



Ministry of Environment
including
BC Climate Action Secretariat and
Environmental Assessment Office

2009/10–2011/12
Service Plan

February 2009



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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



The 2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan for the Ministry of Environment, the BC Climate Action Secretariat and the Environmental Assessment Office outlines our ongoing commitment to sustainable environmental management and environmental stewardship. Our efforts over the next year will continue to concentrate on government priorities related to building a healthy environment for current and future generations.

We are taking decisive action on climate change. In 2008, we launched LiveSmart BC, a comprehensive source of information on the science of global warming, government actions to fight climate change, and ways that individuals, companies and organizations can do their part to reduce their carbon footprint. B.C.'s new Climate Action Plan outlines strategies that will move our province toward our goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. We are engaging with citizens and businesses through seven regional Citizens' Conservation Councils that will help build a network for grassroots climate action across British Columbia. We are setting an example by reducing our own impact on the environment by championing a cross government initiative to be carbon neutral by 2010.

Moving the BC Climate Action Secretariat into my Ministry was a natural evolution. The Ministry of Environment is the logical place for the Secretariat now that we have released the 128-page, cross ministry Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Secretariat will continue to lead and co-ordinate action on climate change across all levels of government and support the Cabinet Committee on Climate Action, chaired by the Premier.

As Minister of Environment I actively promote water awareness, information sharing and the development of water management plans. British Columbia's water management plan, *Living Water Smart*, was released in June 2008. The plan contains 45 actions and targets to ensure the availability of healthy water to British Columbians.

To help ensure that we continue to enjoy the best air quality possible, the government has developed the BC Air Action Plan, which sets out 28 actions to reduce pollution from all sources, with all initiatives underway by 2009. The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport will report on air quality issues that affect human health.

To make our world-class parks system better than ever before, the B.C. government has made a capital investment of more than \$83 million over the past three years to improve park facilities and acquire new lands. B.C.'s total protected area now extends to over 14 per cent of the province. We will continue to enhance visitors' experiences in our provincial parks and protected areas by offering outstanding recreation and wildlife opportunities, providing stewardship opportunities and preserving the province's natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

The new Conservation Framework, developed by scientists, conservation organizations and government, provides a science-based approach to conserving species and ecosystems. The

Framework will help to co-ordinate conservation efforts across government and more effectively focus the allocation of resources to yield the best conservation outcomes.

Third-party eco-certification of marine fisheries is increasingly becoming a critical requirement for maintaining access to global markets. We are continuing to provide support for certification under the Marine Stewardship Council. Our provincial fisheries programs strive to conserve the natural diversity of fish and fish habitat, and to sustainably manage freshwater sport fishing in B.C.

We continue to be a leader in North America in the development of industry-led product stewardship programs. This year, we will be increasing the number of programs after amending the Recycling Regulation to include televisions, computers and computer accessories.

The Ministry will continue to participate in the Resource Management Coordination Program to further a provincial approach to co-ordinating consultation with First Nations and compliance and enforcement activities. Ministry staff are supporting the First Nation Consultation Coordination Teams, Compliance Coordination Teams, Sub Regional Manager's committees and Interagency Management Committees throughout the province. The Ministry's work in this area is guided by business plans that include objectives and performance measures approved by the Sub Regional Manager's committees.

The Environmental Assessment Office continues to perform a vital role through its examination of the potential adverse effects that may result from major developments proposed for British Columbia. The structure of the assessment process means only projects that can be undertaken in a sustainable manner will be certified to proceed. Consultation with First Nations and engagement of the public and other interested parties continues to be a central focus of the process. The Environmental Assessment Office has also made considerable progress on harmonization with the federal government through joint work planning, common training and other initiatives.

The Ministry of Environment's 2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan, including the BC Climate Action Secretariat's 2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan and the Environmental Assessment Office's 2009/10 – 2011/12 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of February 13, 2009 have been considered in preparing the plan and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.



Honourable Barry Penner

Minister of Environment and Minister Responsible for Climate Action
February 13, 2009

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry supports government goals and initiatives

The Ministry of Environment manages and delivers a wide range of programs and services that support the government's environmental goals and objectives, particularly the Great Goal to "lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none." The Ministry is a leader in implementing the government's climate change initiatives and champions the government's vision of unifying British Columbians in the fight against climate change by engaging many areas of government, First Nations, stakeholders and society in this critical effort.

The Ministry promotes stewardship and sustainability

The Ministry of Environment encourages environmental stewardship, engages stakeholders and actively promotes the sustainable use of British Columbia's environmental resources. The Ministry also promotes sustainable economic activity for the long term health and benefit of the province and its citizens.

The Ministry strives to enhance environmental protection and stewardship by monitoring air and water quality, reducing and removing wastes and toxins from the environment and emphasizing compliance activities. These efforts ensure safe, high quality water, land and air resources. The Ministry champions the provincial freshwater fisheries through stewardship initiatives and works with the federal and other governments, stakeholders and industry to ensure sustainable marine fisheries and ocean resources. The Ministry manages wildlife in order to optimize the sustainability of populations within ecosystems. Through the parks and protected areas system, the Ministry ensures that healthy and diverse native species and ecosystems are maintained and that outstanding recreation and wildlife opportunities are available to all.



Ministry of Environment employee Beth Wright collects a water sample from the Georgia Strait



Conservation Officer Dean Miller collects a sample at Goldstream Park on Vancouver Island

The Ministry serves our clients in a responsible way

The Ministry of Environment serves all citizens of British Columbia in their communities, businesses and workplaces. We also provide service to national and international companies and organizations that engage in business within B.C. We do so through our approximately 1,500 skilled and experienced staff in over 50 different communities throughout the province, and through effective partnerships with other government bodies, First Nations, industry, associations, communities and environmental groups.

The Ministry develops innovative partnerships

Some programs and services are provided by third-party partners such as park facility operators, and through Ministry-supported projects delivered by organizations, such as BC Hydro, the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, the Living Rivers Trust Fund, the BC Trust for Public Lands, the Pacific Salmon Endowment Fund Society, the BC Conservation Corps and the Youth Climate Leadership Alliance. This support, in turn, helps fund local programs that enhance the Ministry's ability to fulfill its mandate. The Ministry also participates in cross government initiatives with partners such as, but not limited to, the Ministry of Forests and Range, the Ministry of Health Services, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Integrated Land Management Bureau, the BC Climate Action Secretariat and the Environmental Assessment Office.

The Ministry administers legislation and sets effective standards

Clear, effective legislation and effective standard setting provide the foundation for delivering Ministry programs and services. The Ministry has significant regulatory responsibilities and administers an extensive list of legislation. (See page 44 for a link to this list.) To promote compliance, the Ministry educates, motivates and employs a variety of strategies to help change behaviour and encourage voluntary compliance with regulatory requirements. Where necessary, the Ministry undertakes activities to enforce the Province's environmental legislation.

The Ministry reflects the values of the BC Public Service: integrity, courage, teamwork, passion, accountability, service and curiosity. We perform our work with integrity that promotes an objective approach to environmental management. We pursue innovative and collaborative approaches to ensure service excellence. We take pride in the quality of our programs and are motivated to ensure that they serve British Columbians in their communities well. We are committed to maintaining accountability as we strive to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our programs and services, as well as those of our delivery agents, through program evaluation, business reviews, audits and satisfaction surveys.

Strategic Context

The Ministry of Environment plays a critical role in fulfilling the government's environmental objectives and priorities. The Ministry defines its goals and objectives in relation to the government's strategic direction. However, a variety of factors and events may influence the Ministry's ability to meet its objectives and those of the government.

Environmental Factors

- Climate change will continue to pose significant challenges to government and society. In British Columbia, warming trends are impacting ecosystems and biodiversity. The effects of climate change increase the risks to the environment and to infrastructure from severe weather, pest outbreaks and unforeseen events. Opportunities exist to reduce greenhouse gases and provide incentives for British Columbians to do the same.
- A changing climate affects freshwater supply. A key challenge is sustaining water resources to meet the demands of a growing population, agriculture and fisheries. Using water responsibly can save on the costs of water infrastructure and energy, reducing the need to find new water supplies and ensuring the availability of healthy water.
- The mountain pine beetle has had severe regional economic and environmental impacts within British Columbia and is a serious threat beyond our borders. The mountain pine beetle infestation has not only harmed trees, it has changed the way forests affect groundwater, flooding and surface water runoff, necessitating the development of new strategies to deal with these effects.
- Unpredictable events, such as flooding, fire, storms, oil spills, disease outbreaks and contamination of food and water supplies can have serious effects on human health, ecosystems and the economy. They require an immediate response by the Ministry and its partners.



