

**Ministry of  
Land, Water and  
Resource Stewardship and  
Minister Responsible for Fisheries**

**2022/23 – 2024/25  
SERVICE PLAN**

**March 2022**



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and Minister Responsible for Fisheries

## Minister's Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship 2022/23 – 2024/25 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josie", written over a faint, illegible background.

Honourable Josie Osborne

Minister of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship and Minister Responsible for Fisheries

March 9, 2022

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## Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship works with other natural resource sector ministries to achieve British Columbia's goals of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, economic recovery, and environmental sustainability. The Ministry will be responsible for the effective development of land and marine use policy and planning, biodiversity and ecosystem health, including species at risk policy and program management. The Ministry will also be responsible for developing a new vision for land and resource management with First Nations that will embrace shared decision-making on the land base as part of [reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in B.C.](#)

To do this work the Ministry is accountable for all or key parts of the *Environment and Land Use Act*, *Flathead Watershed Area Conservation Act*, *Forest and Range Practices Act*, *Land Act*, *Ministry of Environment Act*, *Ministry of Forests and Range Act*, *Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act*, *Skagit Environmental Enhancement Act*, *Water Sustainability Act*, and the *Wildlife Act*.

## Strategic Direction

In 2022/2023, the Government of British Columbia will continue its whole-of-government response to the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on protecting the health, social and economic well-being of British Columbians. Building on our economic, environmental, and social strengths while looking to seize opportunities to improve outcomes for all British Columbians will be an important aspect of each ministry's work as we respond to COVID-19 and recover from devastating floods and wildfires. The policies, programs and projects developed over the course of this service plan period will align with the five foundational principles established by Government in 2020: putting people first; working toward lasting and meaningful reconciliation; supporting equity and anti-racism; ensuring a better future through fighting climate change and meeting our greenhouse gas reduction targets; and supporting a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

This 2022/23 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship will support the government's priorities including the foundational principles listed above and selected action items identified in the February 25, 2022 [Minister's Mandate Letter](#).

## Economic Statement

B.C.'s economy has rebounded from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020, despite significant pandemic variant and climate-related events. A strong health response, high vaccination rates, increased infrastructure investments and supports for British Columbians struggling through the pandemic has helped the province rebound. While the recovery has broadened over the past year, it remains uneven with sectors like tourism, hospitality and live recreation events not fully recovered. The path of the ongoing economic recovery in B.C. and its trading partners remains highly uncertain. However, rebuild efforts from the November 2021 floods are expected to provide some support to economic activity in the province. The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) estimates that B.C. real GDP expanded by 5.1 per cent in 2021 and

expects growth of 4.2 per cent in 2022 and 2.7 per cent in 2023. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC projects national real GDP growth of 4.1 per cent in 2022 and 2.8 per cent in 2023, following an estimated gain of 4.7 per cent in 2021. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to be broadly in line with the national average in the coming years. The pandemic has increased risks to B.C.'s economic outlook, such as the emergence of further variants of concern, inflationary supply chain disruptions, extended travel restrictions, and the continued impact of the slower recovery in some sectors of the B.C. economy. Further risks include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies, and lower commodity prices.

## **Performance Planning**

### **Goal 1: Co-develop a Vision for Natural Resources Co-management and Shared Decision Making with Indigenous Nations**

The Ministry will work with Nations to build a vision for co-management on the land base that embraces shared decision making and builds an approach for co-management of land and natural resources that will ensure effective management now and in the future.

#### **Objective 1.1: Strengthen Partnerships and Advance Engagement with Indigenous Peoples in the Stewardship of B.C.s Natural Resource Values**

The Ministry will develop a path forward with Indigenous Peoples, through partnerships and engagement, which includes the continued development of sector strategies and plans, the alignment of natural resource sector laws and the development of tools and supports.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Support the coordinated operation and expansion of collaborative Indigenous forums between Indigenous governments and the Province, such as the Environmental Stewardship Initiative and the Collaborative Stewardship Framework.
- Support the planning and management of agreements including the Marine Plan Partnership for the North Pacific Coast and the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement.
- Develop a long-term collaborative approach with Indigenous partners to manage cumulative effects on the land base to balance economic opportunities and protect environmental and cultural values.

