



# Alberta Environment & Parks Our Journey to Excellence

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*What This Means for our Stakeholders*

April 2022

# Today's Agenda

## 1 Journey to Excellence



### Achieving System Transformation

*Shared vision of excellence*

## 2 Progress to Date



### Notable Achievements

*Delivering on our promises*

## 3 Upcoming Priorities



### Important Work in Motion

*What's important to stakeholders*

## 4 Your Involvement & Questions



### How Your Engagement Can Help

*Advancing progress together*

# Journey to Excellence

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*A Shared vision of excellence*

Alberta

# AEP's Triple Aim for Albertans

Fair and simple rules for all Albertans including industry, individuals and communities



Accessible use of our environment for enjoyment and wellbeing



Sustainable use of Alberta's resources including both conservation and development

# Connecting the Work of the Department

## Achieving AEP Outcomes



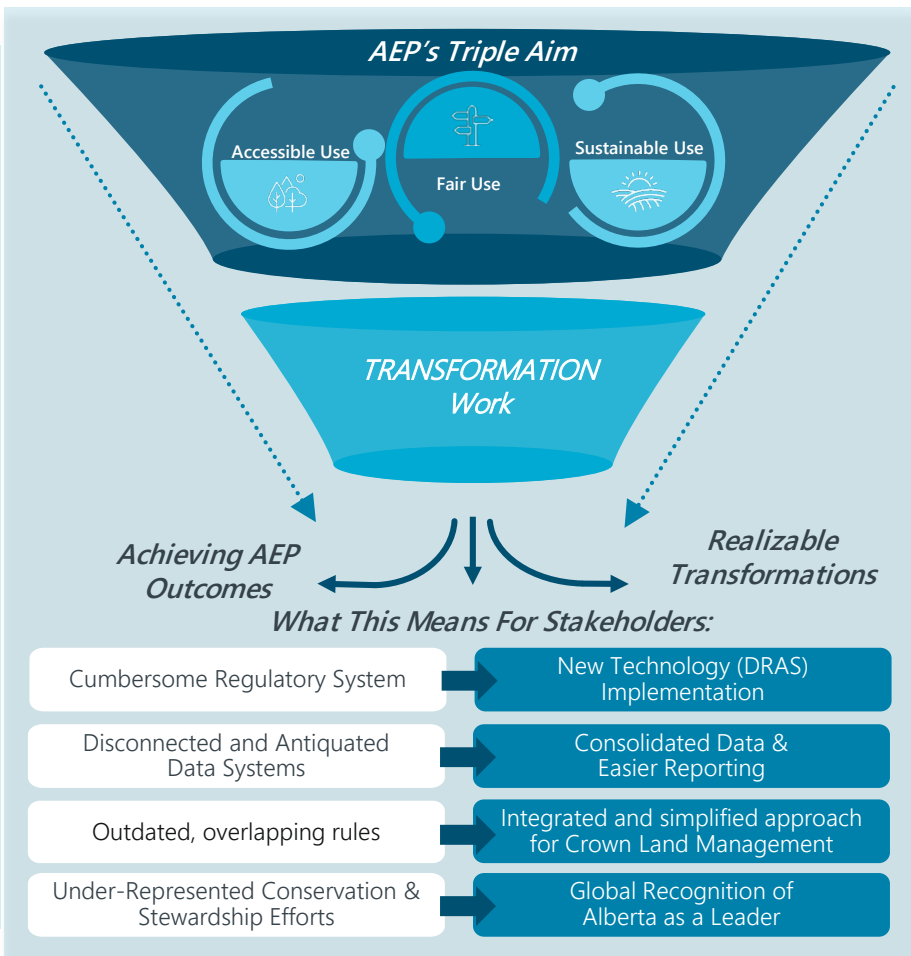
Enabling sustainable resource development



Modernizing legislation, systems, and available tools



Promoting and supporting environmental stewardship



## AEP Department Transformation Initiatives



Crown Land Vision Implementation



Regulatory Transformation



Conservation & Stewardship

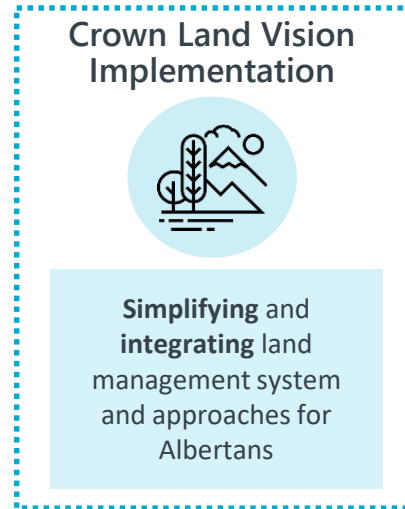
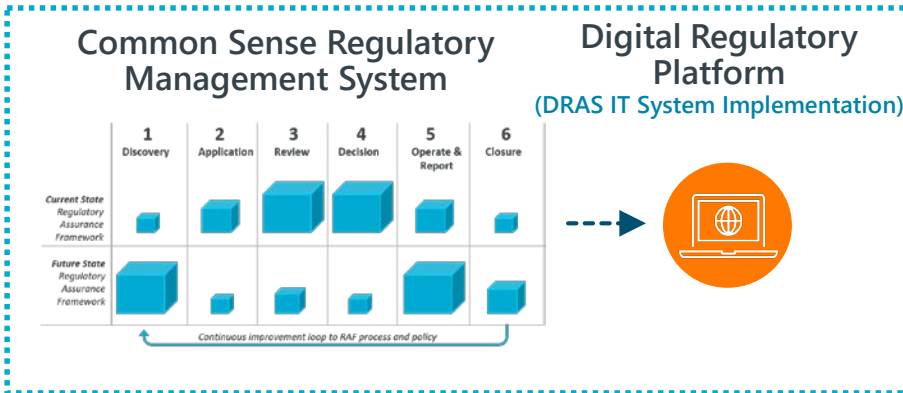
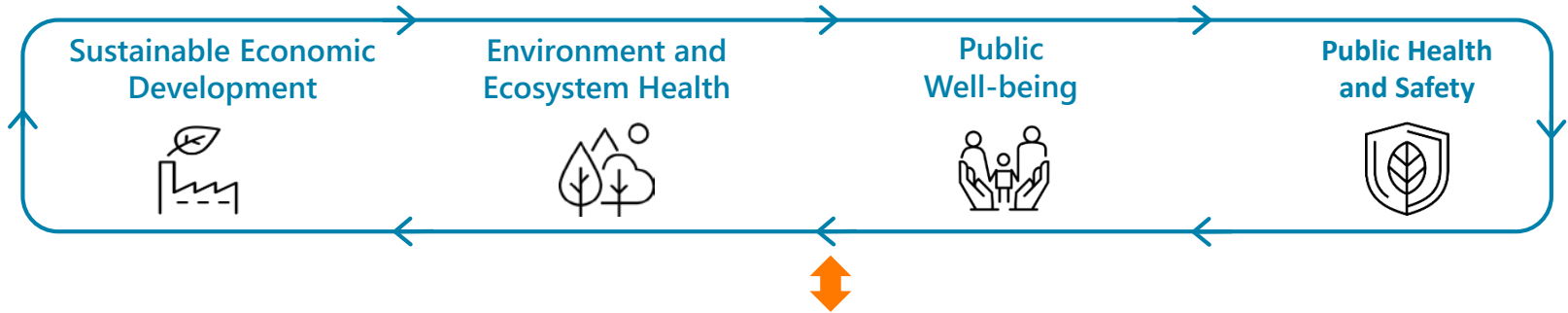


