

Business Plan 2018–21

Environment and Parks

Accountability Statement

This business plan was prepared under my direction, taking into consideration the government's policy decisions as of March 7, 2018.

original signed by

Shannon Phillips, Minister

Ministry Overview

The ministry consists of the Department of Environment and Parks, the Climate Change and Emissions Management Fund, Energy Efficiency Alberta, the Land Stewardship Fund, and the Natural Resources Conservation Board. Within the department's budget, funding is provided for the Land Use Secretariat, the Environmental Appeals Board, and the Public Lands Appeal Board. The Climate Change Office functions within the ministry to coordinate implementation of Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan in collaboration with other ministries.

Six delegated administrative organizations, which are accountable to the minister, are the Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Professional Outfitters Society, Alberta Recycling Management Authority, Alberta Used Oil Management Association, Beverage Container Management Board, and Emissions Reduction Alberta.

Albertans are proud of the province's environment, natural resources, and provincial parks and protected areas system. Alberta's vision is for a healthy and clean province where Albertans are leaders in environmental conservation and protection, enjoy sustainable economic prosperity and a great quality of life. Environment and Parks works to protect and enhance Alberta's environment and ecosystems to ensure a sustainable future, making life better for Albertans. Integration between government departments and agencies, boards and commissions is vital to managing development pressures on the landscape and expectations from Albertans for responsible resource development. The ministry works with Albertans, Indigenous communities and stakeholders to ensure the province's environmental, social and economic outcomes for the future are met. Strategic partnerships such as the Integrated Resource Management System Secretariat, provide collaborative forums to leverage resources, capacity and a shared responsibility for environmental stewardship. The Government of Alberta is committed to implementing the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* consistent with the Canadian Constitution and Alberta law. The ministry engages Albertans to listen and understand the challenges in ensuring Alberta's natural resources are managed using innovative and responsible approaches. To ensure the sustainability of Alberta's air, land, water and biodiversity, all Albertans need to play a strong role.

A more detailed description of Environment and Parks and its programs and initiatives can be found at www.aep.alberta.ca and www.alberta.ca/climate.aspx.

Strategic Context

The outcomes and key strategies identified in this business plan are aligned with and support the Government of Alberta strategic direction. Alberta is famous for its diverse ecologically rich natural regions (Boreal Forests, Canadian Shield, Grasslands, Parklands, Foothills and Rocky Mountains) that offer a range of outdoor recreational opportunities to residents and visitors. Alberta's provincial parks and protected system offers areas ranging from developed recreation areas supporting nature-based outdoor recreational experiences to pristine wilderness areas that

preserve natural landscapes, ecological processes and biological diversity. These areas also provide opportunities for heritage appreciation and tourism. Albertans have told their government to protect the province's environmental health and integrity, as well as the public's health and safety from environmental conditions and events. This includes opportunities to sustainably develop natural resources and adapt and respond to natural disasters. Alberta will diversify its economy and create new jobs without sacrificing its air, land, water, and biodiversity. The province plays a key role in providing strategic science-based knowledge, policies and regulations that guide how activities can sustainably take place. The Government of Alberta is committed to ensuring human activities are balanced with the need to protect biodiversity, sensitive fish and wildlife habitats, watersheds, and drinking water.

Alberta continues to collaborate with its government partners to align implementation of the Climate Leadership Plan with the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan has protected Albertans by ensuring solutions are not imposed on the province by the federal government. The Plan is making life better for Albertans by supporting jobs, creating new sustainable industries and reducing emissions to improve Albertans' health and communities' well-being. These measures help reduce risks and costs, prevent damage and allow Alberta to be a leader in innovation, technology and clean jobs.

The Government of Alberta works closely with Indigenous peoples, federal and local governments, neighbouring jurisdictions, industry and Albertans to collectively respond to changing ecological and socio-economic climates. In particular, Indigenous peoples in Alberta have been stewards of the land for countless generations. First Nations and Métis play a vital role in cooperative management, creating employment and economic opportunities for the entire province. Albertans want access to premium outdoor experiences, where natural landscapes are protected and the economy can grow and diversify. Our province is not only one of traditions, achievements, culture and experiences; it is rich in possibilities. By showcasing these possibilities to the world, Alberta creates a positive image of the province around the world and contributes to the social well-being of Albertans.

Environment and Parks works collaboratively to support the Government of Alberta's efforts in advancing gender equality. Gender equality is intrinsically linked to social and economic growth and is vital to realization of human rights for all. The ministry has adopted Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) and established a Centre of Responsibility to assess the gender and diversity implications of engagement processes, policies, programs and initiatives.

