

# Bulletin #1: Halfway River First Nation and the Province Advance Cumulative Effects Management and Shared Decision- Making for Oil and Gas Development

## 1. Introduction

On January 18, 2023, the Province and Halfway River First Nation (“Halfway”) reached an agreement to address cumulative effects and establish shared decision-making and co-management in Halfway core territory. This work will be focused on the area of Halfway territory identified in Schedule A (the “Halfway Shared Decision-Making Area”). The signed agreement (or “Letter of Agreement”) can be found here: [Halfway River First Nation - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/energy/first-nations/halfway/). The Letter of Agreement commits the Province and Halfway to implement several land and resource measures and shared decision-making processes to mitigate the cumulative effects of natural resource development in Halfway’s territory within Treaty 8.

This initial shared bulletin, as part of Halfway and the Province implementing our Letter of Agreement is focused on oil and gas development. Future bulletins will be focused on other natural resource sectors, as part of managing for cumulative effects in the Halfway Shared Decision Making Area.

## 2. Land Use Planning and Shared Decision Making

The Halfway-BC shared decision-making process will include the establishment of a shared decision-making and co-management structure, setting land management objectives, issuing oil and gas tenure and implementing mitigation measures for oil and gas tenure development, including processes for allocating and identifying exceptions in relation to caps on new oil and gas disturbance. The BC Energy Regulator (“BCER”) is working directly with Halfway on which measures will be permit conditions, planning requirements, application information submission requirements as well as the exploration of regulatory changes. Details will be forthcoming from the BCER. The ongoing co-development of these innovative approaches will continue as new conditions/situations arise. Further details with respect to the Halfway-BC shared decision-making process will be released in due course.

A pilot landscape planning project to guide oil and gas tenure development and restoration is underway in the Halfway Shared Decision-Making Area, beginning with a first phase in the southeast. Specific mitigation measures, environmental objectives and pre-engagement requirements for tenure holders will be established under the plan. Tenure holders in this area are being informed and encouraged to participate in the plan development process. More specific information about the area and process related to the planning pilot will be available publicly as the plan development work unfolds.

### **3. Agreements with Other Treaty 8 First Nations**

The Halfway-BC shared-decision-making process is independent from other Nations' planning processes and Halfway's Treaty rights and interests are in no way diminished or affected by the Province's agreement with other First Nations, including the Blueberry River First Nations Implementation Agreement. Statutory decision-makers remain obligated to consult and accommodate impacts on Halfway Treaty rights in the Halfway Shared Decision-Making Area, regardless of other planning processes in place.

The Province and Halfway are committed to upholding Halfway's rights as recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to working with other Treaty 8 Nations on cumulative effects management, land use planning, restoration, wildlife and other resource management initiatives underway throughout Treaty No. 8.

The Province encourages oil and gas tenure holders to proactively engage with Halfway on resource activity planning in the Halfway Shared Decision-Making Area while the details of the planning and shared decision-making processes are finalized. Further, effective March 7<sup>th</sup>, oil and gas proponents are now required to pre-engage with Nations including Halfway in advance of submitting an application to the BCER. Details can be found on the BCER website here. Halfway's Lands Department can be reached at: [hfrnreferrals@dgwlaw.ca](mailto:hfrnreferrals@dgwlaw.ca).

Schedule A: Halfway Shared Decision-Making Area Map