Air/Water/Climate Change

# What is Transforming? – It is Complex but Connected

Outcomes

Transformation Linkages



# Shifting Culture, Mindsets, and Behaviors



## BELIEVING

Shared Vision of Excellence

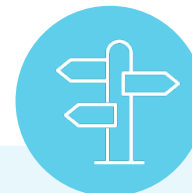
- Conservation leadership
- Integrated land management
- Sustained economic growth



## BEHAVING

Risk Informed not Risk Averse

- Quicker time to decision
  - Fair and predictable
- Living the Crown Land Vision
- Simplifying *and* integrating land management
  - Showcasing Conservation
  - Global contributors of environmental protection



## BECOMING

Dynamic and World Class

- Conservators
- Land Managers
- Regulators

# Progress to Date

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*Delivering on our Promises*

Alberta



# Red Tape Reduction

## Background

The *Red Tape Reduction Act* was passed in 2019 in Alberta to removing needless red tape to save:

- Time;
- Money;
- and Resources;

while still protecting the environment, keeping Albertans safe and healthy, and upholding fiscal accountability.

## AEP's Red Tape Reduction (RTR) Efforts



The RTR to modernize for the 21st century.



Undertaking initiatives to address stakeholder submissions.



Reducing its regulatory requirement count.

## Key Metrics

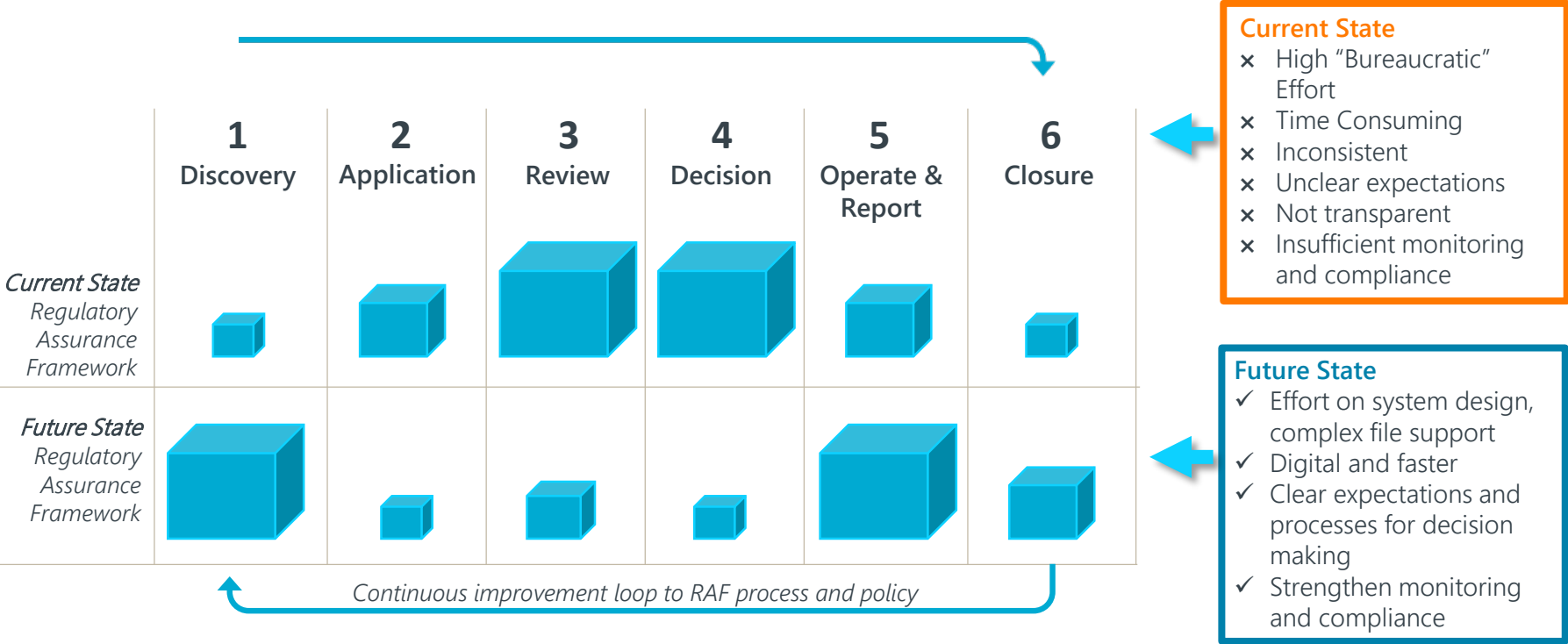
As of March 31, 2022, AEP has **reduced its regulatory requirement count by 34,536 (23.15%)** exceeding the 20% target.