Bridge River Valley, Gold Bridge

Societal Factors

- The population of British Columbia reached over 4.3 million in 2006 and is expected to grow to over 5.5 million by 2030.¹ Such growth is likely to affect the environment in areas experiencing the greatest population increases, resulting in greater water, land and energy consumption.

¹ BC Stats. Quarterly Regional Statistics. First Quarter. 2008.

- Population growth increases the demand for resources, goods and services, and exerts pressure on the environment from development and industry. Such growth can impact the quality of water, land and air, creating waste and discharging pollutants into the environment. For example, as population increases, so too does the number of people commuting to work. However, the impact of such trends may be lessened by changing attitudes and practices among urban planners and industry. Efforts to develop denser communities and encourage more environmentally friendly modes of transportation are gaining momentum. In British Columbia, the proportion of commuters using a vehicle to get to work has declined from 81 per cent of workers in 1996 to 79 per cent in 2006.² Encouraging, too, are efforts to reduce the release of toxic chemicals and to clean up contaminated sites. Ensuring that what happens on land does not negatively affect water supplies is critical to maintaining the long-term health of our watersheds.

- The products British Columbians use in their homes and vehicles can contribute to environmental pollution and climate change. However, education and stewardship efforts are paying off. Currently, B.C. leads Canada in the number of product stewardship programs and is also one of the leading provinces for recycling and diverting non-hazardous waste from landfills.³

This trend is likely to continue as the use of recycling programs by residents and businesses continues to improve, and the list of recyclable products expands to include mercury-containing items such as light bulbs.

- Demographic changes, such as increasing cultural diversity and an aging population, are affecting the use of B.C.'s parks and protected areas. Urbanization and a shift away from nature-based experiences by young people mean less connection with the environment. Understanding the needs of a changing society, offering a variety of experiences and promoting park visitation as a convenient, low cost way to explore the province continue to be a major focus for the Ministry.
- Since 2006, there has also been a decline in recreational hunting and angling activities. Hunters and anglers have historically played a significant role in the conservation of fish and wildlife. Opportunities exist to increase the numbers of hunters and anglers and to develop conservation practices under the model of shared stewardship.



Ministry of Environment employee Kristin Lunn uses cycling as a green form of transportation

² BC Stats. "Going the Distance: Commuting Patterns in BC." Business Indicators. May 2008.

³ BC Stats. "Recycling in BC." Environmental Statistics. November 2007.

Economic Factors

- British Columbia's economic climate remains uncertain and is uncharacteristic of any time in B.C.'s recent history. The private sector expects that the province will experience slower economic growth in 2009 and 2010 than it has in previous years. Risks to B.C.'s economic outlook include a prolonged recession in the United States, continued turmoil in global financial markets, slower global demand for B.C.'s products, volatile commodity prices and further moderation of domestic demand in the province.

Despite these uncertain times, the government of British Columbia remains steadfastly committed to achieving its environmental goals and objectives. Sustaining our economy, our competitiveness and the high quality of life our citizens enjoy depends on maintaining a healthy, diverse environment. The Ministry's ongoing efforts to ensure that environmental goals and objectives are achieved in the most effective and efficient manner are now more important than ever before.

The Ministry will continue to develop key partnerships to support effective program delivery, enhance collaborative initiatives to encourage efficiencies and economies of scale across government, and ensure our internal business practices are effective, efficient and aligned to government's key priorities. Innovation plays an important role in the public service. The Ministry will continue to evaluate our programs and services to determine where improvements can be made.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

The following sections provide an overview of the Ministry's key goals, their supporting objectives and strategies, and performance measures. In some cases, objectives and performance measures have been revised or replaced to better support government priorities and a new Goal 1 has been introduced.

Goal 1: Effective response to climate change.

Climate change has broad global, regional and local significance. Changes in climate drive changes in natural systems that affect economic, environmental and social interests. Although climate changes over long time periods through natural processes, most climate scientists agree that the current rapid rate of change is of serious concern and is linked to the burning of fossil fuels and other human activities that release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

How we respond to climate change will shape our economy, our society, our communities and our way of life. All jurisdictions, including British Columbia, have a responsibility to join the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The introduction of this new goal reflects the Ministry's leadership role in addressing the causes of climate change (mitigation) and preparing for its impacts (adaptation).

Objective 1.1: Reduced provincial greenhouse gas emissions

Reducing the amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the atmosphere is an important step in addressing the causes of climate change and minimizing its impacts on generations to come.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- developing new regulations for industrial, landfill and vehicle tailpipe greenhouse gas emissions;
- promoting use of solar energy through incentive programs in partnership with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources; and
- reporting on provincial greenhouse gas emissions and leading work on developing a community energy and emissions inventory.



Ministry of Environment hybrid car

Performance Measure 1: Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Annual level of greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia relative to 2007 levels.	2007 baseline	6% reduction by 2012	6% reduction by 2012	6% reduction by 2012

Data Source: Ministry of Environment.

Discussion

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act, brought into effect on January 1, 2008, puts into law British Columbia's target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 33 per cent below 2007 levels by 2020, and by 80 per cent below 2007 levels by 2050. The Act also requires the public sector to become carbon neutral by 2010 and to report out on both emissions levels and the actions taken to reduce emissions, beginning in 2008.

Under the *Act*, the Ministry of Environment is responsible for reporting on greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere from all activities in British Columbia, including those resulting from transportation, heating and industry, landfills, agriculture and net deforestation.

The Ministry will begin with reporting out on 2007 greenhouse gas emissions in the spring of 2009 as soon as results are available. The main source of information for this report will be Environment Canada's National Inventory Report, which is prepared every year to meet Canada's obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan is B.C.'s roadmap to a new, prosperous, low carbon economy for the province. It outlines strategies and initiatives to take B.C. approximately 73 per cent towards meeting the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. The Climate Action Plan also provides information on the many ways British Columbians can reduce energy consumption and save money while reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

Objective 1.2: Preparing for unavoidable climate change and its impacts

Taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions now will reduce the impact of future climate change and provide human and natural systems more time to adjust. However, the greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere mean that some ongoing climate change and some impacts are unavoidable. The Ministry is responsible for co-ordinating the overall government approach to adaptation, which will help reduce the risks and costs related to these unavoidable changes. The Ministry is also integrating adaptation into its own work, including the management of water, land, air, native species and ecosystems and parks and protected areas.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- establishing an overall framework for government adaptation;
- identifying and supporting institutions and organizations that can develop and deliver the knowledge and tools decision-makers need to adapt; and
- collaborating with Ministry partners, including other ministries, local governments, communities, industries and non-government organizations on adaptation.

Goal 2: Clean and safe water, land and air.

Objective 2.1: Enhanced protection and stewardship of our water resources.

Achievement of this objective through effective legislation, innovative approaches to water governance and co-ordinated watershed-based planning is critical to the environment.

Strategy

A key strategy for this objective is:

- leading the implementation of the 45 recommended actions and recommendations in government's water management plan, *Living Water Smart*.



North Thompson River

Performance Measure 2: Water quality trends monitored under the Canada–B.C. Water Quality Monitoring Agreement.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Percentage of water bodies monitored under the Canada – B.C. Water Quality Monitoring Agreement with stable or improving water quality trends.	96%	96% or greater	96% or greater	96% or greater

Data Source: Ministry of Environment.

Discussion

Under the Canada – B.C. Water Quality Monitoring Agreement, 31 provincially significant rivers and streams, including the Fraser, Columbia and Peace, are monitored in British Columbia. This performance measure relies on data collected from 42 monitoring stations to determine whether water quality is stable or improving in each of these key water bodies. By measuring the concentration of variables such as metals, nutrients, pH, temperature and dissolved oxygen, the Ministry is able to identify trends in overall water quality. The Federal – Provincial Water Monitoring Group is working closely with stakeholders to establish new monitoring sites across northern B.C. Additional monitoring sites will improve our ability to determine trends in overall water quality.

