

Business Plan

2025-26

Ministry of Environment

Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable Travis Keisig
Minister of Environment*

I am proud to present the Ministry of Environment's Business Plan for 2025-26, which outlines our strategic initiatives and key actions to manage and protect Saskatchewan's environment while supporting sustainable growth. This plan aligns with the Government of Saskatchewan's vision of making our province the best place to live, work and raise a family.

Our goals focus on ensuring safe communities, sustainable landscapes, resilient wildlife populations and a healthy environment.

We are dedicated to enhancing climate resilience through the Prairie Resilience strategy. To achieve this, the ministry is developing a provincial greenhouse gas emissions inventory and accounting framework, supporting industry-led emissions reduction initiatives through the Saskatchewan Technology Fund, funding clean electricity transition efforts, and promoting carbon capture, utilization and storage with regulatory incentives.

Our Solid Waste Management Strategy will continue improving environmental health and attracting new investments to our province. Now in its fifth year, the strategy will undergo a review to ensure that our approach to solid waste management is still effectively addressing environmental concerns and the evolving needs and priorities of our communities and stakeholders.

Sustainable landscapes and resilient wildlife populations are crucial for our natural resource economy and a key part of the Saskatchewan Growth Plan. The ministry will continue implementing the Habitat Mitigation Framework and develop range plans for woodland caribou. New this year is the Habitat Mitigation Framework's boreal offset policy to support industry in mitigating growth and development impacts.

Engaging and supporting our regulated communities is essential for achieving our environmental goals. The ministry will support landfill closures through guidance on assessment and closure requirements and develop training programs and certification process for scalers in the province to support the forest industry.

Through the goals outlined in this business plan, we will build a strong, sustainable and resilient Saskatchewan.

2025-26 Budget Highlights

1	\$174.71 million in grant funding for clean electricity transition, including ongoing developments and future investments to maintain power affordability while reducing emissions in the electricity sector.
2	Continued grant funding for the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund with a budget of \$5.2 million supporting protection of vulnerable fish and wildlife habitat and promoting resource education and endangered species programming.
3	An increase in funding is included in the 2025-26 budget to progress work on the province's Habitat Management Plan, which emphasizes maintaining biologically diverse landscapes, in alignment with the Growth Plan.
4	Annual grant funding for SARCAN recycling continues and is increasing by \$595,000 which is a result of environmental handling charges collected in 2023-24.
5	A new game bird resource allocation licence for outfitters will be introduced to provide a mechanism to track allocation of licences to game bird outfitters and ensure accurate client reporting.

Government Vision and Goals

Saskatchewan's Vision

"...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 2025-26 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 results-based regulation and 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 a changing climate. 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 building 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*

- Continue to implement *Prairie Resilience: A Made-in Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy*.
- Develop an enhanced framework for annual resilience reporting, integrating advanced emissions modelling and analysis.
- Develop and launch the Saskatchewan Greenhouse Gas GHG Inventory and carbon accounting framework.
- Streamline the Output-Based Performance Standards (OBPS) Program's administrative and reporting requirements for regulated emitters.
- Continue to expand the OBPS Program to cover more sectors and emissions, protecting more emitters from the federal carbon tax.
- Support Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage (CCUS) development by issuing OBPS Program performance credits to regulated emitters undertaking CCUS projects.
- Deliver the Saskatchewan Technology Fund's second project application intake, including awarding \$50 million in funding for industry-led emissions reduction initiatives.
- Support Saskatchewan's transition to a clean electricity grid by directing Clean Electricity Transition Grant funding towards SaskPower's clean electricity operating expenses.

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*

- Engage with stakeholders to review the Solid Waste Management Strategy.
- Begin development of a revised Solid Waste Management Strategy that ensures consideration of evolving needs and priorities.

- Explore regulatory options for materials identified in the Canada-Wide Action Plan for Extended Producer Responsibility. Engage on potential changes to *The Household Hazardous Waste Product Stewardship Regulations* and *The Used Petroleum and Antifreeze Products Stewardship Regulations*.
- Continue work with Indigenous Services Canada and the Ministry of Government Relations on the development of northern regional landfills.
- Review the agricultural plastics stewardship programs for effectiveness and efficiency.
- Continue to work with other jurisdictions through the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment to implement action plans in support of the Canada-wide Strategy on Zero Plastic Waste.
- Participate in, and support the work of, the Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee and integrate recommendations into the strategy as required.
- Implement a Saskatchewan Environmental Code chapter for composting facilities.
- Engage on new regulations and standards to modernize solid waste management.

