Describing the Integrated Land Management Approach

ILM Integrated Land Management

Shared Responsibility - Shared Future

Government of Alberta

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What is Integrated Land Management?

Integrated land management (ILM) is the strategic, planned approach to the way we use land and resources.

ILM results in the efficient use of land through informed land management planning, decision-making, actions and evaluation over the full life cycle of activities on the landscape.

ILM promotes the responsible use of public land by influencing user behaviour, improving stewardship and encouraging acceptance of the ILM approach. ILM occurs after the land-use priorities have been determined and users are seeking access to the landscape.

ILM is a way of behaving. It embraces and accepts that:

- on-the-ground planning should consider past, current and potential future land and resource demands, cumulative effects, historic uses and land-use goals,
- adaptive approaches to land and resource use are required, recognizing that an approach appropriate for one area may not be appropriate for a different location,
- innovative ideas and practices are strongly encouraged and supported as part of a process of continuous improvement,
- opportunities for meaningful engagement must be provided to all potential users of public land and associated natural resources,
- timely and comprehensive information sharing is required to ensure all needs, perspectives and relevant data are identified,
- clear objectives with measurable outcomes need to be stated at the onset so that clear direction and goals can be established and communicated, performance can be assessed and processes can be improved upon as necessary, and
- successful management of public land depends on the collaborative commitment and actions of all participants.

ILM reduces the footprint of human uses on public land and associated natural resources. This means managing the impact of human use on economic (industrial, commercial), social (recreational, aesthetic) or environmental (water, wildlife) values.

The Government of Alberta uses the Land-use Framework to plan land use in the province. As they are developed, Regional Plans will guide the use of land and resources. Land use decisions will also take into account cumulative effects and input from other planning processes (e.g., access management planning and municipal planning).

Key outcomes of an integrated approach to land management:

- Human-caused disturbance on the land is less than the disturbance that would have occurred without integration.
- A stewardship ethic is demonstrated by all land users.

Various plans (e.g., Industrial Access Plans, Annual Operating Agreements and Recreation Management Strategies) and processes (e.g., risk assessment and access management planning) that have been developed to manage public land use are tools that support ILM.

These tools use integrated approaches in their development and reflect integrated approaches in their application.

Example of a footprint on the landscape

ILM Principles

To successfully contribute to integrated approaches to land management, land users and managers should adopt and apply the following guiding principles as they plan or implement the life cycle of their activities:

- be comprehensive and balanced in their assessment of the values, benefits, risks, cumulative effects (environmental and socioeconomic) and trade-offs relevant to the operational scale being considered, while remaining focused on footprint reduction.
- be collaborative and inclusive, proactively seeking out timely engagement, sustained relationships and partnerships among participants.
- be responsible and accountable for their decisions and actions, which are underpinned and demonstrated by a stewardship ethic with regard to the maintenance of values associated with land and resources.
- be consistent with the direction provided through guiding policies, plans and decisions, and reflect this direction in their activities.
- be informed by knowledge and science. Information contributes to better understanding of the potential consequences of options, and provides the foundation for informed and prudent decisions.
- use adaptive management to continuously improve tools and processes, while identifying information gaps and other needs and seek to fill them.
- know the roles and responsibilities related to the achievement of ILM outcomes. These roles and responsibilities are transparent, clearly communicated to all land users and managers, and performed in a timely manner.
- respect the diverse values, interests, rights, and knowledge of ILM participants.

Who Contributes to ILM

Land managers and land users working together

Land managers and land users both contribute to integrated land management. Managers apply ILM when they evaluate and approve land uses. Land users apply ILM when they conduct activities on the landscape.

Several provincial departments, working cooperatively, are responsible for the management of public land. For example, provincial parks are managed under the *Provincial Parks Act* by Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. Public land used for industrial, commercial or other operations are managed under the *Public Lands Act* and the *Forests Act* by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. Provincial highways, corridors and related infrastructure are managed by Alberta Transportation under the *Alberta Public Highways Development Act*. Numerous other departments also are responsible for public land management.

Just as several Alberta Government departments have public land management responsibilities, land users also have different focuses or interests on public land.

- Government has a role in managing public land, allocating public land use and using land. Government has a responsibility to uphold ILM principles.
- Land users whose business depends on the landscape are responsible for engaging with other land users when overlapping or shared land uses occur. They should use ILM principles while looking for ways to share their footprint.
- Members of the public also use public land, primarily for recreation. They are responsible for contributing to ILM by being aware of where to recreate, by practising good land stewardship and by respecting the land.

What Triggers to Need for Planning in Support of ILM?

The need for ILM can be triggered whenever a land-related use (social, environmental or economic) overlaps or intersects another use on the same landscape. For example:

- A shoreland, the land at the edge of a lake, is of interest to many land users such as adjacent private land owners, those that need access to the water, and at the same time the health of the shoreland needs to be protected.
- Two or more industrial land users (e.g. forest harvesting and gas extraction) need the same surface land base to access their allocated resources.
- The landscape used by a forest harvesting operation is also used by recreationists, and the land may also have ecologically sensitive areas.

Oil and gas extraction is one of the competing land uses in Alberta.

The need for planning in support of ILM occurs on landscapes where several complex and competing values exist. In these areas, planning an activity or multiple activities is pursued using the ILM approach as a way to reduce the footprint while enabling the various values to co-exist.

