates including:
 - \$5 million for land improvements for Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure (Budget 2023 decision)
 - \$1 million for specialized equipment for Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure (Budget 2023 decision)
 - \$6.035 million **net reduction** to account for time-limited commitment for projects ending (including campsite expansion, back country facilities, and protected area land acquisitions). Total reduction is \$16.089M, offset by \$10.054M reprofiled from FY24 to FY25
- BC Parks (BCP) is responsible for managing approximately \$1.5B worth of assets across the province, including buildings, bridges, structures, roads, trails, water and wastewater systems, campsites, day-use, and backcountry facilities.
- BC Parks continues to implement a new Asset Management System. This will strengthen existing asset management policies and practices, including capital expenditure planning and reporting, and provide better insight into the agency's total asset replacement value.
- Capital projects are prioritized for funding using the following criteria: health & safety, protecting park values, climate change mitigation, economic impact and financial sustainability, asset life spans, accessibility & inclusion, managing visitor use, recreation trends and Indigenous and stakeholder partnerships.
- In delivering these projects, BCP uses the following approaches:
 - Ensure BC Parks facilities meet regulatory requirements.
 - Incorporate Universal Design Guidelines in all frontcountry investments, where possible.
 - Look for partnership opportunities with Indigenous communities in capital projects to include Indigenous perspectives and promote Indigenous history/culture.
 - Design and construct trails where service levels are consistent with the amount and type of use.
 - Remove/decommission facilities that cannot justify their maintenance and upkeep.
 - Ensure conservation objectives are considered and incorporated in projects where applicable.
 - Use green technologies and products in capital projects where economically feasible.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	BC Parks Licence Plate Program and Park Enhancement Fund
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Key Facts

BC Parks Licence Plate Fee Structure:

- Fees for each Licence plate are as follows:
 - \$50 for each *new* BC Parks plate issued.
 - \$40 for each annual renewal of a BC Parks plate.
- Net proceeds from the sale of each licence plate go into the PEF.
- The initial \$50 cost of the plate breaks down as follows:
 - \$18 – new plate fee to provincial government. This new plate fee has been in place since the early 1990s and is part of ICBC’s normal remittance to government.
 - ~\$20 – directly to BC Parks
 - \$7 – plate manufacturing, shipping, and handling
 - \$5 – ICBC administration
- 100% of the annual \$40 renewal fee goes directly to supporting BC Parks.

Program Details:

- Since 2017, the BC Parks Licence Plate program has generated over \$36M in revenue to the Park Enhancement Fund (as of March 31,2023).
- Three different licence plate designs are available for purchase through ICBC’s broker distribution network: Kermode Bear, Porteau Cove, and the Purcell Mountains.
- ICBC coordinates the design, manufacturing and sale of BC Parks Licence plates and provides monthly financial reports (including sales numbers) to ENV.
- Sales for each design as of January 31, 2024, are as follows:

Plate Design Description	Total Plates Sold
BC Parks Kermode Bear	144,084
BC Parks Purcell Mountain	182,360
BC Parks Porteau Cove	146,377
Total Sold	472,821

- Following a GCPE-led paid marketing campaign, sales increased by 10% in FY 2022/23 from the previous year. The most popular month to purchase a plate was June, with over 7,900 plate sales.

- BC Parks licence plate sales fund a variety of programs and projects including conservation; engagement, education, and enhancements (EEE); Indigenous relations; fire-based ecosystem and land management (FELM); Student Rangers; community-led conservation and recreation initiatives; land acquisition restoration; information services; and program administration and marketing.

Next Steps – 2025/26:

- BC Parks will continue to promote the Licence Plate Program through existing social media channels and through new joint marketing initiatives at ICBC broker offices (posters and hand out cards).
- BC Parks will produce an annual report summarizing LPP investments and will provide comprehensive project lists at bcparks.ca/licence-plates. The 2022/23 report will be available to the public by April 2024).

Table 1. Licence Plate Program Expenditures:

Category	LPP Expenditure in 22/23 (\$)
EEE	\$1,261,500
Conservation	\$1,097,600
Indigenous Relations	\$346,100
Fire-based Ecosystem and Land Management	\$248,800
Marine Recreation	\$73,200
Student Ranger Program	\$995,200
Community-led conservation and recreation	\$309,500
Land Acquisition restoration	\$135,000
Web and information Enhancements	\$624,400
Program Admin & Marketing	\$508,500
ICBC direct costs	\$673,700
Total	\$8,269,500

Key Messages:

- The Park Enhancement Fund (PEF) is a dedicated and protected account that supports BC Parks in earning revenues and donations which can be reinvested in enhancements to the provincial parks system.
- The PEF was established in 2008 as a special account under the *Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act*.
- The main contributor to revenue is net proceeds from the BC Parks Licence Plate Program. Additional funding is derived from camping reservation charges, stumpage collected from tree removal projects in protected areas, donations, and interest earned on the account balance.
- As established by the enabling legislation, funding is used for enhanced management, facilities and services benefiting parks and protected areas and can be spent on the following categories:

- information, education, and interpretation programs (inside and outside of parks).
 - product development, merchandising.
 - volunteer program support.
 - program delivery support, planning projects (regional and/or provincial).
 - capital investments (construction, repair, and maintenance); and
 - natural & cultural resource assessment, research, and restoration.
- The BC Parks Licence Plate Program has been in place for 7 years, bringing over \$36M into PEF to enhance parks.
 - At the end of each fiscal year, any unspent funds in the PEF remain in the account balance for spending in future years (subject to Treasury Board approval).
 - Table 1 below summarizes PEF Revenue and Expenditures for 2022/23 (the most-recent year for which this information is available; current fiscal year summary will be available post-March 31, 2024).

Table 1: PEF Revenue and Expenditures (2022-2023)

Revenue Category	Amount
Discover Camping Reservation System	\$5,738,843
Motor Vehicle Act Licences and Permits (Net of Broker Commissions)	\$9,544,237
Harvesting / Stumpage	\$88,094
Directed Donations	\$45,815
Interest	\$635,630
FX Gain & Other Misc. Revenue	\$17,207
Total:	\$16,069,825

Expenditure Category	Amount
Discover Camping Reservation System	\$3,710,152
Licence Plate Program	\$8,269,500
Tree Removal Restoration Fund (Stumpage)	\$79,720
Directed Donations	\$111,071
General	\$622,202
Total:	\$12,792,645

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	BC Parks Foundation
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KEY FACTS

- The BC Parks Foundation (the Foundation) is an independent charitable foundation that was established as the official charitable partner of BC Parks in 2017 through an initial \$10M endowment from the Province. In 2023 the Province contributed an additional \$10M. The relationship between BC Parks and the Foundation is guided by a Collaborative Agreement with the Province, signed in May 2018.
- The Foundation's goal is to generate funding, resources, programs and goodwill to enhance the system of parks and Indigenous protected areas in British Columbia.
- The Foundation also serves as the Conservation Finance Mechanism for the Province through the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship. In this context, the Foundation has agreed to match Provincial funding and raise \$250M in private funding to achieve the federal/provincial 30x30 commitment to reach 30% of protected lands and waters by 2030.
- Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Conservation and Recreation Division sits on the Foundation Board as a Director.

Areas of Focus

- The Foundation has four areas of focus in their fundraising and program priorities:
 - Access and infrastructure: Docks, huts, bridges, trails, parking, bathrooms, signage, and other facilities enabling access, particularly for seniors and people with disabilities.
 - Health: PaRx, a world leading nature prescription program providing evidence and raising awareness of the physical and mental health benefits of spending time in nature.
 - Learning: Guided experiences and self-guided resources available through the discoverparks.ca website help residents, visitors, students, and equity deserving Canadians enjoy and appreciate the many values in B.C.'s parks and indigenous protected areas.
 - Stewardship: Purchasing and restoring/protecting private land, helping finance Crown land protection and restoration, and monitoring and protecting wildlife and biodiversity.

Recent Accomplishments:

- Over \$400 million raised, with 99% from within B.C. including businesses, governments, philanthropy, and crowd funding.
- Tens of thousands of supporters and followers across all demographics and regions of B.C.

- Engagements with over 500,000 park visitors through interpretive programs in 20+ parks.
- 68 places protected.
- Inspiring community scientists to reach over 30 million nature observations through the iNaturalist program.
- Over 1 billion media impressions each year through stories in over 200 media outlets worldwide including the NY Times, BBC, CNN, Washington Post, Bloomberg, and others.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	BC Parks Capital Program
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KEY FACTS

- BC Parks (BCP) is responsible for managing approximately \$1.5B worth of assets across the province, including buildings, bridges, structures, roads, trails, water and wastewater systems, campsites, day-use, and backcountry facilities.
- BCP's 2025/26 base capital budget for facility maintenance and renewal is \$23.98M. This budget is unchanged from 2024/25. In 2023/24 the budget was \$18.98M. The budget for 2022/23 was \$13.98M, which had been unchanged for over a decade.
- BCP's 2025/26 operational maintenance budget is \$7.14M. This budget is unchanged from 2024/25 but had increased by \$2.24M from the previous year. For more information on capital and operational budgets, see Facility Maintenance Estimates Note 08.
- Beginning in 2021/22, BCP received \$21.59M in new capital funding related to the Recreation Expansion mandate. For more information, see Recreation Expansion Estimates Note 09.
- In 2023/24, BCP received \$6M over 5 years (\$1.2M/year) to upgrade high-priority infrastructure to an accessible standard. Infrastructure upgrades are focused on toilet and parking facilities as well as trails to park features, in parks close to urban centers.
- BC Parks continues to implement a new Asset Management System. This will strengthen existing asset management policies and practices, including capital expenditure planning and reporting, and provide better insight into the agency's total asset replacement value. The database will also improve tracking and reporting on accessibility improvements over time.
- Capital projects are prioritized for funding using the following criteria: health & safety, protecting park values, climate change mitigation, economic impact and financial sustainability, asset life spans, accessibility & inclusion, managing visitor use, recreation trends and Indigenous and stakeholder partnerships.

Opportunities:

- Campsite & Recreation Expansion:
 - In 2016/17, BCP and RST received \$22.9M over 5 years to build new campsites as part of a joint Campsite Expansion Program, which added over 1,700 new campsites to high demand locations.
 - In 2021/22, BCP received another \$21.59M over 3 years (extended to 5 years in 2023) for a Recreation Expansion initiative with a focus on trail upgrades/expansion, addition of at least 100 new campsites per year; and \$15M Government Financial Information over 5 years for BCP land acquisitions to support Recreation Expansion.

- **Accessibility:** Announced in 2023/24, the additional \$6M over 5 years is helping to expedite the replacement of high priority, aging facilities to an accessible, universal design standard. This funding will enable BCP to target investment in parks near urban centers with a focus to ensure washrooms, parking facilities, and access (trails) to park features in all front-country parks are meaningfully accessible.
 - Accessibility Audits conducted in 2018/19 in 332 frontcountry park sites found none are fully accessible. While new facilities are currently being built to accessible standards, the vast majority of BC Parks' existing infrastructure requires facility investment to ensure parks are accessible to everyone.
 - BCP committed to improve accessibility in all frontcountry campgrounds and day use areas in the 2017 Futures Strategy, and most recently in BC Parks' Commitment to Inclusion.
 - BCP acknowledges that some people and groups have been excluded from BC Parks due to both visible and invisible barriers. To address these barriers, we created BC Parks' Commitment to Inclusion in collaboration with diverse community partners. This is BCP's pledge to work toward a provincial parks system that is welcoming and meaningfully accessible to everybody. The Commitment to Inclusion outlines how we will prioritize inclusion and build a foundation for the work ahead.

Challenges:

- **User Demand:** Demand for front-country and backcountry (day-use and camping) opportunities is increasing causing additional wear and tear on facilities.
- **Deferred maintenance backlog:** Despite the recent budget increase for facility repair and replacement (noted above), BCP continues to have a historic backlog of facility maintenance needs across the province.
- **Climate Change:** As extreme weather events have become more common over the past few years, BCP is responding to increasing facilities damage and loss. Some of these events do not qualify for federal disaster relief and are creating unfunded financial pressures to repair (i.e.: the rebuild of the Berg Lake Trail in Mt Robson has added over a \$5M pressure to BCP base capital budget).
- **Expansion:** Due to limited available expansion space in existing parks, and considering the amenities sought by park users such as water access, any additional new camping opportunities in the park system will require BCP to acquire new land. BCP and RST are also exploring the potential to expand and develop certain recreation sites to a BCP facility standard.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	System Growth
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KEY FACTS

Current System Size

- British Columbia has one of the largest protected areas systems in North America and continues to expand and enhance it.
- BC Parks is responsible for managing and operating 1,050 parks, conservancies, ecological reserves, protected areas, and recreation areas, encompassing 14,420,416 hectares, or approximately 14.7% of the province's land base.

System Growth

- The Ministry adds land to the BC Parks Protected Areas System through both Crown land additions and private land purchases.
- Recommendations for Crown land additions to the BC Parks protected areas system are usually made through land use decisions led by the Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship.
 - These are usually identified through initiatives such as the modernized land use planning process, the old growth strategic review and recovery plans for species at risk.
 - BC Parks' role is to provide input and advice to these proposals, implementing the recommended new protected areas through appropriate legislation, and subsequent management of those sites.
 - Decisions about establishing additional protected areas involve an analysis of the expected social, economic, and environmental costs and benefits of the proposal.
 - Establishment of new protected areas involves costs including compensation for Crown land tenures, foregone government revenues and resource-based job impacts. In addition, there may be significant operating costs for government associated with the ongoing management of new protected areas.

Private Land Acquisitions

- The Ministry only acquires private land through willing seller and willing buyer transactions.
 - The main objectives of the land acquisition program are to secure:
 - Inholdings (parcels bordered by parks on all sides) or parcels immediately adjacent to existing parks where development of these lands would negatively impact park values;

- Lands that address operational needs such as park access or boundary rationalization; and,
- Lands that enhance the values of existing protected areas by improving connectivity or climate change resilience of existing parks or supporting the planned expansion of recreation opportunities such as camping.
- Where possible, BC Parks works with other governments, conservation and outdoor recreation organizations and individual landowners to secure donations and partnerships towards private land acquisitions.
- The BC Parks Foundation is emerging as an important partner in land acquisition, providing donors with a way to contribute to land acquisition.
- For 2024-25, BC Parks had a base budget for land acquisition of \$2M.
 - This was augmented by one-time funding of \$5M linked to recreation expansion. The \$5M land acquisition funding for recreation expansion will not be available in FY 25-26.

Examples of System Growth in 2024/25

- In June 2024 there was a major expansion of Klinse-za Park in northeastern B.C. to better protect sacred sites and wildlife habitat. The expanded Klinse-za/Twin Sisters Park protects nearly 200,000 hectares of land.
- Also in June 2024, 10 new conservancies encompassing over 76,000 hectares were established in Clayoquot Sound to support reconciliation, conservation of old-growth forests and healthy ecosystems, as well as to provide clarity on areas that will continue to be managed for forestry to support timber supply.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	First Nations Reconciliation In BC Parks
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KEY FACTS

- The BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails (Parks and Recreation Program) Indigenous Relations (IR) Team provides the two agencies with strategic support, guidance, policy, tools, training, and access to funding to support meaningful efforts towards reconciliation, pursue effective operational engagement, consultation and collaboration with Indigenous peoples, and manage cross-Ministry prioritization of resourcing government-to-government requests.
- The IR Team is based out of the Stewardship, Planning, and Infrastructure Branch and is currently supported by one Director, one Manager and four IR Advisors. Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications
Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications
- Intergovernmental Communications

BC Parks' Approach to Reconciliation

- With over 14% of the provincial land-base to manage, BC Parks has been a leader in developing collaborative partnerships with Indigenous nations and given sufficient resourcing, is strategically positioned to deliver on government's reconciliation and conservation goals.
- BC Parks is committed to strengthening its relationships with Indigenous Peoples by nurturing common interests in stewardship and creating space and opportunities to reflect Indigenous Peoples history and cultures in protected areas.
- BC Parks encourages proactive engagement and collaboration with Indigenous partners outside of formal consultation and supports the exercise of Aboriginal Rights and First Nations' traditional and cultural uses in protected areas.
- BC Parks is committed to nurturing a culture within the agency that supports and promotes reconciliation in everyone's work including participating in organization-wide training for regional and headquarters staff, along with in-person training for Guardians and new Park Ranger recruits each year.

Other BC Parks Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Priorities

- BC Parks is in the early stages of updating its Reconciliation Action Plan in alignment with BC Parks' strategic priorities. The revised plan will focus on preparing our organization to be a strong partner in reconciliation, with a focus on tangible actions tied to funding and resources. The action plan will act as a road map for aligning team efforts, managing change, and supporting trust-based relationships with First Nations partners.
- As in previous years, BC Parks is expecting to access funding through ^{Cabinet} ~~Cabinet~~ ^{Confidences} ~~Confidences~~ and BC Parks License Plate Program (LPP) to support critical engagement, collaboration, and capacity building initiatives with First Nations, as BC Parks has no base budget to support these activities.
- BC Parks continues its joint work with MIRR, including:
 - Addressing Treaty/non-Treaty land transfer and co-management interests in protected areas, through a joint policy approach and a joint ADM prioritization and approval process for the Parks and Recreation Program.
 - Actively participating in negotiations at prioritized G2G Tables where Nations have expressed a key interest in provincial protected areas
Intergovernmental Communications
 - Both BC Parks and RSTBC provided resourcing estimates through the 3K Strategic Resourcing Framework in early 2025.
- BC Parks is entering into the second year of implementing the Shared Compliance and Enforcement Pilot (the Pilot) with the Kitasoo/Xai'xais and Nuxalk Nations. The Pilot designates 11 Indigenous Guardians with the same legal authorities as Park Rangers within the parks and protected areas in their territories, making it the first project of its kind in Canada. The Pilot was a Premiers Award finalist in 2023. An in-depth evaluation will be completed in FY25/26 prior to deciding on any future expansion or extension of this work.
- BC Parks is directly involved with 41 Collaborative Management Agreements, 15 broader Strategic Engagement Agreements and/or Reconciliation Protocols and is currently engaged in negotiations at seven active Treaty tables with First Nations.
Intergovernmental Communications
Intergovernmental Communications

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Recreation Expansion
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Key Messages:

- The demand for camping and recreation opportunities has been increasing significantly in recent years and there are not enough camping opportunities in high use locations to meet demand during peak times. Further, a number of day-use areas and trails have seen unprecedented increased use, particularly in the South Coast, Okanagan and West Coast regions.
- \$21.59M in new capital and operating funding was approved in 2021/22 to complete new recreation expansion projects over three years. Due to challenges encountered (summarized below) approval was granted in 2023/24 to extend the project to five years (completing in 2025/26).
- Major challenges encountered include:
 - Intergovernmental Communications
 -
 - Unanticipated archeological finds and associated permitting delays.
 - Other (weather, conservation values, BC Hydro permitting delays due to focus on flood recovery, internal staffing/labour challenges, and inflation).
- Despite the above challenges, the project is on track to exceed all deliverable commitments (300 new campsites, 30km of refurbished trails and 3km of new trails). Expanded parking facilities at several popular parks will also be delivered (>300 new stalls anticipated).
- 17 projects have been completed to date and a further ~11 projects are planned to be completed by the end of 2025/26 (28 projects in total).
- Formal news releases and/or social media posts have been issued for completed projects and for some partially completed projects (those with multiple phases of delivery). Announcements will continue in 2025/26 as projects are completed and open for use.
- Two properties, totaling 9.7ha, were purchased on Hornby Island in 2021/22 for \$11.2M, including a popular 120 site private campground as part of the Recreation Expansion Mandate. The lands were added to the park system through designation in October 2024. The campground is currently in operation and major capital improvements are expected to begin in the fall of 2025.
- In 2024 BC Parks, in partnership with the BC Parks Foundation, purchased an 11.4ha waterfront property on Okanagan Lake for \$10.5 million. The property is adjacent to Okanagan Lake Provincial Park and is intended to be added to the park. The Parks Foundation contributed \$2.4M towards the purchase price.

- Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences

Recreation Expansion Mandate: guide work to create new campgrounds, trails, and protected areas; propose new funding to improve infrastructure; and ensure provincial parks remain affordable for British Columbians.

- To deliver on this mandate, the following funding was initially approved over three years, from fiscal 2021/22 to 2023/24, and since extended to the end of 2025/26:
 - Recreation Expansion: \$21.59M to support planning and delivery of new frontcountry and backcountry campsites, new and renewed trails and day use opportunities in high demand locations. This project aims to build 300 new campsites, 3km of new trail and 30km of refurbished trails.
 - Land Acquisition: \$5M annually over three years, Advice/Recommendatio
Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences
Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences These funds resulted in acquisitions at
Tribune Bay, Okanagan Lake Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences
- Selection of individual projects considered:
 - campsite and recreation demand (with focus on high demand locations)
 - financial sustainability and project feasibility
 - alignment with public and stakeholder interests and needs
 - partnership and/or reconciliation opportunities with Indigenous Communities
 - partnership with stakeholder groups
 - accessible design
 - diversity and inclusion
 - affordable recreation

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Wildfire Planning and Prevention
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Overview of Prevention and BC Parks

- BC Parks has a history of wildfire planning and prevention through fuel management and prescribed fire activities within parks and protected areas.
- BC Parks endeavors to increase wildfire resiliency through effective wildfire planning and prevention and through prescribed fire.
- Wildfire prevention activities are deliberate and planned actions to meet site-specific objectives to promote landscape wildfire resiliency.
- In BC parks and protected areas, these actions must be consistent with BC Parks legislation and policies and include a team of both internal and external qualified professionals such as forest and biology professionals. BC Parks also works closely with subject matter experts from BC Wildfire Service (BCWS)
- BC Parks and BCWS are continually collaborating. Both recognize that wildfire risk reduction may look different in parks and protected areas because of the need to respect and protect the conservation, recreation and cultural heritage values and objectives within these protected lands.
- Fuel management (prevention) uses a variety of tools and may include pruning trees to remove ladder fuels, cleanup of forest floor debris (surface fuel clean up), tree removal (crown thinning), and prescribed burning.
- BC Parks has a team of forest and biology professionals leading this work, as well as a dedicated annual funding allocation from BCWS to collaborate, plan and implement wildfire prevention and cultural and prescribed fire projects.

Project Funding

- In 2024/2025, there was over \$1.2 million of BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction (CLWRR) funding allocated to BC Parks for wildfire planning and prevention projects and \$1.3 million for cultural and prescribed fire projects.
- In 2024/2025, there was \$190,000 in BC Parks Licence Plate Program funding to support fire-based ecosystem and land management projects.

Looking ahead to 2025/2026:

- \$1.2 million in BCWS CLWRR fuel management allocation to support wildfire planning and prevention projects.
- \$730,000 in proposed projects for BCWS CLWRR cultural and prescribed fire allocation. Final allocation to be determined.
- BC Parks Licence Plate Program, Fire-Based Ecosystem and Land Management proposed to cost \$199,500. Final allocation to be determined.

Capacity Funding

- BC Parks has four full-time Land and Resource Coordinators and four seasonal Land and Resource Technologists, all funded by the BCWS CLWRR program funding. The team is led by the Land and Resource Section Head, funded by BC Parks.

Key facts: Wildfire Planning, Prevention and Prescribed Fire

- Naturally occurring ecosystem processes, including wildfires, are important and often necessary for shaping healthy and resilient ecosystems within parks and protected areas.
- Fire suppression over many years can lead to forest fuel build-up and forest health issues, which may be inconsistent with natural ecosystem processes.
- Hotter, drier conditions due to climate change may create favorable environments for wildfire. BC Parks recognizes the need for parks and protected area planning and operations to incorporate adaptation to future climates.
- Where appropriate, BC Parks may take steps to complete ecosystem restoration to restore these ecosystems to a more natural fire cycle.
- Effective wildfire planning, prevention and prescribed fire can contribute to less intense and severe wildfires; increase public, visitor, and first responder safety; protect infrastructure and investment, and create more resilient ecosystems and communities.
- Fuel management uses a variety of tools and may include pruning of trees to remove ladder fuels, cleanup of forest floor debris (surface fuel clean up), tree removal (crown thinning), and prescribed burning.
- BC Parks is working closely with local governments/communities, Indigenous governments/communities, and provincial land managers to restore ecosystems and increase wildfire resiliency to communities across these landscapes.
- BC Parks is working closely with BC Wildfire Service on wildfire planning, prevention and prescribed fire projects, including the development of the Provincial Cultural and Prescribed Fire Program, the BC FireSmart Program, and the BCWS Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction Program.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Joffre Lakes Visitor Use Management
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KEY FACTS

Background:

- Joffre Lakes Provincial Park has become one of the busiest parks in the province with 160,200 annual visitors in 2022.
 - Prior to the implementation of the day use pass, the 196,762 visitors in 2019 represented a 7% increase in attendance from 2018, and a 222% increase since 2010.
- Only a small portion of the 1,487 hectare park is frequented by large numbers of visitors that use the five kilometre trail from the parking lot to the three lakes: Lower, Middle and Upper Joffre.
 - There is also a small backcountry campground at Upper Joffre Lake that has 26 gravel tent pads, under the reservation system.
- The park is highly valued by Lil'wat and N'Quatqua as a place for people to connect with the land and carry out traditional, sustenance, cultural and spiritual practices, as well as food gathering.
- BC Parks partnered with the Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua to develop a Visitor Use Management Strategy (VUMS) in 2018.
 - The long-term Joffre Lakes VUM Plan aims to improve the overall visitor experience, address safety concerns, recognize First Nations interests, and protect the park's natural and cultural values.
 - In addition to jointly signing the strategy, the three parties also signed a Letter of Understanding that speaks to each party's interests and commitment to managing visitor use at Joffre Lakes Park.
- In 2023, day-use passes (which are trail passes) were required from May 6 to October. 9.
 - The number of passes was established jointly with the Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua through the visitor use management strategy, with 1,063 available every day.

Park Closures:

- On August 24, 2023, Lil'wat and N'Quatqua unilaterally closed Joffre Lakes Park. The park was closed until a re-opening agreement was reached between ENV and MIRR Ministers and the Nation's Chiefs for September 19, 2023. There was a subsequent one-day closure for Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30, 2023.
- In 2024, BC Parks worked with Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua through the VUMS technical working group to develop the proposed "2024 Operating Plan" for the

park. The plan manages public access to 500 people per day via the day-use pass and enacted three Reconnection Celebration closures for cultural festivities and fall harvesting for a period totaling 52 days.