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

Identify, prevent and mitigate risks to emerging wildlife health diseases through comprehensive plans and regulations.

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

- Continue to participate in the One Health program, with the ministries of Agriculture and Health, to identify and respond to emerging fish and wildlife diseases.
- Enhance surveillance for emerging wildlife disease threats.
- Implement a provincial Chronic Wasting Disease carcass disposal program.
- Continue to complete assessment and corrective action planning work to address environmental, human-health and safety risks at the non-uranium abandoned mine sites.
- Implement air zone management strategies recommended in the annual *Saskatchewan Air Quality Report: Meeting the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards*.
- Develop a plan to improve the air zone management program based on the program review.
- Continue developing new code chapters to replace *The Hazardous Substances and Waste Dangerous Goods Regulations*.
- Develop a plan to address high-risk illegal dump sites in northern Saskatchewan.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Desired Outcome	Measure	Target
Maintain economic growth and protect against carbon leakage (i.e. industry moving production and jobs to other countries with less stringent climate policies).	Number of facilities registered in the OBPS Program.	From 2024-25 levels: Increase the number of facilities covered under the OBPS Program by 30 per cent by 2030; Increase the number of facilities covered under the OBPS Program by five per cent in 2025-26.

Enhanced resilience to the effects of climate change.	Emissions intensity of Saskatchewan's economy (greenhouse gases per unit of gross domestic product).	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.

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, the Habitat Mitigation Framework and associated policies and programs, 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*

Enhance the resilience of Saskatchewan's natural resource economy by supporting 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 and track progress.
- Continue collaborating with Alberta Forestry, Parks and Tourism, to monitor ongoing survey data addressing risks related to mountain pine beetle and other forest health threats.
- Implement resilience programming to build provincial capacity to adapt and thrive in a changing climate.
- Build a forest resource inventory for the Prince Albert and Meadow Lake timber supply areas.
- Implement the Habitat Mitigation Framework's Boreal Offset Policy and Voluntary Contributions Payment option to support industry in mitigating impacts of growth and development.
- Implement a five-year habitat management work plan.
- Continue to develop and implement range plans for woodland caribou in the northern provincial forests.

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*

- Collaborate with other ministries to engage partners and stakeholders to implement a multiple-species approach to managing critical habitat on Crown land.
- Implement a priority action plan for establishing protected areas that provides clarity on the Protected and Conserved Areas Program and designation process.

- Examine opportunities for new management approaches for protected and conserved areas.
- Incorporate First Nations wildlife management values into wildlife management planning and programming.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Desired Outcome	Measure	Target
A network of conservation lands.	Total protected areas in Saskatchewan.	By the end of 2025, 7,809,629 hectares (12 per cent) are protected.
Saskatchewan's commercial forests are sustainably harvested and managed.	Annual timber harvest utilization rate (i.e. amount of timber harvested compared to the annual allowable cut).	Support an increase of the annual timber harvest utilization rate to 80 per cent (7 million m ³) by 2030. In 2025-26, support an increase to the annual timber harvest utilization rate to 50 per cent (4.5 million m ³).
Sustainable game populations.	Population status of game species.	Dependent on the game species.
Important habitats are identified and managed to support continued use by sensitive species.	Amount and distribution of important habitats.	Maintain adequate habitat to support continued use by sensitive species.

Goal 3: Knowledgeable, compliant and engaged regulated communities.

Saskatchewan’s natural resource industries are instrumental to the province’s economic growth. A comprehensive, clear and transparent regulation and enforcement structure ensures industry partners can operate and grow, while also protecting and enhancing environmental outcomes. 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*

- Provide guidance on assessment and closure requirements to landfills that received federal landfill closure infrastructure funding.
- Implement program review recommendations to enhance permitting processes for mineral exploration in Saskatchewan.
- Evaluate and implement innovative permitting efficiencies to support well-established industry practices.
- Formalize review of advanced mineral exploration permitting process to create best-in-class opportunity. Continue to review and develop guidance on the ministry's regulatory and permitting framework.
- Develop training program and certification process for scalers in the province to support the forest industry.
- Improve the oversight process of impacted sites by developing additional guidance material for completing environmental site assessments.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