A truly integrated planning effort results in land users who share the same landscape and land managers working together toward a common objective:

- To identify an existing footprint that can be shared, or
- To identify an old footprint that can be removed or reused, or
- If a new footprint is required, to coordinate its development to minimize the new footprint.

The objective: create less disturbance by working together than what would have occurred otherwise.

The scope, scale and geographic area covered in a planning effort can depend on the land managers' and land users' objectives or it may be driven by the Regional Plan developed under Alberta's Land-use Framework. The ILM approach is used in footprint planning regardless of whether it is for temporary or permanent access, industrial development (e.g., roads, pipelines, etc.), recreational, or other uses that impact the land base.

What Does Successful ILM Look Like?

Successful ILM happens when:

- We share the land
- We plan the use of our land together
- We build understanding through shared knowledge
- We practice stewardship

When planning activities or evaluating existing activities, land users should ask themselves, "Have I addressed these points to the best of my ability based on the scope and scale of my initiative?"

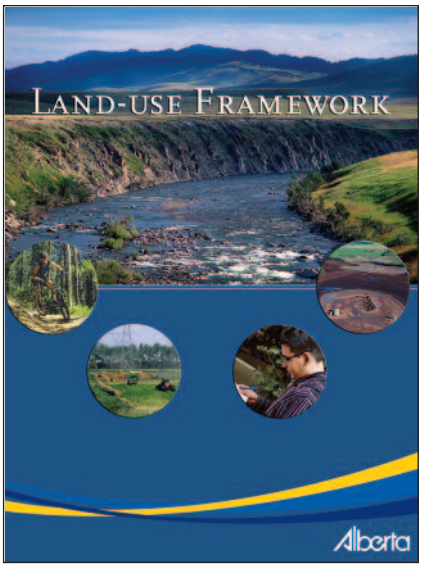
Land managers should ask themselves, "Has the land user satisfactorily addressed these points based on the scope and scale of the proposed activity?"

The following list illustrates the ILM approach.

- The proposed surface activity is aligned with key guiding government policies (including legislation and regulation) and plans (e.g., Regional Plans developed under the Land-use Framework, Water for Life, Biodiversity Action Plan, Integrated Resource Plans, Municipal Development Plans, etc.).
- All surface activities existing in the planning area, which may or may not be affected by the proposed new surface activity, have been identified.
  - Land users in the area affected by the proposed new activity have been identified and engaged, and their diverse interests, knowledge and values in the area have been considered.
  - Impacts on other land users have been identified and addressed.
- The proposal is generally supported by other land users. Where it isn't, concerns can be addressed in an acceptable manner.
- The activity's potential contributions to cumulative environmental, social, cultural and economic effects have been identified, and mitigation strategies proposed where appropriate.
  - Social and cultural values and needs (such as aesthetic, recreational, economic, environmental, educational, subsistence, biodiversity, historic/cultural, spiritual, wilderness and health) that will be affected throughout the life cycle of the activity have been identified, and it is shown how these effects will be addressed.

  - Resource values (such as water quality, fisheries, wildlife, biodiversity, air, vegetation, soils) that will be affected throughout the life cycle of the activity have been identified, and it is shown how these effects will be addressed.
  - Risks to the values in the area (such as disease, pests, fire, sour gas blowout, erosion, disturbance and pollution) have been identified, defined and assessed, and a management strategy has been proposed.
- The best available knowledge, data, information, science, processes and models have been used to support the proposed activity and will be used to minimize the present and future footprint.
- Footprint reduction will be achieved through integration with other land users and activities on the landscape.
- The proposed activity demonstrates stewardship.
- The life cycle of the activity, including reclamation activities upon closure, has been anticipated.
- Anticipated potential future uses and interests can be accommodated during the life of the activity and after the activity has been concluded.
- During the proposed activity, ongoing monitoring is a part of the project plan; data will be analyzed to find ways to improve management.
- There is a mechanism for feedback to make changes because adaptive management is part of the project plan.

Working Towards ILM



Integrated land management is the strategic, planned approach to the way we use land. It is aimed at land managers and land users to reduce their collective footprint.

ILM is already occurring successfully on Alberta's landscape. Whether it is engaging a community in coal bed methane development or planning shared access corridors with forestry and energy companies, ILM is shaping land use. To find out more about projects that successfully demonstrate ILM in action, go to www.srd.gov.ab.ca/ilm.

By working together, we can reduce our impact on the land. We can share responsibility for the land base and work toward a shared future.

Glossary

Annual Operating Agreement
An agreement between the land manager for public land (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development) and a forestry company regarding harvesting plans in a specified area.

Cumulative Effects
The combined effects of past, present and reasonably foreseeable land-use activities over time on economic, social and environmental values.

Footprint
The surface area of land disturbed from its natural condition by human activity and the associated impact to or on related natural resources.

Industrial Access Plan
A plan to identify and co-ordinate access for industry to an area.

Managing the footprint
Any of a host of actions related to or associated with planning, regulating, reducing, minimizing, reclaiming or otherwise addressing the footprint resulting from the use of public land.

Outcome
A desired result.

Public land
Land owned by the provincial government, which makes decisions about how it is used and managed for uses including agriculture, forestry, resource development, habitat conservation and protection of watersheds and biodiversity.

Stewardship
An ethic whereby citizens, industry, communities and governments work together to responsibly care for and manage Alberta's natural resources and environment.