- The 2024 reduction of visitor numbers and park closures for the celebration periods were in alignment with the 2023 re-opening agreement with the Province. The closures provided undisturbed First Nations access for traditional activities and time and space for the park to rest and were well received by the public.
- For the 2025 operational season Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua have brought forward a plan for 103 days of exclusive access to Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Park via the Visitor Use Management Strategy (VUMS) technical working group:
 - April 25 – May 19: for the annual St'at'imc Days and ceremonial activities
 - June 13 – 27: to celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day
 - August 22 – October 23: to allow for harvesting and the honoring of Truth and Reconciliation Day
- Intergovernmental Communications
-

Meeting Status:

- BC Parks staff have continued to meet with Lil'wat and N'Quatqua on a regular basis through the VUMS technical working group and have been in active discussions to reach an agreement for the 2025 Operating Plan in alignment with the 60-day period as directed by the Minister of Environment and Parks.
- Intergovernmental Communications
-

Next Steps Focus:

- Continue to build the relationship and trust with the technical working group and address the closure period discussion in future spring meetings.
 - BC Parks has begun planning for a spring closure and will continue discussions regarding the summer and fall celebration periods.
- Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

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Advice/Recommendations ; Cabinet Confidences ; Intergovernmental Communications

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Advice/Recommendations ; Cabinet Confidences ; Intergovernmental Communications

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Recreation Sites and Trails Overview
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KEY FACTS

- In April 2022, Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) was moved from the Ministry of Forests (FLNRORD) to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (MOECC), as it then was, to align recreation services under one division with BC Parks.
- While this reorganization produced an integrated Parks and Recreation program, RSTBC continued to operate as a distinct statutory program area within the Conservation and Recreation Division.
- In the context of this re-organization, RSTBC program delivery is fulfilled by approximately 50 regional staff members, with management and support staff merged into a new combined Parks and Recreation program.
- There is also a seasonal maintenance crew program staffed by 23 auxiliary employees (nine crews). This program is funded for three years (ending in 2025), with \$900K/year in operational funding and contributions from the Columbia Basin Trust to fund three additional crews, totaling 12 seasonal staff.
- The base budget to operate the RSTBC program is approximately \$5.5M in operational funds and \$1.4M in capital.
- In FY24, RSTBC received a \$3.5M operating budget uplift and \$0.100 in specialized capital for equipment purchases. This budget has funded critical staffing, maintenance work, and enabled contributions to volunteer groups through a \$0.300M BC Trails Fund.
- In addition to its base budget, RSTBC has received \$0.818M in Land Base Investment (LBI) funding, and the Forest Employment Program has provided over \$1.5M to support recreation sites and trails facilities in the past two years, predominantly in the form of maintenance funding. In FY26, the LBI funding will become base budget (\$0.818M).

The primary focus of the Recreation Sites and Trails BC program is:

- To manage established recreation sites (primarily campgrounds) and trails for the benefit of British Columbians and visitors.
- In collaboration with partners and other agencies, RSTBC manages public recreation use on Crown lands outside recreation sites and trails.
- Given staffing resources, the majority of RSTBC's focus is on managing established sites and trails, including rail trails.
- The legislative mandate for RSTBC comes from the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and *Forest Recreation Regulation*.

Program Description:

The core function and activities of Recreation Sites and Trails BC include:

- Management of 1,975 recreation sites and 818 established trails, including rail trails.
- Negotiation and management of 400 site and trail partnership agreements and service delivery contracts, including with First Nations.
- Delivery of capital improvement projects at recreation sites and trails on Crown land, outside provincial parks. (In-park facilities are currently funded and managed separately.)
- Resolution of recreation use conflicts on Crown land through multi-agency collaborative planning and management approaches.
- Development and implementation of policy and planning initiatives including the provincial mountain bike trails policy, and other leading outdoor recreation policy initiatives.
- Administration of the Off-Road Vehicle Fund granting program in partnership with the Powersports Coalition.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Recreation Sites and Trails Provincial Rail Trail Funding and Maintenance
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KEY FACTS

- The Recreation Sites and Trails (RST) branch of the Ministry of Environment and Parks manages 542km of abandoned rail corridor as recreation trail. These are portions of the Kettle Valley, the Slocan Valley and the Columbia and Western Rail Trails.
- Rail Trails are associated with complex historical railway infrastructure in remote and often steep terrain. This infrastructure is aging and failures pose serious risks to public safety, property, and the environment.
- A significant maintenance backlog remains due to decades of limited funding and a resulting maintenance deferral.
- Over the past decade, funding has been redirected by RST from general operational maintenance budgets to cover critical rail trail maintenance. Other funding programs have been leveraged where available.

Government Financial Information

- RST is in the process of seeking a decision on the long-term vision and funding for rail trails. A presentation is being prepared for government in late spring/early summer 2025.
- A table summarizing investment over the past five fiscal years is below:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Government Financial Information					
DFAA			\$733,294	\$1,692,057	\$176,824
Forest Employment Program		\$1,017,076	\$410,500		
RST Capital	\$168,083	\$509,497	\$110,000		
RST Operational	\$168,145	\$88,197	\$10,926		\$30,973
Grand Total	\$336,228	\$1,614,770	\$2,082,720	\$2,470,267	\$1,733,130

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Recreation Sites and Trails Other Revenue and Funding
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KEY FACTS

Other RSTBC Funding FY2024-25:

- Recreation Sites and Trails (RST) received ~\$6.34M in direct (transferred to RST) funding from 5 different funding sources in FY2024-25.
- This includes the following funding allocations:
 - \$4.28M from the Federal Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement (DFAA) program. Anticipating \$4.46M in FY26.
 - \$702K from the Forest Enhancement Program (FEP) administered by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Initiative (JEDI). Funding for FY26 under this program is uncertain. The FEP program provides an 8% admin fee on funds spent to support RST in administering this allocation.
 - \$818K from the Land Based Investment Program currently administered by the Ministry of Forests. Anticipating \$818K in FY26 with the budget being incorporated into RST Operational budget.
 - \$300k from the Columbia Basin Trust which funds 4 seasonal maintenance crews. This program was renewed for a 1-year term for FY26.
 - \$252k from the Off-Road Vehicle fund under MOU to RST. Anticipating \$400k for FY26.
- Each of these revenue and funding sources comes with set spending criteria and reporting requirements.
- RST also reviews funds administered by other ministries that go directly to community partners to invest in provincial Recreation Sites and Trails. In FY25 RST reviewed 30 such projects from JEDI with a combined value of \$9.8M.
- Total funding and # of Trail projects funded by JEDI from 2016 to 2025

Program	# of Projects	Total Funding
FEP	173	\$8,345,579
Rural Dividend	108	\$11,778,206
CERIP	9	\$3,772,862
RCDG	35	\$3,525,571
REDIP	11	\$2,420,177
Total:	317	\$29,196,055

- Funding Programs: Forest Enhancement Program (FEP); Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP); Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) Tourism Development Initiative (TRTDI); Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP)
- Total funding and # of Trail projects funded by TACS from 2020 to 2023:

Program	# of Projects	Total Funding
TDC	10	\$3,789,278
DDF	17	\$5,852,365
CERIP	17	\$4,655,497
TRTDI	57	\$4,205,815
Total	101	\$18,502,955

- Funding Programs: Tourism Dependent Communities (TDC); Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP); Targeted Regional Tourism Development Initiative (TRTDI); Destination Development Fund (DDF)
- Indirect funding through Destination Development and REDIP have been a significant influence on the growth and direction of the RST program.
- While a benefit to delivering recreation amenities, the REDIP and Destination Development funding represent an unfunded administrative and maintenance workload for staff.
- RST is working with JEDI and TACS to improve the funding process to help address these pressures.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	First Nations Reconciliation in Recreation Sites and Trails
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KEY FACTS

- The BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails (Parks and Recreation Program) Indigenous Relations (IR) Team provides the two agencies with strategic support, guidance, policy, tools, training, and access to funding to support meaningful efforts towards reconciliation, pursue effective operational engagement, consultation and collaboration with Indigenous peoples, and manage cross-Ministry prioritization of resourcing government-to-government requests.
- The IR Team is based out of the Stewardship, Planning, and Infrastructure branch and is currently supported by one Director, one Manager and four IR Advisors.
- Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) continues to engage with Indigenous communities across the province to advance reconciliation initiatives where possible. Reconciliation initiatives specific to sites and trails are generally led by district and regional operations staff.
- Indigenous communities are increasingly concerned about recreation related access to, and increasing public use levels on, lands and traditional use and culturally sensitive areas. Due to limited capacity, RSTBC has not always been able to meet the expectations of First Nations for meaningful engagement.
- RSTBC hired two Indigenous Relations specialist positions in 2024 to provide policy and negotiations support to the agency. At the regional level, staff are supported by the IR Team and also have inconsistent access to consultation support from MOF and WLRS; however, this support is limited, and the intention is to improve this support via the new regional IR positions proposed as part of the new Parks and Recreation Program.

Other RSTBC Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Priorities

- RSTBC is supporting the Parks and Recreation Program work to update our Reconciliation Action Plan in alignment with strategic priorities. The revised plan will focus on preparing our organization to be a stronger partner in reconciliation, with a focus on tangible actions tied to funding and resources. The action plan will act as a road map for aligning team efforts, managing change, and supporting trust-based relationships with First Nations partners.
- RSTBC is expecting to access funding ^{Cabinet Confidences} to support critical engagement, collaboration, and capacity building initiatives with First Nations.
- ^{Cabinet Confidences} Intergovernmental Communications

- RSTBC continues its joint work with MIRR, including active engagement in approximately eight treaty and non-treaty land transfer negotiations with Indigenous communities.
- The Parks and Recreation Program participates in a joint ADM prioritization and approval process with MIRR and both RSTBC and BC Parks provided resourcing estimates through the 3K Strategic Resourcing Framework in early 2025.
- RSTBC is prioritizing IR support and policy work, including improving consultation support for statutory decisions and beginning to develop an Incidental Use policy.

Other Key Partnership Initiatives:

- **Visitor Use Management in the Sea to Sky:**
 - RSTBC and MOF have partnered with Lil'wat Nation, N'Quatqua, Squamish Nation and community organizations to develop Visitor Use Management Plans in areas of high cultural significance.
 - Three Visitor Use Management Plans have been completed including the Squamish Valley, Tenquille Lake area and the Meager Creek/Keyhole Hot springs sites. The three management planning processes have formed the basis of operational structures where provincial agencies meet regularly with the relevant Nations.
 - The Visitor Use Management Framework has strengthened provincial government relationships with First Nations and is recognized for delivering highly positive outcomes by all participants.
- **Partnership Agreements**
 - RST has partnership agreements for site and trail maintenance with six First Nations. A summary table is below. However, there may be other Indigenous Partnership Agreement holders not captured in the summary table.

Indigenous Partnership Agreement Holder	Agreement Type	Fees?	# Sites	# Defined Campsites
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Intergovernmental Communications

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Facility Maintenance – Recreation Sites and Trails
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KEY FACTS

Recreation Sites and Trails (RST) Facilities Budget:

- RST conducts maintenance at over 1,900 recreation sites and on 20,000km of trails through contracted works, fee recovery agreements and to a limited extent, by ministry staff including through the Seasonal Maintenance Crew (SMC) program.
- The SMC program involves the hiring of seasonal crews (16 for FY2024-25) to provide site and trail maintenance in established Recreation Sites and Trails. SMC crews completed maintenance work at 871 sites and trails in 2024), including 198km of trails.
- RST estimates that site operators offset over \$3.68M in maintenance costs through fees collected (fee recovery) in recreation sites and over \$1M in maintenance costs through fees for trail use.
- Recreation Sites and Trails received a budget uplift of approximately \$3.34M for site and trails maintenance and asset replacement in Budget 2023/24.
- The additional funding brought the total operations, maintenance, and asset replacement budget for the RST program to approximately \$5.73M; a 155% increase over previous years.
- The budget uplift was used to address the asset replacement deficit for picnic tables, outhouses, and fire rings, and supports hundreds of site and trail volunteers in their maintenance projects.
- In the last 2 years (i.e. 2023-2025), RST was able to reopen 15 Recreation Sites or Trails (see list below) that had previously been closed due to maintenance requirements and safety concerns.

REC1541	DUNSAPIE LAKE
REC6140	CHIEF GRAY LAKE
REC166314	Okanagan Falls Trails
REC1554	WOODS LAKE NORTH
REC1702	BOTANIE LAKE
REC1735	ABBOTT LAKE
REC1893	WINDFALL LAKE
REC230076	Sheila Lake
REC241010	Bearcat Caves
REC1598	LITTLE BOULEAU LAKE
REC1597	BOULEAU LAKE
REC5740	HOBSON LAKE
REC1766	MCLEAN CLAN LAKE
REC1945	JIMMY LAKE
REC1889	HUMAMILT LAKE WEST

- The budget uplift included salary funding for a Facilities Officer position who leads the development of an asset management tracking system for RST. This system will leverage previous related tools deployed by the BC Parks program

and is anticipated to be in service by 2026.

Prior Years (2023/24) Facility Maintenance Budget:

- RST 2023/24 budget for facility maintenance and asset replacement totaled approximately \$5.73M.
- In 2023/2024 RST spent:
 - \$4,005,859 on infrastructure asset replacement & maintenance
 - \$1,363,987 on maintenance contract works
 - \$367,886 on Work Orders for partners
 - Of that \$5.73M
 - \$4.07M was internally funded
 - \$1.66M was funded by external contributions, such as Forest Enhancement Program, Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement, Columbia Basin Trust, Destination Development, Land Based Investment Strategy, or Other Recoveries.
- \$373,759 of ORV Funding was awarded to 19 projects in 2024, with some projects supporting RST infrastructure improvements.

Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Kettle Valley Rail Trail Flood Damage Repairs
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KEY FACTS

- The 70-kilometer section of the Kettle Valley (KVR) Rail Trail between Princeton and Brodie Siding (near the Coquihalla Highway) was heavily damaged by the November 2021 atmospheric river event.
 - The damage to the trail is extensive, has rendered the full segment largely inaccessible and effectively severed the Trans Canada Trail through this region.

Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences

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- Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences

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Contact: Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division, (250) 387-1288

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Conservation Officer Service Overview
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KEY FACTS

- The Conservation Officer Service (COS) is a law enforcement agency that specializes in environmental investigations, statutory compliance and enforcement, and human-wildlife conflict prevention and response.
- The COS has a public safety, law enforcement mandate, where the priority is apprehending poachers and polluters.

Law Enforcement and Public Safety

- Although housed in the Ministry of Environment and Parks, the COS is a natural resource law enforcement service provider to multiple ministries.
- Conservation Officers (COs) enforce a wide range of provincial and federal legislation aimed at protecting the environment, human health and safety and Crown resources and revenue — more than 35 statutes combined.
- COs are uniformed, armed law enforcement officers that drive marked patrol vehicles.
- As Special Provincial Constables, COs are often called upon by the RCMP and other organizations to assist during times of natural disaster or emergencies, and provide supplemental policing as requested.
- COs are highly trained in use-of-force techniques, which include defensive tactics and firearms — akin to our policing partners. In addition to mandated law enforcement training, COs also undergo training in areas such as ATV operation, jet boating and predator attacks.
- The COS is comprised of three primary work units: the Provincial Operations Branch (uniformed patrol branch of the COS); the Provincial Investigations Branch (made up of the General Investigations Section and the Aquatic Invasive Species Section) and the Headquarters Branch (made up of staff development, recruitment and training personnel, and civilian support staff).
- Conservation Officers are posted throughout B.C., with offices in 45 communities in eight regions.
- As the frontline of environmental law enforcement in B.C., the COS conducts hundreds of investigations each year and often works with multiple agencies.

- These investigations can span interprovincial or international borders and CO's often conduct joint investigations with law enforcement officers from various provinces, states and federal agencies.

Human-Wildlife Conflict Prevention and Response

- As the lead agency for preventing and responding to human-wildlife conflicts in B.C., the COS has a primary mandate to protect human health and safety in this regard.
- The COS is the agency of expertise in North America in predator attack responses and trains Conservation Officers and Fish & Game Agencies across Canada and the United States.

Fish and Wildlife Compliance and Enforcement

- A large part of a Conservation Officer's time is spent on compliance and enforcement related to the protection and preservation of fish, wildlife and the environment.
- Separate from dealing with human-wildlife conflicts, this type of work can include hunting checks, angling-related enforcement, and patrols.

Indigenous Initiatives

- Across the province, Conservation Officers build and foster relationships with First Nations through several initiatives, including guardian programs, Enforcement Memorandums of Understanding, jointly funded positions, outreach activities and more.
- The COS currently has three Restorative Justice and First Nations Relations positions to oversee First Nations outreach and initiatives throughout the province.

COS Budget

- The COS FY 24/25 budget is: \$25,839,000.
- Approximate COS budget breakdown:
 - Salary and Benefits:
 - Salary: \$20,584,686
 - Operating: \$5,254,314

Contact: Chief Conservation Officer Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-876-6831

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	COS Staffing
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CAPACITY

- There are currently **167** sworn Conservation Officer positions in the province, with **132** as frontline uniformed officers.
 - All Conservation Officers are appointed as Special Provincial Constables under the *Police Act*.
 - There are also **28.65** civilian staff who provide support throughout the province.
 - Conservation Officers are posted throughout B.C, with offices in **45** communities in eight regions.
 - In the 2024/2025 fiscal budget, the COS received an increase in operating funding and capital funding for 10 conservation officers.^{Intergovernmental Communications}
-
- Additional recruit conservation officers are currently in the process of undergoing assessments for intake into the Western Conservation Law Enforcement Academy starting in May 2025, to fill some of the current vacancies across the province.

ORGANIZATIONAL MAKEUP

The COS is comprised of three primary work units:

- **Provincial Operations Branch** Frontline officers in uniform that work largely in the public spotlight
- **Provincial Investigations Branch** Includes our Aquatic Invasive Species Field Inspectors and the General Investigations Section who conduct complex investigations often in a non-uniformed environment
- **Headquarters Branch** Includes staff development, recruitment and training personnel, along with civilian support staff

DEPLOYMENT GUIDELINES AND STAFFING DECISIONS

- The COS uses deployment guidelines to ensure its operational mission and mandate to provide public safety and environmental enforcement is delivered, while mitigating negative impacts to staff.
- With all resource deployment decisions, the COS ensures there is the least amount of impact to staff and the communities they serve.

- Conservation Officer deployment is regularly reviewed and adjusted by the COS as required.
- The COS looks at several factors when determining where Conservation Officers are posted, including: officer safety, call volume, zone coverage, geographic location, call demand for public safety and enforcement concerns, population size, level of industrial, commercial and recreational activity, number of existing officers within the area and emerging environmental trends and partnership opportunities.
- To address temporary, time-sensitive public safety or enforcement pressures, the COS may augment resources from one zone or region as necessary.

INDIGENOUS RELATIONS POSITIONS

- The COS recognizes the importance of relationship-building with Indigenous Nations. This was reflected with the hiring in 2016 and 2019 of Provincial Coordinators in Restorative Justice and First Nations Relations.
- In November 2023, an additional position was implemented to help address growing demand, interest and collaboration with Nations across BC.
- The COS currently has three positions to oversee Restorative Justice Forums and First Nations initiatives throughout the province.

RANKS		
	Chief	1
	Deputy Chiefs	3
	Inspectors	15
	Corporals- Staff Development, Training and Recruiting	2
	Sergeant - Restorative Justice First Nations	2
	Sergeants – Field Ops	23
	Sergeant - AIS	3
	Sergeants - Detective	4
	Detectives	8
	CO's	106
	TOTAL	167
Civilians		
	Civilian TOTAL	28.65
	COS TOTAL	195.65

Contact: COS CCO Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Conservation Officer Service Other Revenues
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KEY FACTS

Enhanced Service Agreements:

- The Conservation Officer Service (COS) delivers additional compliance and enforcement services through partnerships with other agencies and stakeholders.
- These partnerships typically 'enhance' the level of baseline services historically provided or address new or emerging priorities that fall under the COS mandate.
- **2011** - The COS entered into a partnership with the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) to create an additional permanent Conservation Officer (CO) to address environmental issues from recreational use in sensitive habitats. Funding is contributed from the RDEK, Columbia Basin Trust, and the municipalities of Fernie, Sparwood and Elkford. One of the CO's in Fernie is currently funded from this partnership.
- **2015** – The COS entered into a partnership with the Environmental Sustainability and Strategic Policy Division of ENV (now with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship) to provide enhanced compliance and enforcement, as well as training support, to the Aquatic Invasive Mussel Defense program. This program remains active today.
- **2020** - The COS entered into a partnership with the Halfway River First Nation (HRFN) to hire a CO to provide enhanced compliance and enforcement, as well as outreach services, in critical areas identified by the HRFN. A new five-year term was agreed upon in early 2025 to continue to fund this CO position in Ft. St. John.
- **2022** – BC Hydro provided funding to hire a Conservation Officer for enhanced service delivery within the Site C footprint & Peace River watershed. CO work is directed by a joint board comprised of COS and Treaty 8 representatives. A CO position in Dawson Creek is funded by this agreement.
- **2022** - District of Squamish - The COS dedicated additional resources to the proactive less lethal intervention of bears, as well as proactive attractant enforcement. Funding is used to hire a dedicated Wildlife Safety Response Officer.
- **2023** - Resort Municipality of Whistler - The COS dedicated additional resources to the proactive less lethal intervention of bears, as well as proactive attractant enforcement. Funding is used to hire a dedicated Wildlife Safety Response Officer.

- **2024** - Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDKB) – Grand Forks COS entered into an agreement with the RDKB for enhanced boat safety enforcement on Christina Lake.
- In addition, the COS enters into various smaller partnership agreements with other stakeholders to provide enhanced natural resource law enforcement and public safety services beyond its regular level of service.
- These various partnership agreements not only contribute to protecting the environment and the public, but also enable citizens to easily recognize the COS as the primary natural resource law enforcement and public safety agency in B.C.
- The COS continues to explore new partnerships to work collaboratively to protect the environment and the public.

Initiative	2024 Value	Result
Regional District of North Okanagan - Enhanced boat safety enforcement	\$30,310	Boat patrols in 2024 resulted in: • 140 Powered Vessels checked • 733 Non-Powered Vessels checked • 17 VT's issued • 557 warnings issued • 26 vessels ordered to shore
Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDKB) - Enhanced boat safety enforcement on Christina Lake	\$20,000	Boat patrols in 2024 resulted in: • 200 Powered Vessels checked • 71 Non-Powered Vessels checked • 13 VT's issued • 55 warnings issued • 16 vessels ordered to shore
Regional District of East Kootenay - Enhanced access management enforcement	\$78,030	The COS dedicated .3 of an FTE to outreach, compliance and enforcement activities.
Resort Municipality of Whistler – Enhanced Bear Conflict Prevention and Response	\$45,000	The COS dedicated additional resources to the proactive less lethal intervention of bears, as well as proactive attractant enforcement. Funds are used for a dedicated Wildlife Safety Response Officer.
District of Squamish	\$45,000	The COS dedicated additional resources to the proactive less lethal

		intervention of bears, as well as proactive attractant enforcement. Funds are used for a dedicated Wildlife Safety Response Officer.
Halfway River First Nation - Full funding of a Conservation Officer	\$141,000	A Conservation Officer was hired in April 2020 to provide enhanced service delivery in critical areas identified by the Halfway River First Nation. A new 5 year agreement was signed in early 2025.
BC Hydro – Full funding of a Conservation Officer	\$172, 240	A Conservation Officer was hired in July 2022 to provide enhanced service delivery within the Site C footprint & Peace River watershed. CO work is directed by a joint board comprised of COS and Treaty 8 representatives.
Provincial Caribou Recovery Program - Enhanced patrols and outreach	\$50,000 for four regions and \$165,300 for the Peace region	24/25 – Enforcement patrols targeted priority non-motorized closure areas Advice/Recommendations
Increased Patrols and Game Checks - Peace Region	\$75,000	WLRS funding to cover operational costs linked to increased patrols and game checks.
Increased Patrols and Game Checks – Omineca Region	\$68,000	WLRS funding covered operational costs linked to increased patrols and game checks.
Increase Patrols and Game Checks - Skeena Dease Lake/Atlin	\$75,000	WLRS contributed funding for enhanced compliance verifications in 3 Nation Territories, August – October; to cover expanded patrols and joint game checks with FN guardians and WLRS staff.
Increased Patrols and Game Checks – Skeena Region Treaty 8 overlap Dease Lake	\$37, 000	WLRS funding covered operational costs linked to increased patrols and game checks in Treaty 8 territory accessible by Skeena Region.

Contact: Chief Conservation Officer Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-876-6831

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	First Nations Reconciliation in the Conservation Officer Service
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KEY FACTS

- The Conservation Officer Service (COS) is committed to building ongoing, collaborative efforts to increase reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.
- Across BC, Conservation Officers build and foster relationships with First Nations through several initiatives, including:
 - Guardian programs and training;
 - Enforcement Memorandums of Understanding;
 - Outreach activities, and
 - An environmental Restorative Justice program, which the COS developed.

Indigenous Relations Positions

- The COS recognizes the importance of relationship-building with Indigenous Nations. This was reflected with the hiring in 2016 and 2019 of Provincial Coordinators in Restorative Justice and First Nations Relations.
- In November 2023, an additional position was implemented to help address growing demand, interest and collaboration with Nations across B.C.
- The COS currently has three positions to oversee First Nations outreach and initiatives throughout the province.

Guardian Training

- The COS provides Guardian training to interested First Nation communities, including the TNG rangers and other Guardian programs.
- In 2024, the COS hosted seven Guardian training sessions: 89 participants attended, representing approximately 20 First Nations.
- To date, more than 525 First Nation Guardians and community members have been given this training, through 47 deliveries since 2017.
- Conservation Officers are also working collaboratively with First Nations Guardians on monitoring and compliance issues where operationally feasible.
- In 2021, 2022 and 2023, the COS hired two reservist Conservation Officers in Dease Lake. These experienced officers worked jointly with Tahltan guardians

through the fall hunting season. In 2024, the COS utilized enhanced enforcement, cycling officers into the North Skeena to work with the 3N guardians with great success.

Restorative Justice

- The COS delivers Restorative Justice (RJ) training to First Nations, Conservation Officers and Natural Resource Officers, as well as helps facilitate RJ processes.
- Intergovernmental Communications
- In March of 2024, the COS trained 11 representatives from the Office of the Chief Inspector of Mines in RJ.

