

Business Plan

2026-27

Ministry of Environment

Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable Darlene Rowden
Minister of Environment*

It's my pleasure to present the Ministry of Environment's 2026-27 Business Plan.

The Ministry of Environment produces an annual business plan that directs work for the upcoming year and outlines how that work will impact the people of Saskatchewan. This year, we have included expanded measures and targets to highlight how actions support the overarching mandate of the ministry, as well as Saskatchewan's Growth Plan. Some examples include:

- Supporting sustainable growth by modernizing and advancing climate initiatives under the Prairie Resilience Strategy;
- Protecting and restoring the natural environment by taking steps to minimize environmental contamination;
- Sustainably managing and allocating our natural resources by maintaining biologically diverse landscapes and managing Crown resource land; and
- Continuing to build collaborative, engaged and effective relationships by increasing knowledge of the ministry's work and focusing on engagement overall.

We will also see improvement and innovation drive our work through the development of new code chapters, modernization of regulations, and program and process reviews.

This work, along with the critical everyday work of the ministry, continues to ensure the environment is protected, communities are safe and economic growth is balanced with environmental health.

2026-27 Budget Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p>Ministry of Environment Expense Budget - \$95.988 million The 2026-27 Budget will ensure the ministry can continue doing the work critical to our mandate and goals while also contributing to Saskatchewan’s Growth Plan.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Regulatory Services/Business Transformation Initiative - \$2 million The Business Transformation project has been built around creating a more efficient digital experience for ministry clients – replacing the outdated application system with new and more efficient technology. This budget commits \$2 million to advance Phase 3 of the ministry’s multi-year business transformation initiative.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Preliminary Design for Walleye Intensive Rearing Facility and Fish Hatchery Modernization - \$700,000 The Hatchery is responsible for all fish stocked in the province’s public waterbodies. This investment will begin the modernization of the facility to improve efficiency, reduce operating costs and address biosecurity risks.</p> <p>In addition to the modernization, the ministry will also advance work on a new standalone walleye intensive rearing facility. This new facility, located at the Saskatchewan Fish Hatchery site, is necessary to meet the current and future demand for fish stocking. Advancing the modernization and rearing facility at the same time will allow for the ministry to find efficiencies and achieve economies of scale.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Increase for SARCAN Recycling Grant - \$117,000 Reflecting an increase in beverage container recycling, the 2026-27 budget includes an increase of \$117,000 in grant payments to SARCAN through the Beverage Container Collection and Recycling Program.</p>

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 2026-27 Annual Reports.

Ministry of Environment Overview

Overview

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 protect Saskatchewan’s environment to support sustainable growth and manage the responsible use of natural resources.

Vision

A healthy, resilient environment.

Goal 1: Support sustainable economic growth

Sustainable growth of the natural resource economy is a key part of Saskatchewan's Growth Plan. The Ministry of Environment is fostering growth by supporting natural resource sectors and delivering a modern regulatory framework that encourages innovation and attracts investment. Through Saskatchewan's own industrial emissions pricing system and other programs, the ministry is working to improve emissions intensity while enhancing competitiveness and promoting sustainable economic growth.

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

Modernize and advance climate resilience actions.

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

- Develop a next generation greenhouse gas emissions management and reinvestment system.
- Create a made-in-Saskatchewan greenhouse gas data centre and accounting framework.
- Establish a provincial climate resilience analytics hub and tracking system.

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

Ensure a modern regulatory regime and timely permitting process.

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

- Begin implementation of the Habitat Management Plan by initiating modelling for new guidance tools.
- Improve data management of land dispositions and explore ways to leverage the Enterprise Crown Land Management System (eCLMS) to support permit tracking.

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

Promote and support growth in natural resource and other priority sectors.

