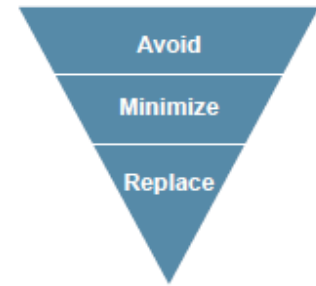


Wetland Application Checklist

Alberta Wetland Policy



Instructions: This checklist is intended to assist Applicants with *Water Act* and *Public Lands Act* applications pertaining to wetland impacts, and to ensure complete and consistent application submissions.

Wetland Application Process

Stage 1. Planning and Legislative Alignment

Preliminary Wetland Ownership, Identification and Delineation

Preliminary Ownership - Private

- The Applicant has verified private ownership through the Land Title of lands involved.
- The Applicant has obtained Landowner’s written consent (1) to perform the proposed activity if the land is privately owned and (2) if the proposed activity will affect a surrounding Landowner.

Preliminary Ownership – Public Land (Crown Ownership)

The *Public Lands Act: Section 3* provides the Government of Alberta with ownership to the beds and shores of most permanent and naturally occurring water bodies. The Department is responsible for administration of public land under provisions of the *Public Lands Act*, including wetlands. The criteria which must be met for ownership (public land) of a wetland are:

- A body of water
- Permanent
- Naturally occurring

The Guide for Assessing Permanence of Wetland Basins is a tool which provides information to assist in determining if the bed and shore is public land or private land. Validation of public land ownership by the department’s Water Boundaries technical experts must be attached to any application related to wetland.

Any semi-permanent or permanent marsh, shallow open water, or intermittent saline wetland is likely to be claimed by the Crown and will need to be confirmed in **Stage 2**.

Preliminary Wetland Identification and Delineation

- The Applicant has completed a preliminary assessment to identify the presence, location and preliminary ecological boundaries of wetlands, according to the Desktop procedures in the Alberta Wetland Identification and Delineation Directive.
- The Applicant has submitted the preliminary spatial file containing individual wetland polygons, delineated according to the desktop procedures in the Alberta Wetland Identification and Delineation Directive to the regulatory body.

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- The Applicant has obtained a preliminary (non-regulatory) estimate of relative wetland value (ABWRET-E) to assist with their planning of wetland activities. This information can be accessed through GeoDiscover

- [GeoDiscover](#)

Legislative Alignment

- The Applicant has met the legislative requirements identified in the Wetland Regulatory Requirements Guide.
- The Applicant has determined wetland management objectives in the applicable Land-Use Framework Regional Plan (i.e. South Saskatchewan Regional Plan) or in a nested sub-regional plan have been met.
- The Applicant has determined relevant Watershed Management Plans have been met.
- The Applicant has completed search results for any special designations to the wetland(s) or environmental sensitivities, including any relevant results pertaining to:
 - *A Historical Resources Act* search
 - Alberta Conservation Information Management System (ACIMS) to identify flora and fauna species including species at risk
 - Fish and Wildlife Management Information System (FWMIS) to identify fishery and wildlife species including species at risk
 - The Disposition Spatial Processing Tool (DPST) which provides a central repository from which government, industry and the public can view surface activities
 - Special Areas Management System to identify restrictions, if the proposed development is within Special Areas 2, 3 and 4
 - Federal Species at Risk (SARA Registry) to identify areas mapped as critical habitat that support threatened or endangered species at risk
- The Applicant has completed a preliminary assessment to identify a duty to consult with First Nations regarding potential adverse impacts of a project on the exercise of treaty rights and traditional uses in accordance with Alberta's Policy on Consultation with First Nations on Land and Natural Resource Management, 2013.

Preliminary Meeting

- When necessary, the Applicant may choose to set up a preliminary planning and alignment meeting with all relevant regulatory agencies. Examples of regulatory agencies include:
 - Public Lands Act Regulatory Lead and/or Water Act Regulatory Lead
 - Provincial Specialists (e.g. Wildlife Biologist, Wetland Specialist, Limnologist, Hydrologist)

- *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* Regulatory Lead where air, water and land quality may be affected
- Municipal Government's Act regulatory lead (ie. Municipality)
- Government of Canada



Stage 2. Wetland Assessments

Public Lands Act Ownership Assessment

- The applicant has determined the potential ownership of Public Lands wetlands identified in the preliminary ownership assessment using the Guide for Assessing Permanence of Wetland Basins.
- The Applicant has submitted the ownership assessment above to the Water Boundaries Unit at water_boundaries@gov.ab.ca and received confirmation of public land ownership. If the wetland is confirmed to be Public Land the province will likely require the wetland to be avoided.