Outcomes, Key Strategies and Performance Measures

Outcome One: Environment and ecosystem health and integrity

Albertans care about the health and integrity of their environment and ecosystems, and the ministry is committed to supporting that need. Productive relationships and partnerships are required to achieve clean air, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, quality water, sustainable water supplies, productive and sustainable lands, conserved natural landscapes, protected areas and ecosystem services. The ministry works with partners to conserve landscapes representative of Alberta's natural regions and ecosystems that protect biodiversity and provide habitat for common, vulnerable, and endangered species.

Leadership and direction to achieve the desired outcomes are provided through legislation, policy, regional plans and frameworks supported by engagement, education, outreach, authorizations, monitoring and compliance programs. Examples of ongoing ministry initiatives include: incenting economy wide greenhouse gas emission reductions; undertaking biodiversity and landscape management actions such as identifying and recovering species at risk; and enabling the Land Trust Grant Program and the Land Purchase Program to help address habitat fragmentation, maintain biodiversity and preserve intact landscapes. The ministry provides an environmental stewardship framework based on planning and policy, and then regulates natural resource access, allocation and use. To protect and conserve Alberta's environment and ecosystem health and integrity it is essential for all users to comply with limits, standards and requirements to enable Alberta to meet the environmental, economic, and social needs for present and future generations.

Key Strategies:

- 1.1 Continued coordination of Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan implementation through collaboration between the Climate Change Office and ministries by:
 - phasing out emissions from coal-fired sources of electricity and developing cleaner sources of energy generation;
 - implementing a carbon levy on fuels that emit greenhouse gas and invest in economic diversification, energy efficiency programs and infrastructure that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, for example the Calgary Light Rail Transit Green Line;
 - implementing a legislated oil sands emission limit; and
 - employing a new methane emission reduction plan.
- 1.2 Continue collaborative development and implementation of regional plans under *Alberta's Land-use Framework* including:
 - developing or completing sub-regional air, land, water, biodiversity and recreational use frameworks and management plans that include cumulative effects triggers and thresholds for priority areas; and
 - developing, implementing and revising landscape level species recovery plans and ecosystem plans, including caribou range plans and associated landscape recovery actions.
- 1.3 Enhance the Alberta Parks system by:
 - implementing Alberta's response to "Pathway to Canada Target 1 – Achieving Canada Target 1 in Alberta" to conserve 17 per cent of Alberta's terrestrial area and inland waters;
 - advancing co-operative management of Alberta's Parks with Indigenous peoples; and
 - developing new Alberta Parks capital infrastructure and investing in maintenance and renewal of existing Alberta Parks infrastructure.
- 1.4 Implement higher scientific standards and expanded provincial monitoring efforts to assess and report on Alberta's ambient environmental conditions and trends including:
 - implementing a multi-year strategic science plan;
 - developing and implementing a multiple evidence-based approach to knowledge co-production between Indigenous and scientific knowledge systems; and
 - developing, supporting and growing community based monitoring and citizen science programs.
- 1.5 Implement higher environmental standards for air, land, water and biodiversity by addressing issues through a variety of tools (e.g., policies, regulations, frameworks, strategies, plans, programs, reviews, recommendations).

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Target 2020-21
1.a Priced greenhouse gas emissions: • Percentage of priced provincial CO ₂ equivalent emissions ¹	45% (2015)	70%	70%	70%
1.b Protected and conserved areas: • Percentage of recognized protected or conserved areas of Alberta ²	12.5% (2016-17)	16.0%	16.5%	17.0%

Notes:

¹ Targets for this three-year business plan are based on legislation and regulation changes with anticipated pricing coverage increasing from 45 per cent in 2015 to 70 per cent in 2018 and 2019. The expiry of the carbon levy exemption for upstream oil and gas and the full application of the Carbon Competitiveness Incentive Regulation will contribute towards a target of 90 per cent in 2023. The results reported are based on a 2-year reporting lag time, and will be compared to corresponding targets for that year.

- ² This measure includes, as progress towards the achievement of Canada Target 1 of at least 17 per cent by 2020, protected areas that meet the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition, national and provincial conserved areas that align with the IUCN definition of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measure (OECM). Although other areas, such as areas under municipal or private management, may meet the definition of a protected area or an OECM, they are currently excluded from this measure as data is not complete. They are estimated to represent less than 0.25 per cent of the 17 per cent target.