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

- Build modern forest resource inventories.
- Develop a responsive sustainable Annual Allowable Cut (AAC).
- Enhance support to the outfitting, commercial fishery, trapping and aquaculture sectors.
- Promote Saskatchewan's low-emissions advantage.
- Encourage industrial innovation, technology and efficiency improvements.
- Enhance resilience and drive economic growth through programs and agreements that support reliable, affordable electricity.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Measure	Baseline	2026-27 Target
Mining and Industrial Permit processing time Measures the average amount of time for processing permits.	Establish in 2026-27	-
Improved GHG emission reductions Cumulative GHG emission reductions in tonnes CO2e from the Saskatchewan Technology Fund awarded projects.	0 tCO2e (2019)	3.5M tCO2e
Effective utilization of commercial fishing allocation Comparison of the annual production by Whitefish, Pike and Trout against the maximum available quota. A higher percentage indicates greater utilization.	Whitefish - 17.6% Pike - 20.5% Trout - 1.5% (2024)	Whitefish - 17.8% Pike - 20.7% Trout - 1.5%

Goal 2: Protect and restore the natural environment

The Ministry of Environment works to keep Saskatchewan's environment healthy and resilient for the future. The ministry is focused on reducing waste, protecting natural areas, preventing invasive species, improving air quality and cleaning up contaminated sites. With clear regulations the ministry can help industries grow while safeguarding the environment.

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

Manage waste effectively.

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

- Approve a renewed Solid Waste Management Strategy.
- Develop an implementation plan for the updated Solid Waste Management Strategy.

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

Minimize environmental contamination.

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

- Modernize regulations, ensuring they remain effective in preventing contamination from hazardous substances and waste dangerous goods.
- Support development of air zone management strategies.
- Minimize and manage environmental impacts of regulated and permitted activities.
- Assess and ensure responsible parties are addressing impacted sites.
- Prevent contamination from abandoned non-uranium mines on Crown land.

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

Protect Saskatchewan's ecosystems.

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

- Implement the Framework for the Prevention and Management of Invasive Species.
- Develop a collaborative aquatic invasive species surveillance program with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation.
- Report on structured decision making as a tool for co-ordinated management of invasive species and diseases.
- Review the Protected and Conserved Areas Roadmap.
- Promote and improve species at risk management.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Measure	Baseline	2026-27 Target
<p>Cleaner Air Quality This measures the CAAQS (Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards) province-wide for each Air Pollutant as follows: Fine Particulate Matter (FPM), Ozone (O3), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), Sulfur Dioxide (SO2). The measures are calculated by averaging each pollutant across the six air zones over three years or over one year, as indicated.</p>	<p>FPM: 6.1 µg/m-3 (2022-24 avg) O3: 55.2 ppb (2022-24 avg) NO2: 5.5 ppb (2024) SO2: 0.3 ppb (2024)</p>	<p>Maintain baselines</p>
<p>Protected and conserved lands in the province The total of all areas determined to be classified as protected or conserved as a percentage of the provincial land base. Protected or conserved includes lands such as provincial parks, federal parks, ecological reserves, important habitat for woodland caribou (core Tier 1 Caribou Area), conservation easements, Crown conservation easements, and community pastures.</p>	<p>9.8% (2025)</p>	<p>12.0%</p>
<p>Stop aquatic invasive species establishment Tracks the percentage of compliance with the Clean, Drain, Dry program as tracked through completed watercraft inspections (measure only tracks clean and drain compliance).</p>	<p>63% (2025)</p>	<p>63%*</p>
<p>Amount of waste disposed of in kilograms per capita This measure tracks the amount of waste per capita going to landfills in Saskatchewan based on StatsCan provided data.</p>	<p>Waste Disposed: 846 kg/capita (2014)</p>	<p>30% reduction by 2030</p>
<p>Reduction of risks associated with contaminated sites This measure calculates the percentage of emergency discharge cases that progress from notification to closure.</p>	<p>49.5% closure (March 31, 2025)</p>	<p>>60% Closure</p>

* The target for 2026-27 is set as maintain because evaluation of current outreach initiatives will be completed in 2027 with improvements to this measure to begin in 2027-28.

Goal 3: Sustainably manage use and allocation of our natural resources

The Ministry of Environment is using evidence-based decisions on environmental impacts to manage use and allocation of natural resources for supporting sustainable growth and responsible stewardship. The ministry is working to maintain healthy landscapes and wildlife populations, protect sensitive species through habitat conservation, and create a connected network of conservation lands, while supporting responsible economic development.

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

Maintain biologically diverse landscapes.

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

- Develop and implement the Habitat Management Plan.
- Implement the South of the Divide Action Plan to address conservation needs in the Milk River watershed.
- Develop and deliver the Woodland Caribou Conservation Program.