#### **Performance Measurement**

- The Ministry will finalize and implement a plan in collaboration with Indigenous governments to increase the number of Forum partnerships outlining co-governance and shared decision-making models supporting trusted integrated resource management. The Ministry will start with a 2021/22 baseline of nine Forum partnerships, expanding the number of partnerships in subsequent years.
- The Ministry, through its work with Nations, will co-develop performance measures to track progress on a co-management and shared decision-making framework and these measures will be reflected in future service plans.

## **Goal 2: Improve Stewardship of Land and Water for Reconciliation, Environmental Protection and Economic Development**

Modernized land use planning, undertaken with First Nations, will help to identify areas where environmental values are affirmed through protection and sustainable economic opportunities. The Ministry is focussing on strengthening monitoring efforts and ensuring that land and water plans reflect current conditions and consider the changing climate.

### **Objective 2.1: Improve Wildlife Management, Protect Wildlife Habitat, and Support the Recovery of Species at Risk**

The Ministry will collaborate with partners to develop and improve relationships, agreements, and strategies that enhance wildlife management and biodiversity.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Work in partnership with the federal government to develop a Nature Agreement that will reinforce collaboration on B.C. and Canada's shared commitment to advance conservation and stewardship in a way that supports reconciliation and economic opportunities.
- With the advice of the Minister's Wildlife Advisory Council, work with the First Nations-B.C. Wildlife Stewardship and Habitat Conservation Forum, wildlife stakeholders and organizations, Indigenous Peoples, rural communities, natural resource development industry stakeholders, neighbouring jurisdictions and the public, to implement the [Together for Wildlife Strategy](#).
- Together with Indigenous Peoples, stakeholders, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and other B.C. ministries, plan and deliver key actions to stabilize, recover and/or maintain identified woodland caribou herds in B.C.
- Connect the systems, tools and people to the transformative work taking place across the natural resource sector and increase the Province's ability to manage for cumulative effects through integrated, science-based land, aquatic, resource, and geographic data.

#### **Performance Measurement**

- The Ministry will develop performance measures related to these strategies to be included in the 2023/24 Service Plan.

### **Objective 2.2: Advance Modernized Land Use Planning**

Land use planning sets the strategic direction to guide sustainable resource stewardship and management of provincial public land and waters that meets economic, environmental, social, and cultural objectives. Modernized land use planning is led by the B.C. government in partnership with Indigenous governments and includes engagement of communities, local governments, industry and other stakeholders.



### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to partner with Indigenous governments and engage stakeholders and communities to identify and set land-use objectives through modernized land-use planning, ensuring sustainable natural resource management reflects shared social, cultural, economic and environmental values.

### **Performance Measurement**

- The Ministry will finalize and implement a plan to increase the participation of Indigenous Nations in Modernized Land Use Planning processes, building upon the success of current modernized land use planning tables.
- The Ministry will start with a 2021/22 baseline of 24 First Nations participating in land use planning processes, expanding on the number of partnerships over subsequent fiscal years, and reporting on the outcomes of these initiatives in future reports, including Annual Service Plan Reports.

### **Objective 2.3: Improve Water Stewardship from Source to Tap**

British Columbians depend on water for drinking, washing, cooking, growing our food, and recreation. Small businesses and industries also rely on water to support economic opportunities. Water is essential for aquatic life and sustaining our world class fisheries. Importantly, water has cultural and spiritual significance for Indigenous Peoples. The Ministry works with Indigenous governments, stakeholders, and partners to plan and set objectives that guide water stewardship.