Currently, automated surface water and temperature monitors are being installed at 29 of the existing water monitoring sites across the province. This will allow water quality scientists to detect changes in surface water temperatures over time. The establishment of these temperature monitors will enhance the Province's ability to understand the effects of changing temperatures on the aquatic environment that are driven by climate change.

Living Water Smart: British Columbia's Water Plan

Living Water Smart is government's vision and plan to keep our water healthy and secure for the future. Through this plan, government commits to new actions and targets and builds on existing efforts to protect and keep our water safe.

Objective 2.2: Reduced contamination from toxins and wastes.

By reducing contamination from toxins and wastes efficiently and effectively, the Ministry will minimize impacts to water, land and air.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- exploring new ways to reduce municipal solid waste disposal;
- supporting the development of a brownfields⁴ strategy for B.C.; and
- promoting the development and adoption of integrated pest management practices.



Objective 2.3: Enhanced protection and stewardship of our air.

By encouraging the use of clean technologies and supporting the establishment of effective emissions standards, the Ministry strives to reduce the impacts of air pollution.

BC Air Action Plan

The government has developed the BC Air Action Plan as part of its broader strategy to lead the world in sustainable environmental management with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none. The plan sets out 28 actions to reduce air pollution, complementing the government's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Ministry is working in collaboration with the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, industry, communities and other levels of government to implement 28 clean air initiatives that champion clean transportation, clean industry and clean communities.

⁴ Brownfields are abandoned, vacant, derelict or underutilized commercial or industrial properties where past actions have resulted in actual or perceived contamination and where there is active potential for redevelopment.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- leading the implementation of the BC Air Action Plan, which is aimed at continuing to reduce emissions from industry, transportation, urban growth, ports and marine vessels;
- expanding the air quality monitoring network to ensure that it meets or exceeds National Air Pollution Surveillance standards;
- introducing policies that support the use of the cleanest available practices and technologies in all new or expanding industrial facilities; and
- continuing to support, in partnership with the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, the development and implementation of local airshed management plans.



Swan Lake, Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, Saanich



Overlooking Southern Vancouver Island

Performance Measure 3: Clean air standards for industry.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of air emission standards incorporating current Best Achievable Technology practices.	3	4	5	6

Data Source: Ministry of Environment.

Discussion

The government is working with industry to ensure that business practices support British Columbians' environmental and health priorities, while ensuring economic sustainability. In order to encourage companies to use the cleanest available practices and technologies, the Ministry has implemented a new Best Achievable Technology approach to setting standards for new and expanding industry. Best Achievable Technology standards for air emissions will be set through guidelines, policies, codes of practice and regulations.

The first air emission standard incorporating current Best Achievable Technology is a Code of Practice for the slaughter and poultry processing industries.⁵ The Ministry developed two new standards in 2008. The first is a guideline for emissions from wood-fired electrical power generation, which was brought into effect in the summer of 2008. This guideline sets out Best Achievable Technology emissions standards for the combustion of wood for generating electricity.⁶ The second standard governs emissions from wood burning boilers used in agricultural operations. Ministry staff collaborated with the greenhouse industry and local governments on a regulatory amendment to adopt the new standards.

The Ministry also plans to develop Best Achievable Technology emission standards for new and expanding asphalt plants, primary and secondary wood manufacturing operations and pulp and paper mills. Many of these standards will support the government's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020.

This new performance measure replaces the particulate matter and low level ozone air quality performance measure. The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport will be leading monitoring and reporting activities on air quality that affects human health.

Objective 2.4: Effective management of environmental risks.

Events such as oil spills and floods can present risks to public health and safety, property and the environment. Although not all environmental risks are avoidable, effective management can help to reduce these risks. The Ministry anticipates, responds to and manages the consequences of risks to the environment.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- responding effectively to high-risk environmental emergencies;
- reducing the risk to public health and safety and the environment through effective management and response programs, and compliance and enforcement strategies and actions;

⁵ More information on this Code of Practice is available at:
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/industrial/regs/codes/slaughter/index.htm>

⁶ More information about emissions standards is available at:
http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/industrial/pulp_paper_lumber/wood_fired.htm.

- managing the environmental risks of human-wildlife interactions through proactive and reactive strategies; and
- managing the remediation of high-risk contaminated sites, and regulating the remediation of all contaminated sites.

Goal 3: Healthy and diverse native species and ecosystems.

Objective 3.1: Well-managed, integrated and accessible information on species and ecosystems.

The collection, storage, management and distribution of scientific information on native species and ecosystems provides for effective research and contributes to the understanding of the status of native species and ecosystems.



Great Blue Heron, Southern Vancouver Island



Shooting star (dodecatheon hendersonii), a southern British Columbia perennial

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- employing the Conservation Framework to collect, assess and distribute information on species and ecosystems, including their conservation status and priority ranking;
- assessing the conservation status of plants, animals and ecosystems and related risks and threats within parks and protected areas; and
- providing guidelines and standards for the protection and conservation of species and ecosystems, including monitoring and reporting on achievements.

Objective 3.2: Well-managed parks and protected areas.

The designation of parks and protected areas means these lands will be preserved for future generations and demonstrates British Columbia's commitment to the conservation of native species and ecosystems.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- undertaking parks and protected areas planning and management to ensure long term protection of natural, cultural and recreational assets; and
- maintaining and promoting partnerships to manage parks and protected areas.

Objective 3.3: Conserved, maintained and enhanced native species and ecosystems.

Ministry programs conserve biodiversity, maintain and enhance native ecosystems and achieve a balance between the needs of wildlife and the needs of people. The Ministry encourages others to accept a greater role in environmental stewardship and facilitates community initiatives to protect and restore native species and ecosystems.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- leading the implementation of the Conservation Framework to set priorities for species and ecosystem recovery and management action;
- continuing to work with and expand partnerships, including those with First Nations, to identify, protect and restore species and ecosystems;
- continuing to develop and implement guidelines, policies, standards and legislation for the protection, conservation and management of species and ecosystems; and
- providing leadership in species-at-risk status ranking and legal designation, and preparing and implementing recovery plans.

Conservation Framework

The Conservation Framework is British Columbia's new approach for maintaining the rich biodiversity of the province. Developed by the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with other scientists, conservation organizations, industry and government, the framework provides a set of science-based tools and actions for conserving species and ecosystems in B.C.

Performance Measure 4: Completed designations under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of completed designations by the Ministry of Environment under the <i>Forest and Range Practices Act</i> , including Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHAs), Ungulate ¹ Winter Ranges (UWRs) and Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds (FSWs).	WHAs – 1,154 UWRs – 54 FSWs – 36	WHAs – 1,304 UWRs – 64 FSWs – 46	WHAs – 1,454 UWRs – 74 FSWs – 56	WHAs – 1,604 UWRs – 84 FSWs – 66

Data Source: Ministry of Environment.

Note: The number for UWRs specifies the number of ungulate winter range packages; each package may have as few as 1 to more than 1,000 winter ranges. Thus, when monitoring progress in this area, it is important to also consider the amount of area designated.

¹ An ungulate is a hoofed mammal such as a caribou, moose, bison or goat.

Discussion

Designations under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* provide special management for species and plant communities affected by forest and range activities on Crown land. These designations help to conserve native species and protect their habitat. They also provide much needed certainty to the forestry and range sectors. It is important to measure Ministry progress in establishing environmental standards for the protection and restoration of species and their habitats under the *Act*.



Female elk, Southern Interior

The Ministry's legal designations are for Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHAs), Ungulate Winter Ranges (UWRs) and Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds (FSWs).

The number of WHAs and UWRs has steadily increased as shown in the table below. The number of FSWs, a designation measured since 2006, is also expected to increase annually over the next several years.

	FSWs	WHAs	UWRs
March 31, 2008	31 FSW designations	1,084 WHA designations covering 764,932 hectares	54 UWR designations approved covering 4,598,086 hectares
March 31, 2007	31 FSW designations	917 WHA designations approved covering 743,863 hectares	48 UWR designations approved covering 3,601,200 hectares
March 31, 2006	17 FSW designations	414 WHA designations approved covering 668,424 hectares	35 UWR designations approved covering 2,658,725 hectares
March 31, 2005	n/a	320 WHA designations approved covering 658,935 hectares	28 UWR designations approved covering 2,284,917 hectares
March 31, 2004	n/a	160 WHA designations approved covering 49,120 hectares	15 UWR designations approved covering 913,462 hectares

Goal 4: British Columbians share responsibility for the environment.