Wetland Assessment and Impact Report

- The Applicant has completed a Wetland Assessment and Impact Report for each wetland that may be impacted as stipulated in the Alberta Wetland Assessment and Impact Report Directive.

Wetland Boundary Identification and Delineation

- The Applicant has attached a spatial file of the following:
 - The project boundary
 - The ecological boundaries of wetlands delineated according to the Alberta Wetland Identification and Delineation Directive
 - The area of proposed wetland impacts per wetland (e.g. point or linear disturbances, increase in wetland size or permanence)

- The area of proposed wetland loss per wetland

Wetland Classification

- The Applicant has determined all wetland classes in the wetland according to the Alberta Wetland Classification System.

Relative Value Assessment - Actual (ABWRET-A)

- The Applicant has completed a relative wetland value assessment for each wetland using the actual Alberta Wetland Rapid Evaluation Tool (ABWRET-A) in spreadsheet output (.xls, .txt) format.

Species Surveys

The following information may be required for some applications depending on the location of the project, complexity of the project, the type of proposed disturbances, specific projected impacts, the scale of impacts, and any additional environmental considerations

- The Applicant has provided information on the following for each wetland:
 - A LAT report, where available, with explanations of how all conditions will be met during construction activities

Water Quality and Water Quantity Assessments

- The applicant has completed appropriate and sufficient assessments on water quality when a proposed activity is likely to result in altered water chemistry discharging into or out of a wetland. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Baseline concentrations of water quality parameters
 - Nutrient loading and retention time models
 - Downstream effects
- The applicant has completed appropriate and sufficient assessments on local hydrology, hydrogeology, geology and/or soils information when a proposed activity is likely to result in changes to the amplitude, timing, frequency, or duration of water discharging into or out of a wetland.



Stage 3. Application Submission

Project Description

- The Applicant has submitted all required regulatory authorization applications for the proposed project:
 - Wetland Regulatory Requirement Guide
 - *Public Land / Water Act* Joint Application Form
 - *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* Application Form

- The Applicant has provided an overview of the proposed activity, including:
 - A description of the proposed activity, the anticipated impacts to all wetlands, and any likely or possible negative effects to wetland area and function
 - A spatial file of the project boundary including:
 - The ecological boundaries of wetlands delineated according to
 - Alberta Wetland Identification and Delineation Directive
 - The table for image review
 - The pathway chosen for delineation
 - The area of proposed wetland impacts per wetland

Water Quality and Water Quantity Assessments

- The Applicant has provided relevant storm water management reports and plans prepared by a qualified professional engineer. Further information is located at:
 - Water Act: Storm Water Management Fact Sheet
 - Storm Water Management Guidelines for the Province of Alberta 1999
 - Standards and Guidelines for Municipal Waterworks, Wastewater and Storm Drainage Systems: Part 5 Stormwater Management Guidelines (2013)



Wetland Assessment and Impact Report

- The Applicant has provided a completed Wetland Assessment and Impact Report as described in **Stage 2** for each wetland that may be impacted as stipulated in the Alberta Wetland Assessment and Impact Report Directive.

Rationale for proposed impacts and evidence of Wetland Mitigation Hierarchy

- The Applicant has provided an Avoidance and Minimization Plan and a Replacement Plan which outlines the rationale and evidence the Wetland Mitigation Hierarchy (avoid, minimize, replace) was applied to each wetland in accordance with the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive.
- The Applicant has also provided a **Reclamation Plan**, where an activity is subject to reclamation pursuant to the *Alberta Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.

The following information may be required for some applications depending on the complexity of the project, the scale of impacts, and any additional environmental considerations:

- Appropriate and sufficient studies on water quality when a proposed activity is likely to result in altered water chemistry discharging into or out of a wetland
- Appropriate and sufficient studies on local hydrology, geology and/or soils information when a proposed activity is likely to result in changes to the amplitude, timing, frequency, or duration of water discharging into or out of a wetland
- Anticipated cumulative effects of the proposed impact on the surrounding land and watershed. This may include cumulative effects to wetlands and wetland functions and services or to the broader environment



Wetland Replacement Plan

This section is relevant when the Applicant proposes permanent loss of wetland area.

- The Applicant has provided a replacement plan for loss of wetlands, expressed in terms of hectares of D-value wetlands in accordance with the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive.



Director's Decision – Issuance or Refusal

Legislative requirements set out in the Water Act Regulatory Requirements Guide.

Stage 4. Wetland Restorative Replacement

This section must be relevant when the Applicant has discussed replacement options with the regulatory body and proposes permittee-based wetland replacement.

- The Applicant has provided any permittee-based replacement design plans according to the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive for wetland restoration, conservation, enhancement or construction.
- The Applicant proposes an appropriate monitoring plan and schedule, along with outlined and foreseeable adaptive management responses.