

# Business Plan

2023-24

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

*Saskatchewan!* 

# Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable Dana Skoropad  
Ministry of Environment*

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I am pleased to present the Ministry of Environment Business Plan for 2023-24.

*Saskatchewan's Growth Plan: The Next Decade of Growth 2020-30* envisions 1.4 million people living in the province by 2030. With this goal in mind, the ministry is making progress on many fronts to ensure that the people of our province have a healthy, resilient environment to call home.

In November 2022, the Output-Based Performance Standards (OBPS) Program received approval from the federal government. This is a made-in-Saskatchewan carbon pricing system on industrial emitters in the province. The program will save Saskatchewan industries (and the jobs and families they support) an estimated \$3.7 billion between now and 2030 compared to the federal carbon pricing benchmark.

Regulated emitters will have the option to pay into the Saskatchewan Technology Fund, creating incentives for industry to develop and implement technologies that contribute to meaningful reductions in greenhouse gas emissions intensity.

I'm proud to note that the ministry will continue other important work, including:

- Reducing and managing solid waste and ensuring the province is resilient to the effects of climate change.
- Addressing fish and wildlife diseases with a collaborative, multisectoral One Health approach, balancing and optimizing the health of people, animals and the environment and recognizing the interconnection between them.
- Sustainably growing the province's natural resource economy.
- Finalizing the Habitat Management Plan and continuing the implementation of the Framework for the Prevention and Management of Invasive Species in Saskatchewan.
- Developing a comprehensive, clear and transparent regulation and enforcement structure to ensure industry partners can operate and grow, while also protecting environmental outcomes.

We know we can't do this work alone. We look forward to collaborating with partners, including Indigenous communities, to ensure that the programs and policies developed to conserve the province's biodiversity and resilience will work for everyone.

With many challenges come many opportunities – I look forward to seeing this work evolve and continue over the next year, and to seeing these actions contribute to a Stronger Saskatchewan.



# 2023-24 Budget Highlights

<b>1</b>	The ministry's proposed 2023-24 expense budget is \$95.311 million, an increase of 2.9 per cent.
<b>2</b>	The ministry will spend \$400,000 to continue accelerating the Forest Resource Inventory project, in support of the Growth Plan goal of doubling the growth of the Saskatchewan forestry sector, by allowing the ministry to better estimate timber volumes and susceptibility to natural disturbances.
<b>3</b>	A total of \$5.1 million is proposed in the budget to continue support for the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund.
<b>4</b>	IT capital funding of \$2.8 million is allocated to continue the modernization of customer service business applications.
<b>5</b>	The annual grant provided for SARCAN recycling will increase by \$2.0 million as a result of environmental handling charges collected in 2021-22.
<b>6</b>	The budget includes \$1.8 million to support species at risk, including \$250,000 for conservation actions in the South of the Divide and greater sage-grouse critical habitat, offset through Environment and Climate Change Canada. This project will help further implement a made in Saskatchewan multiple species approach to managing threatened species.
<b>7</b>	A new wolf hunting licence will be introduced as an add-on to the non-resident outfitter big game hunting licence to help support the industry and to provide greater opportunities for Saskatchewan outfitters.
<b>8</b>	To help fulfill the Government of Saskatchewan's commitment to ensure abandoned mines no longer pose risks to the public and environment, the ministry will undertake post-remediation monitoring and maintenance at the abandoned mine site southwest of Creighton.
<b>9</b>	The ministry will continue to make progress on the Solid Waste Management Strategy implementing new Saskatchewan Environmental Code chapters for transfer stations and compost facilities.
<b>10</b>	Regulations and standards on the Output-Based Performance Standards Program will be finalized and streamlined. The Program will save industries in the province an estimated \$3.7 billion between now and 2030 compared to the federal carbon pricing benchmark.
<b>11</b>	A review of business processes will be undertaken to identify opportunities to support sustainable mineral exploration in Saskatchewan.

# Government Vision and Goals

## Saskatchewan's Vision

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**"...to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."**

>> Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

Saskatchewan's vision and three goals provide the strategic direction for organizations to align their programs and services to build a strong Saskatchewan.

All organizations will report on progress in their 2023-24 annual reports.

## Ministry of Environment Overview

### Mandate

The Ministry of Environment's role is to manage the health of Saskatchewan's environment in a responsible manner that supports sustainable growth through objective, transparent and informed decision-making and stewardship.

### Mission

We will manage and protect Saskatchewan's environment for the well-being of the province and its people.

### Vision

A healthy, resilient environment.

## Goal 1: Safe communities and a healthy environment.

Delivering on Saskatchewan's Growth Plan depends on a healthy environment, and the Ministry of Environment is proud to lead that work. Through our commitment to enhance the health of the environment, we are strategically reducing and managing solid waste and ensuring the province is resilient to the effects of climate change. A made-in-Saskatchewan industrial emissions pricing system and a sustainable, integrated solid waste management system tailored to the unique needs of our province will protect the environment, increase innovation and help build a stronger economy. Taking a One Health approach to fish and wildlife diseases and a comprehensive view to protecting the environment further demonstrate the ministry's commitment to strong and safe communities.