Enforcement MOUs and Enhanced Enforcement Agreements

- Enforcement Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) highlight the use of RJ as the first option when considering enforcement action for infractions of FN members.
- In 2020, the COS signed a five-year enhanced enforcement agreement with the Halfway River First Nation (HRFN) for an HRFN-dedicated CO - the first position of its kind in the history of the COS. In January 2025, this agreement was extended for another five-year term.
- In February 2022, the COS finalized a five-year enforcement MOU with the Xenigwet First Nation, that includes COS provided firearms handling and predator control training for their Rangers.
- In May 2022, the Nazko First Nations and the COS signed a five-year enforcement MOU. This agreement promotes collaboration and shared stewardship for the natural resources in Nazko First Nations Traditional Territory.
- In March 2023, the COS and the Lake Babine First Nation 'Communication MOU' was signed as a result of the Foundation Agreement from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.
- Currently, the COS is working with several different Nations on Enforcement MOUs which will empower the Nation's to have a voice regarding enforcement decisions on their lands.

Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

Contact: Chief Conservation Officer Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-876-6831

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Conservation Officer Service Oversight
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KEY FACTS

- The Conservation Officer Service (COS) is always open to finding new ways to ensure Conservation Officers have the trust of the people and communities they serve.
- The COS, which sits within the Ministry of Environment and Parks, is accountable to government, the public it serves and the courts.
- As a progressive law enforcement organization, the COS has several levels of accountability and operates under a rigorous system of legislation, policies, procedures and orders.
- The COS has a Code of Professional Conduct Policy that Conservation Officers must follow and a public complaints policy for reporting and investigating complaints made against Conservation Officers.
- Conservation Officers are subject to the Special Provincial Constable complaints and discipline regulation under the Police Act when complaints are made by the public regarding law enforcement activities. This regulation sets out a process for internal investigation and dictates that the Director of Police Services will oversee the investigation.
- Complaints about conduct that occurs outside of constabulary duties are dealt with according to the internal policy of the COS.
- Complaints can be resolved informally (if the complainant agrees), investigated by a conservation officer (Inspector rank or higher), or a by a third party.
- Conservation Officers are also subject to oversight by the Independent Investigations Office of BC in incidents of serious bodily harm or death, that may have been the result of the actions, or inactions, of a Conservation Officer.
- Intergovernmental Communications
- Intergovernmental Communications serious officer conduct complaints are being referred to a third-party investigator for investigation.

Body-Worn Cameras

- While several different police services in B.C. use body-worn cameras, New Brunswick's Conservation Officers are currently the only natural resource law enforcement officers in Canada that use them.

- The COS is closely following the progress of body-worn cameras to determine if it would benefit the law enforcement work of our officers.

Review of Investigations

- COS investigations are regularly reviewed by Crown Counsel for serious offences under the Wildlife Act, Criminal Code, Fisheries Act, Environmental Management Act and other pieces of legislation within the COS mandate. Crown Counsel ultimately decides on whether to proceed with formal charges against individuals and corporations.

Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act

- In May 2022, the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act released its recommendations, which included establishing a single, independent, civilian-led oversight agency responsible for overseeing all police and public safety personnel in B.C. which includes the COS. The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General is currently analyzing these recommendations.

Contact: Chief Conservation Officer Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-876-6831

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Invasive Mussel Defense Program
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**For information related to the funding of the IMDP, ongoing efforts towards a Wildlife Act amendment bill to strengthen related legislation or for financial impacts of a potential mussel infestation in B.C., please defer questions to WLRS.*

KEY FACTS

- The goal of the Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) is to prevent the introduction of zebra and quagga mussels into B.C.
- The IMDP consists of three main components:
 - Watercraft inspections to detect and respond to high-risk watercraft potentially transporting invasive mussels from infested waterways into B.C.;
 - Lake monitoring to assess for the continued absence of invasive mussels in B.C. waters, and
 - Public outreach and education, in collaboration with partners, to change behaviour and promote the message of 'Clean, Drain, Dry' to the boating community.

Overview:

- The Conservation Officer Service is a service delivery partner of the IMDP, providing the enforcement arm of the program. COS Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Inspectors oversee watercraft inspection stations, conduct decontaminations and take enforcement action as necessary.
- During the 2024 season, there were 50 AIS Inspectors operating six inspection stations and two roving stations.
- Crews completed 20, 900 inspections and interacted with more than 45, 400 people to promote Clean, Drain Dry practices.
- Of the total watercraft inspected:
 - 199 were identified as high-risk;
 - 63 decontamination orders were issued;
 - 37 quarantine periods were issued to meet the required 30-day drying time;
 - 128 decontaminations were performed, and

- Invasive mussels were confirmed on 12 of the inspected watercraft.
- In 2024, Conservation Officers issued 85 violation tickets and warnings to motorists for failing to stop at an inspection station.
- In addition to the 12 mussel-fouled boats intercepted in 2024, an additional seven watercraft were identified as being mussel-fouled by another jurisdiction. These boats were decontaminated prior to arriving in BC, highlighting the effectiveness of the perimeter defence approach.
- The majority of inspection stations were operational from early April to late October. COS field officers also provided enforcement support throughout the year to address blow-bys at inspection stations and responded to watercraft notifications.
- In 2024 the average compliance rate across all inspection stations was 90.7%, an increase from the 2023 season (88%). This represents the largest single year increase in compliance since 2020.

Background:

- In 2012, the Controlled Alien Species (CAS) Regulation was amended to include AIS that, if introduced, could negatively impact freshwater ecosystems in B.C.
- In 2015, the COS partnered with the ENV ministry's Environmental Sustainability and Strategic Policy Division (now currently with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship), to provide training to their Auxiliary Mussel Inspector staff for the IMDP. This also included enforcement services of AIS-related acts and regulations.
- In 2017, the IMDP was expanded to include a larger inspection team and additional inspection stations, including a 24-hour station in Golden.
- A specialized mussel detection dog (Kilo) was also obtained that year to assist with mussel detection. The COS provided support to inspection stations when non-compliance was detected.
- In 2018, the COS acquired an additional mussel detection dog, named Major.
- That year also saw the Environmental Sustainability and Strategic Policy Division transfer the operational field portion of the IMDP inspection stations to the COS.
- Kilo retired from his duties in late 2024. Another dog is currently in training as his replacement.

Contact: Chief Conservation Officer Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-847-0432

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Human-Bear Conflicts and Orphaned Bear Cubs
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KEY FACTS

- As the lead agency for preventing and responding to human-wildlife conflicts in B.C., the Conservation Officer Services (COS) has a primary mandate to protect human health and safety in this regard.
- Each year, the public makes more than 40,000 calls to the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) hotline to report human-wildlife conflicts; many involve black bears accessing attractants, such as garbage.
- For officers to attend every single call would simply not be operationally feasible.
- Conservation Officers are trained to assess each situation in accordance with Human-Wildlife Conflict Response Guidelines, which were developed in consultation with the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) and the policy, Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores.
- Conservation Officers will consider relocation if circumstances allow. But once bears display food-conditioned behaviour that shows a minimal fear of people, they cannot be relocated or rehabilitated due to the risk to public safety.
- The COS continues to work collaboratively with communities, businesses and the public to increase awareness and education around the importance of attractant management.
- In 2024, the number of black bears dispatched by Conservation Officers was the lowest in more than a decade.
- Conservation Officers dispatched 303 black bears last year, a 49.7% drop from the 603 black bears dispatched in 2023.
- Only 1,7% of the 17,345 black bear conflict calls led to black bears being dispatched.

Guidelines

- Policies and procedures to help guide Conservation Officers with regards to human-wildlife conflict and response are based on extensive scientific research, literature reviews, wildlife experts consultation and more. This also includes input from wildlife biologists and the provincial wildlife veterinarian.
- Conservation Officers also regularly collaborate with wildlife biologists and the provincial wildlife veterinarian in specific incidents involving sick or injured animals. In some cases, these sick or injured bears are euthanized.

- Under the WLRS policy, Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores, the COS is responsible for minimizing the risks that large carnivores pose to public safety and property.
- The COS Human-Wildlife Conflict Response Guidelines (found [here](#)) supplement this policy by helping officers identify the risks associated to specific types of conflicts and provides guidance to determine the appropriate response option.
- In consultation with wildlife biologists and other experts, these guidelines and matrices are regularly reviewed and adjusted, as necessary.

Orphaned Bear Cubs

- In November 2024, the Ministry of Environment and Parks and WLRS finalized joint response guidelines for incidents involving orphaned black bear cubs.
- The guidelines are based on the latest wildlife management science, suitability criteria for rehabilitation and rearing best practices, and prioritize public safety.
- The guidelines allow for several options when determining the appropriate course of action, and clarify the roles of the COS, WLRS wildlife biologists and permitted rearing facilities.
- Conservation Officers will respond to orphaned black bear cubs if there is a public safety issue. If there is no public safety issue, reports are referred to wildlife biologists to determine if any action is appropriate. CO's may provide support and assistance if requested.
- Leaving bear cubs alone is the preferred option. Decisions on the suitability for orphaned black bear cubs to enter rearing programs are made by wildlife biologists, in consultation with the provincial wildlife veterinarian and guidelines on orphaned black bear cubs.
- In B.C., there are three rearing facilities that are permitted to raise and release orphaned bear cubs. These facilities are:
 - The North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre in Errington;
 - Critter Care Wildlife Society in Langley, and
 - The Northern Lights Wildlife Society in Smithers.
- The Northern Lights facility is the only one permitted to rehabilitate and release grizzly bear cubs.

Contact: Chief Conservation Officer Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-876-6831

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Conservation and Recreation Division March 2025	Grizzly Bear Foundation
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KEY FACTS

- In September 2024, the Province – the Ministry of Environment and Parks and the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship - partnered with the Grizzly Bear Foundation (GBF) to examine how to prevent and reduce bear conflicts throughout B.C.
- The goal of this partnership is to reduce the number of bear deaths from human-wildlife conflicts, improve public understanding and confidence in the policies and procedures Conservation Officers follow, and to educate people about the role they play to help keep wildlife wild.
- This work will encompass several areas where improvements to aspects of human-wildlife conflict may be made, such as attractant mitigation strategies for municipalities. Engagement with First Nations partners and other stakeholders will also be undertaken as part of this work.
- This partnership also includes assembling a third-party review committee – a panel of experts – which will work with the Province to review current practices and identify recommendations for any new or improved policies and procedures around human-wildlife conflict.
- The panel will not be reviewing individual officer actions but will be looking for continual improvement in a variety of ways.
- Recommendations were expected to be received this spring, but work has been delayed as the expert panel is still in the process of being assembled.
- Recommendations are expected to be received by the end of this year.

Funding:

- Advice/Recommendations; Government Financial Information

Contact: Chief Conservation Officer Cam Schley
Conservation and Recreation Division, 250-876-6831

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	EPD Overview (General and Budget)
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KEY FACTS

Division Overview:

- Our vision: A clean, safe, and resilient environment – today and always.
- Our branches: Compliance and Environmental Enforcement, Corporate and Strategic Initiatives, Authorizations and Remediation, Environmental Emergencies, Environmental Monitoring and Analysis, Environmental Policy and Initiatives.
- Our staff: 466 FTEs in 13 communities, 40% in Victoria.
- Our core functions:
 - Regulating air, liquid and solid waste in B.C.
 - Provincial environmental emergencies program
 - Regulating contaminated site remediation
 - Regulating sale and use of pesticides
 - Oversight of provincial recycling programs
 - Oversight of economic stimulus programs and Clean BC funding programs
 - Provision, management, and reporting on environmental and climate information
 - Air and water quality partnerships and stewardship
 - Compliance and Enforcement
- Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Considerations:
 - Set authorizations under the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) and the *Integrated Pest Management Act* (IPMA);
 - Provide expert support to *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA) reviews for mining and other industrial projects;
 - Responsible under EMA for Spills and Contaminated Sites Remediation;
 - Oversight of high-risk contaminated sites for B.C. and the Contaminated Sites Regulation;
 - Responsibility under EMA and IPMA for the development of legislation, policy, regulations, and codes of practice.

FY25/26 Estimates Budget for EPD:

Total 24/25 Operating Expense	Total Salaries and Benefit	Total Operating Costs	Total Govt Transfer	Total Other Expense	Total Internal Recoveries	Total External Recoveries	Total 25/26 Operating Expenses
31,989	43,51	12,463	4,642	714	(26,633)	(2,216)	32,480

- FY25/26 Estimates Budget for the Sustainable Environment Fund:
 - Total 2024/25 Operating Expenses: **26,132**
 - Total Other Expenses: **28,690**
 - Total 2025/26 Operating Expenses: **28,690**
- Comparison of the FY24/25 Estimates Budget:
 - Total Operating Expenses increased by **2,540**
 - Salaries and Benefits increased by **491**
 - Operating Costs increased by **2,555**
 - Government Transfers increased by **180**
 - Other Expenses remained unchanged
 - Internal Recoveries increased (negative impact) by **2,555**
 - External Recoveries remain unchanged

Contact: Kathryn Forge, Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Protection Division, 778-584-4250

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Air Quality Monitoring and Reporting
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KEY FACTS

British Columbia's Air Quality Monitoring Network

- ENV and its partners operate a network of ambient air quality monitoring stations across the province.
- In total there are 96 air quality monitoring stations providing near real-time ambient air quality data:
 - 25 operated by ENV,
 - 36 operated by industrial permittees under permit requirements,
 - 28 operated by Metro Vancouver, and
 - 7 operated through data sharing agreements with BC Hydro and the Port of Prince Rupert.

Air Contaminants Measured at Monitoring Stations

- The most commonly measured air contaminant is fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) which is recognized as the most relevant indicator of impacts to human health.
- Other important air contaminants include nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and ground-level ozone (O₃).
 - The combination of fine particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide and ground-level ozone concentrations at one location allows ENV to report the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI). The AQHI is used to communicate the short-term health risk from these air contaminants.
- Where warranted—due to industrial emissions—sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and total reduced sulphur compounds (TRS), total hydrocarbons (THC) and hydrogen fluoride (HF) are also monitored.
- Not all pollutants are measured at all monitoring stations.
- Monitoring and public education efforts are focused in areas of the province that are not attaining the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS).

Rationale for Air Quality Monitoring in B.C.

- ENV conducts air quality monitoring for several reasons:
 - To determine attainment of air quality objectives and standards,
 - To assess and report on trends in air quality,
 - To monitor the effect of emissions from permitted sources,

- To support issuance of air quality alerts to the public during episodes of poor air quality (e.g., during wildfires),
- To assist with management of air quality issues, and
- To support scientific studies.

Reporting of Air Quality Information

- Levels of air contaminants (including the AQHI) are reported in near real-time on the B.C Air Quality website.
- The Air Quality Subscription Service sends notifications by email and/or text message to subscribers when Air Quality staff issue air quality alerts.

ENV Supports Local Air Quality Planning Processes

- Air Quality staff support air quality planning processes in 14 airsheds across B.C.
- This collaboration involves staff participating as technical advisors on air quality “roundtables”, funding for public education, air quality monitoring and publication of air quality data reports.
- Monitoring data are key to the success of these groups.

Requests for Additional Monitoring Stations

- Each year ENV receives requests for new air quality monitoring programs in communities across B.C., the majority of which occur during the wildfire season.
- Air Quality staff provide technical expertise to communities to identify and address local air quality issues.
- Due to resource constraints, new long-term air quality monitoring programs are not feasible in every community. However, ENV has been supporting short-term surveillance programs and citizen science initiatives. This approach enables identification of issues in a cost-effective manner. Some examples include:
 - A new mobile station will be deployed to various locations across the province for a series of short-term monitoring campaigns that will be used to establish background concentrations of key air contaminants. The monitoring data will be used to streamline mining applications, Environmental Assessments, and permit amendments.
 - ENV recently completed surveillance monitoring in Vernon and Merritt, with plans for a surveillance monitoring program in Salmon Arm.

Contact: Robyn Roome, Executive Director
 Environmental Monitoring and Analysis Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 778-671-9190

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Aquaculture Integrated Pest Management and transition to contained facilities – waste management issues
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KEY FACTS

Federal government ban on open net-pen aquaculture:

- The Government of Canada (GoC) announced an intent to ban open net-pen aquaculture in B.C. coastal waters by June 30, 2029.
- The GoC is preparing transition plans that aim to support the construction of land and/or marine-based closed containment finfish farms.
- Intergovernmental Communications
- Expected waste could include effluent from fish rearing, compostable waste due to mortalities and clean-out of pens, and liquid and solid waste originating from facility operations.
- ENV has received inquiries seeking clarity on jurisdiction and regulatory requirements in advance of the shift to closed containment systems.

Intergovernmental Communications

ENV Regulatory Framework

- In 2009, the BC Supreme Court determined that the Finfish Aquaculture Waste Control Regulation under the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) which regulated finfish aquaculture farms in marine waters was an area of exclusive federal authority.
- Following the 2009 BC Supreme Court decision, the Finfish Aquaculture Waste Control Regulation was repealed on March 30, 2012.

- The Land-based Finfish Waste Control Regulation continued to apply after 2012 and regulates the discharge of waste from "land-based finfish facilities" which include those that engage in the feeding, nurturing and rearing finfish in fresh water. Additional authorizations under the EMA may also be used to manage discharges from aquaculture facilities.
- While aquaculture is not considered an agricultural operation under the Agricultural Environmental Management Code of Practice (AEM Code), fish feces from land-based finfish aquaculture facilities can be used as a nutrient source in an agricultural operation and will be regulated under the AEM Code.
- Fish wastes which include carcasses and associated parts from wild and commercial aquaculture and processing facilities can be composted in accordance with the Organic Matter Recycling Regulation.
- Legal Information

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
 Environmental Policy and Initiatives Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 778 698-4906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Atmospheric River Flood and Debris Management
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Background

- The November 2021 Atmospheric River Event (ARE) caused severe flooding across southern British Columbia, impacting 62 communities and First Nations.
- ENV and EMCR led environmental response and recovery efforts focused on addressing public safety and infrastructure risks.
- ENV established the Flood Debris Management Secretariat (FDMS) to oversee and execute the recovery action plan efficiently.
- ENV completed emergency debris cleanup across affected waterways, engaging impacted communities and initiating recovery projects.
- From December 2021 to March 2027, an estimated \$206 million will be spent on these efforts; to February 2025 \$151 million has been spent, leaving \$55 million left to complete the remaining ARE recovery projects.
- All funding is provided through the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) appropriations, with no impact on the ENV budget.
- Of the 18 recovery projects under FDMS management, 12 are complete, and 6 remain in active planning and construction.

Debris Response

- ENV engaged First Nations, local governments, and communities, conducted site assessments, and executed debris action plans for 445 sites across over 725 kilometres of riverways.
- Over 16,000 metric tonnes of debris were removed from rivers; only 4,725 metric tonnes were disposed of in landfill, with a significant focus on recycling materials.

Sediment Projects

- Through debris response, 135 sediment sites posing risks to public safety and infrastructure were identified.
- Funding was approved for 32 sites grouped into 18 projects; 12 are complete (pending regulatory reporting), while 6 remain active for summer 2025 and 2026 construction.
- Sediment removal and site recovery is scheduled for completion by winter 2027 to mitigate flood risks.
- Project complexities include First Nations consultation, regulatory permitting, legal reviews, and coordination with fish habitat construction windows.
- All FDMS work is eligible for up to 90% federal Disaster Financial Assistance

Arrangement (DFAA) funding, coordinated through EMCR.

Indigenous Peoples considerations

- First Nations communities were disproportionately affected by this flood due to their communities being near flooding rivers and streams, affecting their cultural traditions, economy, livelihoods, and food gathering activities.
- The delivery of this work has forged strong relationships with First Nation communities across three response areas (Central, Southwest, Vancouver Island/Coastal) and is directly aligned with the province's legislated responsibilities under the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA), the UN Declaration and the SENDAI framework to reduce risk and build community resilience.
- First Nations' feedback on completed works highlights an unprecedented level of engagement and support by the province, affirming the provincial disaster recovery approach in collaboration with Indigenous Governments.

First Nations and Local Communities	1000+	1000+	40+	60+	460	150+
	Touchpoints with Communities	Employment opportunities	First Nations engaged	Communities engaged	Community members trained	Site visits and Face-to-Face meetings

Internal Consultation

ENV has consulted with a variety of other ministries and governments on recovery projects and safety related issues:

Topic	Organization
Waste and debris management	ENV, FOR, WLRS, and AF
Community assessments and engagement	EMCR, MIRR, Indigenous Services Canada
Debris removal and structures threatened by watercourse	FOR, WLRS, MOTT, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Water quality/monitoring, drinking water	WLRS, HLTH, BC Centre for Disease Control, Office of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO)
Waste, manure and pesticide management	ENV Regional Operations Branch, AF, US Customs and Border Protection
Contaminated sites	ENV (Environmental Protection Division)
Debris and sediment deposits on agricultural land	AF
Disposal of animal mortalities	AF, ENV
Communications plan	GCPE
Funding options, cost recovery, cost sharing and reimbursement procedures	FIN, EMCR, Public Safety Canada, Alberta Ministry of Environment and Protected Areas
Human health	HLTH, PHO

Contact: Pader Brach, Executive Director
Environmental Emergency Branch
Environmental Protection Division, (250) 812-2253

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Avian Influenza Waste Disposal
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KEY FACTS

Response when outbreaks are detected

- Avian influenza (AI) is a federally regulated disease. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) leads the investigation and response. Support from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) is provided for testing, mapping and surveillance. The Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) engages on waste disposal.
- ENV is responsible for authorizing the disposal of avian-infected wastes.
- Animal and bird mortalities infected with avian influenza are considered hazardous waste under the Hazardous Waste Regulation (HWR), as are infected manure, feed, bedding, etc.
- Disposal of animal and bird mortalities and waste that is not infected is managed under the Agriculture Environmental Management Code of Practice or the Organic Matter Recycling Regulation.
- Before infected mortalities or waste can be disposed of, approval is required from ENV to confirm the waste does not pose a threat to human health or the environment. This process is called delisting (also referred to as an exemption under s. 53 of the HWR).
- The most common disposal method is biological heat treatment (high temperature composting to de-activate the virus) and subsequent land application of composted material on an agricultural land base in accordance with the Agricultural Environmental Management Code of Practice. Several landfills have been authorized to receive untreated infected waste under HWR as well if there are space constraints on the impacted site.
- A site-specific delisting HWR protocol is also required. The application process for a site-specific HWR delisting protocol does not delay the initiation of treatment of avian influenza infected waste. Authorization is not needed for treatment to start as long as treatment protocols approved by CFIA are followed.

Current Situation

- Outbreaks of AI typically occur in either the Spring or Fall seasons, though they don't happen every year.
- Between October 2024 and January 2025, 81 infected premises were identified in the province with the vast majority being located in the Fraser Valley.

Previous Outbreaks

- Between October and December 2023, 54 infected premises were identified in the province with the vast majority being located in the Fraser Valley.
- Between April 2022 and April 2023, 104 infected premises were identified in the province with most infected premises located in the Fraser Valley.
- ENV supported the AF Emergency Operations Centre in the fall of 2023.

Contact: Deb Epps, Executive Director
Authorizations & Remediation Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 250-713-2906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Bottle Depots
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KEY FACTS

BC Bottle and Recycling Depot Association:

- The BC Bottle and Recycling Depot Association (BCBRDA) is a non-profit organization that represents 84 (approximately half) of B.C.'s privately owned recycling depots across the province.
- Through private contracts with Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) agencies, depots operate as collection sites for a range of products and packaging regulated under the Recycling Regulation (the regulation). Advice/Recommendations
- BCBRDA was formed to bring a unified voice to depot operators and to communicate their concerns more efficiently with B.C.'s EPR programs to both government and EPR agencies.
- BCBRDA concerns with EPR programs include the following:
 - Business Information
 -
 -
- ENV has worked extensively with BCBRDA since 2020 to discuss their concerns with EPR programs. Staff currently hold monthly meetings with the group. Advice/Recommendations
- ENV has met directly with EPR agencies to discuss BCBRDA's concerns and request clarification on items raised to support discussions with BCBRDA. Advice/Recommendations
- ENV's role is to review and approve EPR plans that meet the regulatory requirements and to monitor the industry's performance in accordance with the approved plan. However, ENV does not get involved in the business-to-business

processes or interject in the contract negotiation process between EPR agencies and their service providers.

- Under the regulation, ENV does have recourse to ensure 'producers are paying the cost' associated with the collection and recycling of their products through the respective EPR plans approved by ENV.

- Business Information

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
 Environmental Policy and Initiatives Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 778-698-4906

Deb Epps, Executive Director
 Authorizations and Remediation Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-713-2906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	CleanBC Plastics Action Plan, including Plastics Action Fund
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KEY FACTS

British Columbians are concerned about plastic waste:

- The CleanBC Plastics Action Plan, released in 2019, supports the government's commitment to phase out single-use plastics and transition to a circular economy.
- There have been many new actions to reduce plastic waste undertaken following the Plastics Action Plan:
 - Implementation of bans and phasing-out specific types of single-use packaging with the Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation.
 - Requiring producers to take responsibility for more plastic products and implementing the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) 5-year action plan (2021-2026) (see EPD Estimates Note – EPR 5 Year Action Plan (including non-residential packaging)).
 - Supporting UN Global Plastics Treaty negotiations and providing technical committee representatives to develop the new national standards for plastics recycling and recycled content.
 - Creation and expansion of the CleanBC Plastics Action Fund and Clean Coast Clean Waters Initiative (see EPD Estimates Note - Clean Coast Clean Waters Initiative Fund).

Bans/Phasing-out single-use plastics (see EPD Estimates Note - SUPWPR):

- In July 2023, the Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation was announced to phase out single-use and plastic items in B.C.
 - Effective December 20, 2023, the regulation bans the distribution of single-use plastic utensils and restricts the distribution of other disposable foodservice accessories (e.g., wood utensils, napkins, condiment sachets).
 - Effective July 15, 2024, the regulation bans single-use plastic checkout bags, with fees on new paper and reusable bags; restricts food service ware made from problematic plastics (i.e., polystyrene foam, PVC, PVDC, biodegradable plastic and compostable plastic); and bans all oxo-degradable plastic single-use items and packaging.
 - Bans on PVC film wrap and polystyrene foam meat trays come into effect July 1, 2028, and July 1, 2030, respectively.

- ENV has developed a range of resources to support businesses, including factsheets and posters which are available on the ministry's website (gov.bc.ca/reuse).
- ENV takes a compliance promotion approach to enforcement and is focused on encouraging voluntary compliance through education and awareness-building. Fines up to \$40,000 can be issued for ongoing disregard of the regulation.