Objective 4.1: British Columbians understand the effect of their actions on the environment.

In order to foster an environmentally conscious society, people must become aware of the relationship between their actions and the impact on their health, and on the lives of other people and species with which they share the environment. As British Columbians continue to make the connection between their activities and environmental impacts, they are much more likely to set a higher environmental standard for their own actions and those of others.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- continuing to work with stewardship organizations to increase environmental awareness; and
- promoting outdoor activities to foster a connection to and an appreciation for the natural environment.

Objective 4.2: Shared environmental stewardship is a priority for all British Columbians.

The Ministry recognizes that in order for shared stewardship to be successful, it is necessary to work in partnership with First Nations, industry, communities, environmental groups and other government bodies.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- recognizing, promoting and enhancing shared stewardship through consultative processes and volunteer initiatives that engage stakeholders, clients and partners;
- promoting sustainable natural resource management through collaborative management; and
- enhancing and promoting shared stewardship through effective and timely communication of compliance activities to protect the environment.



Objective 4.3: Industry and client groups implement best environmental management practices

Dr. Brenda Beckwith explains First Nations stewardship of Garry Oak ecosystems, Beacon Hill Park, Victoria

Sustainable environmental management practices not only protect the environment, they reduce costs (e.g., by using resources and energy more efficiently), and lay the foundation for good corporate citizenship.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- continuing to work with industry to develop, implement and continuously improve industry-led product stewardship programs;
- continuing to research and collaborate with key stakeholders on product categories suitable for inclusion in the B.C. Recycling Regulation;
- continuing to explore opportunities to reduce regulatory burden⁷ through changes such as implementing codes of practice to replace permit-based authorization frameworks, while promoting best environmental management practices and maintaining stringent environmental standards; and
- encouraging compliance by reporting those in non-compliance with Ministry environmental standards and/or regulatory requirements.

⁷ British Columbia continues to make regulatory reform a priority across government, making it easier for businesses to operate and succeed in B.C., while still preserving regulations that protect public health, safety and the environment. Regulatory reform has been and will continue to be undertaken throughout the Ministry as the organization pursues its move to a results-based regulatory approach. Since 2001, the Ministry has reduced its regulatory requirements by 42 per cent while continuing to maintain stringent environmental standards.

Performance Measure 5: Industry-led stewardship programs

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of product categories with industry-led product stewardship programs.	9	9	11	11

Data Source: Ministry of Environment.

Note: Target figures are cumulative

Discussion

Industry-led stewardship programs require producers (manufacturers, distributors and retailers) to be responsible for the life-cycle management of their products, including collection and recycling. Stewardship programs support investment in the B.C. recycling industry and mean that less waste ends up in landfills for local governments to manage. Industry-led product stewardship programs are good examples of how shared stewardship can produce superior environmental results.

For this measure, the Ministry is counting the number of post-consumer product categories with industry-led product stewardship programs. Post-consumer categories refer to the waste that is produced by consumers at the end of a product's life cycle, such as old tires. In 2007, new industry-led product stewardship programs for electronic products were initiated. This brought the total number of programs in place to 9 — electronic products, tires, paint, used oil products, beverage containers, pharmaceuticals, solvents and flammable liquids, domestic pesticides, and gasoline. After consulting with stakeholders on next products to regulate, the government announced in April 2008 its intention to regulate mercury-containing light bulbs and thermostats and to expand the electronics product category. Following this announcement the Recycling Regulation was amended in December of 2008. This amendment expanded the electronics product category to include a variety of electrical products such as cameras and cell phones.



Recycling – a best environmental management practice

Goal 5: Sustainable use of British Columbia's environmental resources

Objective 5.1: Wise management and continued benefits of water and air

British Columbia's water and air resources sustain a full range of economic, community and ecosystem needs. The Ministry seeks to ensure that all British Columbians will continue to benefit from the wise and prudent management of these resources.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- promoting increased community and stakeholder involvement at the local level;
- responding in a timely manner to water licence applications, based on reviews that ensure optimal environmental, social and economic outcomes;
- reviewing legislation to improve the protection of ecology, provide opportunities for community involvement and provide incentives for efficient water use;
- supporting communities engaged in multi-stakeholder watershed management plans;
- promoting and facilitating multi-stakeholder watershed management plans; and
- continuing to support local air quality projects.

The Ministry will continue to support the development and implementation of watershed management plans, but will no longer report on the number of completed and implemented plans.

Objective 5.2: Optimize public, outdoor and commercial opportunities from British Columbia's parks, fish and wildlife

British Columbia's parks, fish and wildlife provide a variety of unique outdoor opportunities for residents and visitors in the form of recreation, camping, marine and freshwater angling, hunting and wildlife viewing. Engaging in these activities promotes an appreciation of B.C.'s landscape, native species and the environment as a whole.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- optimizing stewardship and economic opportunities with First Nations, local communities, non-profit groups, private land owners and others;
- developing strategic plans for parks, fish and wildlife management that promote exceptional outdoor opportunities, while ensuring long-term protection of natural resources;
- developing and implementing marketing strategies to promote active living through park visitation;
- expanding the number of park recreation opportunities;

- providing angling licences through electronic licensing and developing the provision of hunting licences through a similar framework;
- developing new opportunities for marine angling in the Georgia Basin through net pen rearing of juvenile pink salmon;
- streamlining the provision of commercial licences (e.g., for guides, trappers and fur traders) through process improvement and regulation simplification focused on client service standards; and
- promoting awareness of contributions to the Park Enhancement Fund.



Bowron Lake Provincial Park



Stewwinder Provincial Park

Performance Measure 6: Park visitation and visitor satisfaction

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of recorded park visits and visitor satisfaction level					
• Park visits	18.3 million	19.8 million	20.6 million	22.0 million	22.0 million
• Visitor satisfaction level.	80%	84%	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve

Data Source: Ministry of Environment.

Note: Recorded park visits: The number of recorded visits to B.C. parks was approximately 19.8 million based on attendance data submitted from April 2007 through March 2008. Visitor satisfaction: 84 per cent. The satisfaction rating is based on an extensive satisfaction survey that is conducted in campgrounds and day-use areas around the province and is based on nearly 5,000 respondents. The five-year rolling average for 2004/2005 of approximately 80 per cent is based on the Visitor Satisfaction Index rating of the reporting years of 2000/01 to 2004/05.

Discussion

Provincial parks provide protection for representative landscapes and habitat for native species. Parks also provide recreational services and opportunities that contribute to local economies, promote active living and support an appreciation for the environment. B.C.'s parks system is the single largest recreation enterprise in the province and one of the best in the world. The number of visitors to provincial parks is used to measure the contribution of parks to the government's priorities of healthy communities, tourism and the economy. These data are intended to provide a reasonable indication of the trend in the level of use of public outdoor recreation opportunities available in British Columbia's parks.

Since 1985, the Ministry has monitored the effectiveness of providing services in provincial park campgrounds and day-use areas by conducting an annual satisfaction survey with a random sample of park visitors. The results of this survey are used by Ministry staff and park facility operators to assess and improve on park services.

The target of increasing park attendance by 20 per cent between 2004/05 and 2010/11 remains a key focus for the Ministry and attendance has been steadily increasing over the past few years. However, there are many factors outside of the Ministry's control that influence park visitation. These factors include weather conditions, major construction projects, natural events such as forest fires, proximity to wildlife such as grizzly bears and the rising cost of fuel. The expectations of British Columbians are changing and the services required in our parks are changing, too. Work is continuing under the 2006 Parks for People Strategy to ensure that services and programs are responsive to visitor needs and demographic trends.

Objective 5.3: Collaborative management and use of marine and ocean resources

British Columbia's marine fisheries and ocean resources provide great economic and social benefits to the citizens of the province. The Ministry works in close collaboration with the Integrated Land Management Bureau, which is responsible for provincial marine planning, and with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, to represent British Columbia's interests and to ensure that ocean and marine resources are managed in a sustainable manner.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- undertaking initiatives, such as third-party certification of British Columbia's fisheries, to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of British Columbia's seafood products in domestic and international markets; and
- representing British Columbia's interests to ensure a fair share of federal and cross government programs, initiatives and activities to promote research, exports and investment for our seafood sector.