AEP is expected to reach its **33%** regulatory reduction target by March 31, 2023.

To date, AEP has completed **89 RTR Initiatives** and has **54 more Initiatives** underway between now and 2023.

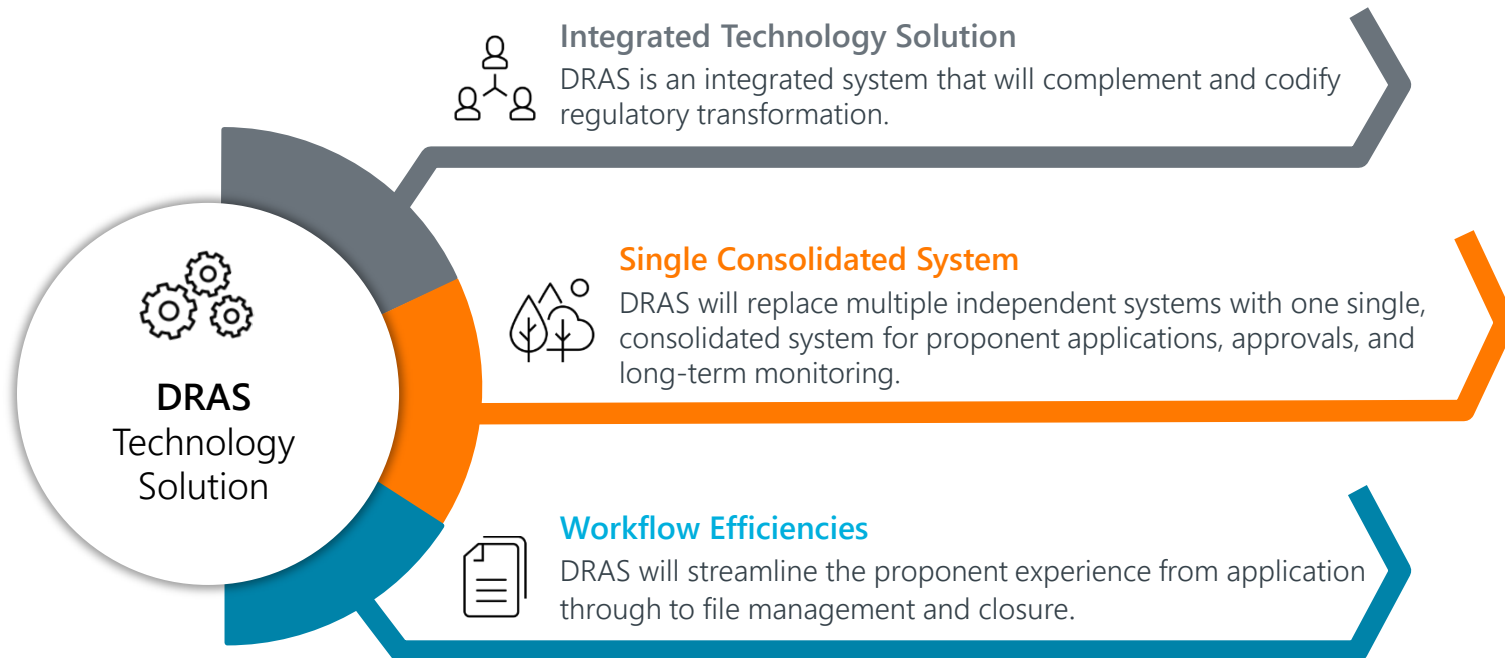
# Regulatory Assurance Framework

**Regulatory Assurance Framework:** AEP’s foundational approach to enabling economic development activity while ensuring environmental standards outlined in policies, plans, and legislation are maintained.