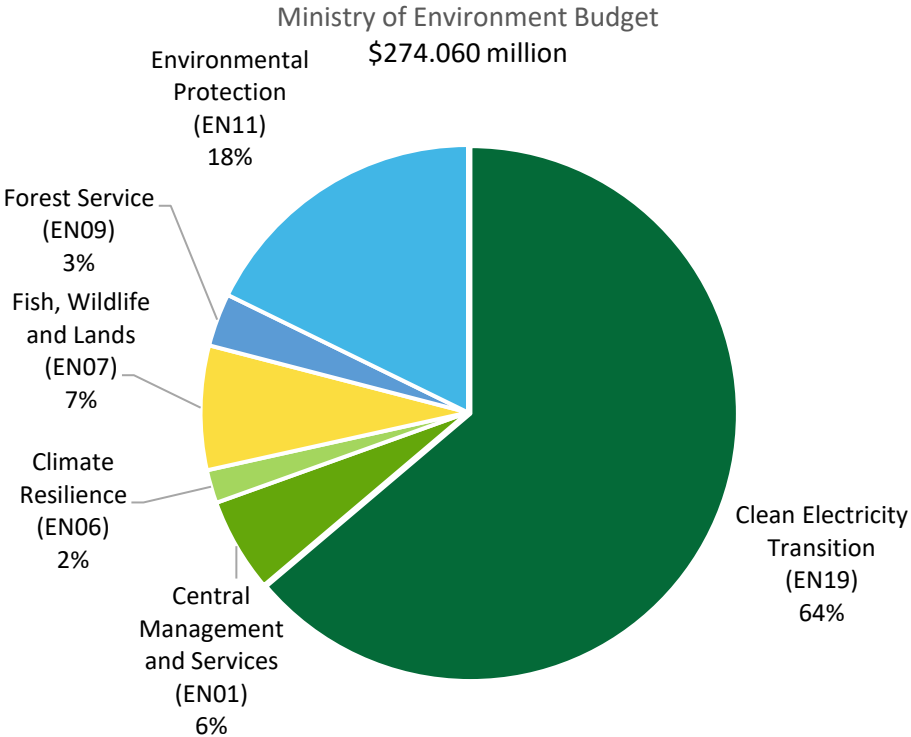
Outcome	Measure	Target
Regulated communities positively contribute to environmental outcomes.	Percentage of operating landfills requiring groundwater monitoring are doing so.	89 per cent in 2025-26. 100 per cent by 2030.

2025-26 Improvement and Innovation Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p><u>Modernization of the Solid Waste Regulations</u> The 2020 Solid Waste Management Strategy aims to establish a modern, efficient, and effective regulatory system for waste disposal and management. For many years, municipalities and other stakeholders have advocated for Saskatchewan-specific landfill regulations. In 2025-26, as part of this ongoing improvement initiative, the regulations will be updated to ensure environmental protection while providing clear, consistent, transparent, and outcome-focused requirements for stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement will begin in 2025, with regulation finalization targeted for March 2026.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p><u>Clean Electricity Transition</u> The Clean Electricity Transition Grant allows the ministry to identify and support projects that drive Saskatchewan’s transition to a clean electricity grid. This initiative integrates more clean energy sources and helps to advance the technologies and infrastructure needed to support economic growth, reduce emissions, and ensure long-term energy security, affordability and reliability for households and businesses. In 2025-26, funding will support renewable electricity generation, and innovative initiatives that reduce energy use and costs, such as efficiency retrofits for households, and energy-savings upgrades for businesses, ensuring reliable and affordable power for everyone and a stronger electricity system for the future.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p><u>Emission Reduction Projects</u> The Saskatchewan Technology Fund supports sustainable growth and innovation in industries regulated under the Output-Based Performance Standards Program. In 2025-26, the Technology Fund is being strengthened and streamlined to accelerate industry-driven emissions reduction projects at regulated facilities. The funding is being doubled to \$50 million, and project eligibility is being expanded. There will be broader reimbursement coverage that ensures more projects can access funding to lower emissions while supporting economic growth.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><u>Mineral Exploration Permitting Process</u> As a result of the Mineral Exploration Permitting Process program review, in 2025-26 the ministry will be updating, modernizing and creating new policies, expanding the use of Environmental Protection Plans, and implementing improvements to the procedural and application processes to increase transparency, reduce timelines and streamline the application process for industry, in alignment with the objectives set out in Securing the Future: Saskatchewan’s Critical Minerals Strategy.</p>

Financial Summary

Ministry of Environment 2025-26 Estimates (\$274.060 million)	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services (EN01)	\$15,599
Climate Resilience (EN06)	\$5,511
Fish, Wildlife and Lands (EN07)	\$20,557
Forest Services (EN09)	\$8,768
Environmental Protection (EN11)	\$48,612
Clean Electricity Transition (EN19)	\$174,710
Total Appropriation	\$273,757
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(\$165)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	\$468
Total Expense	\$274,060



Links to More Information

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