

# Coal Policy Engagement

## Initial engagement survey results

As a first step in the Coal Policy Engagement process, an initial survey opened on March 29 and closed on April 19, 2021. The survey results will help inform the Coal Policy Committee's engagement activities. The committee is responsible for ensuring all Albertans have the opportunity to be involved in the engagement process.

There was a high level of interest in the survey, with almost 25,000 responses. Responses came from across the province, with the majority from southern and central Alberta. Responses were also received from all age groups.

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### RESPONSES BY REGION

Region	Responses
Central	8,807
Northeast	403
Northwest	589
South	13,829
N/A	1,124
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,752</b>

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### RESPONSES BY AGE GROUP

Age group	Responses
Under 18	113
18-24	1,051
25-34	4,526
35-44	5,462
45-54	3,844
55-64	4,423
Over 65	3,794
Prefer not to say	1,212
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,425</b>

## Summary

- The majority of respondents feel the management of the province's coal resources affect them.
- "Environmental impacts of coal development" and "if and where coal development takes place" were ranked by respondents as the most important issues when discussing Alberta's coal policy.
- The majority of respondents feel that there are areas of the province that are not appropriate for coal development, while almost one-third of respondents say that there are areas of the province where development could be appropriate.
- Albertans would like to participate in the engagement process through additional online surveys and virtual meetings.
- Respondents want to learn more about the approval processes for exploration and development, as well as the coal categories, which dictate where and how coal leasing, exploration and development can occur.
- The majority of respondents expressed concerns about coal exploration and development.

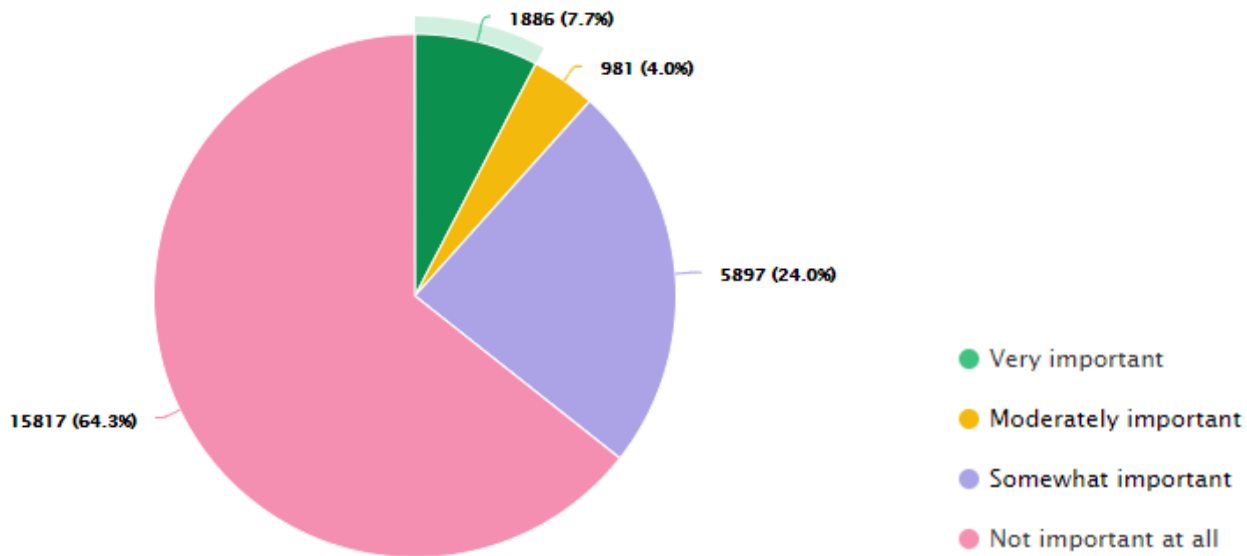
## Impacts of coal development

The majority of respondents felt that the management of Alberta’s coal resources affected them, with more than 70 per cent indicating it had a major effect on them.

Respondents described effects such as coal mining impacts on water, air, environment, health, wildlife and their ability to enjoy outdoor activities. They also expressed concern about liability for clean-up and contamination, and the impact of this on future generations.

When asked how important they felt the economic benefits of coal development are to Alberta and its communities, 64 per cent of respondents felt it was not important at all.

### How important do you think the economic benefits of coal development are to Alberta and its communities?



## Familiarity with Alberta’s coal sector

Respondents indicated they are informed about Alberta’s coal sector. Many respondents indicated that they are familiar with the 1976 Coal Policy and coal categories, with 26 per cent “very familiar” and 56 per cent “somewhat familiar.” In general, respondents also felt familiar with coal exploration and development in Alberta. The majority of respondents indicated they were also familiar with the uses of metallurgical and thermal coal.

### HOW FAMILIAR ARE YOU WITH...

(in per cent)

	1976 Coal Policy	Coal categories	Coal exploration	Coal development
I don’t know	1	1	0	0
Not at all familiar	5	4	2	2
Not very familiar	13	13	11	10
Somewhat familiar	56	50	58	59
Very Familiar	26	31	29	29

## Issues related to Alberta's coal policy

Respondents are concerned about regulation of coal exploration and development. More than 85 per cent indicated they were not at all confident that coal exploration/development in Alberta is regulated to ensure it is safe, efficient, orderly, and environmentally responsible.

