

# South Athabasca Sub-regional Plan

## Surface Materials

This plan manages where future surface materials extraction can occur, and how it will be restored, to support economic development while reducing environmental impact.

### Key Components of the Plan

- **Access Management (Page 16 & 34)** – provides greater flexibility outside caribou range for appended development supporting surface materials activities.
- **Surface Restrictions (Page 34)** – limits exploration and extraction activities in special management areas, including the White muskeg, riparian areas, and in a buffer around Indigenous reserves and hamlets.
- **Progressive Restoration (Page 34)** – limits the size of an area where surface materials are being actively removed and requires restoration of that area before another area can be entered.
- **Restoration Outcomes (Page 34 & 43)** – requires exploration and extraction activities to meet the restoration outcomes outlined in the plan, including use of end pit lakes.

### Surface Materials Facts

In this sub-region:

- In 2023, sand and gravel operations accounted for less than 0.1% of the sub-regional GDP and roughly 80 jobs.
- There are roughly 421 surface materials (sand, gravel, silt, clay) dispositions.
- Surface materials account for roughly 9,500 hectares of footprint.
- Surface materials dispositions range in size from 0.1 hectares to 379 hectares.

### Did you know...

- In the South Athabasca sub-region, sand and gravel activity is largely tied to oil and gas activity, and provincial and municipal infrastructure, including roads.
- A surface materials pit may provide sand, gravel, clay, marl, peat, or any other substance that is not mined or quarried, for sale.
- A borrow area is used for surface material extraction; sometimes it is a pit, sometimes it isn't. They mostly provide non-manufacturing clay, sand, or silt needed to support construction of roads, well pads, plants or other industrial infrastructure.
- Sand and gravel are moved around by rivers and glaciers; they can be found in many locations but are often associated with rivers.

Map of existing surface materials dispositions (sand and gravel, non-manufacturing clay) and surveyed areas with sand and gravel potential. (This map does not appear in the draft South Athabasca Sub-regional Plan).

