



PROJECT FOCUSED TRIAL APPLICATION OF B.C.'S POLICY FOR MITIGATING IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES (ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION POLICY)

Please note: The Trial Application is now complete, and results of the trial have been incorporated into the current Policy and Procedures. This document is available for historic reference only.

What is the Environmental Mitigation Policy?

The Policy for Mitigating Impacts on Environmental Values (Environmental Mitigation Policy, hereafter the Policy) and associated Procedures are intended to improve the quality, focus, and consistency of environmental information used during existing decision-making processes in the natural resource sector.

The Policy and associated Procedures provide a consistent approach and guidance for:

- provincial staff in the natural resource sector who provide advice and make recommendations to statutory or delegated decision-makers and proponents;
- proponents developing mitigation plans to address the impacts of their proposed activities on environmental values; and,
- decision-makers to consider in the process of making resource management decisions.

Why are we doing trial application?

Trial application is being used to assess the use of the Policy and Procedures with an aim to improve and refine their future application. Working with willing proponents allows the testing in real world situations. Trial application is a key step towards building support for and demonstrating success of the Policy and Procedures before the Policy and Procedures are considered for broader implementation. Specifically, trial application will be carried out to test how the Policy and Procedures can improve business processes and bring consistency to:

- identifying environmental values and components;
- completing impact assessments;
- using the mitigation hierarchy; and
- selecting mitigation measures.

Trial application of the Policy and Procedures is about supporting existing processes, particularly where proponents are already required to mitigate impacts to their proposed development activities. As such, this is not bringing in new requirements to authorization processes; a proponent's obligations arise from the legal requirements that govern the particular authorization process.



Who is involved?

Proponents may participate in trial application if they are developing a mitigation plan to address impacts of proposed development activities on environmental values during the trial application period, which will run till the end March, 2013. Willing proponents will be asked to share their mitigation plans with the Environmental Mitigation Policy Project Team (EMP Project Team), provide feedback on the Policy and Procedures documents, as well as share their experiences applying these documents.

The EMP Project Team will work directly with proponents, environmental technical review staff, authorizations staff and decision makers to provide advice and guidance on the development of a mitigation plan and interpretation of the Policy and Procedures. Support will be provided through meetings and open and timely responses to any questions that may arise. The EMP Project Team will also provide clarification and review (with feedback relating to how the mitigation plan aligns with the intent of the Policy and Procedures) of a final mitigation plan.

What are the general expectations of a mitigation plan?

The approach of the Policy and Procedures with regards to developing a mitigation plan includes:

- linking specific mitigation measures to the impacts on an environmental component and the causes of these impacts;
- estimating the uncertainty and expected effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures;
- fully considering and applying the mitigation hierarchy in developing mitigation measures; and
- describing the approaches taken.

A mitigation plan should link back to how, and to what extent, the proposed mitigation measures are expected to address the impacts on the environmental component, including residual impacts where offset measures are proposed.

Trial application will help to determine if (and what) modifications would be useful in improving the Policy and Procedures. The Project Team will compile a document outlining what was learned through trial application.

For more information visit <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/emop/> or contact mitigate@gov.bc.ca