CleanBC Plastics Action Fund (PAF):

- Initially announced in 2020, PAF has invested over \$40M to support over 80 innovative plastic waste reduction projects. There are four priority funding streams including:
 - Post-consumer Recycled Plastics Processing and Manufacturing;
 - Circular Economy Innovation, including reduction of plastic waste through reuse and repair;
 - Indigenous-led projects to reduce plastic waste; and
 - Regional Plastics Innovation, supporting projects outside of the lower mainland.
- Funding applications were accepted by the fund administrator until December 2024. The final disbursement of funding to companies by the fund administrator will be complete by April 2025, and all projects are to be completed by February 2026.
- In 2024/25 the Fund administrator will have distributed over \$20M to support over 60 projects with businesses and Indigenous communities to reduce plastic waste.
- These projects have increased B.C.'s capacity to process recycled plastics by an anticipated 38,000 tonnes annually and prevented an estimated 38 million single-use containers while creating over 250 direct, new, long-term jobs with projects across the province.
- Projects have included: recycling of plastic in textiles; local micro-recycling projects; increasing the amount of recycled plastics that can be recycled back into food-grade packaging; use of 100% post-consumer recycled plastics in packaging; increasing the processing and recycling of ocean plastics; and implementation of reusable take-out container services.
- Indigenous communities have been supported for a variety of projects including the purchase of dishwashers and reusable dinnerware to reduce the use of single-use plastic at events; increasing recycling within communities; and moving from single-use water bottles to refillable containers.

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
Environmental Policy and Initiatives Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 778-698-4906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Clean Coast Clean Waters
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KEY FACTS

Clean Coast Clean Waters Initiative Fund (CCCW):

- CCCW began in 2020 as part of the Stronger BC economic plan to create jobs and support coastal communities as they recovered from the COVID-19 economic downturn and loss of tourism as well as to support B.C.'s work on addressing marine debris.
- CCCW is the largest coastal clean-up in B.C.'s history; the Province has supported CCCW with \$49.83M total, with oversubscription at all intakes.
- By the end of 2023, CCCW:
 - removed more than 2,100 tonnes of debris, including more than 600 tonnes of derelict vessels (215 vessels);
 - recycled or upcycled 65% of material recovered from shoreline projects;
 - cleaned over 6,400 kilometres of shoreline; and
 - created or maintained nearly 2,400 well-paying jobs.
- These figures will increase when the data from 2024 is compiled.
- Funding was allocated as follows:
 - \$3.5M for Small Ship Tour Operator's Association (SSTOA) / Wilderness Tourism Association (WTA) in 2020 to conduct their shoreline clean-up.
 - \$1.33M for Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative (CFN-GBI) in 2020 for shoreline clean-ups focusing on food gathering locations.
 - \$10M in 2021 administered by PricewaterhouseCooper (PwC), the successful contractor on a competitive RFP.
 - \$5M uplift from youth corps funding in 2021 (\$3.85M of which was administered by PwC and \$1.15M of which went to CFN-GBI).

Government Financial Information

- The breakdown of PwC administered projects can be found on Table 1.

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
Environmental Policy and Initiatives,
Environmental Protection Division, 778 698-4906

Table 1: PwC-administered projects and funding

Year	Project type	Recipient, funding
2021	Shoreline clean-up	- Coastal Restoration Society (CRS), \$2,122,000 - Ocean Legacy Foundation (OLF), \$1,465,000 - SSTOA/WTa, \$3,500,000
2021	Derelict vessel	- CRS, \$428,000 - Songhees Development Corporation, \$2,000,000
2021 (uplift)	Shoreline clean-up	- Campbell River Association of Tour Operators (CRATO), \$767,000 - Misty Isles Economic Development Society (MIEDS), \$2,313,000 - Spirit of the West Adventures, \$563,000
2022	Shoreline clean-up	- CRS, \$1,000,000 - MIEDS in partnership with K'yuu Enterprises and the Council of the Haida Nation, \$800,000 - OLF, \$1,000,000
2022	Derelict vessel	CRS, \$1,000,000
2023	Shoreline clean-up	- CRATO, \$1,300,000 - CRS, \$1,780,000 - K'yuu Enterprises, \$1,270,000 - OLF, \$2,500,000 - Rugged Coast Research Society (RCRS), \$1,910,000
2023	Derelict vessel	- CRS, \$1,000,000 - OLF, \$355,000 - RCRS, \$471,000
2023	Facility	OLF recycling; \$800,000
2024	Shoreline clean-up	- Emerald Sea Protection Society, \$318,000 - OLF, \$595,000 - K'yuu, \$750,000 - Lax Kw'alaams Fishing Enterprises, \$498,000 - Let's Talk Trash, \$542,000 - Living Oceans Society, \$571,000 - Metlakatla Stewardship Office, \$514,000 - Quatsino First Nations, \$599,000 - RCRS, \$464,000 - Tsleil-Waututh Nation, \$265,000 - WTa, \$749,000 - Wuikinuxv First Nation Stewardship Dept, \$469,000
2024	Derelict vessel	- Highlander Marine Services, \$631,000 - Quatsino First Nations, \$150,000 - RCRS, \$250,000
2024	Derelict aquaculture	- OLF, \$500,000 - RCRS, \$465,000
2024	Facility	OLF recycling; \$800,000
		PwC (5% for administration), \$1,942,000

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Contaminated Site Remediation – Scope and Economic Importance
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KEY FACTS

Site Remediation Metrics:

- The Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) is responsible for ensuring human health and environmental protection, with strong oversight of high risk and non-high risk contaminated sites.
- Under the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA), Section 43, the Minister must establish a site registry and appoint a registrar to manage the site registry. In accordance with regulations, the registrar must provide for reasonable public access to information in the site registry.
- There are presently 27,116 sites appearing on the provincial Site Registry with an average of 1200 new sites added every year (4.3% annual growth rate since 2017).
- It is important to note that sites in the Site Registry may be in different stages of investigation or remediation, including some that have been successfully remediated.
- High risk sites are particularly concerning as they are significantly contaminated environments defined as exceeding the Contaminated Sites Regulation (CSR) “safe” standards by at least a factor of 10 and having a direct exposure pathway between toxic substances and living organisms (humans or plants/animals). They also can have mobile contamination that spreads potentially to neighbouring properties.
- There are presently more than 300 confirmed high risk sites in the Site Registry. Approximately 120 high risk sites submitted site remediation applications in FY2024/25, and several of those submitted more than one application.
- As high-risk conditions are remediated, sites will be re-classified as non-high risk. An average of six sites per year were reclassified from high risk to non-high risk over the past five years: eight sites were reclassified in 2024. These sites could be sourced or affected by neighbouring properties.
- Due to the highly complex and technical nature of the Site Remediation Program’s work, professional/technical staff and Statutory Decision Makers balance their time between high risk and non-high-risk sites.
- The Site Remediation Program (SRP) operates on a cost recovery basis; Contaminated Sites Regulation (CSR) Schedule 3 Fees for services apply:
 - Annual revenue ranges from \$1.8M - \$2.8M per year.
 - 2022/23 gross revenue was \$2.2M,
 - 2023/24 gross revenue was \$2.6M.

- 2024/25 estimated revenue:
 - FY25 Q3 original estimate: \$2.4M
 - FY25 actual YTD revenue – February month closing: \$2.7M
 - Unofficial FY25 revenue estimate: \$2.8M
 - In FY 2024/25, revenue covered ~55% of the program costs.
- Applications average a total cost of ~\$5,000 in fees, ranging from \$25 - \$79,000 depending on the complexity of the site and services required.
- 2024/25 to date:
 - SRP has received 537 applications for contaminated sites services under CSR Schedule 3, and 610 were completed so far in 2024/25.
 - 203 applications for 157 housing-related sites have been completed so far, this fiscal year, representing over 76,000 housing units.
 - There are currently 345 applications in the caseload awaiting review, a decrease from last year's caseload of 377 applications.
 - Roughly 20% of applications received are for housing development.

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 Authorizations and Remediation Branch,
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-713-2906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Elk Valley Water Quality including Area Based Management Plan and Water Treatment
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General Water Quality (WQ)

- Addressing WQ issues in the Elk Valley is a continuing priority for the ministry; a dedicated team of environmental protection experts and independent statutory decision makers are using the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) to improve WQ. We are working closely with Ktunaxa First Nations in our efforts.
- The ministry's Compliance and Environmental Enforcement Branch is holding Elk Valley Resources (EVR) accountable to meeting regulatory requirements and is responding with enforcement actions such as Administrative Monetary Penalties (AMP) when non-compliances are found.
- The ministry's permitting team in the Authorizations and Remediation Branch continues to prioritize application reviews for projects like new water treatment that further improve WQ.
- Four active mines are operated by EVR, a company formerly owned by Teck and operated under the name Teck Coal Ltd. but now owned mostly by Glencore. Permit conditions and regulatory requirements did not change as a result of the name change and transfer of ownership. Following the transfer, the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals reviewed and updated the financial security and environmental protection requirements included in the security.
 - Any expansions of existing mines, or new mines, will need to demonstrate how they can comply with all regulatory requirements, and they need to fit within the established framework of improving water quality.
- Over 215 mine inspections have been completed by ENV since 2014, including 65 inspections of the Valley-wide EMA permit which addresses water quality.
- Enforcement responses are escalating over time, with increasing numbers of AMP referrals for ongoing non-compliances.
 - Over \$17.2M in AMP's have already been assessed to Teck, including some significant fines related to water quality exceedances and delays in implementing water treatment. A large \$16.5M penalty is under appeal.
- There are seasonally elevated levels of selenium and nitrate at some locations in the watershed, but robust environmental monitoring programs show functioning aquatic ecosystems in the mainstem Elk and Fording Rivers.
- Selenium levels in the downstream transboundary Koocanusa Reservoir exceed B.C.'s proposed water quality objective (WQO) and Montana's water quality standard. However, monitoring programs have not detected ecosystem impacts.
 - Some fish tissue selenium levels exceed thresholds where effects to the fish are possible, but the vast majority of fish tissue samples (98%) are

below the threshold for safe human consumption.

- EVR is predicting full compliance with all water quality limits and targets by 2028.
- B.C. is participating in the International Joint Commission (IJC) process – see IJC Estimates Note in the ENV Binder.

Area Based Management Plan (ABMP) Amendments

- The ABMP has been in place for 10 years and it is working; it has driven significant investments, and it provides a strategy to manage cumulative effects and protect ecosystems from multiple mines in the watershed.
- In response to a Ministerial Order issued in July 2024, ministry staff are amending the ABMP to ensure it remains relevant and reflects the latest science. Staff are on track to complete the first amendment by July 2025.
 - The first amendment is focused on transferring ownership of the plan to the government from industry, and a second amendment will review the selenium target in Koocanusa Reservoir after the first amendment is done.
 - The amendment process includes deep engagement with Ktunaxa First Nation Governments, and opportunities for input by industry, Canadian and US Agencies, US Tribes, and the public and stakeholders.
- As part of the second amendment, ENV intends to complete the work that was undertaken with the Ktunaxa First Nation, in partnership with US Agencies, to develop a draft selenium WQO for Koocanusa Reservoir.

Water Quality Treatment:

- EVR is now operating 4 water treatment facilities: 2 large tank-based Active Water Treatment Facilities (AWTFs) and two Saturated Rock Fills (SRFs).
- Water quality downstream of these facilities is improving, as record amounts of selenium and nitrate are being removed from the watershed.
- EVR now has capacity to treat 77.5 million liters/day - an investment of over \$1.4B. The ministry is holding EVR accountable to construct more facilities.
 - EVR will be adding or expanding 6 more treatment facilities by 2027, which will bring the treatment capacity to almost 150 million liters/day.
- The new SRF technology is showing very effective treatment of selenium and nitrate and is proving to be a more robust and cheaper technology than AWTFs.
- Other technologies are now being deployed, and EVR continues to invest in research and development. They are at the global forefront in developing technologies for both treatment and source control of coal mining impacts.

Contact: A.J. Downie, Director, Southeast Coal Mining Team
 Authorizations and Remediation Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-802-7149

2025/26 Estimates Debate

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Southeast Initiatives Secretariat (SEIS) Overview

Recommend Response:

- The Southeast Initiatives Secretariat (SEIS) is a two-year pilot created to address the complex challenges that exist in the Elk Valley, in Southeast BC, where metallurgical coal mines provide a significant contribution to both the regional and provincial economies and supports 3,848 direct and an estimated 5,143 indirect jobs as well as local businesses.
- SEIS leads strategies and initiatives to continued responsible mining while healing the land and advancing reconciliation with the Ktunaxa Nation First Nations.
- The Secretariat is a single point of contact for all levels of government (including First Nations), proponents, stakeholders, and an integrated Team BC approach across multiple ministries that advance the priorities in this area of BC.

Additional Response points (if needed):

- SEIS leads five core ministries: WLRS, FOR, ENV (Environment & Parks), IRR (Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation) and MCM (Mining & Critical Minerals).
- Since being formed in July 2024, SEIS has made significant progress in strengthening relationships with the Ktunaxa governments, local governments and other stakeholders, and developing a strategy to ensure the Elk Valley economy continues to thrive with the support of those parties.

Key Facts:

- Southeast (SE) BC metallurgical coal deposits are a high-quality, strategic resource held by BC, critical to the provincial economy. In 2023, the four operating Elk Valley Resources Ltd. (EVR) mines in the SE accounted for 83% of total steelmaking coal production and 81% (\$663.5M) of all mineral tax collected from coal and metal mines in BC, as well as providing 12,820 direct, indirect and induced jobs in BC and 30,490 across Canada.
- Mining and other natural resource extraction in the Elk Valley have resulted in substantial adverse environmental impacts on water quality and aquatic

2025/26 Estimates Debate

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

ecosystems from elevated levels of selenium and other contaminants. There are also significant impacts on the land including rare ecosystems (i.e., high elevation grasslands) and bighorn sheep. Indigenous rights held by the Ktunaxa First Nation (KFN) are adversely impacted by the current condition of the land and water.

- EVR plans to submit a revised Detailed Project Description (DPD) to the EAO for the Fording River Extension Project (FRX) in early 2025 which, if approved, may enable sustained production for several decades. Other expansions/projects also need to move forward to avoid reductions in staffing as early as 2025.
- A primary goal of the SEIS is to address concerns and leverage opportunities which help establish conditions in the SE that could enable continued responsible mining supported by key stakeholders and First Nations. If these conditions do not form, EA decisions on expansions to EVR mining operations will be extremely challenging and risks that EVR will ramp down their operations resulting in substantial impacts to BC and local economies and communities.
- The Elk Valley is part of the transboundary Kootenai/y watershed with water flowing through Koocanusa Reservoir and into Montana and is in the core of Ktunaxa territory. This region is now the focus of an International Joint Commission (IJC) Reference on water pollution.
- A ministerial order for amendments to the Elk Valley Area Based Management Plan, originally established in 2013, is underway. The amendment process is a collaborative one between BC, KFN and proponents and requires considerable resources from all parties.
- Recent outreach initiated by Canada has re-opened discussions regarding transfer of the Dominion Coal Blocks and trilateral meetings with BC, Canada and KFN governments are underway. Options are being considered and related costs are currently unknown.
- The SEIS ADMO is jointly funded by MCM, ENV, IRR, FOR and WLRS and reports directly to the Major Projects Implementation Board (MPIB). As SEIS was created in July 2024, there is no Estimates budget at this time and is being considered via the Budget 2025 process for the first time.
- A working budget of \$614,856 for the 2025 Fiscal Year End includes salary and operating expenses. Travel of the ADM to SE BC is essential for establishing and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.

Date Prepared/Revised: February 11, 2025

Ministry Executive Sponsor:

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Phone: 250-508-1670

Alternate Contact for Issue:

Name: Katie von Gaza

Phone: 250-420-6367

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Environmental Monitoring Expansion under the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy
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KEY FACTS

ENV received over \$10M over three years (starting FY23) under the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy (CPAS) to upgrade or expand ambient hydroclimatological monitoring networks by 16%.

Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy (CPAS) – Hydroclimatological Monitoring Expansion:

- ENV received over 10M and 17 permanent FTEs over three years under CPAS to support the expansion of provincial ambient hydroclimatological monitoring programs.
- Hydroclimatological monitoring programs provide critical information that is essential for natural resource decision-making and future climate modelling and projection.
- Data collected through hydroclimatological programs are critical to assess the following risks: short-and long-term water shortage, saltwater intrusion, severe wildfire season, reduction in ecosystem connectivity and health, extreme precipitation and landslide, and moderate to severe flood risk.
- CPAS funds were approved to upgrade or expand ambient hydroclimatological monitoring networks by 16% over 3 years from FY23 ending FY25.
- Proportional expansion of hydroclimatological monitoring will be split unevenly between climate, snow, groundwater, water quality and hydrometric (river flow) monitoring networks dependent on individual network's ability to hire and train staff and deploy resources (See Appendix).
- Network gaps were assessed using geospatial statistical tools with input variables such as land-use, water licenses, and ecoregions.
- Geospatial assessments and expansion plans are refined based on: Federal, Provincial, and local agency input; First Nation and client engagement; local site characteristics (are there suitable sites); and logistics.
- Year 1 (FY23) of CPAS expansion focused on staffing and acquisition of monitoring equipment with limited expansion across the hydroclimate networks.
- Year 2 (FY24) of CPAS focused more specifically on network expansion and continued acquisition of monitoring equipment as staffing reaches full capacity.
- Year 3 (FY25) of CPAS focused on continued acquisition of monitoring equipment, the full implementation of network expansion and transition into long-term station maintenance and data management.

Contact: Robyn Roome
Executive Director, Environmental Monitoring and Analysis Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 778-671-9190

APPENDIX: Hydroclimatological Monitoring Expansion by Network

Network	Proposed Site Expansion	Completed Installations to Date	Total Number of Stations (FY25)
Climate Monitoring ¹	24 new or upgraded stations	8 new, 7 upgrades	N/A
Snow Survey Program	12 additional stations	13	60
BC Lake Monitoring Network	9 new lakes	8	61
Volunteer Lakes Monitoring Program	5 new lakes	25	65
BC Provincial Groundwater Observation Well Network	26 new wells drilled	18	237
Canada-BC Hydrometric Agreement	20 new gauges	14	469
Provincial Hydrometric Monitoring	45 new gauges	7	7
Canada-BC Water Quality Monitoring Agreement	6 stations	3	52

¹105 ENV Climate Monitoring sites (Snow and Air) and a total of 813 Climate Monitoring sites (e.g. AGRI, FOR, CRD, BCH) operated under the Climate-Related Monitoring Program Agreement.

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Extended Producer Responsibility - Recycling Regulation and plan approvals
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KEY FACTS

Extended Producer Responsibility – Recycling Regulation overview:

- Since 2004, B.C. has regulated many products through an approach known as extended producer responsibility (EPR) under the Recycling Regulation (the regulation). The approach shifts responsibilities from local and Indigenous governments and taxpayers to the producers and consumers of products.
- The regulation requires producers of regulated materials to have a ministry-approved EPR plan that sets out how products will be collected and managed, recovery targets and performance measures, and program objectives.

EPR Plan Approvals:

- There are currently 19 different EPR plans in B.C., covering a wide range of consumer packaging and products. After initial approval, EPR plans must be updated, consulted on, and submitted for amendments every five years.
- All EPR plans must meet ministry expectations for material recovery rates, accessibility, producers paying the cost, public awareness, service for First Nations communities, and reducing environmental impacts.
- In 2024/25, the ministry approved a total of six EPR plans, which is an increase over prior years. This is in part a reflection of the benefits of the recent reorganization of EPR teams into policy teams and a program delivery team.

British Columbia is a leader in recycling:

- Jurisdictions across North America look to our EPR system as a model for how industry and government can work together to help people recycle more and better protect the environment.
- EPR drives innovation and capital investments, creates more jobs than traditional waste disposal and improves worker safety through safer collection systems.
- B.C. has seen significant investments by recycling businesses, ^{Government Financial Information} to enhance sorting and processing that retains material value and increases access to local markets.
- B.C.'s EPR programs collectively expend an estimated \$450 million annually to operate recycling programs and the deposit-refund system. This is typically recovered through 'eco fees' or costs embedded in the product price.

- To strengthen accountability and transparency in B.C.'s EPR system, in 2024, ENV introduced guidance for producers on public financial reporting and sufficiently paying the costs of collecting and recycling products.
- EPR programs provide provincewide and equitable access to recycling. ENV is updating policy to support consumer access, particularly in remote regions.
- In 2021, ENV published the EPR-Year Action Plan 2021 to 2026, outlining priorities to advance recycling by (1) adding more product categories; and (2) improving management of non-residential packaging and paper. (see also EPD Estimates Note: EPR 5 Year Plan (including non-residential packaging)).

Product end fates:

- Recent trade tariffs may have an impact on exports of recycled materials such as aluminum, paper and glass.
- ENV encourages all EPR programs to source local material management options where possible. Since 2014 Recycle BC has increased the amount of collected materials managed domestically from 33% to 73% in 2023.
 - Recycle BC manages 99.6% of its plastics in B.C. with over 98% of plastic collected from B.C. residents being made into plastic pellets for new products and packaging.
 - Glass: Recycle BC manages 100% of its glass within Canada.
- Encorp Pacific, the EPR agency that manages most beverage containers in B.C., sends plastic containers to recyclers in B.C. and Alberta. Encorp exports 76% of its glass container and 100% of its scrap aluminum to the USA to be made into new bottles and cans.

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
 Environmental Policy and Initiatives Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 778-698-4906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Extended Producer Responsibility Five-Year Action Plan (including non- residential packaging)
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KEY FACTS

Expanding B.C.'s extended producer responsibility recycling system:

- Since 2004, B.C. has regulated many products through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) under the Recycling Regulation (the regulation). Although B.C. is a North American leader with 19 EPR programs already in place, more can be done to support communities and protect the environment (see also EPD Estimates Note Extended Producer Responsibility – Recycling Regulation and Plan Approvals).
- In 2021, ENV published the EPR Five-Year Action Plan 2021 to 2026 (the Action Plan), which outlines priorities to advance recycling by (1) adding more product categories to the regulation; and (2) improving recovery and recycling of non-residential packaging and paper.
- Targeted engagement on the Action Plan regulatory timelines and definitions of proposed product categories occurred in fall 2022.

Priority products proposed for regulation in the EPR Five-Year Action Plan:

- ENV is preparing amendments regarding new product categories to be added to the regulation, for consideration of government.
- Advice/Recommendations
- These products were identified as high priority based on a consultation-driven approach, industry readiness, and significant waste management costs for local governments (borne by taxpayers) and First Nations.
- By regulating more products, EPR could further reduce local and Indigenous governments' waste management costs, create safer collection systems and grow B.C. recycling businesses.
- Reuse, recycling, and remanufacturing create more jobs than traditional waste disposal and supports a resource-efficient circular economy.

Non-residential packaging and paper products:

- The EPR Five-Year Action Plan outlined the pathway to identifying a policy approach to address non-residential packaging in 2025 and beyond.

- ENV released a discussion paper on non-residential packaging and engaged on this topic between April and July 2024. An Engagement Summary was published on March 25, 2025.
 - ENV heard from local governments, industry associations, First Nations and the public through 11 Information sessions, two workshops, three Indigenous roundtables, and an online public survey. Engagement participation and responses included over 300 participants; 69 written submissions; and over 600 public survey submissions.
 - ENV heard general support for the desired outcomes presented and identified that no one policy approach will solve all the issues; a combination of policies and actions is needed to move more materials from the non-residential sector into the circular economy.
- ENV is currently identifying and prioritizing policy approaches, considering the feedback from the engagement.

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 Environmental Protection Division, 778 698-4906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Fraser Valley Renewables
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KEY FACTS

Authorization requirements for compost facilities under the *Environmental Management Act*:

- The Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR) regulates compost facility operations as well as setting the standards for the quality and use of compost and biosolids on the land base.
- A permit is required for all compost operations that process food waste or biosolids and have a design capacity of greater than 5,000 tonnes/year. For facilities that have a design capacity of less than that, a notification to the ministry and compliance with applicable requirements of the OMRR is required.
- Lands located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) have additional rules in place. Only Class A compost is permitted for land application within the ALR which can be applied freely in accordance with the Agricultural Environmental Code of Practice. Processing of waste into compost within the ALR requires a Non-farm Use approval under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
- The land at 810 Iverson Road is within the ALR. On April 22, 2022, the landowner submitted an OMRR notification for a compost facility with a design capacity of less than 5,000 tonnes/year. An updated notification was submitted for the same facility on August 29, 2022.

Complaints from local residents and regional district about improper site use:

- In August 2022, the ministry began receiving complaints of a potential unauthorized dumping operation at 810 Iverson Road expressing concerns primarily around air quality and drinking water impacts.
- Sampling and laboratory analysis confirmed that Fraser Valley Renewables Ltd. (FVR) was applying ineligible compost material on farmland
- To ensure coordination in the response and communications the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), ENV, Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD), and local MLA office attended weekly situation briefing calls coordinated by ENV.

Compliance Information:

- ENV and the ALC worked together to compel compliance with provincial legislation at this site from September 2022 to September 2024 when the matter was resolved.
- Between September 2022 and February 2024, ENV completed four inspections, all finding FVR out of compliance for introducing waste to the environment

without authorization and not having a Land Application Plan. The last inspection in February 2024 resulted in a referral for an administrative penalty.

- In October 2022, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) issued a stop work order, halting the spread of material containing plastic, metal, construction, and demolition waste.
- On June 30, 2023, the ALC ordered FVR and the landowner a remediation order to remove all waste (14,400 tonnes) by May 31, 2024, and clean up the site.
- On February 10, 2025, the ALC issued monetary penalties to FVR (\$10,000) and the landowner (\$2000) for missing the deadlines in the ALC Order.
- In July 2024, ENV issued a Pollution Prevention Order (PPO) to FVR.
- The PPO required the waste piles to be covered, leachate to be removed from the site and continually removed monthly, and a groundwater investigation be completed if all material is not removed from the site by September 15, 2024.
- All leachate and material were removed by the deadline and ENV cancelled the PPO on September 20, 2024. There are no further obligations of the FVR and the owner.
- On November 12, 2024, ENV issued FVR a \$8,000 administrative penalty for not having an authorization or a Land Application Plan. The penalty is overdue and will be sent to collections if not paid 90 days after the date of issue.