Linking Performance Measures to Outcomes:

- 1.a Priced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions performance measure tracks progress toward pricing a broader range of provincial GHG emissions, extending from carbon pricing based only on emissions intensity limits for large final emitters to an economy-wide price on combustion fuels. Emissions pricing systems are understood to be an effective and efficient means of reducing emissions. Pricing coverage increases the breadth of reductions pursued and will ultimately help achieve reduced GHG emissions in Alberta. Environmental and ecosystem health and integrity is impacted by GHG emissions as they are a major contributor to climate change.
- 1.b Protected and conserved areas contribute to biodiversity and provision of ecosystem services such as water quality and quantity, air purification, and nutrient recycling. Protected areas are recognized as essential mechanisms to improve biodiversity worldwide and are the cornerstone governments must rely on to achieve biodiversity conservation objectives. This performance measure tracks progress toward Environment and Parks, and Alberta, meeting its commitment to Canada Target 1 of the 2020 Biodiversity Goals and Targets. The goal is to achieve at least 17 per cent of Canada's terrestrial area and inland waters in networks of protected areas and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECM).

Performance Indicators	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)
1.a Provincial air quality index: • Percentage of good air quality days in urban areas based on Alberta's ambient air quality objectives for fine particulate matter, ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide ¹	96.7% (2012)	96.4% (2013)	96.6% (2014)	95.0% (2015)	97.0% (2016)
	Good air quality days				
1.b Species at risk: • Percentage of vertebrate species including mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish designated as 'at risk' ²			3.4% (2005)	3.7% (2010)	4.2% (2015)
1.c Total greenhouse gas emissions: • Total million tonnes of CO ₂ equivalent (greenhouse gas) emitted from source categories ³	246 (2011)	260 (2012)	272 (2013)	276 (2014)	274 (2015)
1.d Municipal solid waste to landfills: • Kilograms of municipal solid waste, per capita, disposed of in landfills ⁴	691 (2012)	911 (2013)	669 (2014)	661 (2015)	565 (2016)
1.e Transboundary waters outflow obligations: • Number of inter-provincial and international transboundary rivers for which Alberta delivers its river water quantity outflow obligations, out of the total number of outflow obligations ⁵	7 out of 7 (2012)	7 out of 7 (2013)	7 out of 7 (2014)	6 out of 7 (2015)	7 out of 7 (2016)
	Transboundary outflow obligations met				

Notes:

- ¹ The Air Quality Index reflects the overall provincial air quality based on ambient air quality objectives of five major pollutants: fine particulate matter, ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide. The Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards focus on long-term ambient levels of fine particulate matter and ozone resulting from human activity in the province's six air zones and complement the Air Quality Index by guiding air quality management actions.

- 2 Species at risk data are provided by universities, colleges and expert biologists, and are assessed by the provincial government against established criteria. Results are reported once every five years as committed to as a signatory of the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk in Canada.
- 3 Greenhouse gas emissions have a two year reporting lag period. The following table demonstrates the forecasted impacts of the Climate Leadership Plan, and potential reductions from research and innovation.

Year and Considered Policy/Economic Expectations	Reported Results			Forecasted Results							
	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022	2024	2026	2028	2030
2014 Government of Canada Emissions Trends	241	260	274	277	282	287	297	306	312	315	317
2017 Economic Trends and Federal Climate Policies, 2014 Alberta Policies (No CLP)*	241	260	274	274	285	286	289	296	296	297	293
2017 Policy and Economic Expectations (with CLP)*	241	260	274	273	267	270	264	256	255	255	254
2017 Policy and Economic Expectations (with CLP)* plus Potential Reductions from Innovations	241	260	274	273	267	268	256	243	235	229	222

* Includes Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan and federal climate policies.

- 4 The 2013 actual is not reflective of historical trends due to the Southern Alberta floods.
- 5 Interim data from administrative bodies have been used to populate 2015 and 2016 results.

Outcome Two: Sustainable economic diversification

Albertans wish to generate economic diversification through a green economy that improves human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological imbalances. This includes growth in income and employment driven by public and private investments that reduce carbon emissions and pollution, enhance energy and resource use efficiency, and prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Investing in a diversified and greener economy through utilization of green spaces and diversification of land use will expand rural economies and their sustainability. The Government of Alberta will utilize policy, regulations and economic instruments to enable an economy that promotes investment and development by Albertans in green sectors such as waste, water, renewable energy, ecotourism and outdoor recreation. The provincial agency, Energy Efficiency Alberta, exemplifies this by providing programs and services to help Albertans save money and energy, while lowering Alberta's carbon footprint and developing micro-generation, small scale energy systems and an energy efficiency services industry in Alberta. The development of a green economy promotes the government's desire to sustain and advance economic, environmental and social well-being now and into the future.

