

Berland Sub-Regional Plan

Well-based energy and minerals

The plan enables future energy projects and provides flexibility for all types of well-based energy development, including petroleum and natural gas and well-based resources, while managing environmental impacts.

Key components of the plan

Zonation

- The plan provides flexibility and certainty for ongoing energy development within the Go Zone. Compartment A has more targeted strategies to improve intactness in caribou ranges and other sensitive areas (key wildlife biodiversity areas). See the Overview Factsheet for additional information on Zonation.
- The Nature-first zone does not allow new surface disturbance except where needed for pre-existing energy tenures.

Managing footprint

- New or expansion of surface disturbance may be permitted Compartment A, that includes caribou range, when planned with restoration activities that demonstrate an overall reduction in disturbance.
- Limited exceptions are allowed for supporting infrastructure. Other energy-related activities must comply with access management requirements.

- Restoration will be prioritized in the following order: formal dispositions within caribou ranges, formal dispositions within all zones, and legacy seismic lines as identified by the Caribou Habitat Recovery Program.
- Restoration targets have been created to remove unproductive well pad infrastructure from the land.
- Tracking and reporting on restoration targets of inactive footprint is required to monitor progress.

Access and linear feature management

- Energy-related roads, pipelines, transmission lines, and seismic activities must minimize clearing widths, reduce long-term fragmentation, and encourage vegetation regrowth.
- The plan provides strategies to limit cumulative effects and support caribou habitat recovery.

Energy facts

- Energy development in the sub-region is mainly focused on conventional oil and gas production.
- Petroleum and natural gas tenure covers 67.5% of the sub-region.
- Approximately 20% of Alberta's natural gas production occurs in this sub-region.
- Around 30% of production comes from wells within caribou ranges.
- The sub-region includes areas with high geothermal potential.

Did you know...

- Alberta has a goal to double oil and gas production which will require energy production and export from this sub-region.
- Not all energy footprint is permanent. The plan emphasizes restoring inactive wells and unused roads, helping return land to productive use over time, helping to improve landscape conditions over time.
- Energy development must "clean up after itself". New development is linked to demonstrating progress on restoring older, inactive energy infrastructure.
- Some areas preclude new energy development in favour of intactness. In the Nature-first Zone, no new surface disturbance will be allowed on lands where no tenure agreements have been held, although existing approvals are honoured.
- Restoration helps make room for future development. By restoring land that is no longer needed, the plan helps ensure space remains available for future economic opportunities.