Performance Measure 7: Fisheries in Marine Stewardship Council's eco-certification process.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of commercial British Columbia fisheries in the Marine Stewardship Council's eco-certification process.	6	7	8	9

Data Source: Ministry of Environment

Note: Target figures are cumulative.

Discussion

The Marine Stewardship Council is an independent, global, non-profit organization that provides eco-certification to well-managed fisheries around the world. Certification is considered to be the gold standard for fisheries' sustainability, and third-party eco-certification is increasingly becoming a requirement for fisheries to maintain access to global markets. The Council's label of approval also reflects consumer preference for seafood products that contribute to healthy sustainable stocks.

Assessments are completed through a scientific certification program by an independent body consistent with United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's guidelines for sustainable fisheries and fisheries eco-labelling. Certification takes approximately two years to complete. A total of six fisheries are in the full assessment process for eco-certification.

This new performance measure supports the government's desire to ensure a sustainable future for B.C.'s commercial fisheries and seafood sector, and its socio-economic contributions to British Columbians. It replaces the number of marine-based commercial and recreational fisheries managed collaboratively.



Fishing boats off the coast of Prince Rupert

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2008/09 Restated Estimates ¹	2009/10 Estimates	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Environmental Stewardship	40,610	34,256	33,722	33,043
Parks and Protected Areas ²	38,603	36,111	35,854	35,417
Water Stewardship	63,878	58,288	58,608	58,305
Environmental Protection ³	42,380	37,564	37,096	36,467
Compliance	20,266	18,589	18,588	18,589
Executive and Support Services	31,603	30,139	29,466	28,528
Total	237,340	214,947	213,334	210,349
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)				
Environmental Stewardship	305	299	299	299
Parks and Protected Areas	209	217	217	217
Water Stewardship	135	136	137	137
Environmental Protection	268	268	268	268
Compliance	153	153	153	153
Executive and Support Services	383	372	372	372
Total	1,453	1,445	1,446	1,446
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Environmental Stewardship	371	57	568	1,067

Core Business Area	2008/09 Restated Estimates ¹	2009/10 Estimates	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Parks and Protected Areas²	14,630	11,422	11,597	11,768
Water Stewardship	109	27	148	266
Environmental Protection	245	52	344	629
Compliance	974	29	737	1,429
Executive and Support Services	2,032	132	71	71
Total	18,361	11,719	13,465	15,230

1. These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2009/10 *Estimates*.

2. Includes Park Enhancement Special Account.

3. Includes Sustainable Environment Fund.

Environmental Appeal Board and Forest Appeals Commission

The Environmental Appeal Board (Board) and Forest Appeals Commission (Commission) are independent, quasi-judicial tribunals jointly administered by the same office. They hear appeals of government decisions under several provincial statutes concerned with natural resource management, environmental quality and public health protection.

As well, the Board and Commission administer other tribunals including: the Hospital Appeal Board for the Ministry of Health Services; the Community Care and Assisted Living Appeal Board for the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport; and the Industry Training Appeal Board for the Ministry of Advanced Education.

The Board has statutory authority to hear appeals from administrative decisions under the *Environmental Management Act*, the *Health Act*, the *Integrated Pest Management Act*, the *Water Act* and the *Wildlife Act*. The Commission has statutory authority to hear appeals from administrative decisions made with respect to a variety of matters regulated by the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act*, *Forest and Range Practices Act*, the *Forest Act*, the *Range Act*, the *Wildfire Act* and the *Private Managed Forest Land Act*.

While the Board and the Commission operate independently from the Ministry of Environment, their budget vote is the responsibility of the Ministry. Therefore, they are not considered one of the core business areas accountable to the Minister of Environment, but they are included in the Resource Summary of this Service Plan.

It is further noted that the Oil and Gas Appeal Tribunal, which was enacted under the *Oil and Gas Activities Act*, is scheduled to come into force in September 2009 and may have the same membership as the Board and the Commission.

Resource Summary Table

Core Business Area	2008/09 Restated Estimates ¹	2009/10 Estimates	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)	2,096	2,103	2,100	2,098
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)	11	11	11	11
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)	15	15	15	15

¹ These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2009/10 *Estimates*.

Ministry Contact Information

Regional Office	Telephone	Fax	Website
Victoria – Headquarters	250 387-1161	250 387-5669	www.gov.bc.ca/env/
Vancouver Island Region			
<i>Main Regional Office:</i> Nanaimo	250 751-3100	250 751-3103	www.env.gov.bc.ca/van-island/
Other offices: Black Creek, Duncan, Goldstream Park, Parksville, Port Alberni, Port Hardy, Ucluelet			
Lower Mainland Region			
<i>Main Regional Office:</i> Surrey	604 582-5200	604 930-7119	www.env.gov.bc.ca/lower-mainland/
Other offices: Brackendale (Squamish), Cultus Lake, North Vancouver, Sechelt, Powell River			
Thompson Region			
<i>Main Regional Office:</i> Kamloops	250 371-6200	250 828-4000	www.env.gov.bc.ca/thompson/
Other offices: Clearwater, Lillooet, Merritt			
Okanagan Region			
<i>Main Regional Office:</i> Penticton	250 490-8200	250 490-2231	www.env.gov.bc.ca/okanagan/
Other offices: Grand Forks, Kelowna, Oliver, Princeton/Manning Park, Vernon			
Kootenay Region			
<i>Main Regional Offices:</i> Cranbrook Nelson	250 489-8540 250 354-6333	250 489-8506 250 354-6332	www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/
Other offices: Castlegar, Creston/West Creston, Fernie, Invermere, Golden, Revelstoke			
Cariboo Region			
<i>Main Regional Office:</i> Williams Lake	250 398-4530	250 398-4214	www.env.gov.bc.ca/cariboo/
Other offices: 100 Mile House, Bella Coola/Hagensborg, Quesnel			

Regional Office	Telephone	Fax	Website
Skeena Region			
<i>Main Regional Office:</i> Smithers	250 847-7260	250 847-7591	www.env.gov.bc.ca/skeena/
Other offices: Atlin, Burns Lake, Dease Lake, Queen Charlotte City, Terrace/Lakelse Lake			
Omineca Region			
<i>Main Regional Office:</i> Prince George	250 565-6135	250 565-6629	www.env.gov.bc.ca/omineca/
Other offices: Vanderhoof, Mackenzie, Mount Robson, Fort St. James			
Peace Region			
<i>Main Regional Offices:</i> Fort St. John	250 847-7260	250 847-7591	www.env.gov.bc.ca/peace/
Other offices: Chetwynd/Moberly Lake Park, Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson/Liard Hotsprings, Atlin			

Hyperlinks to Additional Information

The Ministry of Environment's vision, mission and values can be found here:

www.env.gov.bc.ca/sp/2009/vision_mission_values.pdf

The Ministry of Environment's organizational chart can be found here:

www.env.gov.bc.ca/sp/2009/org_chart.pdf

Descriptions of the Ministry of Environment's core business areas can be found here:

www.env.gov.bc.ca/sp/2009/core_business.pdf

A listing of the legislation administered by the Ministry of Environment can be found here:

www.env.gov.bc.ca/sp/2009/leg.pdf

BC Climate Action Secretariat

Purpose of the Secretariat

British Columbia's climate action goals are a key part of achieving the government's Great Goal of leading the world in sustainable environmental management. The government established the BC Climate Action Secretariat in 2007 in recognition of the seriousness of the issue and the fact that climate change cuts across all ministries, all levels of government and all aspects of daily life,

The BC Climate Action Secretariat is mandated to ensure an innovative, co-ordinated and effective approach to climate action in British Columbia. Situated within the Ministry of Environment, the Secretariat is the central government agency responsible for achieving the government's greenhouse gas reduction targets by co-ordinating climate action activities across government and with stakeholders.

The BC Climate Action Secretariat:

- co-ordinates and facilitates best practices research and policy on climate action across government ministries;
- advises and supports the Cabinet Committee for Climate Action;
- establishes engagement processes with First Nations, municipalities, other governments, industries, environmental organizations, and the scientific community to facilitate their input into the planning process;
- assesses incentives and other fiscal and financial mechanisms to lead and drive the change envisioned;
- leads and co-ordinates the carbon neutral public sector initiative;
- co-ordinates the development of a public outreach and strategic engagement program to mobilize citizens and partners;
- co-ordinates the Citizens' Conservation Councils on Climate Action;
- develops and facilitates the implementation of a regional cap and trade system and standardized offsets program;
- develops necessary adaptation strategies and procedures for the province;
- leads and supports the development of all required climate action-related legislation and regulations;
- works with international, national and regional partners to forward climate action goals; and
- supports the Pacific Carbon Trust.