Key Strategies:

- 2.1 Through the Climate Change Office and in collaboration with other ministries and Energy Efficiency Alberta implement energy efficiency initiatives.
- 2.2 Support economic investment opportunities focused on environmental conservation and green jobs.
- 2.3 Complete review of public land utilization and fees, and implement accepted recommendations.
- 2.4 Continue to develop and implement opportunities for revenue generation, partnerships and program financial sustainability within the Alberta Parks system.
- 2.5 Participate in collaborative development of a Castle Region Tourism/Economic Development Strategy.

Performance Measure(s) under Development:

Performance measure(s) are under development that reflect progress toward achieving sustainable economic diversification through nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation on public lands and provincial parks and protected areas.

Outcome Three: Social well-being

Albertans love the province and wish to maximize the social benefits and social equity a high quality natural environment provides. To complement the overall mental and physical health benefits derived from a healthy environment and ecosystem, the ministry manages Alberta's Parks system land base, facilities and infrastructure, and access to public lands. Opportunities are provided for Albertans and visitors to explore natural landscapes, engage in nature-based experiences or outdoor recreational activities, and learn about Alberta's natural heritage through the ministry's many educational, interpretative and experiential programs. Additional outdoor recreational activities are provided through management of water reservoirs and fish hatcheries. These interactions enhance social well-being and quality of life while contributing to the provincial green economy through Alberta's recreation and tourism industry. To ensure these opportunities are available to future generations, the ministry works with Albertans including Indigenous populations, to protect and conserve the province's air, land, water and biodiversity.

Key Strategies:

- 3.1 Enhance Alberta Parks system through continuous improvement of park operations and implementation of the Alberta Parks' Inclusion Strategy and Visitor Experience Strategy.
- 3.2 Implement and expand community based monitoring pilots and citizen science programs to enhance public understanding and increase participation.
- 3.3 Enhance public and key stakeholder environmental literacy programs for responsible stewardship and healthy living.
- 3.4 Implement a recreation management strategy for public lands that fosters outdoor recreation planning, management, development and nature-based tourism.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Target 2020-21
3.a Hunting wildlife certificate and Canadian sportfishing licence sales ¹ :				
• Percentage of Albertans who have a hunting wildlife certificate	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%
• Percentage of Albertans who have a Canadian sportfishing licence	7.1% (2016)	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%
3.b Alberta Parks visitation				
• Percentage of Albertans who visited an Alberta Parks location in the last 12 months	36.5% (2016-17)	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%
3.c Alberta Parks visitor satisfaction				
• Percentage of Albertans who visited an Alberta Parks location in the last 12 months and are satisfied with the quality of services and facilities	91.2% (2016-17)	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%

Note:

¹ The measure description has been amended to more accurately reflect the calculation.

Linking Performance Measures to Outcomes:

- 3.a Nature-based activities provide social and economic benefits to Albertans and foster communities that are engaged in environmental stewardship and responsible use of nature. The ministry issues hunting and fishing licences which provide opportunities for Albertans to engage in hunting and fishing and to connect with nature while developing an appreciation and respect for the outdoors and wildlife. Licensing also provides revenue for wilderness development and outdoor recreation management and has direct tourism and economic benefits.
- 3.b Albertans and visitors to Alberta's provincial parks and protected areas system have opportunities for enjoyable and safe experiences in nature and a variety of nature-based outdoor recreation activities, which contributes to overall social well-being and resiliency.

- 3.c The park visitor satisfaction performance measure tracks progress toward Albertans' satisfaction with the ministry's delivery of Alberta's provincial parks and protected areas system, infrastructure, and operating facilities. Targets for this performance measure reflect an increased emphasis on Alberta parks facilities and services and an expectation that this emphasis and investment will result in increased levels of visitor satisfaction.

Outcome Four: Protected public health and safety from environmental conditions and events

Scientific evidence indicates the frequency and severity of catastrophic events like floods, fires and drought is expected to increase due to climate change. The ministry helps protect Albertans through delivery of the Climate Leadership Plan and significant investments for flood protection and resilience. The Climate Leadership Plan will significantly reduce air pollution from generation of electricity by phasing out coal-fired emissions and transitioning to cleaner sources of electricity by 2030.

Environment and Parks continues to work with other ministries and agencies to assure the public is prepared for and protected from the adverse effects of environmental conditions and events. This includes regulation of drinking water facilities requiring an approval or registration under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*; flood hazard mapping, forecasting, recovery and mitigation by water infrastructure operations management; problem wildlife management; flood and drought adaptation funding and enhanced flow monitoring. Collaborative efforts by Albertans including municipalities and First Nations and Métis are key to assure protected public health and safety and to build community resilience to the impacts of catastrophic events.

