



Public Participation in Saskatchewan's Environmental Assessment Process

What is an Environmental Assessment?

Saskatchewan's Environmental Assessment (EA) process is an opportunity to assess the risks of project activities on the environment and determine ways to prevent harmful effects from occurring. EA aims to provide a high level of environmental protection and ensure proponents include appropriate mitigation for potential environmental impacts before decisions are made.

Who is the public?

The public refers to any person or group interested in or affected by the project, which may include landowners, community associations, municipal governments, First Nations and Métis communities, regional planning agencies and special interest groups.

Why should the public participate?

Public participation is an important part of the EA process to help build healthy working relationships and improve decision making by identifying relevant environmental issues. Public participation is also an opportunity for government to gather information from the wider community and address concerns that will lead to better decisions and outcomes.

Public participation process:

The public is first notified of a project when an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is initiated. Early notification gives the public time to assess interest in participating in the EIA process. A notice is advertised in local newspapers and posted on saskatchewan.ca/environmentalassessment. Public engagement in the EIA process will help identify potential impacts from proposed project activities and develop ways to avoid or minimize them. The proponent will develop a public engagement plan outlining the activities to be undertaken to ensure that public concerns are documented in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The aim is to ensure affected individuals and communities have a full understanding of the overall project and how it may impact them. Once all project information has been reviewed by government, the public is notified of the formal public review and comment period. This is the public's opportunity to review project documents and identify any gaps in the information presented in the EIS and concerns that should be considered prior to a decision being made on the project.

Environmental Assessment Process

Project Proposal

Proponent is encouraged to hold public information sessions and stakeholder meetings
Proponent submits Technical Proposal

Government reviews Technical Proposal

Terms of Reference

Proponent outlines public engagement plan as part of the Terms of Reference

Government reviews and approves Terms of Reference (guideline for Environmental Impact Statement)

Environmental Impact Assessment

Proponent implements public engagement plan (open houses, public meetings, newsletters)

Proponent submits completed Environmental Impact Statement

Government reviews and accepts Environmental Impact Statement

Government initiates public review of the Environmental Impact Statement and Technical Review Comments

The government's public review period should not be the first time the public is receiving project information.

Ministerial Decision

The Minister of Environment makes a decision based on information in the Environmental Impact Statement, Technical Review Comments and public comments

Public who participate during the formal review period receive confirmation of the decision.

Project review:

Public comments are most helpful for decision-making when they speak to how effectively the proponent has addressed all project issues presented in the EIS. Comments can speak to public priorities that may include land, water, air, wildlife, and cultural interactions with the environment. It is important to learn how environmental effects of a proposed project may impact ecological, socio-economic and cultural considerations. This information is necessary to help identify potential solutions. Each comment is reviewed with the aim to improve the environmental outcomes associated with a project and to verify how well the project can operate within surrounding communities.

Access to project information:

Notification of the public review period is advertised in local newspapers. Copies of the EIS and associated documents are available for viewing at local municipal offices and on the government website. The ministry will also provide the Technical Review Comments document, which is a summary evaluation of the proponent's EIS, to assist the public in the review of the EIS.

The Environmental Assessment branch maintains an accessible online database of all projects currently undergoing an EIA that will require public comment. Notices, information and project-related documents are posted on saskatchewan.ca/environmentalassessment as they become available. Questions can be sent to the EA administrator anytime during the EA process.

Submitting public comments:

Public comments should be received prior to the end of the advertised review period in writing, either by mail, fax or e-mail to the EA administrator for the project or to environmental.assessment@gov.sk.ca. Comments must be formalized through written submission and should include your first name, last name and preferred method of contact.

Contact Us:

Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
Environmental Assessment Branch
4th Floor, 3211 Albert Street
Regina, SK S4S 5W6
Tel: 306-787-6132
Fax: 306-787-0930
Email: environmental.assessment@gov.sk.ca