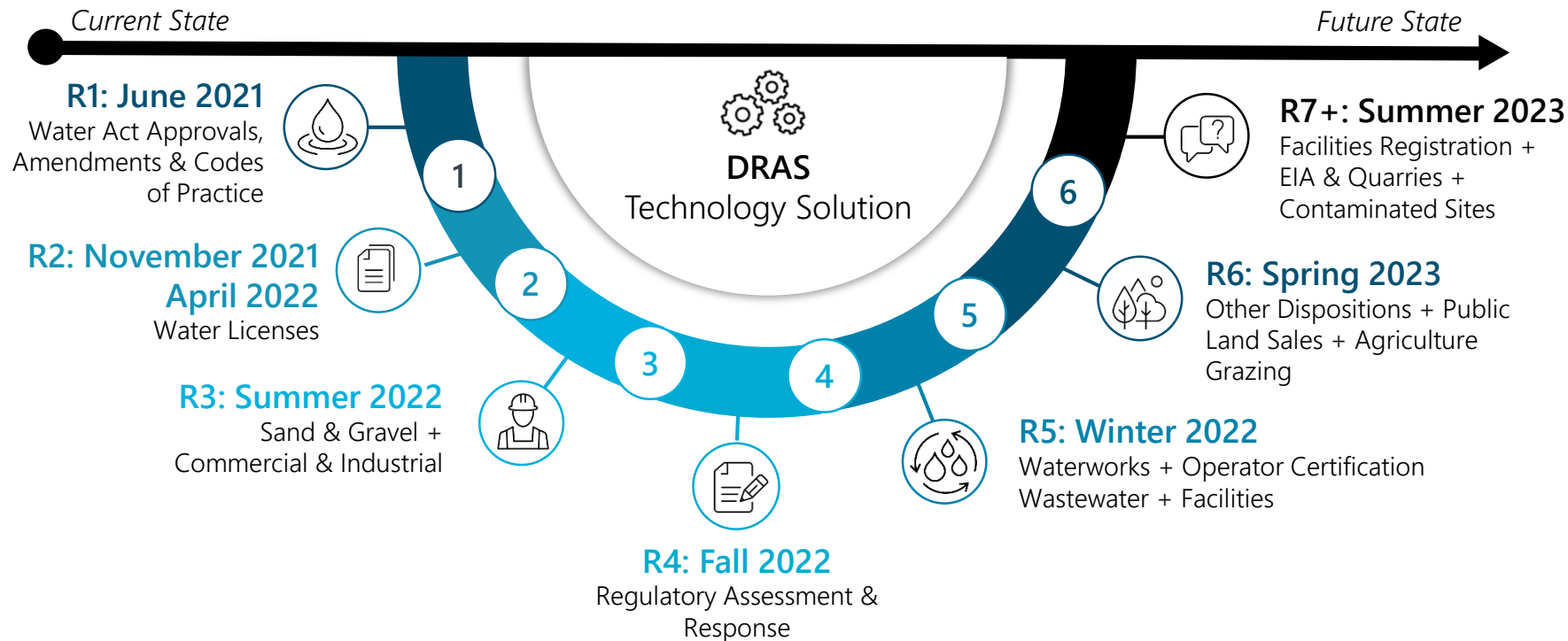
# Digital Regulatory Assurance System

The **Digital Regulatory Assurance System (DRAS)**, will be the **technological backbone of the transformed regulatory system**, enabling clear, expedient decision making and straightforward environmental monitoring.



# Digital Regulatory Assurance System


DRAS is a **multi-million dollar investment** in automating Alberta's regulatory system. The **first release** went live in June 2021. Additional releases are planned as outlined below.





# Digital Regulatory Assurance System


## DRAS STATS


### What We Have Achieved To Date:


 \$1.3 Million in Cost Savings on Annual Licence Renewals

 585+ Water Act Approval Applications Submitted

 360+ Water Act Approval Decisions

 125 Water Licence Applications Submitted

 15+ Water Licence Decisions

 1160+ CoP Applications

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK RELEASE 1 – WATER ACT

Estimated efficiencies gained

75

Manual minutes saved per application by applicants

44

Estimated number of days saved throughout the application process

## IMPROVED USER EXPERIENCE

Users have said that efficiencies are found

Client Experience

Time Savings

Increased Efficiency

More Agility

Increased Effectiveness

Alberta is a conservation and biodiversity leader:

- A range of management approaches are used across all Crown land, which covers over 60% of the province, from protected areas to working landscapes
- Thresholds and environmental safeguards are woven into how we manage intent across all Crown lands, air, water, and biodiversity

# Alberta's Crown Land Vision



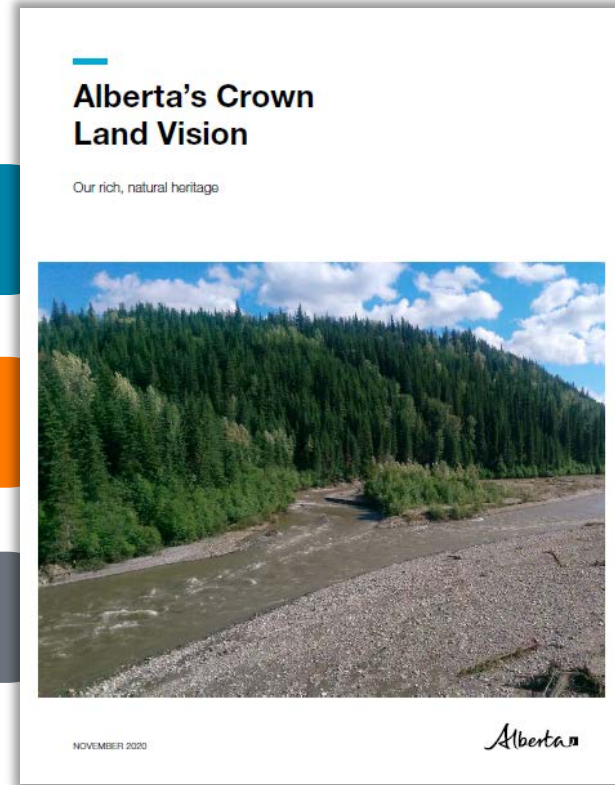
Clear, Easy to Understand System for Land Use



Sustainable Funding & Partnerships for Recreation



Focus on Outcomes & Red Tape Reduction



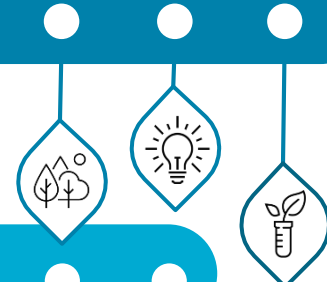
# Realizing the Vision



## Clear, Easy to Understand System for Land Use

### Activities

- Enhanced Land Use Reservation Program



## Sustainable Funding & Partnerships for Recreation

### Activities

- Trails Act – trail management including heritage and cultural trails
- Public Land Camping Pass and Kananaskis Conservation Pass
- Enhanced Delivery – “boots on the ground”



## Focus on Outcomes & Red Tape Reduction

### Activities

- Sub-regional Plans (Caribou, Moose Lake, etc.)





# Sustainable Outdoor Recreation

Alberta is taking steps to conserve lands, enhance public safety and ensure Alberta's wild and beautiful destinations are sustained now, and in the future.

## Key Achievements

### Background

Kananaskis Country has experienced considerable pressures through increased visitation. More than 5 million visited in 2020. The new Kananaskis Conservation Pass and Public Land Camping Pass went into effect June 1, 2021.