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

Manage Crown resource land.

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

- Develop an approach to managing roads and trails on Crown resource lands.
- Develop collaborative strategies with other ministries and agencies to achieve provincial growth objectives.
- Ensure that Crown resource land management guidelines align with the ministry's mandate.
- Develop and implement a data governance structure for Crown lands.

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

Manage harvest allocations.

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

- Ensure sustainable harvest alongside optimized utilization of the timber resource.
- Implement the Game Management Plan and species management plans.
- Develop an engagement plan for *The Wildlife Act* review.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Measure	Baseline	2026-27 Target
<p>Undisturbed Critical Caribou Habitat Measures the percentage of area unaffected by human-caused disturbance in Tier 1 caribou habitat management areas.</p>	88% undisturbed (2024)	> 88% undisturbed
<p>Assessment of Restoration for Woodland Caribou Range Measures the total amount of human-caused or natural habitat disturbance in woodland caribou range that has been assessed for potential restoration action. Measured annually in kilometers of linear features or hectares of disturbed area.</p>	865 km 0 ha (2025-26)	300 km and/or 300 ha
<p>Timber Harvest Utilization in the Provincial Forest Comparison of the total timber volume harvested to the allocated volume to determine a utilization rate; assessed over a 5-year control window.</p>	60%, average previous 5-year harvest levels (4.17M m3) with the new provincial Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) (6.87m3)	Maintain
<p>Percentage of Wildlife Management Zones in a Base Harvest Strategy This measures the percentage of wildlife management zones in base harvest strategy for species with management plans. This includes black bear, elk, moose, pronghorn, upland game birds, and white-tailed deer.</p>	% in base harvest by species (2025)	>80% for all >60% for Elk
<p>Percentage of Land Converted to Permanent Structures from Forestry Operations in the Commercial Forest This measure evaluates the forest industry's performance in maintaining the productive forest land base by minimizing the permanent or long-term footprint of forest management activities. It tracks the percentage of the Managed Forest Land Base (MFLB) that is permanently converted to other land uses as a result of forestry operations in Timber Supply Areas (TSAs) with approved Forest Management Plans (FMPs). Permanent uptake is offset by the reclamation of road corridors that have been returned to a productive forest condition.</p>	0.002%, five-year average of permanently converted MFLB lands. (2023)	2.0% or less as specified within the FMPs

Goal 4: Build collaborative, engaged and effective relationships

The Ministry of Environment is committed to working with people, governments and organizations to protect Saskatchewan's environment and support sustainable growth. This includes helping the public and stakeholders understand the ministry's role and programs, ensuring industries follow environmental rules, and building strong partnerships with Indigenous communities, industry and other groups. These efforts will strengthen trust, encourage co-operation, and create a foundation for shared success in environmental stewardship.

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

Increase knowledge of the ministry with stakeholders, Rightsholders and the public.

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

- Improve availability and ease of information access to the public and Rightsholders.
- Improve Crown resource land and regulatory web presence.
- Provide clear regulatory information and advice to industry.

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

Develop proactive and engaged relationships.

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

- Implement a strategic engagement framework.
- Develop resources to ensure that engagement considers reconciliation and inclusion.
- Update and create Beneficial Management Practice Guidelines with support from the Saskatchewan Mineral Exploration and Government Advisory Committee (SMEGAC).
- Develop a webpage for new entrants to easily access the Beneficial Management Practice guidelines.
- Advance a One Team approach to addressing complex issues across the Government of Saskatchewan.
- Facilitate engagement with Indigenous communities.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