Key Strategies:

- 4.1 Develop and implement policy, plans and programs to anticipate and minimize impacts of catastrophic events including floods, droughts, invasive species and human-wildlife conflicts.
- 4.2 Complete upgrade of capital infrastructure in the Alberta Parks system and other public lands.
- 4.3 Develop and implement a ministry emergency management plan and continuity plan to enhance preparedness.
- 4.4 Implement a water management strategy for safe and quality drinking water for Albertans and Indigenous communities.
- 4.5 Monitor and report on the changes in environmental conditions with the potential to effect health and safety related to climate change, catastrophic events, and declining air and water quality.

Performance Measure(s) under Development:

Performance measure(s) are under development that reflect progress toward achieving protected public health and safety from environmental conditions and events.

Risks to Achieving Outcomes

Environment and Parks identifies and manages key strategic risks that may influence or impact the ministry's ability to achieve outcomes and implement key strategies. The following represent risks to ongoing work:

- Responding and adapting to future climate scenarios, including extreme events, climate variability, and biodiversity changes, is a risk that affects all ministries. Environment and Parks will work closely with the Alberta Climate Change Office to implement the government's Climate Leadership Plan.
- Demonstrating cohesive and integrated resource management through collaboration with Indigenous peoples, other governments, industry and other stakeholders will be a critical component to ensure shared responsibility in sustainable resource development and management of cumulative effects.
- Albertans expect clear and accurate information on environmental issues. Environment and Parks must ensure communications are timely and consistent to meet this expectation.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable			2018-19 Estimate	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Budget	2017-18 Forecast			
REVENUE						
Internal Government Transfers	1,354	78,181	78,986	126,729	37,065	33,636
Transfers from Government of Canada	1,531	4,966	3,073	29,074	50,192	29,139
Investment Income	3,574	439	4,445	4,507	4,524	5,541
Premiums, Fees and Licences	114,146	119,621	127,578	127,253	127,830	128,424
Climate Change and Emissions Management Fund	160,414	196,000	206,000	537,000	645,000	972,000
Other Revenue	53,451	90,036	88,440	85,281	86,714	83,848
Ministry Total	334,470	489,243	508,522	909,844	951,325	1,252,588
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(1,378)	(93,154)	(93,959)	(141,547)	(51,883)	(48,454)
Consolidated Total	333,092	396,089	414,563	768,297	899,442	1,204,134
EXPENSE						
Ministry Support Services	59,412	68,604	70,620	65,042	64,547	63,235
Air	23,892	17,276	17,684	18,867	19,063	18,588
Land	54,241	52,088	51,790	58,789	57,677	56,881
Water	73,360	155,261	209,055	108,275	137,329	136,797
Fish and Wildlife	29,006	45,349	45,438	54,821	46,343	45,917
Integrated Planning	35,298	37,499	37,655	36,201	36,344	35,698
Parks	98,855	102,900	108,903	106,634	112,031	120,213
Land Use Secretariat	4,699	10,263	10,269	6,134	6,174	5,987
Science and Monitoring	64,616	75,798	74,080	82,264	83,695	80,519
Climate Leadership Plan	93,151	453,963	353,056	300,156	372,894	497,248
Quasi-Judicial Bodies	15,533	9,324	17,531	9,068	9,103	8,950
2013 Alberta Flooding	94,684	20,050	16,470	13,309	4,475	5,571
Ministry Total	646,747	1,048,375	1,012,551	859,560	949,675	1,075,604
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(651)	(15,323)	(15,633)	(23,768)	(15,168)	(15,168)
Consolidated Total	646,096	1,033,052	996,918	835,792	934,507	1,060,436
Net Operating Result	(313,004)	(636,963)	(582,355)	(67,495)	(35,065)	143,698
CAPITAL INVESTMENT						
Ministry Support Services	1,871	3,425	4,100	2,725	3,152	2,875
Land	3,260	5,602	5,784	5,602	5,602	5,602
Water	-	73,127	73,127	122,375	32,284	29,132
Fish and Wildlife	9	9,027	5,527	10,057	5,433	3,662
Integrated Planning	7	-	-	-	-	-
Parks	25,970	47,932	48,422	37,932	42,932	42,932
Science and Monitoring	2,089	1,000	3,900	1,000	1,000	1,000
Climate Leadership Plan	-	118,247	13	-	-	-
Quasi-Judicial Bodies	-	17	17	17	17	17
2013 Alberta Flooding	33,873	44,533	13,256	8,378	-	-
Ministry Total	67,079	302,910	154,146	188,086	90,420	85,220
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	-	(76,127)	(76,932)	(124,675)	(35,011)	(31,582)
Consolidated Total	67,079	226,783	77,214	63,411	55,409	53,638