### Where are the Fees Going?

Camping pass fees will be reinvested to improve recreation experiences. Kananaskis Conservation Pass funds support trail maintenance, waste management, search and rescue operations, visitor services and the upkeep of facilities at day-use areas.

### Successes

- More than 253,000 Kananaskis Conservation Passes have been issued, generating more than \$10 million in revenue on track to meeting the target of \$15 million
- Twenty additional conservation officers and 32 new seasonal positions, including recreation officers and visitor services staff, have been hired to support safe and sustainable outdoor recreation.
- Capital investments into Alberta's parks and public lands will create more than 330 direct jobs and support improvements to trails, facilities, day-use areas, campgrounds and other recreation infrastructure.
- New reporting line, 310-LAND, consolidates 15 regional and department lines into one easy-to-remember number that Albertans can call 24-7 to report parks and public land violations and public safety incidents.

# Trails Act & Sustainable Recreation

## Key Achievements

New legislation will strengthen conservation of public lands by modernizing how Alberta's trails are managed and improving recreation experiences for Albertans.

## Background

Alberta's updated *Trails Act* enables sustainable recreation on public lands and protected trails.

The *Trails Act* will modernize how Alberta's trails are managed, while conserving the environment and improving recreation experiences for Albertans.

Classification: Public

## Protecting and Preserving Alberta's Outdoors

Trail use has changed significantly over the decades. Alberta has 13,000 kilometres of designated and managed trails but hundreds of thousands of kilometres of unintended trails.

The *Trails Act* will assure environmental protections and public safety across the trail system, while managing trails in a sustainable way that is sensitive and responsive to nearby communities and the ways in which they use the land.

## What Will the *Trails Act* Do?

- Establish the cornerstones for a sustainable trail management system on public land;
- Enable trails to be safe and, as needed, designated for specific uses such as hiking or riding an OHV;
- Enable improved trail planning, which will consider other land-uses and values;
- Strengthen enforcement tools to prevent environmental damage and promote environmental stewardship of public land; and
- Promote a bigger role for partners in building and maintaining trails.

# Land Use Reservation Program

Standardized, streamlined processes that support good data quality, clearly capture the interests of the reservation holder, and ensures effective land use decision making.

## Key Achievements

### Background

Of the 25,000 land use reservations in Alberta, many are outdated, unclear, or conflicting. This project will achieve three key outcomes to address this challenge:

1. A Modernized Reservation System
2. Clarity for Proponents, Holders, and Decision Makers
3. Reduced Administrative Burden

### Executive Summary

We are making purposeful program enhancements targeted at addressing key pinch points and increasing program consistency and clarity, while ensuring that LURP data are reliable, trusted, and relevant.

There are several program enhancements in areas of policy, IT, and data governance. These enhancements will ensure:

- Clear procedures, application requirements, and criteria to inform both reservation and land use decision making
- Transparent policy backed decisions

### Progress Metrics

Approximately 1/3 of outdated existing reservations are slated to be cancelled.

This equates to approximately 4 million hectares of public land where outdated reservations are no longer referenced.

Approximately 59% of remaining reservations will be moved into the new LURP database.

# Caribou Sub-Regional Planning

## Key Achievements

The Section 11 conservation agreement between Canada and Alberta on woodland caribou under the Species At Risk Act specifies a five-year timeline for Alberta to complete sub-regional plans that support caribou recovery outcomes.

## Background

Caribou Sub-regional Task Forces bring together Albertans from a diverse background to provide government with recommendations to inform the development of sub-regional plans that maintain a working landscape and support achievement of caribou recovery. As draft plans are developed they will be further informed through fulsome public and Indigenous engagement processes.

## Key Insights

Sub-regional planning demonstrates Alberta's commitment to achieving caribou recovery while maintaining a working landscape and providing clear land use requirements.

Expected outcomes of sub-regional planning include enabling sustainable development and future economic opportunities by reducing the amount of footprint (e.g. roads) required for different land-uses.

As draft sub-regional plans are finalized for public engagement, a comprehensive socio-economic assessment will also be undertaken to understand potential impacts and opportunities.

# Kitaskino Nuwenënë Wildland Expansion

## Key Achievements

The park expansion is a result of collaboration between the Alberta government, the Government of Canada, Indigenous communities and industry, dating back to 2019. The Mikisew Cree First Nation led collaborative discussions

## Background

In 2019, the **Government of Alberta established** the Kitaskino Nuwenënë Wildland.

It included over **160,000 hectares of land just south of Wood Buffalo National Park** and adjacent to the Birch River and the Richardson Wildland Provincial Park.

## Executive Summary

The **Kitaskino Nuwenënë Wildland has now been expanded** by adding over 152,000 hectares of land. This adds to the **largest area of protected boreal forest in the world.**

Several companies, including Athabasca Oil Corporation, Burgess Canadian Resources, and Cenovus Energy, surrendered Crown mineral rights to make the expansion possible

## Key Insights

Expanding the wildland area aims to:

- **Help protect the landscape, watersheds and wildlife** in the area, including wood bison and woodland caribou.
- **Support Indigenous Peoples'** traditional activities, including the exercise of treaty rights.
- **Create recreation** opportunities for Albertans.

# Designated Industrial Zone Project

Work with municipalities to facilitate preapproved industrial zones to streamline regulatory approvals and decision-making.

## Key Achievements

### Background

The Designated Industrial Zone project taking place in Alberta's Industrial Heartland, supports a Government commitment to work with Municipalities and Industry to enhance regulatory efficiency across the lifecycle of approvals, optimize cluster infrastructure with focus on water access, top-soil management, and electricity transmission within the zone; while achieving environmental outcomes for air and water quality.

### Executive Summary

A Governance structure and working groups were set in motion August and November 2020, respectively. More than 40 multi-stakeholder working sessions have been completed. Policy shifts and enabling mechanisms have been identified to achieve the outcomes.