Strategic Context

The BC Climate Action Secretariat operates within a strategic context characterized by both challenge and opportunity. This context includes an increasingly serious global environmental crisis, a slowing economy, a dynamic intergovernmental relations backdrop, and a complex, multi-dimensional public sector. These four contexts will affect the ability of the Secretariat to act on its mandate and achieve success.

Environmental Context

As a result of temperature increases, the province is experiencing the symptoms of climate change right now — from the warming of northern British Columbia to increased forest fires, flooding and rising sea levels. Additionally, the mountain pine beetle epidemic, caused by the lack of cold winters for more than a decade, is costing our province millions of dollars.

The impact of the climate crisis on British Columbia is clear. So is the need for strong, early action. As indicated in the reputable Stern Report, “Tackling climate change is the pro-growth strategy for the longer term, and it can be done in a way that does not cap the aspirations for growth.” In fact, Stern’s comprehensive economic review of the impact of climate change argues that “the benefits of strong, early action considerably outweigh the costs.” The question is not whether to act to mitigate climate change, but how. It is not action that creates unmanageable economic, social and environmental burdens. It is inaction.

The BC Climate Action Secretariat must focus both on strategies for mitigation and adaptation. The scope of the problem for British Columbia is serious; the success of the BC Climate Action Secretariat will thus depend in part on its ability to adequately respond to climate change through appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Economic Context

The private sector now expects that B.C. will experience slower economic growth in 2009 and 2010 than it has in previous years. Risks to B.C.’s economic outlook include a prolonged U.S. recession, continued turmoil in global financial markets, slower global demand for B.C. products, volatile commodity prices and further moderation of domestic demand in B.C.

Over the longer term, British Columbia’s climate change initiatives, along with similar efforts by other jurisdictions globally, will stimulate the creation of a new low-carbon economy that is based on renewable energy and new conservation technologies. The government will work with stakeholders to prepare British Columbia to seize early benefits from these new opportunities. A low-carbon economy will help insulate British Columbia from fluctuating fossil fuel energy costs and provide a more robust, diverse and resilient economic environment where growth, productivity and prosperity are powered by clean energy.

Intergovernmental Context

Climate change does not recognize borders, whether they are municipal, regional, provincial, national or international. Climate change is also not a challenge that we can tackle alone. The government of British Columbia has recognized the need to build new partnerships that establish a critical mass for decisive action that can leverage collective strength, build on common purpose, share resources and expertise, and launch regional and international systems that will help us reach our targets.

National and international collaboration to establish market mechanisms for identifying efficient greenhouse gas reductions is therefore a key part of British Columbia's climate action strategy. British Columbia's partnerships with members of the Western Climate Initiative and the International Climate Action Partnership will lay the foundation for compatible market-based systems to trade carbon offsets and credits within North America and worldwide. It is critical for British Columbia to help lead in the early stages of how these systems are designed and structured.

However, the intergovernmental relations context related to climate action is not characterized by certainty. As a result, the success of several key components of the provincial approach to climate action, including the establishment of the Western Climate Initiative's Regional Cap and Trade Program, are dependent on maintaining and strengthening intergovernmental relationships and encouraging other jurisdictions to join similar emissions trading systems.

Provincial Government Context

The Province has committed to harnessing the energy, enthusiasm and dedication of the BC Public Service to become carbon neutral by 2010. This commitment is an important way for government to demonstrate leadership and "walk the talk" of climate action. The public sector includes not only core government ministries, but also a variety of Crown agencies, schools, colleges, universities and health authorities. Creating a system by which all of these diverse entities can easily measure, report, reduce and offset their emissions through a valid emissions offset system is a complex challenge. The achievement of a carbon neutral public sector will also depend on the engagement of a wide variety of public servants. This must occur within a public service that is facing the demographic challenge of an increasing number of retirements. The ability of the BC Climate Action Secretariat to guide the public service and inspire their commitment to carbon neutrality will be important determinants in the successful implementation of this key climate action initiative.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Goal 1: British Columbia meets or exceeds its greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Objective 1.1: Ministries and Crown agencies achieve their responsibilities under the Climate Action Plan.

The Climate Action Secretariat will ensure that the Climate Action Plan is implemented by leading and co-ordinating initiatives across government ministries. The Secretariat will also continue to support the Cabinet Committee on Climate Action by identifying new priority climate action initiatives, developing comprehensive policy options and co-ordinating efforts across ministries and Crown agencies.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- developing climate action policy and providing advice, research and planning documents as directed by the Cabinet Committee on Climate Action;
- guiding the successful delivery of climate action goals across government by providing direction and resolving issues;
- assisting other ministries in developing policy, legislation and/or regulations as required; and
- providing research support and leveraging existing ministry capacity to guide strategic policy development.



Connor Lake in Height of the Rockies Provincial Park

Performance Measure 1: Achievement of greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Achievement of greenhouse gas reduction targets.	<p>Eight pieces of climate action legislation in place</p> <p>Regulation for five out of eight pieces of legislation complete</p>	<p>Regulations for the <i>Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Vehicle Emissions Standards) Act</i> and the <i>Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Renewable and Low Carbon Fuel Requirements) Act</i> complete</p>	<p><i>Regulations for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Cap and Trade) Act</i> complete</p> <p>Zero net deforestation legislation complete</p>	<p>Greenhouse gas emissions reduced by six per cent from 2007 levels</p>

Data Source: BC Climate Action Secretariat.

Discussion

The BC Climate Action Secretariat released phase one of the Climate Action Plan in June 2008. The plan details a suite of climate action policies projected to achieve 73 per cent of B.C.'s target to reduce emissions by one third below 2007 levels by 2020. The plan also allows the BC Climate Action Secretariat to co-ordinate climate action priorities internally across government and to communicate climate action to the broader public, communities and businesses.

The form of the Climate Action Plan is expected to evolve over time and will be reviewed and amended as needed. In August 2008, the Climate Action Team released a report recommending additional measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and interim targets for 2012 and 2016. The government is considering these recommendations and will incorporate appropriate policy initiatives into the Climate Action Plan. In response to the Climate Action Team's recommendations on interim targets, in November 2008, the government established in law greenhouse gas reduction targets of six per cent below 2007 levels by 2012 and 18 per cent by 2016. The effectiveness of the overall Climate Action Plan directly correlates with the Province's progress towards meeting its targets for 2012, 2016 and 2020. The performance measure will later be expanded to include the targets for 2016 and 2020.

Goal 2: British Columbia demonstrates leadership in cross jurisdictional initiatives to address climate change.

Objective 2.1: The government's intergovernmental relations strategy for climate change establishes cross jurisdictional actions on climate change that support the Climate Action Plan.

By continuing to engage with provinces, states and countries, the government of British Columbia will reinforce the need for regional, national and international strategies and partnerships to combat climate change. The Climate Action Secretariat will help in developing national and international regimes, ensuring that they are to the benefit of British Columbians.

Challenges associated with this objective include a dynamic intergovernmental context, changes in priorities of partners and possible delays in action.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- participating in the Western Climate Initiative, the International Climate Action Partnership. The Climate Registry, and the Pacific Coast Collaborative to co-ordinate regional climate action goals;
- developing opportunities that arise from cross jurisdictional agreements to the benefit of British Columbia, such as carbon offset projects in the waste, agricultural and forest sectors;
- continuing to work with Canadian provinces through the Council of the Federation;
- pursuing other regional, national and international opportunities to advance climate action goals and fostering collaboration through formal agreements and partnerships; and
- working with local governments to further climate action goals.

Performance Measure 2: Demonstrated active leadership role in advancing climate action initiatives in partnership with other jurisdictions.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Demonstrated active leadership role in advancing climate action initiatives in partnership with other jurisdictions.	B.C.'s agenda is advanced in cross-jurisdictional climate action initiatives	B.C.'s climate action goals are co-ordinated with other jurisdictions	Strategic climate change actions are aligned with partner jurisdictions	Cross jurisdictional actions and mechanisms to reduce emissions in place

Data Source: BC Climate Action Secretariat.