Contacts: Brady Nelles, Executive Director
Compliance and Environmental Enforcement Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 250-645-9314

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Hullcar Aquifer and agricultural waste
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KEY FACTS

Background:

- The Hullcar Aquifer is the primary source of drinking water for residents of the Hullcar Valley.
- Steele Springs Waterworks District (SSWD) serves approximately 250 residents with 22 private water wells that draw from the aquifer.
- In 2014, all residents of the Township of Spallumcheen, including Splat-sin community members, were placed on a Water Quality Advisory by Interior Health.
 - Nitrate levels in the SSWD system exceeded the Canadian Drinking Water Guideline.
 - In 2019, SSWD installed a new well and chlorination system and the Water Quality Advisory was lifted.
- WLRS is leading the collaboration with the Splat-sin on the Hullcar/Ci-cahl aquifer.
 - Ministries of Environment and Parks (ENV), Health, Agriculture and Food (AF), and Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation support the Steering Committee and Technical Working Groups. The Interior Health Authority also sits on the Steering Committee.
 - This year, the Hullcar/Ci-cahl Steering Committee focused on developing a strategic plan, an updated government-to-government agreement and supporting action plan (in progress). The proposed work together includes completing outstanding commitments from the Hullcar Action Response Plan, continuing to develop trusted information that inform decisions and developing a long term co-governance road map to work towards co-management of water.
 - The Technical Working Group started a surface water monitoring program and continued to monitor groundwater quality and levels in the aquifers.
- The Province has spent over \$1,800,000 over the previous seven years to support water monitoring and modelling contracts, Splat-sin engagement, and facilitation. The Province also provided \$950,000 in 2017 to ensure safe drinking water for residents of the Hullcar/Ci-cahl aquifer.
- The Province, through WLRS, continues to support this project through year-by-year funds from the Cabinet Conferences which provided \$300K for fiscal year 2024-25. The same value has been requested for fiscal year 2025-26.

Hullcar Aquifer:

- Intensive agricultural activity in the fields above the aquifer continues.
- Identified contributors to elevated nitrate levels in the Hullcar aquifer are primarily related to agricultural operations including: application of animal waste and chemical fertilizers, overflow from waste storage, variability in crop uptake of nitrates. Domestic septic fields are also likely a contributing factor.

ENV Regulatory Background:

- ENV regulates the discharge and management of wastes to the environment associated with agricultural operations in BC, through the *Environmental Management Act*, the Waste Discharge Regulation, the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Code.
- The AEM Code came into effect on February 28, 2019 to address discharges from agricultural operations. It applies to all agricultural operations in BC, from small hobby farms to large commercial operations
- Aims to ensure agricultural practices are protective of the environment with additional measures for operations in high-risk areas and operating during high-risk conditions.

ENV Compliance Activities:

- In 2016, ENV issued 10 Pollution Abatement and Prevention Orders (Orders) to agricultural operators above the Aquifer #103. One Order was cancelled upon appeal by the Environmental Appeal Board
 - The purpose of the Orders was to compel immediate action to reduce and prevent agricultural waste from entering the aquifer.
 - The Orders are no longer in effect due to compliance with the Order requirements.
- In 2024, ENV completed a compliance audit under the AEM Code of agricultural operations in the Hullcar Valley.
 - ENV staff assessed compliance of the facilities previously issued Orders and attempted to identify new agricultural operators in the Hullcar Valley.
 - In 8 of 10 inspections, ENV issued Advisories of non-compliance, which indicated minor, temporary environmental impact at most and that operators demonstrated a willingness/ability to comply.
 - In 2 of 10 inspections were issued Notices of Compliance, no non-compliances were found.
 - ENV staff identified opportunities for compliance promotion or education initiatives and shared those with AF and the Steering Committee.

Contact: Brady Nelless, Executive Director
Compliance & Environmental Enforcement
Environmental Protection Division, 778-349-6051

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Rio Tinto and Challenges in the Kitimat Valley Airshed
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KEY FACTS

- Rio Tinto (RT) owns and operates the aluminum smelter and Kemano powerhouse in the Kitimat Valley. RT is a significant economic contributor and community partner in the Kitimat Valley and Northern BC, employing approximately 1,100 workers and 400 contractors.
- The Kemano Powerhouse and associated Nechako Reservoir (the Reservoir) are an integral part of RT's operations.
 - Power capacity of 896 MW (electricity for > 600,000 homes).
 - Decreased water levels in the reservoir in 2024 resulted in RT reducing production to preserve water volumes and purchasing electrical power.

Rio Tinto's 2025 Challenges: Tariffs, Collective Labor Agreement (CLA)

- The United States (US) imposed 25% tariffs on aluminum (Al) imports from Canada into the US on March 12, 2025. RT exports roughly 80% of their aluminum to the USA and tariffs could increase to 50% in April 2025.
- RT and UNIFOR are negotiating the CLA with a July 23, 2025 deadline. When the previous union negotiation failed in 2021, it resulted in a shutdown of 2/3 of the smelter operations. It took over two years to resume full operations.

Kitimat Valley cumulative impacts – current and future industrial emitters

- Indigenous Groups with Aboriginal interests in the Kitimat Valley raised concerns about the potential for cumulative impacts due to emissions (sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x)) of current and future industries in the valley.
 - Key concerns are related to human health from air pollution and the acidification of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
- LNG Canada is nearing completion of constructing a liquified natural gas export facility in Kitimat with operations anticipated by mid 2025. LNG Canada is regulated under the *Environmental Management Act* however the authority to do so has been delegated to the BC Energy Regulator (BCER).
- With two regulatory agencies responsible for discharges into the Kitimat airshed, a coordinated regulatory approach is necessary.
 - BCER has the authority to issue permits under EMA but have expressed uncertainties about their authority to amend permits and address cumulative impacts.
 - BCER and ENV are working to align the regulatory approach in the Kitimat Valley.

- In February 2025, meetings occurred with regulators (ENV/BCER), industry (RT, LNGC, Cedar LNG) with the Haisla Nation, and then with the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum Nations. All parties agreed to collaborate on the issues facing the airshed. Additional meetings in the Spring and Fall of 2025 are planned.

Sulphur Dioxide Environmental Effects Monitoring (EEM) Program

- RT's modernized smelter was commissioned in 2015 and provided the capacity to double aluminum production, along with doubling sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emissions, permitted under EMA.
- The SO₂ EEM program requires annual monitoring of SO₂ impacts on receptors (humans, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems) and identifies thresholds that trigger actions (including mitigations) to avoid causing negative impacts to receptors.

Community

- Kitimat utilizes the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) communication tool.
 - The public can opt to be notified of current and forecasted AQHI ratings when concentrations of pollutants (fine particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide and ozone) reach thresholds that warrant alerting the public to make informed decisions to protect their health.
 - Unique to Kitimat, ENV is also testing the AQHI-Plus which provides special notes in the AQHI notifications when additional guidance beyond the standard AQHI message is warranted to reflect elevated SO₂ concentrations.
 - Kitimat is also the only community in BC with a SO₂ Alert an alert is received when the 1-hour SO₂ concentrations reach or exceed a threshold (36 parts per billion) at any of three community monitoring sites. Since the inception of the alert system in 2019, a total of 23 alerts have been issued.
- The Kitimat Airshed Group is a nonprofit, multi-stakeholder group that facilitates communication between the public, industry, Indigenous Groups and government agencies.

Contact: Deb Epps, Executive Director
 Authorizations and Remediation Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-713-2906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Status of all Metro Vancouver sewage treatment plants
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KEY FACTS

Iona Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) - Richmond

- Operating as chemically enhanced primary treatment facility authorized under Operational Certificate (OC) 23 in 1963, this plant serves a population of approximately 750,000 residents.
- The facility is currently in the design stage of a facility upgrade and expansion that will incorporate tertiary treatment and ecological restoration.
- It's anticipated that 950,000 residents will be served by this WWTP in 2051.
- Cost to deliver Iona WWTP upgrade and expansion project is \$9.9 billion (\$6.4 billion in 2022 dollars, including escalation over duration of projects and risk reserve). (source <https://metrovancover.org/>)
- The expanded wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is expected to be operational by 2035.
 - Design of the facility is in progress.
 - Current site activities include removal of biosolids stockpiles, de-sludging historical lagoons and barge berth siting evaluations. These activities, along with consultation activities, are continuing to progress prior to initiation of site preparation work. The timeline is 2022-2028.

Lions Gate WWTP & Northshore WWTP - North Vancouver

- Lions Gate WWTP currently operates as a primary treatment facility authorized under OC 30. It will be replaced by the North Shore WWTP (NSWWTP)
- The NSWWTP is under construction and is intended to serve a population of 300,000 residents and businesses in the District of North and West Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver, and the Squamish Nation, and the Tsleil-Waututh Nation.
- Construction has seen multiple delays due to site conditions, COVID restrictions, previous contractor legal dispute, and issues with construction deficiencies.
- NSWWTP was required to be completed by 2020. The expected completion is 2030. Cost to deliver NSWWTP is \$3.86 billion. This includes construction of the new North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant, construction of related conveyance infrastructure, and preliminary design for decommissioning the current Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- The NSWWTP will incorporate tertiary treatment and utilize the existing Lions Gate WWTP marine outfall.

- The NSWWTP is currently in the construction phase. Timeline 2024-2030.
- The Lions Gate facility will be decommissioned upon completion of the new North Shore WWTP.

Lulu Island WWTP – Richmond

- Secondary treatment facility authorized under OC 233 and serves a population of approximately 200,000 residents.
- There are no plans to expand the facility for population growth.

Annacis Island WWTP – Delta

- Secondary treatment facility authorized under OC 387 and serves a population of approximately 1 million residents.
- The facility is currently implementing expansion and upgrades identified in the Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) to serve a future population of approximately 1.5 million residents.
- Upgrades include additional primary sedimentation tanks, solids contact tanks, secondary clarifiers, and new outfall to the Fraser River. The upcoming Stage 5 construction works include additional trickling filters and anaerobic digester.
- The facility will be the location of a biofuel pilot project (hydrothermal liquefaction), currently in design phase. Project would extract carbon from wastewater biomass to create biocrude oil.

Northwest Langley WWTP

- Secondary treatment facility authorized under OC 4339 and serves a population of approximately 30,000 people in Langley.
- The facility is in the design stage of a proposed expansion and upgrade to accommodate Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge and serve a population of 280,000 people. Proposed completion in 2030.
- As the proposed expansion is considered a reviewable project under the Reviewable Projects Regulation, the LWMP requires amendment to consider upgrades and expansion for the project to be exempt from an environmental assessment under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.
- The expansion would include ground improvements for seismic and flood protection, tertiary treatment, and new outfall.

Contact: Deb Epps, Executive Director
 Authorizations and Remediation Branch,
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-751-3146

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Neucel/Quatsino
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KEY FACTS

Background:

- PricewaterhouseCoopers Ltd. (PwC) has been the receiver and trustee over Neucel Specialty Cellulose Ltd. (Neucel) since April 2020.
- Neucel continues to exist as a legal entity and the 100-year-old pulp mill in Port Alice (the Site) remains private property.
- The Province is funding PwC's costs for stabilizing and decommissioning the Site through a contractual agreement. The agreement expires March 31, 2025.
- The Environmental Emergencies Branch (EEB) within the Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) has been the lead overseeing the contract with PwC.
- Advice/Recommendations; Government Financial Information

Financial Implications:

- By March 31, 2027, costs towards the Site paid by the Province are predicted to be \$219.80 M.
 - Since their involvement with the Site in 2020 until the end of this fiscal year, the Province is anticipated to pay PwC \$22.45 M in fees.
- Although the government has priority as a secured creditor under the bankruptcy proceedings, the assets onsite will not be sufficient to cover the costs incurred.

Work Remaining/ Next Steps:

- The closure of the Main Landfill, and stabilization of the slope beneath the Main Landfill, remain key pieces to completing the stabilization activities. This work is anticipated to take until the end of 2026, spanning two construction seasons.
- It is anticipated that ongoing long-term treatment of effluent will be needed even after the Main Landfill is capped.
 - Two water treatment plants were added between the fall of 2023 and the fall of 2024, ^{Security Concern}
 - ENV is working with WLRS to determine next steps once the current scope of work (i.e., demolition and de-risking works) is completed.

Quatsino First Nation Interests:

- Quatsino asserts Aboriginal rights and title in relation to the Site.
- Quatsino are concerned with possible contamination and have emphasized the need for an investigation.
 - No contaminated site investigation has yet been undertaken. This is outside the current scope of funding for ENV's work on site. The current scope is to stabilize and decommission the site while pursuing responsible persons.
 - The recent sampling of sediment and biota in the inlet adjacent to the Site was undertaken as part of the requirements of the effluent permit for the Site (PE-1240). Intergovernmental Communications
Intergovernmental Communications
- Intergovernmental Communications
 - Quatsino have undertaken internal studies to inform their input into future Site decisions, including remediation and future economic opportunities.
 - Quatsino has an in-person meeting with the Ministers of ENV, WLRS and JEDI booked for May 8, 2025.
- Intergovernmental Communications

Contact: Pader Brach, Executive Director
Environmental Emergencies Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 250 953-3855

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	North Okanagan Wastewater Treatment Plant/Spallumcheen/ Armstrong
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KEY FACTS

North Okanagan Wastewater Recovery Project:

- The North Okanagan Wastewater Recovery Project (NOWRP) is a partnership between the Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO), the Township of Spallumcheen and the Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB). The project will provide a centralized wastewater treatment facility reusing all effluent for irrigation and be registered under the Municipal Wastewater Regulation.
- The intent of the project is to expand the wastewater treatment facility over time. The first phase services existing developments that rely on onsite septic systems. Future phases will support new development and economic development opportunities while improving water quality in Swan Lake and local streams.
- The Township of Spallumcheen received \$24.3M and the RDNO received \$9.5M in funding through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) to support the project.
- Although the project may have a positive benefit for the area, the location and level of treatment proposed have the potential to create a significant risk to the environment and public health therefore this must be carefully considered as part of the review process. Ministry subject matter experts have advised that additional information about groundwater is needed to resolve uncertainty about this risk.
- The Ministry's target timelines to review the application have not been met because of delays caused by significant design changes and multiple revised applications made by the project owner. ENV staff have prioritized the file throughout the process, often prompting the applicant to provide information to the Ministry in a timely manner.
- The technical review on the application was completed in October 2024 and ENV staff met with Spallumcheen and the Regional District of North Okanagan to review the outcome. On October 25, 2024, a letter was sent by ENV staff requesting additional details on the information provided to confirm it meets the requirements of the Municipal Wastewater Regulation. No new information was requested.
 - To date, these details have not been provided. Spallumcheen has requested time to complete the work and anticipate submitting this information by June 1, 2025.
- In addition to completing a technical review of the information submitted, completion of consultation with First Nations is required on the application. This is hindered by the outstanding information.

- Funding challenges also meant the project design was changed, reducing the level of treatment and omitting OKIB from the first phase of development.
- Although a partner in the project, Okanagan Indian Band staff were not informed by Spallumcheen of the changes made to the project over time. This has resulted in significant time and effort by provincial staff to ensure meaningful consultation has occurred, including several meetings and funding to support their review.
- The level of detail in the application does not meet the Ministry standards and given the potentially significant risk to the environment and public health from the proposal, the application cannot be considered for approval until the details are provided.
- Ministry staff continue to meet with the proponents on outstanding issues.

City of Armstrong Wastewater Treatment Plant:

- The City of Armstrong has a Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) that was approved February 25, 1988.
- The LWMP is out of date and does not represent current liquid waste management planning or future growth.
- Following the third roll out of the federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding, the City of Armstrong received \$14.5M for improvements to wastewater infrastructure to meet regulatory compliance and to integrate Armstrong's wastewater system with the North Okanagan Wastewater Recovery Project.
- To date there has not been progress on integrating Armstrong's wastewater treatment with the North Okanagan Wastewater Recovery Project initiatives.
- The City of Armstrong is instead utilizing grant funding as part of a pilot project for an innovative treatment technology to inform if it is an option for the City of Armstrong to improve wastewater infrastructure.

Contact: Deb Epps, Executive Director
 Authorizations and Remediation Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-751-3146

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Office of the Auditor General Performance Audit Hazardous Spills
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KEY FACTS

Environmental Emergency Branch (EEB)

- EEB has regulatory oversight of hazardous material spills and is responsible for coordinating the government's response to a major hazardous material spill. Spills commonly involve gasoline, diesel, and heating fuel, but can also include other hazardous substances, such as toxic gases or corrosives.

Office of the Auditor General Performance audit findings and recommendations

- The Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia (OAG) released a performance audit of the ENV's management of hazardous material spills on February 27, 2024.
 - The objective of the audit was to determine whether ENV has effectively managed hazardous spills to protect the welfare of the public and the environment. The audit focused on the period from November 23, 2020, to February 28, 2023.
 - The OAG believed the deficiencies identified were in key areas which impact the overall management of hazardous spills and concluded that the Ministry had not effectively managed hazardous spills.
 - The OAG provided nine recommendations. ENV has accepted all nine recommendations.

Actions taken

- EEB Action Plan to address the OAG recommendations:

OAG Recommendation	Actions Taken
1. ENV work in partnership with First Nations to update the plans it uses to coordinate a provincial-level response to a major hazardous spill.	In 2024/25, EEB has drafted an update to the Hazardous Material Incident Management Plan. EEB will engage with First Nations on the draft Hazardous Material Incident management Plan in 2026/27.
2. ENV review and update its training and development requirements to ensure current standards, regulations and best practices are met.	In 2025/26, EEB will conduct a jurisdictional scan to inform the development of an updated training program. The scan will include in-depth analysis of best practices, Work Safe BC regulations, and industry standards. Based on the jurisdictional findings, in 2026 EEB will update its training and development requirements.

3 ENV implement a process to help ensure that First Nations are notified about hazardous spills.	In 2022, EEB launched the Spill Notification Service to improve First Nations notifications using Alertable. 60 First Nations have signed up and they are using the system. Additional First Nations will be added over the next two years.
4 ENV implement procedures to help ensure recovery staff consistently review reports and verify that recovery activities are complete.	In 2024, EEB completed a Recovery guidance document for staff to establish environmental endpoints. In 2025, EEB is developing internal guidance for Recovery's review of spill files.
5. ENV develop guidance to support recovery staff to engage and partner with First Nations.	In 2025, EEB is developing Indigenous knowledge guidance for recovery staff.
6. ENV implement a process to help ensure that response officers notify the Environmental Emergency Program's compliance and enforcement staff of instances of potential non-compliance.	In 2023, EEB updated internal compliance and enforcement policies and procedures. In 2023/24, EEB updated the compliance and enforcement training and education program to ensure response officers understand regulatory requirements, including notifying compliance and recovery staff.
7. ENV develop solutions for improving the effectiveness of its cost recovery process to help ensure that substantive costs are recovered from those responsible for spills.	In 2023, EEB developed a dispute review process to ensure administrative fairness. In 2025, EEB is developing new cost recovery policy and procedures.
8. ENV address limitations with its emergency management software system to improve how staff members access and use it to inform program decisions.	In 2024/25, EEB is working with the software provider to improve search functions, data mining, and reporting capabilities in WebEOC to allow EEB to improve and track the quality of its work, prepare business cases for needed resources, respond to information requests, and make strategic program and planning decisions.
9. ENV report annually to the Legislative Assembly on the effectiveness of the spill response regime.	In 2025, EEB will develop measures for the effectiveness of the spill response regime to be incorporated in the annual Report to the Legislative Assembly. This will be a multi-year process.

- Many of these actions are multi-year projects and EEB will continue to prioritize this work.

Contact: Pader Brach, Executive Director
Environmental Emergency Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 250-953-3855

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Organic Matter Recycling Regulation Modernization
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KEY FACTS

- The Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR) regulates: (1) industrial composting of organic waste; (2) processing of biosolids and (3) land application of compost and biosolids.
- Biosolids are the finished product of wastewater treatment. Local governments, as producers of biosolids, have been accountable for meeting quality standards under OMRR since 2002. Local governments are playing an increasing role in other types of organics diversion as landfill space becomes limited.
- A modernized regulatory framework is needed to adopt more protective compost and biosolids standards based on current science, including for contaminants of emerging concern (CECs), also referred to as “forever chemicals”, and to manage odour and leachate issues, particularly in high rainfall areas.
- Changes are also needed to fulfil commitments to Indigenous Nations for transparent and participatory processes, and to reduce and manage costs for communities.
- Needed updates will also support alignment with the Single Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation (SUPWPR) (see EPD Estimates Note – Single-Use Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation Implementation) and to reduce the issue of plastics contamination at compost facilities.
- Extensive public engagement on policy has occurred to date on updating the OMRR; more recent sessions with local and Indigenous governments, community groups, and waste management industry representatives followed a project update published in 2022.

Provincial Policy Updates

- OMRR updates are currently in the development phase. The ministry will continue to work with partners on next steps.
- Intended processes and tools will increase transparency about compost facility operations and about land application of biosolids, with mandatory engagement with Indigenous Nations.
- Intended changes will update product quality standards with more stringent pathogen, metal and plastic contamination limits and address CECs, including per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) (see EPD Estimates Note – PFAS Chemicals Management), in biosolids and other managed organic matter.
- Changes will also create policy alignment with the SUPWPR. Currently, wooden and paper food wares are not allowed to be composted under current OMRR, even though they are encouraged as alternatives to single-use plastics.

- The ministry has been following developments in science and risk-assessment within a Canadian and North America context. The ministry recently engaged a technical working group on current scientific information and field studies on the risks of land application of biosolids. The group had a focus on PFAS chemicals and microplastics. The recommendations from the working group were published in summer 2024 and will inform CEC testing policy.

Local Government's Role in Organics Management

- Local governments make decisions about end uses for biosolids based on factors such as cost, greenhouse gas emissions reduction potential, nutrient reuse potential/siting options for land application, and availability of landfill space.
- With decreasing available landfill space, a growing number of local governments support organics diversion programs under their solid waste management plans and through land use and bylaw requirements. They may operate their own compost facility operations or work with third party service providers (see EPD Estimates Note – Organics Infrastructure Funding Programs).
- Currently, compost facilities are receiving unwanted plastics which require significant labour and equipment costs to manage. Under the proposed amendments, facilities that want to process compostable plastics and other novel feedstocks can apply to be authorized to compost these products. ENV will work with local governments on improving public awareness about compostable materials.
- Local governments also play a significant oversight role in responding to bylaw complaints about compost facility operations regarding odour and other concerns.
- ENV recognizes that new intended requirements such as testing for CECs represent a potential change for local governments. ENV will work with local governments in a collaborative, adaptive approach based on science and appropriate use cases for biosolids. Testing requirements will improve information sharing and increase transparency in managing biosolids.
- ENV also understands local government and operators' concerns about ensuring financial and operational viability. Proposed best management practice requirements for managing odour and leachate, particularly in high rainfall areas, are intended to be adaptive while protecting the environment.
- Transition rules and supportive guidance will be in place to give parties time to adapt to new requirements.

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
Environmental Policy and Initiatives Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 778 698-4906

○ Intergovernmental Communications

- In February 2024, Bowen Island Municipality withdrew from the program due to escalating costs and the need to prioritize other major capital projects.

Organics Funding Program (OFP):

- The OFP provides ongoing support for organics waste diversion and GHG reduction through \$15M in funding, generating a total investment of \$22.5M in new or expanded processing infrastructure and collection programs.
- Applications are invited from Indigenous governing bodies, municipalities and regional districts in B.C. The Province will contribute \$15M to fund up to 66% of eligible project costs of the successful projects.

- Intergovernmental Communications

- The FY25/26 intake was launched in December 2024 Intergovernmental Communications
Intergovernmental Communications

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
Environmental Policy & Initiatives Branch,
Environmental Protection Division, 778-698-4906

Appendix A: Summary of funding recipients

Recipient	Type of project	Provincial Eligible Cost Share
OIP		
Comox Valley Regional District	Infrastructure	\$454,815
District of Summerland	Infrastructure	\$790,500
Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (Oliver)	Infrastructure	\$400,000
Regional District of East Kootenay (Elk Valley)	Infrastructure	\$333,160
Regional District of East Kootenay (Columbia)	Infrastructure	\$333,160
Regional District of East Kootenay (Central)	Infrastructure	\$333,160
Regional District of Kootenay Boundary	Infrastructure	\$1,182,006
Regional District of Central Kootenay (Central)	Infrastructure	\$776,053
Regional District of Central Kootenay (Creston)	Infrastructure	\$485,745
Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (Eastgate)	Infrastructure	\$2,033,333
Columbia Shuswap Regional District	Infrastructure	\$100,000
Northern Rockies Regional District	Infrastructure	\$222,546
Squamish Lillooet Regional District	Infrastructure	\$437,248
District of Kitimat	Infrastructure	\$455,192
Kwadacha Nation	Infrastructure	\$149,970
Heiltsuk Tribal Council	Infrastructure	\$152,532
Total OIP:		\$8,639,420
CleanBC-OICP		
Esk'etemc First Nation	Infrastructure	\$216,871
Capital Regional District	Infrastructure	\$168,462
Kitasoo First Nation	Infrastructure	\$341,121
Gitxaala First Nation	Infrastructure	\$75,197
Intergovernmental Communications		
Fraser Valley Regional District	Infrastructure	\$34,393
Old Massett Village Council	Infrastructure	\$490,000
Regional District of Nanaimo	Infrastructure	\$3,000,000
Town of Oliver	Collection	\$21,999
Village of Lumby	Collection	\$12,143
District of Kitimat	Collection	\$196,327
City of Campbell River	Collection	\$633,431
City of Powell River	Collection	\$346,666
City of Kimberly	Collection	\$198,399
City of Vernon	Collection	\$936,719
City of Comox	Collection	\$396,917
City of Kamloops	Collection	\$1,788,233
District of Summerland	Collection	\$451,639
City of Fernie	Collection	\$175,999
Regional District of Central Kootenay	Collection	\$1,196,057
Regional District of Kootenay Boundary	Collection	\$702,905
District of Invermere	Collection	\$173,219
Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen	Collection	\$304,459
Esk'etemc First Nation	Collection	\$39,147
Kitasoo First Nation	Collection	\$30,951
Cowichan Valley Regional District	Collection	\$1,861,670
Gitxaala Nation	Collection	\$148,430
Total CleanBC-OICP:		\$24,905,734

*Not yet announced.

