

# Ministry of Environment and Parks

## 2025/26 – 2027/28 Service Plan

March 2025



For more information on the Ministry of Environment and Parks contact:

PO BOX 9335  
STN PROV GOVT  
VICTORIA, B.C.  
V8W 9M1

1-800-663-7867

Or visit our website at

<https://www.gov.bc.ca/ENV>

Published by the Ministry of Environment and Parks

## 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tamara Davidson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

## Table of Contents

Minister's Accountability Statement .....	3
Strategic Direction.....	5
Purpose of the Ministry.....	5
Performance Planning .....	6
Appendix A: Minister Mandate Letter.....	12

## 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) <sup>1</sup>	506	480	470	460	450

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

<sup>1</sup> 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 <sup>1,2</sup> – Percentage of legislated timelines met within the environmental assessment processes, excluding proponent requested delays. <sup>1,2</sup>	91%	90%	90%	90%	90%

Data source: EPIC.track

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 <sup>1</sup>	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Environmental Protection	31,989	32,480	32,480	32,480
Conservation and Recreation Division	100,741	101,180	101,215	101,215
Executive and Support Services	28,529	28,750	28,750	28,750
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>161,259</b>	<b>162,410</b>	<b>162,445</b>	<b>162,445</b>
Park Enhancement Fund	12,989	13,033	13,033	13,033
Sustainable Environment Fund	26,135	28,690	28,690	28,690
<b>Total</b>	<b>200,383</b>	<b>204,133</b>	<b>204,168</b>	<b>204,168</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>				
Executive and Support Services	44,686	32,556	32,556	32,556
Park Enhancement Fund	400	400	400	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,086</b>	<b>32,956</b>	<b>32,956</b>	<b>32,956</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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 <sup>1</sup>	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Environmental Assessment Office	17,074	17,343	17,343	17,343
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,074</b>	<b>17,343</b>	<b>17,343</b>	<b>17,343</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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



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.

.../2

- **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.

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.

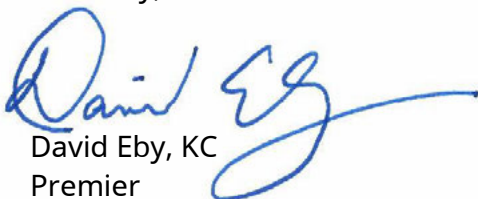
We have an obligation to protect and defend British Columbians, as well as seize opportunities, in these uncertain times.

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