Mechanisms for implementation are in various stages of development in readiness for implementing by September 2022.

### Key Insights

**Alberta's Industrial Heartland:** World scale petrochemical manufacturing with industries strategically co-locating to take advantage of feed stock hubs, cluster infrastructure and to form symbiotic relationships.

**Designated Industrial Zone Pilot:** Building on strong relationships among industrial, Airshed and Watershed associations provincial and municipal governments and a long history of working towards improved cumulative effects management dating back to 2007.

# Industrial Heartland: Designated Industrial Zones



## Regulatory Performance

### Status

- Critical policy shifts have been identified
- Project implementation Q2 2022

### Strategic Consideration

- Align municipal planning and permitting
- Develop a framework that sets criteria for DIZs



## Environmental Outcomes

- Feasibility studies are underway to determine if air and water quality objectives can be met under industrial growth scenarios

- Ensure water quality is maintained or improved.
- Ensure air quality is not exceeding CAAQS level 3



## Cluster Infrastructure

- Regional water and energy supply, wastewater treatment, and topsoil management studies and policy development are underway

- Enable growth through shared water infrastructure.
- Reduce cost of transit power among facilities in DIZ.

## Key Metrics

Industrial Heartland houses more than **40%** of Canada's petrochemical manufacturing.

Potential for future large scale **growth, attraction** of new industry and **expansion** of critical industries.

Existing industry benefits from a **streamlined** renewal process.

# Designated Industrial Zone Implementation Plan



March 2021

## Criteria and Operational Policies

- DIZ Criteria (minimum requirements)
- EPEA Renewal Requirements
- Applicant Advisory Service Topsoil Guideline

June 2022

## Policies for Clustered Water Infrastructure

- Operational Policy for Zone-Wide Assessment
- Outcomes from Water Systems Feasibility Study
- Water Supply and Distribution Policy
- Capital grant for "regulatory ready" water intake design
- Wastewater Clustering Guidance

Sept 2022

## DIZ Directive and Air & Water Policies

- DIZ Directive (Standard Terms and Conditions, Topsoil Clause)
- Air Emission Standards and Requirements (Ops Policy)
- SWQ Load Management (Ops Policy)

2022-2023

## Planning and Recommendations

- Proceed with required regulatory changes based on recommendations from feasibility studies and pilot

2023 & Beyond

## Regional Efficiencies and Regulatory Changes

- Operationalize DRAS for DIZ applications
- Develop policy for Over the Fence power solutions
- Complete regulatory changes
- Capital investments for completing zone-wide assessment and developing air and water quality management programs
- Consolidate multiple regulatory requirements into a single approach for the DIZ



# Protecting and Managing Our Water Resources

## Key Achievements

Alberta

In Alberta, our quality of life depends on having clean water for the environment, for our communities and for our economic well-being.

### Water Quality

Ensuring that lakes, rivers and aquifers are protected from development activities to support healthy aquatic ecosystems and safeguard our vital drinking water supplies.

#### What are we doing?

Continually monitoring surface water and groundwater quality across the province, establishing and implementing surface water quality management frameworks in key regions and modernizing our policies and regulations for various sectors.

### Water Management

Managing our water supplies wisely to protect aquatic ecosystems and existing water rights, while growing our communities and pursuing new economic opportunities.

#### What are we doing?

Building on a strong foundational water allocation system we continue to work with our municipal, agricultural, industrial and Indigenous partners to address water security now and into the future, strengthen conservation efforts as well as proactively managing for flood and drought.

### Wetlands

Wetlands play a key role in flood reduction, drought mitigation and water quality.

#### What are we doing?

Streamlining wetland policy implementation through enhanced regulatory process such as codes of practice and other measures.

#### Enhanced Collaboration

Strengthening our partnerships and processes under Water for Life to foster meaningful dialogue amongst stakeholders and tackle the key challenges we are facing regarding our water resources.

# Water for Life and Surface Water Quality Frameworks

In Alberta, our quality of life depends on having clean water for the environment, for our communities and for our economic well-being.

## Key Achievements

### What is Water for Life?

The Water for Life Strategy guides the Government's management of water in Alberta. The Water for Life Action Plan recommends specific actions that can be undertaken to achieve the goals of the strategy.

### Why is it Important to Albertans?

This new action plan will provide actions for several Alberta sectors to pursue. These sectors are affected by water management or play a relevant role and include key industries and government.

### What are SWQMFs?

A surface water quality management framework (SWQMF) establishes an approach to monitoring and managing long term cumulative impacts of human activities on water quality in the mainstem rivers in a region.

### Why is it Important to Albertans?

SWQMFs establish clear objectives for surface water quality and considers the impacts of all development activities in the watershed on water quality.

### How are These Connected?

A SWQMF is just one component of a larger environmental management system, including the Water for Life strategy, managing development activity to ensure water quality is protected.