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	PFAS Chemicals Management
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KEY FACTS

PFAS Overview:

- Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of more than 15,000 related human-made chemicals used in a wide range of commercial and industrial applications. They are found in products as diverse as non-stick cookware, cosmetics, food packaging and textiles such as carpets, furniture and clothing. Significant sources include firefighting foams for jet-fuel fires.
- They are referred to as “forever chemicals” because they can take thousands of years to breakdown in the environment. As such, PFAS can be present in municipal solid waste and in biosolids (the end product of wastewater treatment) from consumer and industrial uses.

Federal PFAS Legislation

- Environment and Climate Change Canada and Health Canada released the State of PFAS Report in March 2025 which recommends designating PFAS as toxic under federal legislation. PFAS has been linked to cancers, liver and kidney damage, immune system impairment, infertility, low infant birth weight, and birth defects like cleft pallet.
- The federal government is proposing new management actions through a phased prohibition. Each phase will consider exemptions based on available alternatives and the costs and feasibility of eliminating and replacing PFAS use.

Phase	Prohibition	Timeline
1	Firefighting foams (some are already prohibited)	Consultation in Summer/Fall 2025; Regulation in Spring 2027
2	Consumer products where alternatives exist (e.g., certain textiles, ski waxes, building materials, and food packaging)	Consultation to follow publication of Phase 1 regulations (i.e., 2027). No estimated timeline for regulation at present.
3	Evaluate sectors requiring further consideration through stakeholder engagement and further assessments.	Consultation to follow Phase 2 risk management (TBD)

- The federal government also currently prohibits the manufacture, use, sale and import of PFAS under the Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2012, although there are some limited exceptions (e.g., fire-fighting foam).
- The federal government has implemented a limit of 50 parts per billion (ppb) of PFOS in biosolids imported into or sold in Canada as a commercial fertilizer. The

50 ppb limit aligns with standards set in different jurisdictions and is viewed as an indicator of industrial impacts.

Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR)

- The OMRR regulates the production of land application of compost and biosolids (the product of wastewater treatment). PFAS can be present in biosolids as a result of household and industrial uses being collected in wastewater. As previously indicated in a 2018 Intentions Paper, the ministry intends to add the authority to require producers of biosolids to monitor and report contaminants of emerging concern, including PFAS.
- In 2024, ENV published recommendations from a technical working group on compost and biosolids quality, including a focus on PFAS chemicals. Working group outcomes will inform policy and sampling requirements for OMRR implementation.
- The new OMRR would grant additional powers to a ministry decision maker to impose conditions on land application to protect human health and the environment based on data and other information. Cabinet Confidences
Cabinet Confidences

Landfill Leachate and Landfill Gas

- As it is not possible to separate PFAS-containing waste from the general waste stream, PFAS can be found in municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills or in MSW destined for incineration. Once in a landfill, PFAS may migrate and be found in leachate (liquid) and landfill gas (air). When incinerated PFAS may be present in air emissions or collect in fly ash and bottom ash produced during the incineration process.
- B.C.'s landfill criteria require a qualified professional to recommend the appropriate water quality criteria and compliance locations. For leachate, the requirement would be to meet the standards of the receiving environment or wastewater system, following the soil and water quality guidelines that have PFAS limits.
- The province supports the federal management and control of PFAS at the source as the most effective solution, as continued disposal of products containing PFAS can increase future risk and result in costly treatment to manage wastes.

Contaminated Sites Regulation

- B.C. has set standards for three PFAS chemicals in the Contaminated Sites Regulation (CSR); the ministry will continue to adapt and evaluate this regulation as more research emerges.
- The standards only apply to a small subset of industrial and commercial uses specified in CSR Schedule 2, but not to other uses that may be of public concern, such as municipal waste facilities or sewage lagoons. Where a Director considers it necessary for the protection of human health or the environment, an interim standard may be established for substances such as PFAS.

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Environmental Protection Division, 778 698-4906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Public Interest Bonding Strategy
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KEY FACTS

Project overview:

- Purpose: Ensure owners of large industrial projects are bonded moving forward so that they – not British Columbians – pay the full costs of decommissioning and closure at end of project life, even if their projects are abandoned.
- The Public Interest Bonding Strategy was initiated in fall 2020, following a number of cases where B.C. taxpayers covered the cost of cleaning up abandoned industrial sites.
- The project is taking a risk-based approach to development of new regulations and is guided by the key principle of “polluter pays”, while ensuring industry competitiveness and viability, and consistency with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- ENV chairs a cross-agency government working group that includes representation from natural resource sector ministries (MCM, ECS, WLRS, EAO), as well as BCER, AG, FIN, HMA, and JEDI. The working group meets regularly and works collaboratively to advise on policy options, share information, and input on project planning.
- The current project phase is focused on ensuring high-risk activities regulated under the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) have plans in place to safely decommission and close industrial projects, and that financial security is available if they are unwilling or unable to close their sites.
- Amendments to the EMA were completed in 2023 to provide the Province with authority to require industrial projects to prepare decommissioning and closure plans and provide assurance, where applicable.
- Policy development is underway to inform a new regulatory framework enabled under the EMA to complete the current phase of the project.

Current activities:

- An Intentions Paper was launched in April 2024 for a 60-day public engagement on proposed decommissioning and closure requirements.
 - Broad engagement included webinars and workshops with First Nations, Indigenous Peoples, industry representatives, non-governmental organizations, and the general public. Written submissions were also collected via email and an online feedback form.

- Engagement feedback was analyzed and summarized in two What We Learned Reports (from public and Indigenous feedback), and were published online in January 2025.
- ENV is now refining policy to incorporate engagement feedback and inform new regulations.
 - Policy concepts include risk-based determination mechanisms, content and engagement requirements for decommissioning and closure plans, cleanup costing, financial security requirements, and cost recovery considerations.
- Regulations are currently anticipated to be brought forward in 2027 with new requirements to be phased in beginning in 2028, while being considerate of providing industry time to implement.

Project outcomes and benefits:

- In 2023/24, the Province held \$513M in contingent liabilities from abandoned projects on Crown land. There is an unknown liability for high-risk projects owned by private industry regulated under EMA.
- By March 31, 2027, costs towards the Neucel Site paid by the Province are predicted to be \$219.80M.
- Financial assurance provides a guarantee that the owners of industrial projects pay for decommissioning and closure activities for their sites.
 - This ensures obligations are fulfilled in a timely manner and protects the Province against incurring new costs from abandoned projects.
- A risk-based bonding policy attracts responsible investment in B.C. projects, enhancing industry trust and reputation with the public and First Nations.
- Industry is incentivized to reduce liabilities by reducing environmental impacts (for example, through innovative practices and progressive cleanup throughout the project life).
- Proactive closure planning supports the timely cleanup of industrial lands in preparation for the next industrial operator, making sure businesses have ample industrial land to grow B.C.'s economy.
 - Planned and timely decommissioning and closure activities also reduce effects on local communities at the end of a project's life.
- A robust regulatory framework to ensure that industrial sites are safely decommissioned and closed will lessen the risk of pollution or contamination from occurring, preventing future contaminated sites and reducing liability to government.

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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Revelstoke Liquid Waste Management Plan
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Background:

- The City of Revelstoke Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is currently a lagoon system operating under a 1973 permit, with the last amendment in 1993. The WWTP is near capacity with a maximum rate of discharge of 4,152 m³/day.
- Revelstoke is proposing to replace their sewage treatment facility to meet the needs of the city and the Revelstoke Mountain Resort projected 2041 population estimates. This would include servicing large areas of the city which are currently unserved over time, based on population projections.

Status of Liquid Waste Management Plan Development:

- In 2008, the City of Revelstoke initially started a Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) by completing a Stage 1 Report. Due to cost constraints, the City did not move past a draft Stage 2 report (see attachment LWMP Process).
- In 2018, the City of Revelstoke re-initiated the LWMP process due to growing capacity concerns for the existing facility.
- The proposed new wastewater treatment facility would see a capacity increase from 2019 population of 17,308 to 2041 population of 27,816, and wastewater flows from 4,152 m³/day to 12,456 m³/day.
- The Stage 2 LWMP was submitted in April 2021 and within 30 days, ENV provided comments to Revelstoke on the Stage 2 Report.
- The Stage 3 LWMP was submitted in June 2021 and was found to be significantly incomplete, and under the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) could not be submitted to Minister for approval as it did not comply with the regulations for management of liquid waste.
- Rather than recommend rejection of the plan to the Minister, ENV advised Revelstoke of the deficiencies and gave them the opportunity to resubmit. ENV reached out to Revelstoke's consultants on three occasions asking for an update when the revised consolidated Stage 3 report would be submitted.
- A revised Stage 3 LWMP was submitted in May 2023, and unfortunately did not address the deficiencies. ENV staff continued to advise and support by holding multiple meetings over several months to review requirements to confirm understanding.
- In April 2024, the City of Revelstoke submitted a new design for their WWTP which was entirely different from the design that was considered and consulted upon in the draft LWMP.

- The design change was due to the fact that engineers had indicated the preferred design option could not be built due to geographical restraints. The public has not been consulted on the revised design or cost implications as required under EMA.
- Although in the Fall of 2024, Revelstoke had committed to providing the deficient information to support the draft LWMP by the New Year in 2025, instead; in December 2024, the City of Revelstoke requested director approval under the *Environmental Management Act*, to start construction of the new Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- In February 2025 ENV responded to the City of Revelstoke that the director delegated under the *Environmental Management Act* does not have authority to approve construction. The governing legislation for Revelstoke's Wastewater Treatment Facility Project is the *Environmental Assessment Act* until such time as the Minister, under the *Environmental Management Act*, approves a Liquid Waste Management Plan that the wastewater treatment facility is a component of.
- On March 10, 2025, ENV received a new submission of the LWMP and staff are currently reviewing it in detail. The initial assessment seems to indicate a workable plan may have been finally received.
- The years of delays in addressing the draft LWMP deficiencies combined with escalating costs have put the City of Revelstoke's project at risk.

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LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANS

The *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) allows local governments to develop a Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) for approval by the Minister. These plans are strategic in nature and develop community-specific solutions for wastewater management that meet or exceed existing regulations.

LWMP Objectives	The two primary objectives for LWMPs are: 1. Protect public health and the environment. 2. Properly consult the public and indigenous nations. Additional provincial objectives for LWMPs are water conservation, stormwater management, drinking water source protection, resources from waste, energy conservation, climate change adaptation, and mitigation and sustainable financing and asset management. Local governments are encouraged to use their LWMPs to illustrate innovation and leadership in these areas.
Regulatory Framework	LWMP and the associated subsidiary Operational Certificates (OC), together with the Municipal Wastewater Regulation (MWR) and the Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMMR), form the pillars of municipal wastewater and residuals (including biosolids) management in B.C. While the minister approves the LWMP, the director can issue a site-specific OC that can specify operational requirements for a municipal waste management facility covered by an LWMP. A municipality may decide to register under MWR instead of receiving an OC.
Planning Process	Local government staff lead the LWMP process which is generally divided in three stages: • Stage 1 - Broad options assessment • Stage 2 - Short listing options • Stage 3 - Final recommendation (approved by Minister) Cost estimates for capital works, maintenance, and tax burden are provided with an increasing level of accuracy through the stages of plan development. It is often necessary for local government to complete environmental impact studies as part of a LWMP. Final Stage 3 LWMP are approved by the Minister and are enforceable under EMA with penalties for non-compliance prescribed up to \$300,000.
Benefits for local government	The B.C. <i>Community Charter</i> requires municipalities to obtain elector assent (i.e. referendum) when incurring debt to finance municipal infrastructure. This requirement for elector assent is waived when the debt is incurred for wastewater and residuals projects under an approved LWMP for which adequate public consultation has been completed. This assurance is a significant benefit and driver for municipalities in pursuing LWMP.
Environmental Assessments	The <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> (EAA) and its regulations apply to municipal liquid waste discharges for projects that will serve > 10,000 people. However, the EAA's Reviewable Projects Regulation provides an exemption for projects that are completed under an approved LWMP.

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Rodenticides - Implementation
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KEY FACTS

Rodenticides & Wildlife:

- Anticoagulant rodenticides can pose significant risks to wildlife, particularly birds of prey such as owls.
- Rodenticides are pesticides used to control rats and mice. Anticoagulant rodenticides are rodenticides that cause death by preventing blood clotting.
 - “Second generation” anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) are highly toxic and can persist in the bodies of dead rodents.
 - Due to their efficacy in controlling rats, SGARs became the standard choice for controlling rodents.
- Poisoning of owls from the use of SGARs occurs by the owls eating rodents that have consumed rodenticides, termed “secondary poisoning”.
- In response to media reports of poisoned owls, local governments, non-government organizations, and public petitions requested a ban of SGARs.

Amending the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Regulation:

- To protect wildlife, the Integrated Pest Management Regulation was amended to restrict the use of SGARs.
 - Sale and use of SGARs is now restricted to Essential Services (including hospitals, food services, and supportive housing) and there are new requirements for use.
- The regulatory changes came into effect on January 21, 2023.
 - To support the changes ENV conducted a science review and public consultation and established working groups with First Nations and local governments.

Implementing the 2023 Amendments:

- ENV staff have been supporting implementation of the amendments by working with partners to promote the new requirements and producing guidance on responsible rodent management practices.
- While some localized challenges have been identified during the transition, initial findings show reduced SGAR use and reduced wildlife poisoning.
- Following the amendments, ENV received a moderate increase in correspondence from the public and service companies expressing concerns

about the costs and administrative burden of the regulations, and about increased rodent populations.

- In fall 2023, ENV initiated targeted engagement to understand potential challenges and further support implementation of the amendments.
- Key findings included an 88% decrease in SGAR use, approximately 50% reduction in reported wildlife poisonings, no rodent-borne disease outbreaks, and continued strong support from local governments.
 - While some localized increases in rodent populations were noted, some of this may have been due to a lack of understanding of available tools to manage rodents and the challenges of pivoting from a reliance on rodenticides to a focus on prevention.
- Improved guidance materials were developed in collaboration with partners and released in December 2024. Staff are continuing to support partners.
- The sector is still adjusting to the new regulations and reduced reliance on rodenticides. Rodent prevention methods (exclusion and sanitation) remain the most effective, economical, and sustainable strategies in the long term.

Rodent populations

- Some media reports have noted an apparent rise in rodent populations, particularly in the Lower Mainland.
- However, there are similar reports of rodent increases from jurisdictions that have not restricted SGARs.
 - Climate change and increased urban development have been noted as drivers of rodent increases worldwide.

Integrated Pest Management:

- Pesticides, including rodenticides, should only be considered as part of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program with a focus on prevention.
- Over the long term focusing on prevention is the most cost-effective strategy for rodent control.
- IPM is a decision-making system that seeks to minimize pesticide use.
- IPM focuses on preventing pests from occurring in the first place.
 - If prevention measures are not sufficient, targeted control options, including the responsible use of pesticides and pesticide alternatives (e.g., trapping), may be warranted.

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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Integrated Pest Management (Glyphosate)
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KEY FACTS

Glyphosate:

- Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications
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- In 2017 Health Canada concluded their regular reassessment of glyphosate and found it is safe when used according to label directions.
 - In 2019, Health Canada reaffirmed this decision following concerns raised by several NGOs. This finding is supported by similar decisions from agencies in the USA and Europe.
 - While the International Agency for Research on Cancer's 2015 hazard assessment listed glyphosate as 'probably carcinogenic', neither Health Canada nor other pesticide regulatory agencies consider glyphosate to be a cancer risk at current exposure levels.
 - In 2025, the Federal Court made a decision requiring Health Canada to better explain how their glyphosate decision was made.
 - The decision did not question the safety and continued registration of glyphosate, nor Health Canada's evaluation process.
 - B.C. looks forward to this increased transparency in federal decision making on pesticides as we expect this will increase confidence in the overall regulatory framework for pesticides.

Pesticide Regulation in B.C.:

- Pesticides are jointly regulated federally and provincially.
- Health Canada evaluates pesticide products before they can be sold, establishes restrictions on use to minimize risks, and approves their sale in Canada.
 - Health Canada regularly re-evaluates these decisions to ensure safety measures are still sufficient.
- B.C. further regulates pesticides to ensure they are used safely.

- B.C. requires pesticide applicators to be trained and certified and requires mandatory use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Glyphosate Use and Issues in B.C.:

- There is public concern about glyphosate use and its potential risks to human health or the environment.
- While there is no evidence of human health impacts from current glyphosate use in B.C., the Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) continually monitors for new science on impacts of pesticides.
- Glyphosate is used in forestry to control competing vegetation during reforestation.
 - Forestry use is most prevalent in northeast B.C. but has been declining overall.
- The use of glyphosate in forestry requires an authorization from ENV.
 - Authorization holders must consult First Nations and the public, and establish setbacks from water bodies and sensitive areas.
- ENV works closely with FOR, who researches glyphosate use in forestry to identify potential risks to biodiversity and wildlife, and alternative practices to reduce herbicide use while maintaining economic viability of the industry.

Agreements with First Nations Relating to Herbicide Use:

- In 2023, B.C. established G2G agreements with Blueberry River First Nations and other Treaty 8 Nations that include restrictions and measures for collaborative decision-making for herbicide use in forestry.
- ENV staff are working with Nations and with partners in FOR and other ministries to develop policy and process changes to implement the commitments.
- ENV is also working on a digital transformation project that will improve access to information during consultation and increase transparency around pesticide use.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM):

- Pesticides should only be considered as part of an IPM program with a focus first on pest prevention.
- IPM is a decision-making system that relies on multiple tools and strategies to help reduce pests and minimize unnecessary pesticide use.
 - If prevention measures are not sufficient, other control options, including the responsible use of pesticides, may be warranted.

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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Single-Use Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation Implementation
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KEY FACTS

Background:

- British Columbians throw out billions of single-use items annually, many which are difficult to recycle as they are often small, made of hard-to-recycle plastic, and can be hard to collect when used away from home.
- In 2019, ENV published the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan (the Action Plan) for reducing plastic waste in B.C. In response, over 35,000 British Columbians expressed a strong desire for a reduction of plastic waste, including bans.
- On November 26, 2020 government made a mandate commitment to begin the phase-out of single use plastics province-wide. A subsequent mandate commitment was made, on December 7, 2022, to complete the Action Plan and set a target date to phase out single-use plastics.
- The *Environmental Management Act* was amended November 2021 to enable regulation of single-use and plastic items. In April 2022, ENV invited feedback on the Preventing Single-Use and Plastic Waste Intentions Paper, which outlined a new waste prevention regulation to address the most problematic single-use and plastic items in B.C. and to help transition B.C. to a circular economy for plastics.
- Through the engagement, businesses and local governments expressed support for a provincial approach as opposed to a patchwork of local regulations.
- On July 14, 2023, ENV announced the Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation (SUPWPR), which establishes a province-wide framework to phase out single-use plastics and items to prevent waste.

SUPWPR Implementation:

- SUPWPR restricts use of plastic shopping bags, disposable food service accessories, oxo-degradable plastics, and food service packaging made from polystyrene foam (i.e., Styrofoam™), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), polyvinylidene chloride (PVDC), compostable and biodegradable plastics.
- **Effective December 20, 2023**, plastic utensils and pre-packaged bundled accessories are prohibited, with food service accessories only available by-request (or through a self-serve station).
- **Effective July 15, 2024;**
 - Single-use plastic shopping bags are banned with minimum fees required for paper and reusable bags, to encourage more reuse.
 - Restrictions introduced on food service ware made from biodegradable or

compostable plastic, polystyrene foam, PVC and PVDC, with the following exemptions: businesses have until July 1, 2028, to stop using PVC film wrap to allow for time to source appropriate alternatives, and have until July 1, 2030, to stop using polystyrene foam trays for raw protein to allow industry time to develop suitable alternatives and adjust operations.

- Prohibition of all oxo-degradable plastic containing products.

Federal Regulations:

- Bans on plastic straws and plastic ring carriers are solely due to the federal Single-Use Plastics Prohibitions Regulations (SUPPR). The B.C. SUPWPR treats drinking straws consistently with most other single-use food service accessories, requiring they only be provided on request.
- The federal regulation is subject to a legal challenge before the Federal Court of Appeal. The SUPWPR rules remain in effect regardless of the court's ruling.

Degradable Plastics (including compostable plastics)

- Plastics labelled degradable or compostable are not necessarily better for the environment.
- Oxo-degradable plastics include additives that accelerate breakdown, leaving microplastics that can pollute the environment and harm human health.
- Oxo-**bi**odegradable plastics are a subset of oxo-degradable plastics. Lab studies suggest they may fully biodegrade without leaving microplastics, but field study data about real-world conditions is lacking. Oxo-biodegradables are single-use and cannot be composted or recycled, with landfilling as the only disposal option.
- Compostable plastics do not reliably break down in B.C.'s compost facilities; they also disrupt recycling of other plastics. Therefore, items and packaging composed of compostable plastics are regularly screened out and sent to landfill. SUPWPR allows some compostable plastic items, while banning others, enabling ENV to monitor progress in the management of these materials.

SUPWPR Implementation

- Throughout 2024, ENV delivered a province-wide public education campaign to support businesses and consumers in the transition to acceptable alternatives. ENV has developed a range of resources, including factsheets and posters, which are available on the ministry's website (gov.bc.ca/reuse).
- To further support businesses, the CleanBC Plastics Action Fund is investing over \$40M to support plastic waste reduction projects in B.C.; the final \$8M will be distributed in 2025.
- ENV takes a compliance promotion approach to enforcement, focused on encouraging voluntary compliance through education. Continued non-compliance may result in fines up to \$40,000 for ongoing disregard of the regulation.
- The Organic Matter Recycling Regulation is currently being updated to provide consideration of alternative fibre-based products and compostable plastics, where these items can be effectively managed.

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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Site Remediation-Soil Relocation and Protocol 19
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KEY FACTS

Background:

- The soil relocation amendments to the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA), Contaminated Sites Regulation (CSR) and Protocol 19: Site Investigation and Reporting (Protocol 19) phase 1 came into force on March 1, 2023.
- The new legislation enhances environmental protection on specified commercial and industrial sites (CSR Schedule 2) with respect to a range of soil management activities and facilitates compliance verification and enforcement.
- Improvements have been made to ENV oversight of soil relocation by utilizing a notification process and high-volume site registration process.
- The new soil relocation requirements also ensure that non-waste quality (uncontaminated) soil is analyzed before it is relocated to receiving sites to confirm quality and ensure it is appropriate for deposit.
- Protocol 19 was developed to provide legal requirements for site investigation.
 - Protocol 19 phase 1 was developed to support soil relocation by providing requirements for soil and soil vapour sampling and analysis to confirm acceptability of soil at receiving sites.
 - Protocol 19 phases 2-5 (for vapour, soil, groundwater and sediment) are under development to improve the quality and consistency of site investigations for contaminated sites.
- After Protocol 19 phase 1 initially came into force on March 1, 2023, ENV received feedback about project costs and delays pertaining to the EMA, the CSR and specific parts of Protocol 19 phase 1.

Completed amendments to Protocol 19 phase 1:

- Protocol 19 phase 1 was amended in August 2024 to address concerns raised by interested parties during implementation. Concerns were related to potentially unnecessary, overly conservative or redundant requirements and reduced reliance on professional judgement inadvertently resulting in soil disposal to landfills.
- Amendments to Protocol 19 - phase 1 included:
 - Providing sampling requirement exemptions for transitory sites (e.g. soil treatment facilities, storage sites, municipal yards, transfer stations and gravel marts);
 - Providing greater flexibility and more opportunity for professional

judgement when selecting substances to be sampled;

- Providing exemptions from soil/vapour sampling for sites that are certified by ENV to be cleaned up and not contaminated;
 - Reducing metal leaching and acid rock drainage sampling frequency and including additional analytical requirements consistent with Ministry of Transportation and Transit practices; and
 - Allowing the use of a vapour attenuation factor to estimate vapour concentrations in the breathing zone to align with Site Remediation Program vapour investigation practices.
- ENV has received positive feedback regarding the August 2024 Protocol 19 - phase 1 amendments.
 - ENV is continuing to monitor the soil relocation requirements to ensure they are practical and protective of human health and the environment.

Next Steps:

- Continue to monitor feedback on the soil relocation requirements in the EMA and the CSR and on Protocol 19 phase 1.
- Continue compliance promotion, education and verification activities for soil relocation in B.C.
- Continue development of Protocol 19 phases 2-5.

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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Teck Smelter – air and effluent emissions
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KEY FACTS

Overview

- The Teck lead and zinc smelter in Trail has been operating since 1906. It is the source of legacy contamination and ongoing discharges which pose a risk to human health and the environment.
 - The smelter's impacted area is the largest multi-metal (e.g. arsenic, cadmium, lead and zinc) contaminated site (25,000 ha) in B.C., impacting over 10,000 ha of Crown land and 8,000+ private parcels.
 - It is also the source of cross-border contamination that has led to the Upper Columbia River being designated as an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) superfund-site in the USA.
 - It is the only designated Environment Management Area under the Contaminated Sites Regulation in B.C.
- ENV's Authorizations and Remediation Branch (ARB) manages the site collaboratively using a comprehensive regulatory approach. The Site Remediation Program (SRP) regulates legacy contamination, and the Industrial Waste Authorizations team (IWA) regulates the ongoing discharges from the active operation.
 - Collaboration to create consensus regarding the management of legacy contamination and current operations is also being undertaken between the company, community members, Indigenous Groups and federal, provincial and local agencies.
- IWA is working with Teck to identify sustainable waste management strategies (e.g., emissions reduction, monitoring improvements) as Teck adapts to changing market demands and diversifies their product base.

Air Discharges

- IWA is in the process of updating all three air permits as they do not reflect current environmental and health standards. Current discharge limits were last updated in 2009. The focus of these updates will be on lead, sulphur dioxide and other contaminants of concern. These parameters all exceed standard limits for the environment and human health.
- Lead (Pb) is 5 times higher than the EPA standard for discharge. Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) is more than double the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standard. Other contaminants of concern will also be evaluated.

- Lead emissions, including from both fugitive dust, are at levels that have posed a risk to children's health and this has been monitored. SO₂ ambient air pollution is the highest in British Columbia and regularly exceed the CAAQS (Attachment 2) standards, which can cause short term impacts to respiratory and cardiac health.
- Deficiencies in the ambient air monitoring network
 - Teck's monitoring network was consolidated in 2003 without air dispersion modelling to determine optimal representative locations to assess air quality in high impact areas and where high-risk populations reside.
 - This lack of meaningful monitoring data limits ENV's ability to make well informed regulatory decisions to mitigate environmental and health risks, inform permit updates and recommend improvements to Teck's ambient air monitoring network.
 - To address the data gap, Teck is required to perform a comprehensive review to provide an emission inventory of various air pollutants and model predicted environmental impacts.