Discussion

British Columbia will continue to take an active leadership role in developing national and international partnerships on climate change. The BC Climate Action Secretariat's current leadership in organizations such as the Western Climate Initiative and the International Carbon Action Partnership will help British Columbia meet its own climate action targets and ensure that multi-lateral initiatives are to the economic benefit of British Columbians.

Goal 3: British Columbia's public sector will be carbon neutral by 2010.

Objective 3.1: Public sector organizations have the tools required to meet carbon neutral targets.

By facilitating the development and distribution of tools and resources across the public sector, the BC Climate Action Secretariat will ensure that the carbon neutral commitment can be achieved.

Challenges associated with this objective include ensuring a consistent and user friendly accounting system across the broader public sector.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- working with the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services to develop a carbon measurement tool for use by all public sector organizations;
- working with the Ministry of Environment to develop reporting standards for the public sector;
- working with the Ministry of Finance to support the development of the Pacific Carbon Trust as a Crown corporation responsible for purchasing carbon offsets;
- developing and distributing guidelines for carbon neutrality to all public sector organizations;
- providing expertise and advice as required; and
- reporting on progress.

Performance Measure 3: British Columbia public sector operations meet carbon neutral targets.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
B.C. public sector operations meet carbon neutral targets.	The B.C. public sector uses reporting and inventory tools to achieve carbon neutrality (for travel)	The B.C. public sector uses reporting and inventory tools to achieve carbon neutrality (for travel)	The B.C. public sector uses reporting and inventory tools to achieve carbon neutrality (for all activities)	The B.C. public sector uses reporting and inventory tools to achieve carbon neutrality (for all activities)

Data Source: BC Climate Action Secretariat.

Discussion

The carbon neutral public sector commitment requires the compliance of a diverse group of public sector organizations. The targets set here reflect the need to develop tools and resources to assist public sector organizations in learning how to measure, reduce and offset the greenhouse gas emissions for which they are responsible. All public sector organizations will be carbon neutral for travel for 2008 and 2009, carbon neutral for all emissions by 2010 and carbon neutral for each subsequent year thereafter.

Goal 4: British Columbians are engaged in taking action on climate change and benefiting from economic opportunities in a new low-carbon economy.

Objective 4.1: British Columbians are informed about how they can take action on climate change and have opportunities to participate in the development of new government-led initiatives.

By developing a comprehensive strategy for public outreach, the BC Climate Action Secretariat will assist the Province in increasing public engagement and encouraging the behavioural change required to significantly reduce provincial greenhouse gas emissions. These efforts will also support the potential economic opportunities available to British Columbians in the emergence of a new low-carbon economy. Working with industries, communities and other stakeholders will forge linkages between British Columbian entrepreneurs, new technologies and emerging markets.

Challenges associated with this objective include research gaps on the attitudes of British Columbians towards climate change and gaps in best practices on successful public outreach strategies on climate action.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- supporting the Citizens' Conservation Councils in fulfilling their mandate to advise government on public engagement strategies, including public information and education campaigns;
- maintaining an informative, comprehensive and engaging website and other communications resources as identified;
- facilitating and managing sector-specific working groups;
- building strategic partnerships with individuals, communities, non-profit organizations and businesses to encourage British Columbians to make low-carbon lifestyle and business choices;
- supporting the Ministry of Trade, Technology and Economic Development in its low-carbon economy development and profiling its work in climate action outreach, education and engagement activities; and
- continuing dialogue with youth.



Cycling is a low-carbon lifestyle choice

Performance Measure 4: The public is taking action on climate change and benefiting from economic opportunities.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
The public is taking action on climate change and benefiting from economic opportunities.	Public awareness of climate change increases	Public awareness of climate change increases	Public is informed and early participants are benefiting from new economic opportunities	Public engaged and benefiting from low carbon economy

Data Source: BC Climate Action Secretariat.

Discussion

Public engagement and outreach is a critical component in achieving British Columbia's greenhouse gas reduction targets. The performance measure targets set here reflect the need to conduct the necessary analysis in order to adopt the best possible public engagement strategy for the Province, solicit the advice of a new Citizens' Conservation Council, and continually develop new tools to encourage change in the public's behaviour.

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2008/09 Restated Estimates ¹	2009/10 Estimates	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Climate Action Secretariat	15,458	14,594	14,621	14,554
Total	15,458	14,594	14,621	14,554
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)				
Climate Action Secretariat	18	33	33	33
Office Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund)(\$000)				
Total	0	3	3	3

¹ These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2009/10 *Estimates*.

Secretariat Contact Information

For more information on the Climate Action Secretariat contact:

Climate Action Secretariat

First Floor

525 Superior Street

Victoria BC V8V 1T7

Contact:

James Mack

Head, BC Climate Action Secretariat

250 387-3966

Website: www.climateactionsecretariat.gov.bc.ca

Environmental Assessment Office

Purpose of the Office

The Environmental Assessment Office was created in 1995 to co-ordinate the assessment of proposed major projects in British Columbia in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*. This role was continued for the Environmental Assessment Office when government proclaimed the new *Environmental Assessment Act* in December 2002.

Environmental assessment examines the potential for adverse environmental, economic, social, heritage, and health effects from the construction, operation, and, where required, decommissioning stage of a project. For any project requiring an environmental assessment certificate, the proponent must complete an environmental assessment review and receive a certificate before provincial agencies can issue approvals for the project under other provincial enactments.

Under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, projects become reviewable in three ways.

- Projects in the following sectors that meet or exceed the size thresholds established in the Reviewable Projects Regulation (B.C. Reg. 370/2002) are automatically subject to the *Environmental Assessment Act*: industrial, mining, energy, water management (dams, dykes, and reservoirs), waste disposal, food processing, transportation and tourism (destination resorts).
- Project proponents may also apply to the Environmental Assessment Office to have their project reviewed under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.
- The Minister of Environment may also order the assessment of a project if the Minister believes the project has the potential for significant adverse effects and where it is in the public interest to do so.

The environmental assessment process administered by the Environmental Assessment Office provides for:

- opportunities for First Nations, local government, government agencies, and all interested parties to provide input and identify issues;
- an accountable and transparent decision-making process with easy access to key assessment information;
- consultations with First Nations to address and, where appropriate, accommodate potential effects on established or asserted aboriginal rights and title;



- technical studies to identify any potentially adverse environmental, social, economic, heritage, or health effects of a proposed project;
- strategies and measures to avoid, prevent, or reduce potential adverse effects through mitigation or project redesign;
- preparation of a comprehensive assessment report summarizing issues and findings at the conclusion of the process;
- preparation of a recommendations document, with reasons, that provides advice on whether to issue an environmental assessment certificate for a proposed project; and
- assignment of conditions and follow-up or compliance reporting requirements to a proponent in an environmental assessment certificate.

Strategic Context

In the last several years, the Environmental Assessment Office has experienced a significant growth in the number of proposed projects entering the assessment process. While the global economic uncertainty in recent months may lead to some moderation in the number of projects entering the process, British Columbia's economy is expected to remain strong relative to other jurisdictions and a significant demand for assessment of major projects is expected to continue. The estimated potential capital investment value for projects in the environmental assessment process in 2008/09 was expected to exceed \$30 billion.

Energy and mining project proposals will continue to comprise the majority of projects in the assessment process and will use the bulk of the Environmental Assessment Office's resources. Energy projects represent a wide diversity of power sources such as hydro, wind and biomass. Project proposals for new mines, primarily in the northwest and northeast, are expected to continue to enter the environmental assessment process at a significant rate. In addition to energy and mining, projects from other sectors such as oil and gas, tourism, transportation and waste management are also expected to continue to enter the assessment process in coming years.

In conducting its assessments, the Environmental Assessment Office is guided by the evolving case law and government policy related to the obligations of the Crown to consult with First Nations. Among other things, the Environmental Assessment Office seeks First Nations' input on its project-scoping decisions and procedural orders, it encourages and helps fund First Nations' participation in technical working groups, and makes provisions for First Nations' discussions outside of working groups where necessary. The Environmental Assessment Office also actively encourages proponents to meet with First Nations at their earliest opportunity to learn about First Nations' communities and First Nations' interests and concerns.



*Proposed Kwoiek Creek
hydroelectric project site*

Because there are a significant number of projects that require assessment under both provincial and federal law, the Environmental Assessment Office works closely with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to minimize duplication and overlap and to maximize efficiencies wherever possible. While considerable progress has been achieved, more work remains to be done.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Goal 1: The environmental assessment process is effective and efficient .