# Upcoming Priorities

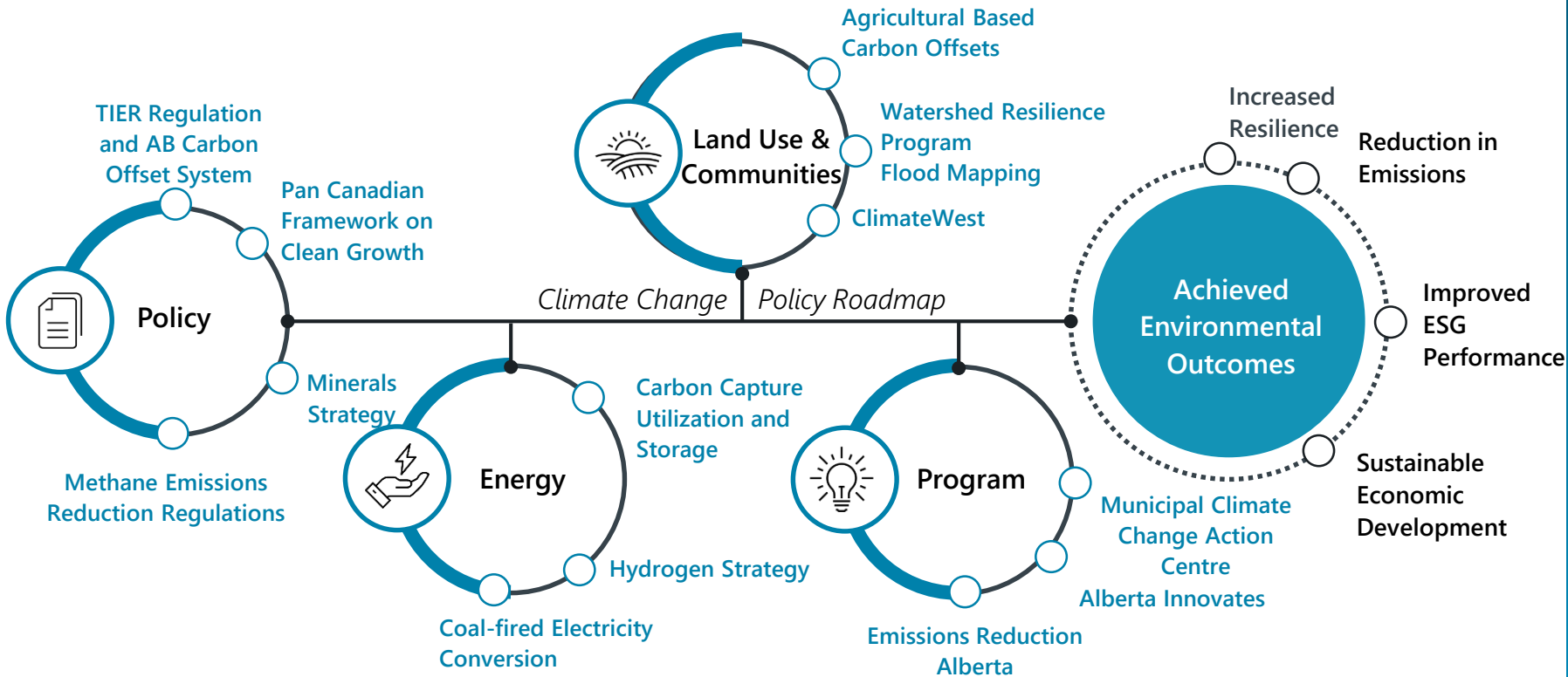
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*Important Work in Motion*

Alberta

# Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

Alberta has created an ecosystem of support for climate change policy initiatives that have achieved many environmental and socio-economic outcomes.



# Climate and the Technology Innovation and Emissions Reduction (TIER) System

Alberta continues to advance climate actions that protect the environment while supporting new investment and economic growth.

## Key Achievements

### Background

The TIER system is the centerpiece of Alberta's climate and emissions management approach.

### How it works

Large industrial emitters regulated under TIER must find new, innovative technology solutions to meet facility or sector-specific emission reduction targets that are tightened annually. If regulated emitters do not meet their annual target, they must pay into the TIER Fund. These collected payments are then recycled to fund projects and programs that further support research and development to reduce emissions, support industry to gain access to technology solutions, and support climate change adaptation in Alberta.

Classification: Public

### TIER Successes and next steps

- Alberta's government recently announced investment of up to \$176 million from the TIER Fund and federal Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund for 16 projects that will cut almost 7 Mt of emissions by 2030.
- Alberta announced \$4.5 million for the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre to administer a new Climate Adaptation Program for Alberta municipalities and Indigenous communities.
- Electricity emissions have dropped nearly 40 per cent since 2015 - 46 Mt in 2015; 31 Mt in 2018; and 29 Mt in 2020.
- From 2007 to 2020, Alberta's emission offset system generated about 62 Mt of reductions, with the largest reductions from agricultural soil sequestration, renewable electricity and CCUS.
- The TIER Regulation is scheduled to be reviewed by the end of 2022.

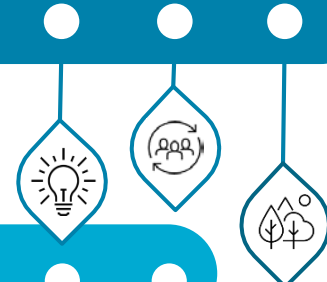
# Air Policy – NO<sub>2</sub> Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS)



## CASA Engagement on Meeting NO<sub>2</sub> CAAQS

### Activities

- Stakeholder engagement to understand perspectives on options to manage NO<sub>2</sub> and meet NO<sub>2</sub> CAAQS



## Focused Discussion on How to Move Forward

### Activities

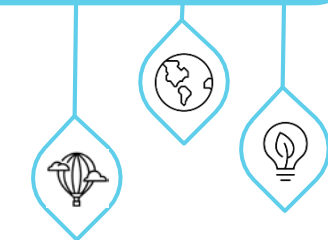
- Webinars featuring key sectors and other jurisdictions on considerations and potential actions to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- Focused discussion on potential options to meet CAAQS and stakeholder perspectives



## Holistic Approach to Meeting NO<sub>2</sub> CAAQS

### Activities

- Collective stewardship and responsibility
- Outcomes built on evidence-based decision-making that considers and manages cumulative effects



## Ambient Air Quality Objectives (AAQOs) for NO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub> Continuous Improvement

### System needs:

- *Sustainability*
- *Inclusiveness*
- *Efficiency*



### What We Have Achieved:

- Applying the most up-to-date health evidence
- Understanding stakeholder perspectives

## Continuous Emissions Monitoring System Modernization of Technology

### System needs:

- *Excellence*
- *Acceptability*
- *Innovation*



### What We Have Achieved:

- State-of-the-science methods
- Aligns or leads other leading jurisdictions
- Adaptation of new leading-edge AI technology

## Acid Deposition Management Framework (ADMF) Cumulative Effects Management

### System needs:

- *Direction*
- *Partnership*
- *Action*



### What We Have Achieved:

- Updated ADMF will “screen” for potential areas of concern for acidification
- Affected stakeholders will investigate and refine assessment through collaborative process
- Action, when necessary, will be coordinated as per the ADMF

# Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Plastics

Alberta's goal is to become the Western North America centre of excellence for plastics diversion and recycling by 2030 including having province-wide plastics recycling and diversion systems in place.