**Strategy:** *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Coordinate the development and implementation of provincial policies to support sustainable growth and enhance Saskatchewan's overall resilience to the effects of climate change.

**Key Actions:** *What we will do to get there*

- Explore opportunity to renew the *Prairie Resilience* climate strategy and resilience measurement framework.
- Implement new Output-Based Performance Standards (OBPS) Program regulations for a provincial carbon pricing system on industrial emitters in the province.
- Build flexible and streamlined programs and regulatory compliance mechanisms, including the Saskatchewan Technology Fund.

**Strategy:** *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Implement the Solid Waste Management Strategy to improve the health of Saskatchewan's people and environment, as well as attract investment into the province through new growth opportunities.

**Key Actions:** *What we will do to get there*

- Lead collaboration to implement the Solid Waste Management Strategy commitments, including:
  - Explore regulatory options for materials identified in the Canada-Wide Action Plan for Extended Producer Responsibility.
  - Continue to work with Indigenous Services Canada and the Ministry of Government Relations on the development of northern regional landfills.
  - Continue to implement *The Household Packaging and Paper Stewardship Program Regulations*.
  - Continue to work with other jurisdictions to implement action plans in support of the Canada-wide Strategy on Zero Plastic Waste through the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.
  - Participate in and support the work of the Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee and integrate its recommendations into the strategy.
  - Implement Saskatchewan Environmental Code chapters for transfer stations and composting facilities.

- Draft new regulations to modernize solid waste management.

**Strategy:** *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Identify, prevent and mitigate risks to human health and safety through comprehensive plans and regulations.

**Key Actions:** *What we will do to get there*

- Continue the One Health program with the ministries of Agriculture and Health to identify and respond to emerging fish and wildlife diseases.
- Continue to evaluate risks, and develop corrective action plans at priority non-uranium abandoned mine sites. Conduct public safety assessments of abandoned mine sites.
- Continue to collaborate with the air zone associations and industry to develop and implement air management plans for continuous improvement to air quality. Strengthen existing partnerships with the National Air Pollution Surveillance Program and bordering jurisdictions to assess air quality in Saskatchewan and ensure air quality data is available to the public.
- Improve the process for oversight of impacted sites.
- Develop new regulatory tools for hazardous substances and waste dangerous goods management.
- Inventory, characterize and evaluate risks for illegal dump sites in northern Saskatchewan. Develop corrective action plans for the closure of high-risk sites.

**Performance Measures:** *What success looks like*

Desired Outcome	Measure	Target
Increased number of facilities in Saskatchewan taking part in emissions intensity reduction program.	Number of facilities registered in the OBPS Program.	Increase the number of facilities covered under the OBPS Program.
Increased amount of emissions in Saskatchewan taking part in emissions intensity reduction program.	Amount of Saskatchewan emissions covered under the OBPS Program.	Increase the amount of provincial emissions covered under the OBPS Program.
Enhanced resilience to the effects of climate change.	Emissions intensity of Saskatchewan’s economy (GHGs per unit of GDP).	Continued decrease in the emission intensity of Saskatchewan’s economy.
Reduced waste.	Amount of waste generated in kilograms per capita.	From 2014 levels: 30 per cent reduction by 2030; 50 per cent reduction by 2040.
Reduced contamination.	Number of sites entered into the notice of site condition registry.	In 2023-24, 17 reclaimed sites entered in registry.

## **Goal 2: Sustainable landscapes and wildlife populations that are resilient and biologically diverse.**

Sustainably growing the province's natural resource economy is a key part of the Saskatchewan Growth Plan. The ministry is working to accomplish this through evidence-based decision making on land use and environmental impacts. Strategies guide monitoring and response to issues impacting natural resources, including the Habitat Management Plan and the Framework for the Prevention and Management of Invasive Species in Saskatchewan. In collaboration with partners, including Indigenous communities, programs and policies are developed to conserve the province's biodiversity and resilience. These measures will lead to the long-term health of Saskatchewan's natural resources by ensuring their future sustainability.

**Strategy:** *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Conduct and use resilience analysis to optimize Growth Plan objectives and better support evidence-based decision-making on sustainable growth initiatives.

**Key Actions:** *What we will do to get there*

- Implement action items identified by the working group for the Framework for the Prevention and Management of Invasive Species in Saskatchewan.
- Continue to build a Forest Resource Inventory for the Prince Albert and North Central Timber Supply Areas.
- Finalize the Habitat Management Plan.

**Strategy:** *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Work with our partners to develop and implement programs and policies to protect the province's biodiversity.

**Key Actions:** *What we will do to get there*

- With the ministries of Agriculture and Energy and Resources, engage with partners and stakeholders in the implementation of a multiple-species approach to managing critical habitat on Crown land.
- Establish protected and conserved areas by implementing a priority action plan using all tools available, including traditional protected areas and other effective conservation measures.
- Incorporate Indigenous People's wildlife management values into wildlife management planning and programming.