### **Key Strategies**

- Building on the engagement process underway and working with Indigenous nations and federal and local governments, create a Watershed Security Strategy and begin the development and approval process of an associated Watershed Security Fund to protect clean water.
- Develop and implement a provincial approach to establish Water Sustainability Plans.

### **Performance Measurement**

- The Ministry will make progress on the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund. Performance measures will be considered for the 2023/24 Service Plan.

### **Goal 3: Stewardship of Marine and Coastal Values for Environmental Protection, Economic Development, and Reconciliation**

This goal addresses the Ministry's role in working with Indigenous Nations and partners to ensure sustainable use of our coastal and marine spaces, marine fisheries, and production in the aquaculture sector as part of government's broader goals on economic recovery, rural and coastal community growth, and food security. Supporting these efforts requires investing in conservation and restoration of species and their habitats, infrastructure, and programs supporting healthy fish populations and sustainable harvests.

#### **Objective 3.1: Address Fish Species Declines**

Reinvigorate provincial programs that address wild salmon and other fish species declines and coastal fisheries economies. Investments will align with recommendations from B.C.'s Wild Salmon Advisory Council and other fisheries reviews.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Work with the Federal Government, First Nations leadership, and stakeholders to develop strategies for wild salmon recovery and revitalization in B.C.
- Explore ways to enhance investment in the British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, a contribution program funded jointly by the federal and provincial governments.
- Explore options for unlocking under-utilised salmon habitat rendered impassable by natural or human causes.
- Explore policies to prioritize wild salmon and other fish species recovery in provincial natural resource programs.

#### **Performance Measurement**

- The Ministry, in its first year of operation, will consider appropriate performance measures and targets linked to strategies for wild salmon and other fish species for the 2023/24 Service Plan.

#### **Objective 3.2: Develop a Coastal Marine Strategy**

The Province has committed to develop a new coastal marine strategy, in cooperation with the federal government, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities, to provide a blueprint for future stewardship, economic resilience and management of our coastal waters. This work complements work on a network of Marine Protected Areas in the Northern Shelf Bioregion and continued implementation of the integrated marine plans developed under the [Marine Plan Partnership](#).

#### **Key Strategies**

- In partnership with First Nations, federal and local governments, and other natural resource ministries, develop the first Provincial Coastal Marine Strategy to better protect coastal habitat while supporting coastal economies.

- In partnership with First Nations, federal and local governments work to develop the first ever Marine Protected Area Network in Canada.
- Continue to work with Marine Plan Partnership First Nations partners to secure a durable and stable implementation financing model.

### **Performance Measurement**

- The Ministry, in its first year of operation, will consider appropriate performance measures and reporting to reflect outcomes from the Coastal Marine Strategy and the Marine Protected Areas Network.

## Financial Summary

Core Business Area	2021/22 Restated Estimates <sup>1</sup>	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan
<b>Operating Expenses (\$000)</b>				
Land Use Policy and Planning and Terrestrial Ecosystems	42,031	43,063	43,717	43,717
Watershed, Aquatic Ecosystems, Fisheries and Coastal Policy and Planning	5,998	6,831	7,415	7,415
Information, Innovation and Technology	21,828	21,921	21,985	21,985
Reconciliation and Natural Resource Sector Policy	497	1,835	2,776	2,776
Natural Resource Sector Secretariat	3,836	5,333	6,389	6,389
Executive and Support Services	7,818	13,025	16,786	16,786
<b>Total</b>	<b>82,008</b>	<b>92,008</b>	<b>99,068</b>	<b>99,068</b>
<b>Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)</b>				
Executive and Support Services	0	245	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other Financing Transactions (\$000)</b>				
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>1</sup> For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2021/22 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2022/23 Estimates.

\* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

## **Appendix A: Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Tribunals**

As of April 1, 2022, the Minister of Land, Water and Natural Resource Stewardship and Minister Responsible for Fisheries is responsible and accountable for the following:

- Mackenzie River Basin Board
- Minister's Wildlife Advisory Council
- Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board
- Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission