



Business Plan

2019–20

Department of Environment



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Budget 2019-20: Business Plan
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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2019-20 Business Plan for Nova Scotia Environment. This plan highlights key actions over the coming year to protect our environment, the health and safety of Nova Scotians, and the welfare of farm animals.

We take our regulatory role very seriously and we aim to continuously improve how we carry out our compliance and enforcement responsibilities. We are taking numerous steps this year.

We will continue to build our internal system for processing notifications, approvals, licenses and registrations by adding new programs to it. This improves our ability to deploy the right resources for the level of risk, record our inspectors' activities, and track trends in enforcement and compliance.

We will also improve our service delivery to the food service industry. We will switch from renewing all food establishment permits on March 1 each year to renewing each one on its 12-month anniversary, with no increase in fees. This will alleviate an administrative log jam that can cause delays in renewing permits.

We will continue to be national leaders in the fight against climate change. Having launched our cap-and-trade program, we will continue implementing it to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while protecting the pocketbooks of Nova Scotians. We will introduce new legislation to provide legal protection for our coasts and continue working with the Department of Lands and Forestry toward our goal of protecting 13 per cent of land in the province.

Finally, we will continue to work diligently on environmental assessments to ensure developments do not negatively affect our environment.

I look forward to working with department staff, colleagues across government, and stakeholders across the province to advance these priorities for the benefit of all Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
The Honourable Margaret Miller
Minister of Nova Scotia Environment

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Vision of Nova Scotia Environment

A leader in regulatory excellence, conservation, partnership and promotion, we protect the environment, human health, and the welfare of farm animals.

Mandate

The September 2017 mandate letter gives direction for the following priorities:

- Continue to support a business environment that is conducive to innovation and economic development, striking the right balance to ensure that effective regulation protects the interests of Nova Scotians while enhancing our provincial prosperity.
- Continue consultation and work with Nova Scotians to develop coastal protection legislation to provide legal protection for our coasts.
- Collaborate with the Department of Lands and Forestry on the Biodiversity Act and the creation of a Biodiversity Council.
- Continue implementing Nova Scotia's Cap-and-Trade Program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Work with the Department of Lands and Forestry to move toward 13 per cent protected land in the province without negative recreational or economic effects.

Core functions

The following core functions of Nova Scotia Environment support the mandate:

- Develop programs and deliver services to enhance the protection of the environment, human health, and the welfare of farm animals.
- Develop legislation, regulations and policies based on sound scientific knowledge and expertise.
- Educate, inspect and enforce to ensure compliance with legislation and regulations.
- Proactively respond to environmental, animal, and human health risks.
- Process notifications, applications, and approvals for regulated activities.

Goals to achieve mandate and core functions

Goal 1: Education, inspection, compliance, and enforcement

Continue improving the department's enforcement responsibilities with:

- A professional workforce that applies the right level of response to each issue.
- Consistent and effective compliance with legislation and regulations.
- An integrated and responsive organizational structure with flexibility to deploy resources based on risk.

Priorities/Activities for 2019-20

- Incorporate Contaminated Sites Program into the System for Notification and Approval Processing (SNAP), the department's system for processing notifications, approvals, licenses and registrations. The system also tracks the operational work of environment inspectors. When an inspector completes an inspection, site visit or audit, the system

tracks it for accuracy and continuity. By incorporating the Contaminated Sites Program into SNAP, contaminated sites will be prioritized by level of risk. This will ensure appropriate resources are deployed for the level of risk and allow more accurate reporting.

Planned approach to measure progress, impact and success

- Contaminated Sites Program included in SNAP.

Goal 2: Program and risk management

Well-structured programs manage risks to an acceptable level and deliver benefits by:

- Continuously aligning resources and efforts with program needs based on risk.
- Meeting intended outcomes while focusing on continuous improvement.

Priorities/Activities for 2019-20

- Add programs to SNAP to help ensure that resources and efforts are continuously aligned with program needs based on risk. This will:
 - Help us better manage inspectors' work to deliver programs and capture the full suite of work they complete such as inspections, consultations, audits, and other enforcement activities.
 - Allow more accurate reporting on things such as level of risk, when enforcement actions are required, or how often complaints are received. This also allows compliance trends to be compiled.
 - Help us ensure programs are meeting intended outcomes while focusing on continuous improvement. Every time programs are added and global enhancements and improvements are made to SNAP, each program benefits.

Planned approach to measure progress, impact and success

- Inspectors are able to record all their inspection, compliance and enforcement activities using SNAP and report a more accurate representation of the work they complete on a daily basis.

Goal 3: Client-focused service delivery

Improve the quality of service delivery to clients through:

- Regulations that are clear and easy to understand.
- Supporting and empowering staff with information, resources and training to serve Nova Scotians well.

Priorities/Activities for 2019-20

- Switch from renewing all food permits on March 1 each year to renewing each permit on its anniversary date, with no increase in fees. This will improve service delivery by reducing administrative delays sometimes caused by processing the high volume of food safety permits processed all on the same day.

Planned approach to measure progress, impact and success

- Food safety permit renewals are staggered so that each one is renewed on its 12-month anniversary rather than March 1.

Goal 4: Regulatory excellence

Ensure regulations are necessary, predictable, transparent, and protect our health, safety and environment by:

- Modernizing regulations and reducing regulatory burden where appropriate to eliminate barriers to private sector growth and productivity.
- Modernizing legislation to create a foundation for innovation, sustainable prosperity, and regulatory excellence.
- Measuring results to ensure outcomes are met.

Priorities/Activities for 2019-20

- Introduce coastal protection legislation.
- Continue implementing Nova Scotia's Cap-and-Trade Program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support sustainable prosperity in Nova Scotia.
- Work with the Department of Lands and Forestry to move toward 13 per cent protected land in the province without negative recreational or economic effects.

Planned approach to measure progress, impact and success

- Introduction of legislation to protect our coasts.
- Companies are registered in the online system to receive, trade, and remit greenhouse gas emission allowances. Companies submit greenhouse gas reports for 2018 by June 1 and verification statements by September 1.
- Track actions and ideas for continued renewal of our approach to supporting sustainable prosperity.
- Increase in percentage of province legally protected land.

Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary			
(\$ thousands)			
<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>2018-2019</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>2018-2019</u> <u>Forecast</u>	<u>2019-2020</u> <u>Estimate</u>
Administration	870	844	795
Policy	5,341	5,741	5,891
Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement	21,185	21,113	21,190
Sustainability and Applied Science	8,375	8,650	8,369
Climate Change	1,745	1,668	2,279
Total - Departmental Expenses	37,516	38,016	38,524
Ordinary Recoveries	100	95	354
<u>Funded Staff (# of FTEs)</u>			
Department Funded Staff	355.3	323.7	355.3

Note:
 For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
 For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1