More than 90 per cent of respondents felt there are areas of the province that are not appropriate for coal exploration and development. Suggestions for restricted areas include:

- The Rockies and the foothills
- Wildlife corridors
- Areas near watersheds or major bodies of water
- Lands in Categories 1, 2 and 3
- Recreational areas
- Ecologically sensitive areas
- Areas in close proximity to residential areas
- Areas in close proximity to farms

There were also suggestions that no areas of the province are appropriate for coal exploration and development.

Approximately 30 per cent of respondents felt exploration and development may be appropriate for some areas of the province. Suggestions for appropriate areas include:

- Lands in Categories 3 and 4
- Areas not in proximity to a watershed
- Existing mine sites
- Areas that do not affect First Nations lands/Métis settlements
- Lands that have no other use
- Areas not prone to drought
- Northern areas with low population
- Only areas with metallurgical coal

Respondents ranked a series of options to indicate what they considered most important when discussing Alberta's coal policy. Of highest importance were the environmental impacts of coal development, followed by if and where coal development takes place. Regulatory oversight, enforcement and approval processes were also highly ranked.

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### **MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES WHEN DISCUSSING ALBERTA'S COAL POLICY**

(from most important to least important)

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Ranked score</b>
Environmental impacts of coal development	1.97
If and where coal development takes place in Alberta (e.g. coal categories)	2.99
Regulatory oversight and enforcement for coal exploration	4.42
Approval processes for coal exploration	4.54
Regulatory oversight and enforcement for coal development	4.65
Approval processes for coal development	4.9
Providing an understanding of local and economic community impacts	5.47
Economic impacts of coal development	6.49

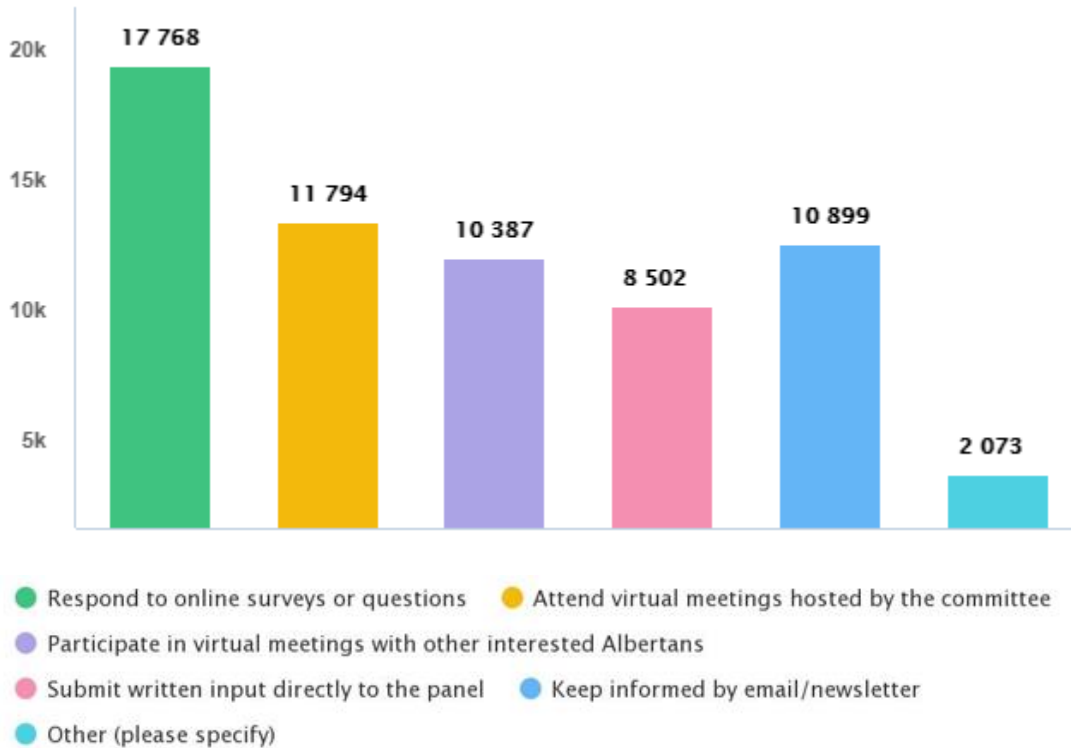
Respondents provided many suggestions on other important issues that should be discussed. The most common suggestions related to the impacts of coal development on water. Other issues included:

- Whether any surface development should be allowed
- Intergenerational issues such as industry sustainability, long-lasting contamination concerns and health impacts
- Future liability for clean-up and reclamation

## Engaging with the Coal Policy Committee

Respondents were interested in several options to continue to engage with the committee, including a subsequent survey, participation in virtual meetings, and providing input directly to the committee.

### How would you like to engage with the committee during this engagement?



Suggestions on ways to engage with the Coal Policy Committee include:

- Town halls
- Public hearings
- Posting written submissions online

### Topics of interest

Respondents identified a number of topics they would like to become more familiar with to support their participation in the engagement process. Most commonly mentioned were the approval processes for coal exploration and development, followed closely by the coal categories.

**Aspects of the 1976 Coal Policy or regulation of coal development that respondents want to become more familiar with before participating in future engagement.**