## Key Achievements

### What is EPR?

EPR is a policy approach in which producers of products and packaging manage the financial and operational obligations of recycling their materials when they reach end of life.

### Why is EPR Important?

Establishing EPR will shift the burden of recycling programs from municipalities to industry, creating cost savings for municipalities and municipal taxpayers.

Consistent, province-wide recycling will help establish economies of scale and drive a plastic circular economy.

### Next Steps

Stakeholders were engaged in spring 2021 on an overarching EPR policy framework and EPR recycling systems for single-use plastics, packaging, paper products, and hazardous and special products.

EPEA amendments were made in fall 2021 to enable EPR followed by a regulatory framework in spring 2022.

Additional engagement with stakeholders will occur in the coming months to develop the regulatory framework and ensure a smooth transition.

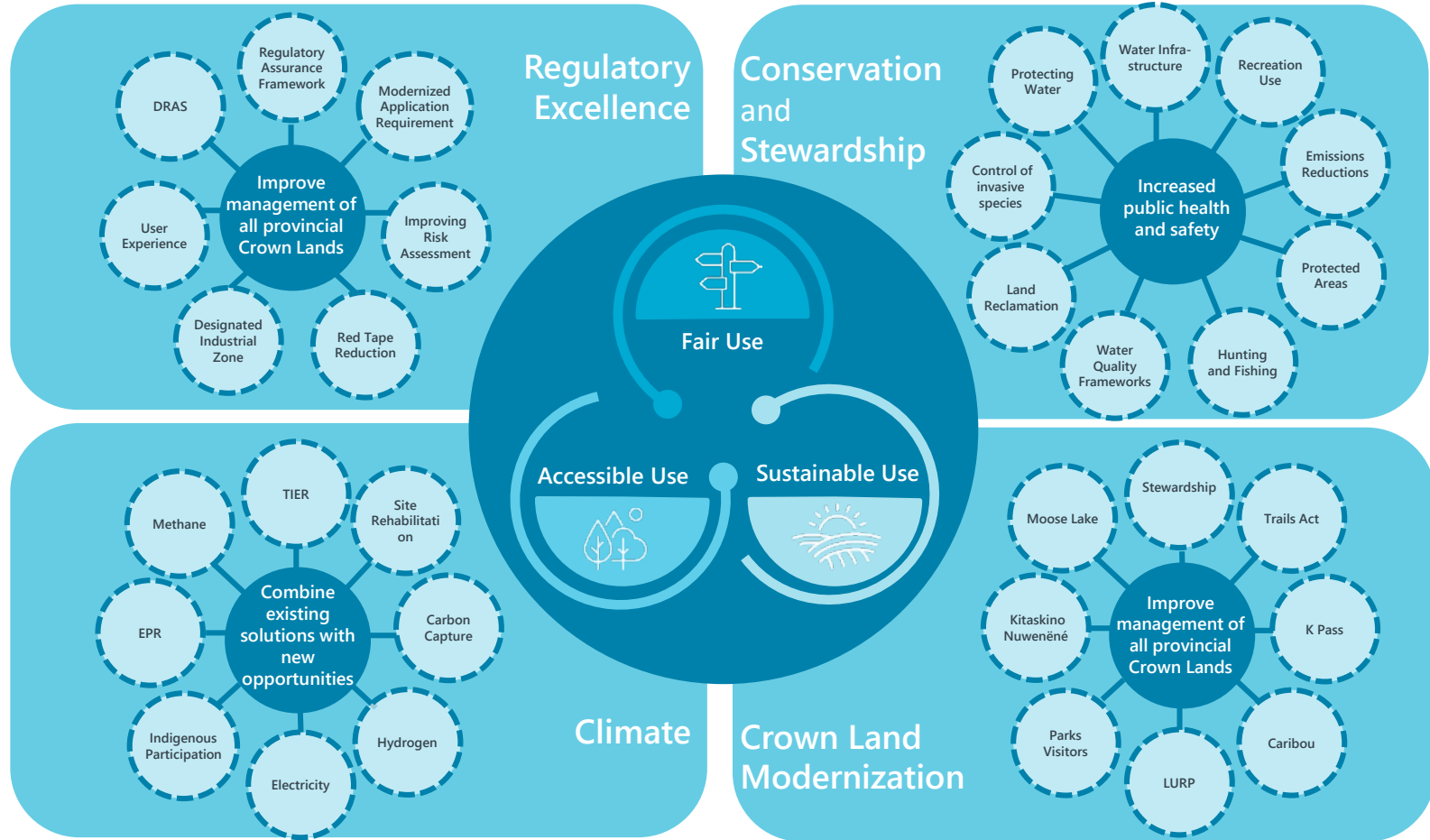


# Summary

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*In closing*

# All Environmental Management Contributes to Outcomes



# How Stakeholder Involvement Can Help

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Alberta



## Defining the Path Forward Together

*Contributing insights to reshaping a reformed regulatory system*



## Aligning on Aims and Outcomes

*Offering stakeholder perspective to help shape decisions on Fair, Accessible, and Sustainable Use outcomes*



## Advocating for a Journey to Excellence

*Allowing AEP to equip stakeholders with continued wins in realizable gains for Albertans*

*Alberta* 

Questions?

