



# Fossil Repository Guidelines

February 26, 2025

**Related Documents:** [Requirements and Criteria for Regional Fossil Repositories in British Columbia](#)<sup>1</sup> provides additional guidance relevant to establishing regional fossil repositories in B.C.

## 1. Purpose

The Fossil Repository Guidelines outline the current process for institutions to be recognized by the Heritage Branch as a repository for fossils resources.

## 2. Background

The Province commissioned a report in 2018 to examine repository requirements and best practices identified by museum professionals and paleontologists in other jurisdictions. The report offered the foundation for Heritage Branch's current requirements and process.

## 3. Authority

Industrial and commercial companies operating in B.C. must assess the impact of proposed activities on fossils before proceeding with construction.

Activities such as placement or construction of improvements requiring excavation may impact fossils. Proponents for land use projects and developments must assess the potential to impact fossil resources.

Legislated requirements for industry to assess potential impacts come from the *Land Act* and the *Heritage Conservation Act* and are also directed in policy. Permits issued under the *Heritage Conservation Act*, the *Land Act*, the *Oil and Gas Activity Act*, or under an Environmental Assessment Certificate, may include requirements and

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<sup>1</sup> [Fossil management in British Columbia - Province of British Columbia](#)

conditions specifying a repository for fossil resources uncovered during industrial or commercial activities on the land.

## 4. Requirements

### A. Repository Standards

To be approved as a regional fossil repository to accept fossil resources, institutions must demonstrate that they meet the following standards:

1. Appropriate training and experience of staff for the care and curation of fossils or natural heritage objects, and related records.
2. Physical security of the facility for long-term storage and curation of collections.
3. Financial security of the facility for long-term storage and curation of collections.
4. A dissolution plan should the repository be unable to continue operations (i.e., where the collections would go).
5. Confirmation that the repository will accept materials such as fossil remains, sediment samples, site records (including reports, field notes, photographs, catalogues, drone files, and other materials that are important for understanding the context of fossil sites and fossils).
6. A policy that provides appropriate access to the collection for researchers, and other interested parties.
7. A preventive conservation policy or strategy to address the ten agents of deterioration identified by the Canadian Conservation Institute<sup>2</sup>:
  - physical forces
  - thieves, vandals, and displacers
  - fire
  - water
  - pests
  - pollutants
  - light
  - incorrect temperature

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<sup>2</sup> [Agents of deterioration - Canada.ca](https://www.cci.gc.ca/agents-of-deterioration)

- incorrect relative humidity
- custodial neglect and dissociation

## B. Out of Province Repositories

Repositories located outside of British Columbia will only be considered under exceptional circumstances. Any transfer of fossils or natural heritage materials outside of the Province would require authorization by the Province.

## C. Submissions to the Heritage Branch

Institutions wishing to be recognized as regional fossil repositories should submit the following to the Heritage Branch:

- cover letter
- documentation of the above standards
- relevant plans and policies
- photos
- CVs for key personnel

Please submit documentation by email to [Fossil.Management@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Fossil.Management@gov.bc.ca).

## Change Log

<b>Version Date</b>	<b>Key Changes</b>
February 2025	Fossil Repository Guidelines created