Given its comprehensive nature, the environmental assessment process necessarily requires a significant investment of time and resources by all participants. As a result, it is essential to ensure that the process is as effective and efficient as it can be. The Environmental Assessment Office has a strong national reputation for conducting effective and efficient reviews and it is important to preserve and build upon that success. In particular, it is essential to continue work with the federal government to truly eliminate duplication where possible, and to harmonize processes in those cases where both federal and provincial assessments are undertaken.

Objective 1.1: Ensure the process is easy to understand and complexity is minimized.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- entering into agreements with the federal government to use existing legislative tools to minimize duplication and to continue enhancing harmonization through joint work plans and joint staff training;
- engaging First Nations early in the process, providing capacity funding, and making procedural decisions that are timely and principled;
- ensuring that project information is made widely available through the electronic Project Information Centre (e-PIC) and consultation activities such as open houses;
- reviewing and streamlining policy documents, practices, and procedures; and,
- establishing clear service standards and commitments to proponents, First Nations and the general public, through the Environmental Assessment Office's new Fairness and Service Code.

Performance Measure 1: Application reviews in the B.C. environmental assessment process are completed within 180 days.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Percentage of application reviews in the B.C. environmental assessment process completed within 180 days:				
• B.C. process only, and	90%	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve
• joint B.C./Canada process.	80%	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve

Data Source: Environmental Assessment Office.

Discussion

This performance measure is a simplified version of two performance measures that existed in previous plans. The performance measure recognizes that there may, in some cases, be additional delays where federal and provincial reviews are undertaken and harmonized, but sets a target very close to that which exists for provincial reviews only.

Significant progress was made with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in 2008/09 on a range of initiatives designed to minimize duplication and enhance harmonization. For example, the Environmental Assessment Office has entered into an agreement with the National Energy Board to accept National Energy Board assessments under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* as equivalent to provincial reviews, thereby removing the need for the Office to review these projects or aspects of them. This agreement was entered into under the authority of section 27 of the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

Similarly, the Environmental Assessment Office and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency have also recently entered into a broader agreement committing to further use of such creative legislative tools. This includes the identification of a pilot project for which the federal review responsibilities would be delegated to the Province, with each government having authority to make final decisions. The agreement also deals with matters such as joint training, detailed joint work plans and staff exchanges.

The Environmental Assessment Office continues to work toward simplifying its policies and enhancing its public outreach. This includes the recent development of a Fairness and Service Code, which sets out a number of commitments that the Environmental Assessment Office makes to proponents, First Nations and the general public. It also sets out service delivery standards and principles that guide the Environmental Assessment Office. This document is available on the Environmental Assessment Office website.

Objective 1.2: Ensure the Crown's duties to First Nations are discharged and that First Nations are engaged in environmental assessments.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- ensuring early communication and consultation with all First Nations potentially affected by a proposed project;
- providing First Nations with capacity funding;
- supporting the First Nations Environmental Assessment Technical Working Group; and
- acknowledging that First Nations have rights regarding consultation and accommodation that are different from other participants in the environmental assessment process.



Proposed Nascall River hydroelectric project site

Performance Measure 2: Percentage of potentially affected First Nations engaged in the environmental assessment process.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Percentage of potentially affected First Nations engaged in the environmental assessment process.	80%	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve

Data Source: Environmental Assessment Office.

Discussion

This performance measure is a modification of a prior measure that was based solely on First Nations' participation in project working groups. The revised performance measure recognizes that potentially affected First Nations may participate in an environmental assessment through the working group and through other direct discussions with the Environmental Assessment Office. The target has been increased from 75 per cent to 80 per cent.

The Environmental Assessment Office takes numerous steps to facilitate First Nations' participation in environmental assessments wherever possible. This includes the provision of capacity funding and an opportunity to participate on working groups (comprised of representatives from various governmental agencies and local governments), wherever First Nations wish to do so. The Environmental Assessment Office also provides considerable funding to the First Nations Environmental Assessment Technical Working Group, whose purpose is to build capacity within First Nations to assist with their participation in the environmental assessment process.

The Environmental Assessment Office is required to meet the Crown's consultation and accommodation duties to First Nations – a duty which exists in addition to whatever other opportunities First Nations may have as interested participants in an environmental assessment. For this reason, the Environmental Assessment Office consults First Nations at the outset of the assessment process and discusses the manner and degree of consultation to be undertaken. As directed by the governing case law, this includes a discussion of strength of claim where, and to the extent that is necessary to determine, the appropriate manner and degree of consultation to be afforded.

In most cases, the Environmental Assessment Office's process and related discussions will afford a manner and degree of consultation that is at the high end of the consultation "spectrum." This includes significant exchange of information and dialogue regarding potential adverse effects on established or asserted aboriginal rights and facilitating modifications to the project or related commitments where necessary to accommodate First Nations' interests. The Environmental Assessment Office also affords First Nations an opportunity to review and comment on the Environmental Assessment Office's draft First Nations' consultation analysis at the end of a review, as well as the opportunity to present their views on a project (in their own words) directly to ministers, alongside the Environmental Assessment Office's analysis and recommendations.

Goal 2: The environmental assessment process is valued.

In addition to being effective and efficient, environmental assessments must be valued. Value is achieved by ensuring that the full range of issues and interests has been considered and that ministers are duly informed when deciding about both the benefits and potential adverse effects of a project when deciding whether to issue an environmental assessment certificate. This is particularly important in circumstances involving large-scale projects, for which there are often divergences of view and considerable public interest.

Objective 2.1: Demonstrate that all interests and perspectives are considered.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- ensuring that all assessment reports consider the potential environmental, economic, social, heritage and health effects of a project, as required by the *Environmental Assessment Act*;
- meeting on a regular basis with the Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee to receive feedback and suggestions for improving the environmental assessment process and ensuring it is valued; and,
- soliciting and duly considering proponent feedback.

Performance Measure 3: Satisfaction with the assessment process.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Proponents' overall level of satisfaction with the assessment process.	8 out of 10	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve

Data Source: Environmental Assessment Office.

Discussion

This measure addresses the level of proponent satisfaction with the environmental assessment process by asking proponents to rate the Environmental Assessment Office on a scale of 1 to 10, regardless of where they are in the process. The survey is undertaken every two years. The results of our next survey will be available in spring 2010. The Environmental Assessment Office also seeks proponents' views on the delivery of the environmental assessment process through periodic telephone interviews and meetings with all proponents that are actively engaged in, or that have recently completed, the environmental assessment process.

Objective 2.2: Ensure that the benefits of environmental assessment are recognized.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- demonstrating transparency in decision making and clarity of process; and,
- engaging in outreach with First Nations, industry associations and the general public regarding the benefits of the environmental assessment process.

Performance Measure 4: Requests to opt-in to the assessment process.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Forecast	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
Number of requests to “opt-in” to the environmental assessment process.	2	2 or more	2 or more	2 or more

Data Source: Environmental Assessment Office.

Discussion

This is a new performance measure that is based on a premise that project proponents would not seek to opt-in to the environmental assessment process unless they feel it provides value. More specifically, it presumes that an assessment of value involves consideration of whether the process enhances the sustainability of the project, whether it enhances public support or acceptance, whether it provides significant confidence that the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate has been discharged and whether it assists in the coordination of other regulatory agencies (federal and provincial).

Although not subject to a specific performance measure, the Environmental Assessment Office receives and responds to recommendations provided by the Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee. This committee is co-chaired by the Environmental Assessment Office and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and includes a range of organizations representing environmental and industry interests, as well as the First Nations Environmental Assessment Technical Working Group. The committee’s recommendations deal with a range of topics, including refinements to policy and methods to enhance public and stakeholder participation in the environmental assessment process.



Proposed Kerr-Sulphurets-Mitchell mining project site

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2008/09 Restated Estimates ¹	2009/10 Estimates	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Environmental Assessment Office	10,515	9,466	9,477	9,477
Total	10,515	9,466	9,477	9,477
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)				
Environmental Assessment Office	52	55	55	55
Total	52	55	55	55
Office Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund)(\$000)				
Environmental Assessment Office	56	10	10	10
Total	56	10	10	10

¹ These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2009/10 Estimates.

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