**Performance Measures:** *What success looks like*

<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>
A network of conservation lands.	Total protected areas in Saskatchewan.	By 2025, 7,809,629 hectares (12 per cent) are protected.
Saskatchewan's commercial forests are sustainably harvested and managed.	Annual timber harvest utilization.	In 2023-24, the timber harvested from provincial land will not exceed 8,613,000 cubic metres.
Sustainable game populations.	Population status of game species.	Dependent on the game species.
Critical habitats are identified and managed to support continued use by sensitive species.	Distribution of sensitive species.	Continued utilization of critical habitats by sensitive species.



### Goal 3: Knowledgeable, compliant and engaged regulated communities.

Saskatchewan’s natural resource industries are instrumental to the economic growth of the province. A comprehensive, clear and transparent regulation and enforcement structure ensures industry partners are able to operate and grow, while also protecting and enhancing environmental outcomes for the province. This is further accomplished by reducing the risk of contamination through compliance assurance activities and working with industry partners to identify impacted sites. Opportunities to increase engagement and involvement with First Nations and Métis communities continue through permitting processes and the Ministry’s ongoing commitment to Duty to Consult.

**Strategy:** *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Collaboratively design and implement regulatory tools and processes to enhance environmental outcomes.

**Key Actions:** *What we will do to get there*

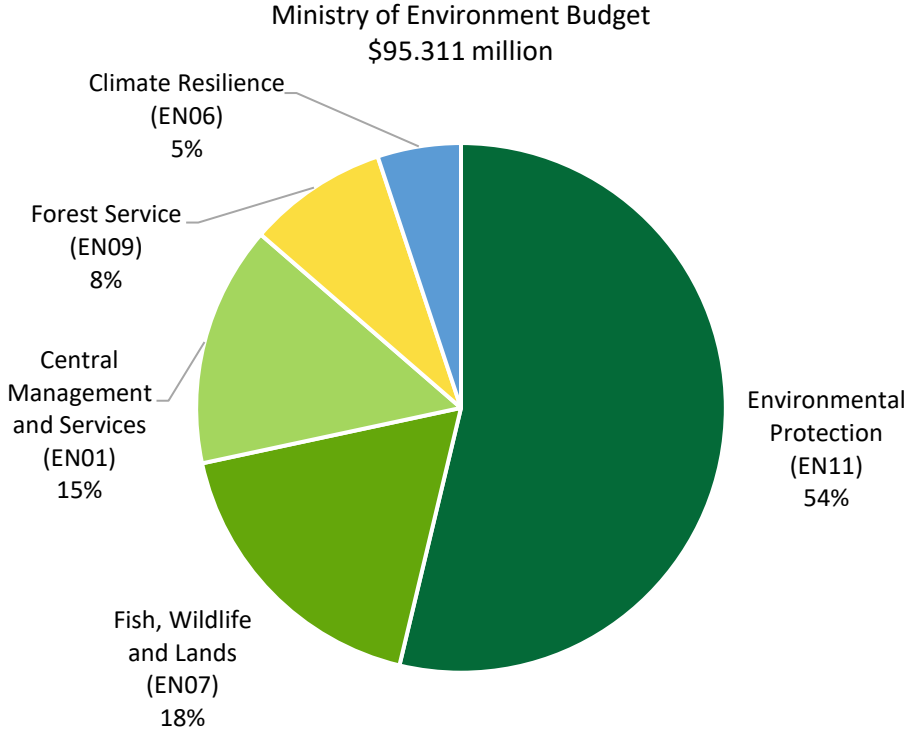
- Support landfills that received federal landfill closure infrastructure funding by providing guidance on assessment and closure requirements.
- Evaluate the mineral exploration permit process to identify opportunities for improvements.
- Continue to review and develop guidance on the ministry’s regulatory and permitting framework to support new and existing partners in developing within the province. Develop guidance for advanced exploration permitting.

**Performance Measures:** *What success looks like*

Desired Outcome	Measure	Target
Regulated communities positively contribute to environmental outcomes.	Percentage of operating landfills that require groundwater monitoring are doing so.	85 per cent in 2023-24. 100 per cent by 2030.

# Financial Summary

Ministry of Environment 2023-24 Estimates (\$ 95.311 million)		(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services (EN01)		\$14,343
Climate Resilience (EN06)		\$4,964
Fish, Wildlife and Lands (EN07)		\$17,449
Forest Service (EN09)		\$8,331
Environmental Protection (EN11)		\$52,367
<b>Total Appropriation</b>		<b>\$97,454</b>
Capital Asset Acquisitions		(\$3,013)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment		870
<b>Total Expense</b>		<b>\$95,311</b>




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### Links to More Information

- [Ministry of Environment](#)
- [Government of Saskatchewan Budget, Planning and Reporting](#)