Effluent Discharges

- In 2020 ENV initiated a comprehensive permit review to update the effluent permit to address concerns in the Columbia River and reflect modern standards. An updated draft permit is intended to be shared for discussion with Teck in 2025.
 - There are 22 contaminants of potential concern in the Columbia River that have exceeded aquatic life guidelines. ENV's goal is to determine if the current or legacy discharges are the cause of these exceedances.
 - Historical operations have led to legacy issues (e.g., groundwater as levels up to a thousand times greater than the Contaminated Sites Regulation aquatic life standard range of 50-500 ug/L).
- Permitted discharge limits have not been updated since 2006. The smelter discharges effluent into the Columbia River from three outfalls that are equivalent to 140 Olympic sized swimming pools. The effluent contains contaminants for arsenic and zinc.

Legacy Contamination

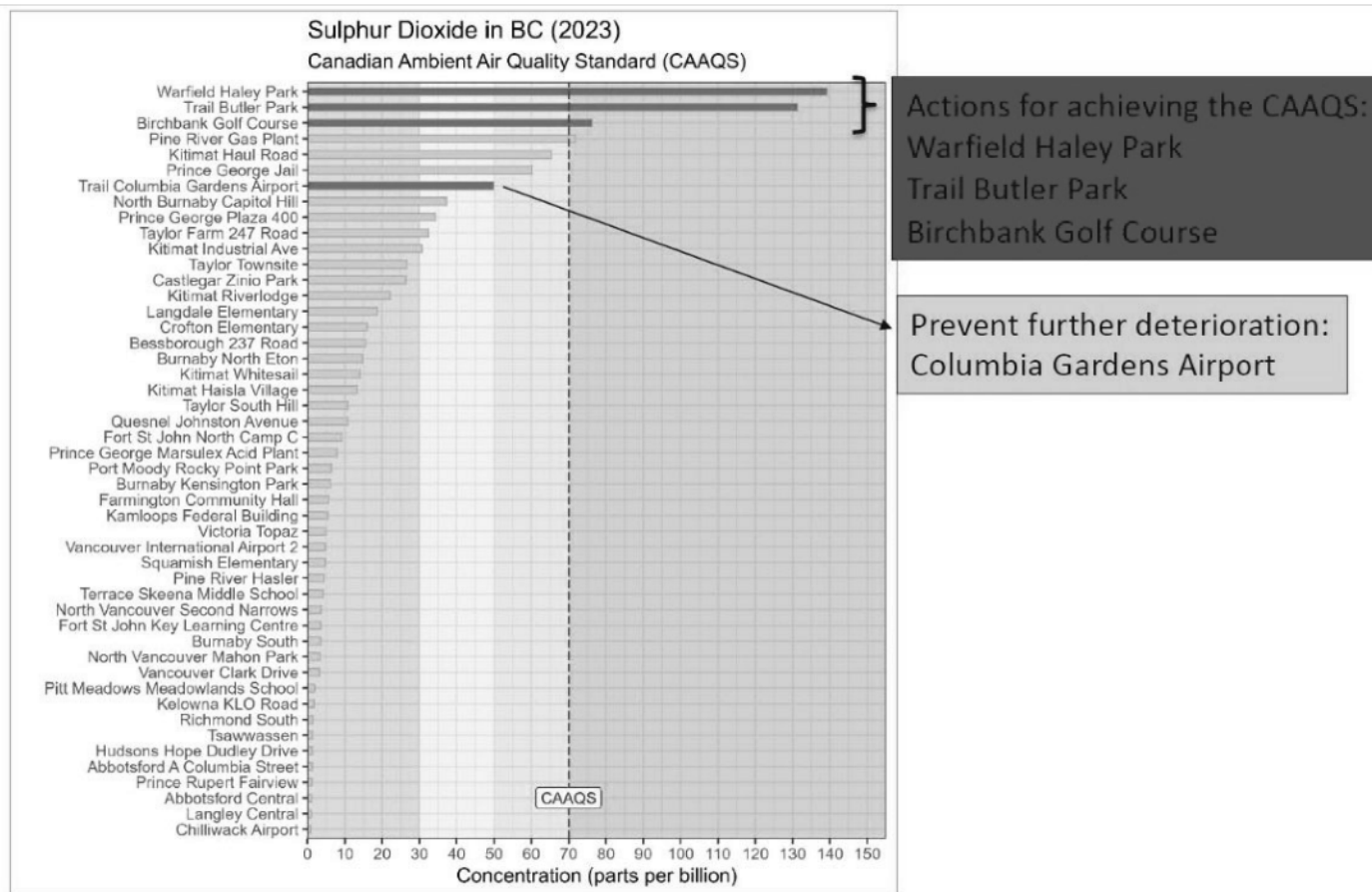
- There is no provincial permit condition or contaminated sites instrument to address the legacy contamination in the surrounding waterbodies. However, Teck has been addressing some historic contamination based on previous direction from Environment and Climate Change Canada and SRP through the Trail GW Final Remediation Plan

Contact: Deb Epps, Executive Director
 Authorizations and Remediation Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-713-2906

ATTACHMENT

eAPPROVAL ID 048-40435

March 17, 2025

2023 Ambient SO₂ levels in BC: 4/7 are in Trail. The top 3 exceed CAAQS.

Ministry of
Environment and
Climate Change Strategy

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	TMX Marine Spill Response – EAO Conditions
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KEY FACTS

CER and EAO reconsideration process summary

- Following the Trans Mountain Reconsideration process, the Governor in Council (GIC) and the Canada Energy Regulator (CER) (formerly the National Energy Board), issued a new federal certificate for the project on June 21, 2019, with 156 conditions.
- Trans Mountain applied to the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) to amend the project's Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) to reflect the new federal certificate. On August 28, 2019, the EAO approved the amendment to maintain consistency between the EAC conditions and the CER conditions.
- Following a series of judicial reviews and challenges, Provincial Ministers subsequently directed the EAO to undertake a provincial reconsideration process, consistent with direction from the B.C. Court of Appeal (BCCA), to identify and consider portions of the CER's Reconsideration Report that differ from the initial CER Report and to provide recommendations regarding any new or amended EAC conditions in response to those portions, within the limits of provincial jurisdiction.
- On February 24, 2022, Provincial Ministers changed the project's Certificate Conditions following the EAO's recommendations. Provincial Ministers also communicated recommendations to the federal government regarding issues raised outside the scope of the reconsideration process so that they can take action to address and implement the recommendations.
- The changes to the EAC Conditions and recommendations Provincial Ministers sent to the federal government are focused on the marine environment.

EAO certificate condition changes – Marine Spill Response

- As a result of the reconsideration process, the following changes have been made to the provincial EAC:
- Amending Condition 35 (Fate and Behavior of Bitumen Research), requiring Trans Mountain to provide research updates every five years, and add local coastal governments to the parties requiring consultation on the research.
- A new condition requiring a human health risk report that includes:
 - identifying exposure pathways in the event of a marine spill,
 - identifying roles and responsibilities of local, provincial and federal authorities in the event of a marine spill, and

- consulting with Indigenous nations, local governments and relevant agencies to develop the report that will provide important information as the federal government and its agencies prepare plans that address the potential impact to human health from spills.
- A new condition requiring Trans Mountain to develop a shoreline baseline data report, developed in consultation with various parties, that consolidates data at hypothetical incident locations along the shipping route that will strengthen restoration and recovery in the event of a ship-source marine spill.
- Adding Snuneymuxw First Nation to the list of 'Aboriginal Groups – Marine Shipping', and
- Adding a definition for 'Potentially Affected Coastal Local Governments'.

Recommendations outside reconsideration scope:

- Former Ministers Heyman (ENV) and Ralston (EMLI) strongly urged the federal government to consider and take action on concerns raised by participants during the reconsideration process that was outside of the BCCA's direction and relevant to federal agencies. The EAO also identified a recommendation to the Minister of Forests (formerly Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations).
- To ensure the Trans Mountain Project is operated in a sound manner the following recommendations have been made to address concerns:
 - engaging with Indigenous nations on shipping and traditional harvesting
 - continued efforts on marine vessel wake
 - regular updates on CER recommendations, including the National Anchorage Strategy and federal marine oil spill compensation regime
 - Indigenous engagement in federal marine spill planning and response
 - Indigenous involvement in the Environment and Climate Change Canada Recovery Working Group
 - Transport Canada oversight of the Western Canada Marine Response Corporation (WCMRC)
 - formal Indigenous engagement commitments by the WCMRC

Contact: Pader Brach, Executive Director
 Environmental Emergencies Branch
 Environmental Protection Division, 250-953-3855

Kelly Wintemute, Executive Project Director
 Environmental Assessment Office, 236-475-4421

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Guidance TMX Marine Spill Response – EAO Conditions
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GUIDANCE

TMX project details

- The Trans Mountain Expansion Project (TMX Project) consists of approximately 987 kilometres of new oil pipeline and the reactivation of 193 kilometres of existing oil pipeline.
- The pipeline will transport crude, semi-refined and refined petroleum products and the expansion will increase the capacity of the existing pipeline from 47,700 cubic meters per day to 141,500 cubic meters per day.

CER recommendations to federal government

- The Canada Energy Regulator (CER) also included 16 recommendations to the Governor in Council (GIC) for measures to mitigate, avoid, or lessen the effects of project-related marine shipping that the CER stated are beyond the scope of its regulatory authority or Trans Mountain's control, but within the authority of the federal government.

EAO Public engagement and feedback

- From January 15 to March 1, 2021, the EAO held a public comment period asking for feedback on the Draft Provincial Reconsideration Report for the provincial reconsideration of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project.
- Main feedback themes included:
 - Environmental - 37% (potential impacts to southern resident killer whales, oil spills, greenhouse gas emissions, increased marine traffic, **insufficient existing marine spill response regime**)
 - Socioeconomic effects - 6.5% (**impacts from a potential oil spill on:** human health, tourism and fishing, coastal communities, financial responsibility of a spill falling to B.C. Taxpayers; and, economic benefits derived from increased marine traffic)
 - Proposed EAC Conditions - 7.5% (support for conditions, **adding a requirement for Trans Mountain to assume full financial responsibility for a potential spill**, concerns relating to the impartiality of a Qualified Professional retained by Trans Mountain to complete a Human Health Risk Report, support for inclusion of potentially affected coastal communities in the list of groups that must be engaged in the development of the Fate and Behaviors of Bitumen Research condition)

- Indigenous consultation and engagement - 3% (need for free, prior and informed consent, support for Indigenous oversight in mitigation measures).
- Other (46%)

Fate and Behavior of Bitumen Research Report

Trans Mountains submitted the Fate and Behavior of Bitumen Research Report to the EAO, which was review reviewed by the EAO in January 2024. The Report is available here: [EPIC \(BC EAO Condition 35 Report June 2023 \(1\).pdf\)](#). The next Report is due 5 years following the start of Operations.

Contact: Pader Brach, Executive Director
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Kelly Wintemute, Executive Project Director
Environmental Assessment Office, 236-475-4421

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Waste Discharge Authorizations – Number, Type and Revenue
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KEY FACTS

Number and Type of Waste Discharge Authorizations processed in 2024-25:

- **591** authorizations were processed from April 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025.
- This includes permits, approvals, operational certificates, notifications, and registrations:
 - **214** simple applications; relatively low-risk waste discharge applications including registrations, notifications, and minor administrative amendments.
 - **275** complex applications; these require technical assessment and reviews by ministry staff.
 - **102** of the total applications were reviewed and then withdrawn.
- Low risk applications (simple applications) may include name changes, registrations, and notifications under various regulations such as the Asphalt Plant Regulation or the Concrete Code of Practice.
- Complex applications (high risk applications) would include examples such as mines, pulp and paper, smelters and liquid and solid waste operational certificates.

Annual Discharge Fees and Fees from Discharge Permit Applications

- The Permit and Approval Fees and Charges Regulation establishes application fees and annual discharge fees for permits. The Waste Discharge Regulation establishes application and annual fees for discharges registered under codes of practice.
- Annual Fees must be paid for all active permits based on the authorized discharges. A variable fee assessment is determined based on the quantity of each contaminant specified in a permit multiplied by a rate that is based on the hazard posed by each contaminant type.
- Application fees for permits are a flat nominal fee of \$400. This fee only covers the cost of documentation. The fee does not cover the cost to undertake assessment and consultation, which can be substantial, nor does it reflect the range of effort between simple and complex applications.

Revenue from Waste Discharge Authorizations in 2024-25:

- Total revenue from fees for the fiscal year 2024-25 until February 28, 2025, is \$23.342M under the *Environmental Management Act*. A detailed table is below.

Type	Revenues (\$ in Thousands)
Waste Discharge Fees	12,609
Code of Practice Fees	83
Hazardous Waste Fees	868
Diapers	4,875
Contaminated Sites	2,700
Pesticides	588
Admin Penalties and others	1,401
Interest on Overdue Accounts	218
Total Revenue 2024-25:	23,342

Contact: Neil Webb, Manager, Integrated Services
Authorization and Remediation Branch,
Environmental Protection Division, 778-476-9038

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Protection Division March 2025	Waste-to-Energy proposals
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KEY FACTS

Solid Waste Management Planning and Waste-to-Energy (WTE) in B.C.:

- Municipal solid waste (MSW) management in B.C. is guided by the 5R pollution prevention hierarchy (the hierarchy)—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recovery, and Residuals Management—and supporting circular economy approaches.
- The hierarchy is a key principle in B.C.'s Guide to MSW Management Planning, which all regional districts must follow when considering improvements to their solid waste management systems and updates to their solid waste management plans (SWMPs).
- Waste prevention efforts are becoming increasingly important as the largest landfills in the province, which accept more than half of B.C.'s waste each year, have an average remaining lifespan of only 15 years before further expansion is necessary. WTE projects are sometimes viewed as a possible solution to decrease the landfilling of waste; however, they rely on the continued generation of waste to operate.
- WTE is an allowable activity under the *Environmental Management Act*. However, before regional districts consider WTE as an option, they should first set and achieve targets for reducing waste at the higher levels of the hierarchy.
- WTE facilities that process MSW are at the bottom of the hierarchy (i.e., Recovery or Residuals Management), as potentially valuable materials are effectively lost from the economy through reuse or recycling.
- There is only one MSW WTE facility in B.C., located in Burnaby and owned by Metro Vancouver (MV). MV has been operating the incinerator since 1988 for the purpose of burning MSW; the facility currently processes around 25% of MV's MSW. In 2003, MV added a generation facility to the incinerator, using the waste heat to produce electricity.
- The facility predates current guidance for Regional Districts to first achieve a waste reduction target. It is approved by the ministry through an Operational Certificate which sets requirements related to the facility's operation, including air emission limits, monitoring, reporting and publication. The facility has previously raised concerns, primarily around air quality, for residents and environmental groups in MV and the Fraser Valley Regional District.

WTE Background and Guidance

- Some WTE facilities use MSW in an energy recovery process. The most common method is direct combustion of MSW to produce steam and heat, which

can then be used to generate electricity, or to supply heat and hot water through district energy systems.

- Regional districts typically need to undertake a major SWMP amendment, including public consultation and engagement on the details of the proposed facility, prior to submitting a SWMP amendment to the ministry for approval.
- The ministry expects regional districts to show progress towards lowering the waste disposal rate and achieving the targets set in their SWMPs, to reduce the need for new landfills or WTE solutions, which are both costly.
- The SWMP is expected to include an MSW disposal rate target of 350 kg/person/year before considering WTE technologies. As of the last reporting period on Environmental Reporting B.C. for 2022, no regional districts are achieving this target.

WTE Proposals

- In addition to combustion, there are an increasing number of WTE technologies being explored that aim to convert specific types of waste into fuel sources and other products, e.g., pyrolysis, gasification, or hydrothermal liquefaction.
- WTE technology vendors are increasingly engaging with local governments, First Nations and the Province, to market their waste management solutions. Ministry staff often need to share additional advice as there can be limited technical information provided to support viability, an understanding of the ministry's regulatory framework, and the high capital cost which can range from \$60M to \$300M depending on the type of technology and size of the facility.
- Currently, there are very few small-scale WTE systems operating in Canada and the few projects that have invested in full scale operation have struggled to achieve the expected results. Recent examples in Canada include:
 - A facility in Nova Scotia was scheduled to be fully commissioned and commercially operational in June 2019. In 2023 an update was publicly posted that the facility is facing challenges with processing MSW, which has resulted in the municipality reverting to landfilling their waste.
 - In January 2024, a biofuels plant (a type of WTE gasification process that converts sorted biomass waste into ethanol) in Edmonton was shut down 11 years ahead of schedule. During its operation, the plant produced five million litres of biofuels annually, less than 14% of 36 million litres a year that company projected in original project estimates.
- WTE technologies may show promising results during pilot scale operation; however, WTE technologies are relatively unproven at commercial scale with significant waste pre-processing requirements and potentially high costs for taxpayers.

Contact: Sonya Sundberg, Executive Director
Environmental Policy and Initiatives Branch
Environmental Protection Division, 778-698-4906

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division March 2025	B.C.-Alaska Transboundary Relationship
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KEY FACTS

Negative Perception of B.C. Mining

- B.C. has made significant regulatory and compliance improvements over the past decade to protect the environment and build a responsible mining industry.
- The Province takes compliance and enforcement of environmental protection requirements in the natural resource sector seriously – and monitors for compliance through dedicated inspectors in ENV, EAO, MCM and WLRS.
- The Province's position remains that an IJC reference for the northwest is not needed given the actions B.C. is taking, the strong working relationship with Alaska and that transboundary water pollution from B.C. mines has not been observed in Alaskan waters.
- Misinformation about B.C.'s current mining regulatory framework vs historical mining practices and a lack of trust with respect to transparency and interpretation of water quality data are contributing factors.
- Concerns have focused on historical contamination from the Tulsequah Chief Mine (Tulsequah) near the Alaska border, and more recently on the Mt. Polley tailings breach as examples of environmental impacts from B.C. mining. There are also concerns regarding proposed mining projects that are currently going through the environmental assessment process.
 - Concerned groups and US Tribes have called for an International Joint Commission (IJC) reference for the B.C.-Alaska border and are pressuring the Alaska State government to also support an IJC reference.
- Progress has been made over the past year on a partnership approach with Teck and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation towards the reclamation of Tulsequah.
- Communications improvements, including updated webpages and engagement with concerned groups, have highlighted regulatory improvements B.C. has made in the past decade.
- The State of Alaska appreciates the working relationship that has been built with B.C., the regular project updates, and collaboration on communications projects that allows Alaska to communicate with their citizens that concerns are being addressed.

United States and International Interests

- B.C. and Alaska meet formally on a bi-annual basis to discuss transboundary mining and water quality at a Bilateral Working Group (BWG), supported by a staff-level (ENV, MCM and EAO) group that meets monthly.
- Engagement and transparency have been discussed as priorities at previous BWG meetings. In June 2024, a delegation of B.C. executives attended an in-person BWG meeting in Juneau, Alaska and participated in a joint B.C.-Alaska public open house to discuss key transboundary mining and environmental protection topics.
- In Jan 2025, B.C. completed new responsible mining webpages to tell the natural resource sector approach to responsible mining in B.C., the mining regulatory framework and improvements in the past decade.
 - The BWG last met on March 10. It was a positive discussion. AK commissioners expressed appreciation for progress made together on sharing information with concerned stakeholders and for B.C.'s updates on progress of Tulsequah remediation efforts.
- Fisheries in coastal waters are addressed separately via the Pacific Salmon Commission, with B.C.'s engagement led by WLRS and with different challenges.

Water Quality Monitoring

- No exceedances of Alaska Water Quality Standards have been observed in water samples downstream of B.C. mines near the B.C.-Alaska border.
- Northwestern B.C. has a high level of naturally occurring mineralization.
- From 2017-2019, a joint B.C.-Alaska technical working group completed water monitoring of four transboundary watersheds and found that:
 - No exceedances of Alaska Water Quality Standards were observed in water samples downstream of the B.C.-Alaska border; and
 - Given the existence of other sampling programs planned by state, federal or provincial agencies throughout the transboundary region, B.C. and Alaska agreed there was no need to continue the joint sampling program.
- The final report was received with skepticism by ENGOs in B.C. and Alaska as well as Tribal groups in Alaska, who remain concerned about pollution from Tulsequah as well as about potential impacts from operating mines and mines under development.

Attachment: Tulsequah Chief Mine (MCM Estimates Note)

Contact: Lisa Paquin, Executive Director
Strategic Policy Branch
Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division, 778-698-4419

Tulsequah Chief Mine

KEY MESSAGES:

- The Province is continuing our collaborative work with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) and engaging with stakeholders regarding clean-up of the Mine.
- From 2020 to 2022, the Province carried out interim reclamation activities at the Mine in collaboration with the TRTFN using \$1.2M of seized security.
- Teck is voluntarily supporting clean-up at Tulsequah. To date, Teck has provided a total of \$3.26 million to support interim reclamation works in 2021 and 2022.
- In 2024, Teck, in collaboration with TRTFN, planned and executed a site investigation program to support development of a final closure plan. This work will continue through 2025.
- The Province, TRTFN and Teck meet regularly to develop a sustainable closure plan for the Mine.
- The Province continues to work with Alaska to transparently share information with the State, Tribes, and environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) and address concerns from Alaska state lawmakers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The Tulsequah Chief Mine (the Mine) is located south of Atlin and northeast of Juneau Alaska, on the Tulsequah River, in the traditional territory of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN). The Tulsequah River drains into the Taku River, which then drains into Alaska.
- Underground copper/lead/zinc mining activities carried out at the Mine from 1951 to 1957 by Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Ltd. (Cominco), left a legacy of acid rock drainage, raising concerns amongst First Nations and stakeholders, including Alaska.
- Cominco, through corporate amalgamation, is now Teck Metals Corp., a subsidiary of Teck Resources Ltd. The Mine has not operated since the late 1950's. Teck carried out exploration activities at the Mine in the 1980's and 1990's before selling its interests to Redfern Resources Inc. ("Redfern").
- Redfern became insolvent, and the Mine was acquired by Chieftain Metals Inc. ("Chieftain") in 2010.
- The Mine is currently owned by Chieftain, a company incorporated in Ontario.
 - In 2016, Chieftain became insolvent and in September 2016, Chieftain's primary secured creditor, West Face Capital Inc. ("West Face"), applied to the Ontario Superior Court for the appointment of a receiver over Chieftain and its parent

company, Chieftain Metals Corp. All Chieftain's corporate directors resigned at this time.

- In fall 2016, the Chief Inspector of Mines confiscated the \$1.2 million security bond provided by Chieftain, which was used to secure areas of the site, address immediate issues, and fund the development of a conceptual closure and reclamation plan.
- In September 2022, West Face transferred their interests in Chieftain to Armex Mining. In August 2023, Armex appointed directors to the board of Chieftain and Chieftain remains a corporation in the Province of Ontario.
- After a series of inspections, compliance actions, and orders to Chieftain, the Chief Inspector of Mines made the decision to cancel their Mines Act permit in May 2024. As well, over 2023 and 2024, the Chief Gold Commissioner cancelled all *Mineral Tenure Act* claims held by Chieftain for failure to provide adequate evidence of work on site. A no-registration reserve is in place over the Tulsequah site.
- Chieftain continues to own 24 2-post crown granted mineral claims at the Mine and 4 fee-simple parcels at the barge site.
- 2023 marked the transition from interim work to more focused long-term reclamation planning work at the Mine, with Teck voluntarily taking the lead on closure-planning activities in collaboration with TRTFN and BC Data collection. Closure planning work started in August 2023 and is expected to continue throughout 2025.

United States and International Interests:

- Following a March 2023 visit to Alaska by MCM and ENV senior executive for the Juneau Mining Forum, a press conference was held where Alaska state legislators and Alaska Tribal Leaders expressed concern and urgency surrounding Tulsequah Chief and other northwest B.C. mines. Since then, numerous letters from Alaska state legislators have been sent to the U.S. and B.C. governments expressing concerns of continued development in the transboundary region. This approach appears to be supported by numerous ENGOs and Alaska Tribes and Tribal organizations.
- The Province and Alaska signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation (MOU) in 2015. The MOU is being implemented through a Statement of Cooperation on the Protection of Transboundary Waters. B.C.'s relationship with its Alaskan counterparts (Commissioners) is strong, transparent, and cooperative.
- B.C. is working with its Alaskan counterparts through the MOU to identify ways to continue to transparently share information with the State, Tribes, and ENGOs. B.C.'s position remains that an International Joint Commission reference is not needed, given the actions B.C. is taking and the strong working relationship with Alaska.
- Provincial staff will continue to be in regular contact with the State of Alaska, Tribes in Alaska, ENGOs, and other interested parties regarding the site investigation program conducted in 2024 and continuing in 2025.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

- Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS:

- Not applicable

ADM(s) Responsible	Contact number
George Warnock	778-675-5228

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ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division March 2025	International Joint Commission for the Kootenay Watershed
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KEY FACTS

Joint Reference:

- B.C. is fully engaged in the International Joint Commission (IJC) process in the Elk-Kootenay watershed. B.C. supports the reference and we see this as an opportunity to build trust and understanding between B.C, Canada, United States, and Ktunaxa governments.
- We want to ensure that B.C. remains a leader in mining regulation and oversight, while enhancing responsible resource development and strengthening First Nations involvement in the mining sector.
- B.C. is committed to a competitive mining sector that grows the economy and creates good jobs, supports environmental stewardship, and advances reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.
- The IJC process will respect the legal responsibilities and jurisdictions of each government, including the role that B.C. plays as the primary regulator of the mining sector, and B.C. has been assured the IJC Governance Body will not seek to replace or override existing regulatory processes.
- The IJC reference is specific to the unique circumstances in the Elk Valley and Kootenay watershed. At this time, B.C. is not supportive of IJC involvement in any other watershed and will continue to work collaboratively with neighboring jurisdictions.

Background

- Canada and the United States, in partnership with the transboundary Ktunaxa Nation, have initiated the IJC through a joint reference. The objective of the IJC reference is to reduce and mitigate the impacts of water pollution in the Elk-Kootenai/y watershed, as committed to in the Joint Statement of President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau on March 24, 2023. The reference was transmitted to the IJC [via joint ambassador statement](#) on March 11, 2024.
- The reference instructs the IJC to assist governments in the establishment of a formal governance structure (Governance Body) to support information sharing and co development of options for future action.
- The Governance Body is composed of 18 members, six each from Canada, the United States, and the Ktunaxa governments.
 - Canada's delegation is split evenly between federal and provincial representatives. B.C.'s Governance Body members are the Deputy

Ministers of ENV, Mining and Critical Minerals, and the Intergovernmental Relations Secretariate.