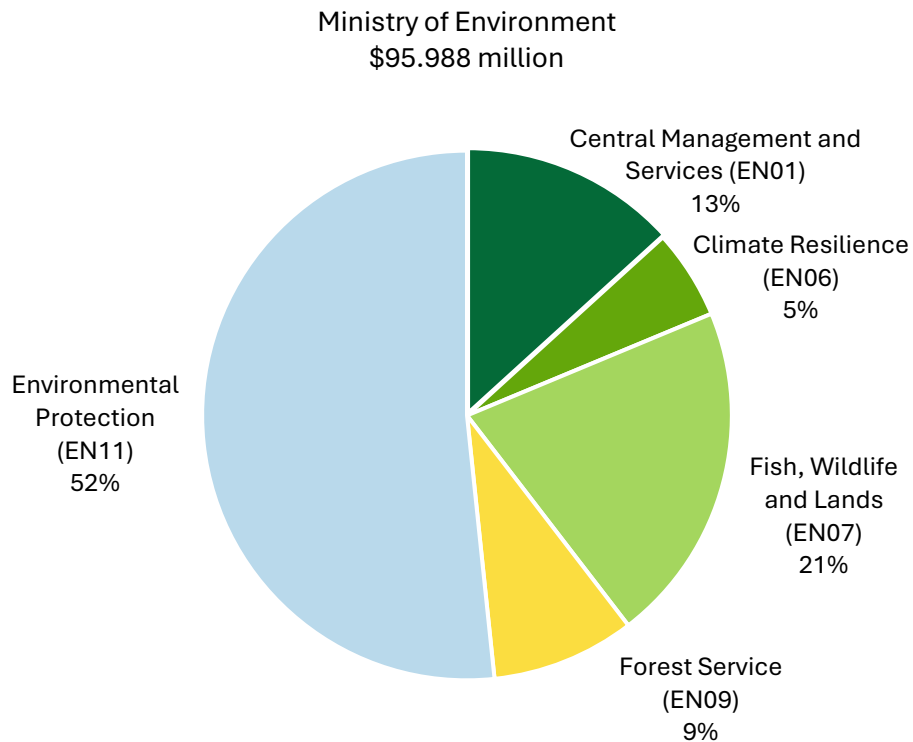
Measure	Baseline	2026-27 Target
<p>Ministry of Environment’s Strategic Engagements Quantity of strategic engagements that occur on an annual basis. This does not include engagements that are classified as management activities.</p>	<p>TBD (2026-27)</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Social media presence and engagement Tracks the number of followers and engagement on posts across the ministry’s social media channels.</p>	<p>12,386 Followers Engagements/post: Reactions: 31.6, Shares: 15.5, Comments: 7.3 (2024-25)</p>	<p>Increase</p>
<p>Increasing availability of information to the public Number of Knowledge Base Articles (KBAs) available online to the public.</p>	<p>183 new KBAs published (2025)</p>	<p>Increase</p>

2026-27 Improvement and Innovation Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p><u>Species Detection Survey Permitting Modernization</u> The ministry is modernizing the Species Detection Survey permitting process to reduce turnaround time and keep pace with increasing application volumes. In 2026, a new online application form will be launched that supports automated review and, for low-risk applications, faster approvals. This will reduce manual processing, make it easier for clients to apply on a computer or mobile device, and provide a clearer, more accessible experience while helping the ministry manage permitting more efficiently.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p><u>Modernization of <i>The Municipal Refuse Management Regulations</i></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 2026-27, 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 2026, with regulation finalization targeted for the end of fiscal 2026-27.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p><u>Fish and Wildlife Development Fund Program Review</u> The Fish and Wildlife Development Fund (FWDF) was established to manage, preserve and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in Saskatchewan. The FWDF is used for habitat/land securement (i.e. purchase of lands for conservation), conservation initiatives, and land management projects. FWDF lands are managed mainly for conservation and for hunters, trappers, and other outdoor nature enthusiasts, including hikers, bird watchers, and photographers.</p> <p>The ministry is undertaking a comprehensive review of the habitat/land securement and land management agreements and processes to improve program administration and to identify strategic ways to purchase lands for conservation. This will ensure that agreements with conservation partners and supporting processes remain clear, consistent, and sustainable, while continuing to support effective habitat conservation outcomes for the benefit of Saskatchewan residents.</p>

Financial Summary

Ministry of Environment 2026-27 Estimates (\$95.988 million)	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services (EN01)	\$12,951
Climate Resilience (EN06)	\$5,345
Fish, Wildlife and Lands (EN07)	\$20,371
Forest Service (EN09)	\$8,570
Environmental Protection (EN11)	\$50,480
Clean Electricity Transition (EN19)	\$0
Total Appropriation	\$97,717
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(\$2,165)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	\$436
Total Expense	\$95,988



Links to more information

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