- The reference also instructs the IJC to establish a two-year Study Board to convene experts and knowledge holders, with the aim to support a common understanding of pollution in the Kootenai/y watershed.
 - The purpose is to review existing science, identify gaps, assumptions and uncertainties, and present recommendations to the Governance Body.
 - The Study Board will provide the IJC with a plan of study, an interim report in September 2025, and a final report September 2026. These reports will provide an analysis of the current available science and identify data and research gaps to improve understanding of the water quality issues in the watershed.
- B.C. is aware that there have been requests for IJC involvement in other transboundary watersheds. B.C. is not supportive of IJC involvement in any other watershed and will continue to work collaboratively with neighbouring states and transboundary First Nations and Tribes.
- The Elk-Kootenay/I IJC reference is specific to the history and complexity of water quality influences, historical and ongoing water quality exceedances, and unique relationships of the region. Specifically, to requests for an IJC reference in Alaska, B.C. is not aware of any exceedances of Alaskan water quality standards.

Next Steps/Intergovernmental Considerations

- The Study Board released a draft Plan of Study that is currently under IJC review. The plan includes a budget and financing request to the federal governments of Canada and the United States for a total of \$4.9M. The currency is not specified to be CAD or USD.
- All engaged governments including B.C. are expected to participate in the process through 'in-kind' contributions, i.e. by making available provincial staff to support the process.
 - B.C. and the IJC have an MOU in place to provide funding for B.C. to hold a Study Board Manager position and support B.C. participation in other Study Board related work. This funding covers the salary and costs of one full time employee equivalent at a BIO 30 pay scale.
 - B.C. also has a representative on the Government Advisory Committee to the Study Board, and staff may be asked to participate in the technical working groups at the discretion of the IJC.

Contact: Lisa Paquin, Executive Director,
Strategic Policy Branch
Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division, 778-698-4419

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division March 2025	Priority Engagements Related to Reconciliation
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Context

- ENV's legislation relates to matters of high importance to First Nations including parks and protected areas, regulating and permitting discharges from mining, agriculture and other economic activities, and addressing spills and other environmental emergencies.
- Implementation of ENV's legislation has the potential to impact section 35 rights, as well as rights under the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration).
- As such, there is a high level of interest from First Nations in ENV's alignment of laws work, and operational partnerships, and increasing requests for shared decision making, cultural expression and land back requests related to ENV, particularly in respect to parks and protected areas.
- ENV undertakes collaborative work with First Nations, supports efficient implementation of key environmental legislation, including permitting activities that support sustainable economic development, while advancing reconciliation.

Emergency management, permitting and collaborative stewardship initiatives and partnerships

- First Nations have strong interests in stewardship of the land and long-standing concerns regarding cumulative impacts in their traditional territories.
- This has resulted in increased requests for the Ministry to establish more collaborative processes that result in greater First Nations involvement in operational work led by ENV.
- In 2024 ENV worked with over 100 First Nations on a wide range of collaborative emergency management, environmental stewardship, permitting and operational planning initiatives.
- These 'boots on the ground' type initiatives are responsive to First Nations' priorities and demonstrate real progress on reconciliation. The successes of these initiatives support relationships on larger strategic initiatives and agreements often led by other ministries.
- The Environmental Protection Division works in partnership with First Nations on spills and other environmental emergency projects, freshwater monitoring, contaminated sites remediation and waste management and permitting projects.
 - Sixty First Nations and Councils are now receiving real-time spill notifications through an enhanced system using Alertable. This is linked to implementation of Recommendation #3 of the Office of the Auditor-General's report on hazardous spills. Six First nations received funding for post-spill support and another six participated in Spill response training.
 - In 2024, seven First Nations were engaged in collaborative work related to water quality monitoring and Water Quality Objectives development in their territories. First Nations are also being provided water monitoring training through the BC LakeKeepers Training program.

- Capacity funds were provided to nine First Nations to support 11 projects and statutory decision-making processes related to municipal wastewater discharges, hazardous waste management, contaminated sites, and mining discharges.
- Environmental Protection Division (EPD) worked with the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG) on four waste prevention and reduction initiatives in F24-25 – organics funding programs, CleanBC Plastics Action Fund, extended producer responsibility and non-residential packaging (the latter two are policy initiatives) . IZWTAG currently represents 120 First Nations in the Province
- The Conservation and Recreation Division (CARD) partners with First Nations on planning and management of parks, protected areas, recreation sites and trails across B.C.
 - CARD is working with many First Nation partners on a wide variety of projects and initiatives within parks, protected areas and recreation sites and trails. These activities support reflecting First Nations' history & culture (i.e. renaming parks, interpretative signage, shared studies, storytelling and cultural camps), collaborative management planning activities, shared stewardship initiatives including compliance & enforcement, joint training and patrols with Guardians, capital project development, and other strategic projects and operational initiatives.
 - In 2024, the Conservation Officer Service hosted seven guardian training sessions. 89 participants attended, representing approximately 20 First Nations

Negotiating and Implementing Treaties and Agreements with First Nations

- ENV collaborates with First Nations and partner agencies to develop and implement agreements and treaties to advance reconciliation through a coordinated, sector-wide approach.
- This includes new arrangements for shared decision-making, collaborative park management, atmospheric benefit-sharing, climate adaptation and emergency response, and cumulative effects management.
- In 2024, ENV contributed to the development of a number of treaties and agreements including the K'omoks, Kitselas and Kitsumkalum treaty process, and Government to government agreements with Coastal First Nations, Treaty 8 First Nations and Splatshin First Nation.
 - In 2024 CARD and EPD participated in discussions on 11 treaties involving BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails, and EPD interests.

Alignment of Laws with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- ENV is undertaking work to align laws, as well as major policy that will inform future laws, with the UN Declaration, in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous Peoples.
 - In 2024, ENV consulted and co-operated with First Nations and engaged Indigenous peoples' organizations to inform policy development across seven major policy and legislative projects.

The Declaration Act Action Plan

- ENV is working in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous Partners to implement the Declaration Act Action Plan:
 - In 2024, ENV completed Action 4.28: Draft a report with recommendations for how BC Parks can better reflect Indigenous Peoples' histories and cultures in provincial parks and protected areas. Five First Nations partners were directly engaged in this work and the resulting report will be used to inform the refresh of the Reconciliation Action Plan for the BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails programs.
 - In 2024, ENV reported on Action 2.12, relating to collaborative development and implementation of CleanBC and the Climate Preparedness Adaption Strategy. Indigenous Partners include the First Nations Leadership Council. The Climate Action Secretariat moved to Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions in early 2025.
 - ENV is also contributing to reporting on Action 2.6, which relates to collaborative stewardship of the Environment.

Contact: Amy Avila, Assistant Deputy Minister
Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division, 778 698-7296

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division March 2025	Resourcing Permitting Efficiencies
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KEY FACTS

Across government, permitting and authorizations are being transformed to provide a faster, efficient process to strengthen and diversify B.C.'s economy while maintaining high environmental standards and advancing reconciliation with First Nations.

- The Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) has been allocated resources to help speed up the permitting process for the natural resource sector:
 - ENV has benefitted from the government's 2023 commitment of \$77 million dollars over three years.
 - For the 2025/26 fiscal year, ENV received approval of \$5.922M (\$3.319M in base budget and \$2.603M additional approval) to continue funding 25 new FTEs and digital systems work to support improved permitting processes.
 - This maintains funding levels from the 2024/25 fiscal year.
- ENV is working with key natural resource ministries to develop specific measures that will expedite authorizations and permitting.
 - New deemed authorizations are being prioritized under the *Environmental Management Act* including opportunities for greater reliance on qualified professionals within approved parameters.
 - Major projects submit one joint application for *Mines Act* and *Environmental Management Act* permits.
 - ENV is working with MCM to introduce a single digital mine permit application intake for major projects.
 - ENV is also working with the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) to identify opportunities to expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects.
- ENV continues to ensure environmental protection and First Nations jurisdiction, title and rights are upheld as we explore opportunities to streamline permitting processes.
- For government's critical major projects, ENV has prioritized permitting resources and taken new approaches to streamlining permitting reviews.
 - ENV has set internal expectations for use of available staff capacity on four priority mining projects.
 - ENV is working with MCM and EAO on sequential environmental assessment/joint permitting process for three priority mining projects that

have resulted in 40% faster decision timelines on Eskay Creek gold-silver mine, Red Chris mines expansion and Mount Milligan copper and gold mine review processes.

- ENV has successfully worked with MCM and EAO on a fully joint process for EA and permitting for the Highland Valley Copper Life of Mine Extension project.
- ENV's Structured Application Process is helping to set predictable timelines for mining projects under the *Environmental Management Act* permitting process.
- ENV is continuing to improve processing timelines through several initiatives to support the Housing Action Task Force:
 - ENV has launched a new digital application intake and information management system within the Site Remediation Program.
 - New Site Remediation Program staff positions helped make progress on reducing the backlog of contaminated sites permit applications by 20% in 2023 and by a further 10% in 2024/25.
 - In 2024/25, ENV completed 203 housing-related contaminated sites applications, representing at least 76,000 housing units.
- ENV is also improving permit processing and decision timelines within BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails:
 - The Parks and Recreation Program hired two additional temporary positions in 2024/25 that complement 3.5 other temporary BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) positions focused on providing permitting improvements.
 - Coordinate and provide guidance for First Nations consultation and engagement on provincial priority projects for BC Parks and RSTBC.
 - A new position to support court-mandated considerations and documentation of cumulative effects in decision making for BC Parks and RSTBC was added in the 2024/25 fiscal year.
 - Another new position was added this fiscal year to provide caseload support for BC Parks' authorizations, and the new position is working to reduce backlog on priority files across the province.
 - RSTBC also funds 0.5 of an FTE focused on permitting improvements to address permitting efficiencies and backlogs.
 - Staff are working to streamline permitting to support commercial recreation activities in BC Parks and at recreation sites and trails, while continuing to uphold environmental and social values.

Contact: Amy Avila, Assistant Deputy Minister
Strategic Services and Indigenous Partnerships Division, 778 679-3522

MINISTRY PROFILE

Ministry: Environmental Assessment Office - Ministry of Environment and Parks

Ministry Mandate:

The Environmental Assessment Office (the EAO) is a neutrally administered and independent office of the provincial government, reporting to the Minister of Environment and Parks (ENV). The EAO was established in 1995, to administer the *Environmental Assessment Act* (the Act) and its regulations. The EAO partners with the ENV on corporate administration and matters of mutual benefit, but has a separate mandate legislated under the Act, budget (vote), and human resources authority.

The EAO's legislated mandate requires a publicly accessible, and neutrally administered process under the Act. The process, which generally takes three to five years, assesses environmental, economic, social, cultural, and health effects of major projects proposed in British Columbia (B.C.); identifies means for preventing or reducing adverse effects; and regulates certified projects to ensure compliance with legally binding project conditions.

The Act outlines the purpose of the EAO is to promote sustainability by protecting the environment, fostering a sound economy for the people of British Columbia, and supporting reconciliation with First Nations. The EAO also facilitates public participation in EAs and coordinates assessments with other governments, including Indigenous nations, and with other provincial ministries and agencies. Where projects have proceeded successfully through the process, the EAO leads compliance and enforcement activities, and additional regulatory oversight activities, often in collaboration with other government agencies.

The environmental assessment (EA) process is the first authorization process in the regulatory continuum that First Nations and the public encounter on a major project that is considered reviewable under EA legislation, requiring our processes to address a wide range of issues, and engage/consult with a variety of interested parties. Without receiving an environmental assessment certificate, a project cannot proceed. Once an environmental assessment certificate has been granted, a project also requires provincial permits to move to construction and operation. On recent projects, the EAO has been working with other provincial regulators during the assessment to coordinate permitting reviews to be carried out at the same time, reducing overall timelines for provincial authorizations without compromising quality and scope.

The expectations for public and First Nations consultation have increased exponentially in recent years due to the implementation of Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and the changes reflected under the Act. Under the Minister of Environment and Parks' mandate letter, the EAO has been directed to work with other regulatory agencies to expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects. The EAO has been actively working to streamline and find efficiencies in its process for the past couple of years, as well as significantly bolstering staffing to increase internal capacity for assessments. The EAO increased its staffing from 111 to 162 from 2022/23 to 2025/26, with 20 of these positions time-limited.

Along with staffing, the EAO has been working with other regulators – including the ministries of mining, energy, environment and water and lands – to align their various processes, reduce duplications and collaborate to find ways to improve timelines for reviews.

The EAO is led by Associate Deputy Minister, Alex MacLennan and comprised of four divisions: the EA Operations Division, led by Assistant Deputy Minister, Chris Trumpy, the Strategic Services and Compliance Division, led by Executive Director, Julie Chace, Corporate Services Division, led by Executive Director, Mirella Stanbridge, and the Communications & Engagement team, led by Executive Director, Sarah Plank.

Related Legislation:

- *Environmental Assessment Act* 2002 and 2018
- Responsible Minister Order
- Reviewable Projects Regulation
- Reviewable Projects Transition Regulation
- Environmental Assessment Transition Regulation
- Violation Ticket Administration and Fines Regulation
- Environmental Assessment Fees Regulation
- Conservation Officer Service Authority Regulation
- Natural Resource Officer Authority Regulation
- Protected Areas Regulation
- Administrative Penalties Regulation

Full Time Equivalents (FTEs): 162

Executive Organizational Chart:



Budget: \$17.343 Million for 2025/26

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

Estimates
2024/25Estimates
2025/26

VOTE 25 — ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE

This vote provides for the programs, operations, and other activities described in the voted appropriation under the following core business: Environmental Assessment Office.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE

Voted Appropriation

Environmental Assessment Office.....	17,074	17,343
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Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for the administration and continuous improvement of an objective, publicly accessible, and neutrally administered process under the *Environmental Assessment Act*. The process assesses environmental, economic, social, cultural, and health effects of major projects proposed in British Columbia; identifies means for preventing or reducing adverse effects; and regulates certified projects to ensure compliance with legally-binding project conditions. The Environmental Assessment Office promotes sustainability and supports reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia. The Environmental Assessment Office also facilitates public participation in environmental assessments and coordinates assessments with other governments, including Indigenous nations, and with other provincial ministries and agencies. Where projects have proceeded successfully through the process, the Environmental Assessment Office leads compliance and effectiveness monitoring, audit, and management, often in collaboration with other government agencies. Costs may be recovered from ministries, other entities within government, other levels of government, organizations, businesses, and individuals for activities described within this sub-vote.

VOTE 25 — ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE

17,074

17,343

Environmental Assessment Office
\$17, 343, 000.00

VOTE 25 Environmental Assessment Office

Description	Total 2024/25 Operating Expenses	50	51	52	54	Total Salaries and Benefits	55	57	59	60	63	65	67	68	69
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074	9,739	62	2,480	—	12,281	1	496	645	852	125	160	—	—	3
Total	17,074	9,739	62	2,480	—	12,281	1	496	645	852	125	160	—	—	3

70	72	73	75	Total Operating Costs	77	79	80	Total Govt Transfers	81	83	85	Total Other Expenses	86	88	Total Internal Recoveries	89	90	Total External Recoveries	Total 2025/26 Operating Expenses
2	—	5	1	2,290	2,400	—	1,150	3,550	—	—	124	124	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(900)	(901)	17,343
2	—	5	1	2,290	2,400	—	1,150	3,550	—	—	124	124	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(900)	(901)	17,343

EAO Core Messaging

Key Messages:

- Our natural environment in B.C. is a precious asset, and I take our commitment to protect and steward it for future generations very seriously.
- Communities rely on our natural environment for food, recreation, health and well-being, spiritual practices and local economies.
- Making sure large-scale projects are properly assessed is critical to making sure development is sustainable – so we get good jobs and economic growth while also protecting our environment and wildlife, and keeping communities healthy and safe.
- When we assess projects, we also have obligations to uphold First Nations jurisdiction, title and rights – supporting a shared vision for economic well-being and proper stewardship of the land, air and water.

If asked about what a neutral regulatory office means...

- The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) is a neutral regulatory agency that manages assessments of proposed major projects in B.C. – like mines, oil and gas pipelines and facilities, large infrastructure projects and resorts.
- Proposed projects that exceed the thresholds set in regulations must be reviewed to assess potential impacts on people, wildlife and the environment.
- During its review, the EAO consults with technical experts, First Nations, the public, the company, local governments, and federal and provincial agencies.
- This is a comprehensive assessment process to make sure the right projects go forward, with support from First Nations and communities.
- A team of compliance and enforcement officers at the EAO also monitor approved projects, through routine and spot inspections, and take enforcement action as necessary.
- They make sure projects are built and operated in compliance with all our requirements to protect the environment, wildlife, people and communities.

If asked about First Nation involvement in the EA process..

- Supporting reconciliation with First Nations is also a key purpose of the EAO.
- The EAO collaborates with First Nations throughout the assessment process and involves First Nations in the decision making on projects that may affect them.

If asked about assessment timelines...

- The EAO has been actively working to streamline and find efficiencies in its process for the past several years.
- The office has been working with other regulators – including the ministries of mining, energy, environment and water and lands – to align their various processes, reduce duplications and collaborate to find ways to improve timelines for reviews.
- For example, by having all agencies cooperating to review projects together at the same time, rather than one after the other, we were able to reduce timelines and overlap for technical reviews, decreasing the time it took for all provincial approvals for the Cariboo Gold mine to five years.
- Similar approaches are reducing overall timelines for provincial reviews for other projects as well.
- The EAO is also working with proponents to set them up for success by setting clear and appropriately scoped information requirements at the start.
- And they are reviewing processes to remove duplicative steps and increase coordination, and bringing IT systems online that improve efficiency, tracking and coordination to speed up timelines.
- My mandate letter directs the EAO to work with other regulatory agencies to expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects, and the EAO is working to bring forward additional options.
- A formal review of the Environmental Assessment Act is currently underway – that includes looking at timelines and regulatory coordination.

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Assessment Office March 2025	Mandate Letter and Tariff Response
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KEY FACTS

Mandate Letter:

- Three items in the Minister of Environment and Park's mandate letter, dated January 16, 2024, relate to the Environmental Assessment Office (the EAO).
 - Work across ministries and with Indigenous leadership and business leaders to support work to recognize Indigenous rights and title, protect environment for future generations, and support predictable and sustainable economic growth in our province.
 - Direct the Environmental Assessment Office to work with key permitting ministries to develop specific measures that will expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects. Bring proposed measures forward for Cabinet review within six months.
 - Support BC's energy transition and climate targets by directing the Environmental Assessment Office to proceed with the exemption of wind power from Environmental Assessment Act provisions. Exempt other relevant classes of projects from environmental assessment where the assessment is duplicative, delays projects with environmental advantages, or offers only limited value while impeding projects that will benefit the province as a whole.

If asked how the EAO is helping to meet the following mandate:

Work across ministries and with Indigenous leadership and business leaders to support work to recognize Indigenous rights and title, protect environment for future generations, and support predictable and sustainable economic growth in our province.

- As required by section 76 of the *Environmental Assessment Act* (2018) (the Act), the EAO is undertaking a review of the Act (Act Review) to “determine what changes, if any, should be made”.
- The Act Review process and scope are at the discretion of the Minister.
- The Act Review team has already begun working across ministries and with Indigenous leadership and business leaders:
 - Preparatory work for the Act Review included engaging ministries and government agencies, First Nations, Indigenous Governing Bodies, Indigenous organizations, industry associations and the Union of BC Municipalities.

- The preparatory work conducted will inform the Minister's decision on the areas of focus for the Act Review with a public announcement thereof anticipated in 2025. Once formally begun, the Act Review will continue to provide engagement opportunities for all interested parties and involve working across ministries and with Indigenous leadership and industry leaders.
- **How the Act Review supports sustainable economic growth, protecting the environment and recognizing Indigenous rights and title:**
 - The Act is the legislative framework that governs the Province's environmental assessment process, which ensures that any potential environmental, economic, social, cultural, and health effects, as well impacts to First Nations' rights and interests, that may occur during the lifetime of a major project are thoroughly assessed and that any predicted significant adverse effects are appropriately regulated.
 - The Act Review will evaluate the revitalized environmental assessment process, including whether it promotes sustainability in B.C. by protecting the environment, fostering a resilient economy, and supporting reconciliation by ensuring that the rights and titles of First Nations are respected.

If asked how the EAO is meeting the following mandate:

Direct the EAO to work with key permitting ministries to develop specific measures that will expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects. Bring proposed measures forward for Cabinet review within six months.

- The EAO is collaborating with the BC Energy Regulatory (BCER), Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS), Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals and Ministry of Environment and Parks to create sector-specific EA – Permitting Optimization Working Groups increase coordination and streamline processes across agencies.
- Among other things, these groups will identify major projects suitable for consideration for a coordinated permitting / EA process that allows permitting agencies to issue permits soon after issuance of an Environmental Assessment Certificate.
- Areas of working group focus to reduce regulatory timelines for priority projects include reducing regulatory duplication between EA and permitting, proponent readiness for coordinated EA / permitting, expedited regulatory timelines, and cross-ministry off ramps for issues beyond the scope of a specific project.
- Cabinet Confidences
- Further, all actions will be vetted with the Major Projects Implementation and / or Regulatory Efficiency Boards.

If asked how the EAO is meeting the following mandate:

Support BC's energy transition and climate targets by directing the Environmental Assessment Office to proceed with the exemption of wind power from Environmental Assessment Act provisions. Exempt other relevant classes of projects from environmental assessment where the assessment is duplicative, delays projects with environmental advantages, or offers only limited value while impeding projects that will benefit the province as a whole.

- **The EAO is collaborating with the Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions, WLRS, and BCER** Cabinet Confidences **to ensure that the nine 2024 Call for Power wind projects are not subject to other provisions of the Act.**
- **Initial work is underway at the EAO and other ministries, including the Ministry of Infrastructure, to evaluate whether current and anticipated legislation and policies related to reviewable major projects approach sustainable project development and reconciliation with First Nations similarly to the Act, and determine how to address assessment activities that are duplicative or act to impede projects that will benefit the province as a whole.**

Tariff Response:

If asked how the EAO is responding to tariffs imposed by the United States and other trading partners:

- **The EAO is not directly working to respond to the imposition of tariffs.**

Contact: Julie Chace, Executive Director
Strategic Services and Compliance Division, 778 698-7289

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Ministry of Environment and Parks Environmental Assessment Office: Policy and Legislation Branch March 2025	Environmental Assessment Act Review
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KEY FACTS

Overview:

- **Section 76 of the *Environmental Assessment Act* (2018) (the Act) requires the Minister of Environment and Parks (Minister) to initiate a review (Review) of the Act within five years of the Act coming into force, to “determine what changes, if any, should be made”.**
- **The Review process and scope of the Review are at the discretion of the Minister.**
- Advice/Recommendations

Review Preparation Phase and Initiation:

- **In November 2023, the Minister directed the EAO to begin a Review Preparation Phase. This phase aimed to promote co-development of the Review process with B.C. First Nations and Indigenous governing bodies and to inform recommendations on consultation / engagement methods and key areas of focus.**
 - The EAO engaged with 12 industry groups, 11 government agencies and ministries, and 35 First Nations, Indigenous governing bodies (IGBs) and First Nation organizations and gained valuable feedback that has shaped what areas are most pressing to consider.
 - Key areas of interest based on feedback received included timelines, First Nations consent, organizations’ capacity to participate, regulatory duplication and coordination with other approvals and permits, the types of projects that should be reviewed, proponent readiness, and more.
- The EAO has analyzed the feedback received during the Review Preparation Phase. Based on this analysis, the EAO has prepared a range of options for the Minister, each designed to align with the Minister’s mandate and the insights gathered from what we heard.

The Review supports the Ministry Mandate:

- **The Review is intended to**
 - **Support the Ministry of Environment and Parks’ mandate to “work across ministries and with Indigenous leadership and business**

leaders to support work to recognize Indigenous rights and title, protect the environment for future generation, and support predictable and sustainable economic growth.”

- **Align to the Interim Approach to Implementing Section 3 of the Requirements of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Interim Approach).**
- **Demonstrate meaningful consultation and cooperation with First Nations and Indigenous Governing Bodies in keeping with the Interim Approach, as well as further engagement with key parties.**

Next Steps:

- **The scope and progression of the Review are contingent upon direction from the Minister.**
- The first phase of the Review is expected to begin in 2025

Contact: Julie Chace, Executive Director
Strategic Services and Compliance Division, 778 698-7289

ESTIMATES NOTE (2025) Confidential Minister of Environment and Parks EAO March 2025	Environmental Assessment - Timelines
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KEY FACTS

Actual timelines on Environmental Assessments:

- The first project to complete an assessment under the 2018 act, Cariboo Gold mine, completed the process in 3.3 years.
- In fact, on average over the past 25 years, environmental assessments have taken just over four years to complete (4.12 years).
- The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) meets its legislated timelines 90 percent of the time when the proponent hasn't requested an extension.
- Only a very small number of specific projects have extended timelines – generally this is due to factors such as complex environmental or impacts, proponent delays, or a project being redesigned during the assessment.
 - Proponent timelines can be affected by market conditions, the need to find investors, doing required planning, studies or consultation, or addressing significant issues that would otherwise prevent the Province of British Columbia from approving the project.
 - The Province takes seriously its legal responsibilities to consult with First Nations who may be impacted by a project – this is an important part of our mandate to support reconciliation, and it requires time to do it properly.
- Proponents that bring forward well-designed projects that align with provincial policy, strategy and direction are more likely to have more straightforward reviews and regulatory approvals.

The EAO's work to improve timelines:

- The 2018 *Environmental Assessment Act* was designed to support more predictable, timely, robust assessments, and good decisions on projects.
- Timelines are one of the areas of consideration in the legislatively mandated review of the *Environmental Assessment Act* – which has begun and is in early stages.
- The EAO is, as directed in the Minister of Environment and Parks' mandate letter, also working with other regulatory agencies to expedite authorizations and permitting for major projects, to bring forward options within six months.
- British Columbia's reputation as a good place to invest in projects with high environmental and social values is created by our strong regulatory processes, environmental protections and First Nations consultation.

Contact: Chris Trumpy, Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Assessment Office, 778 698-7295