

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

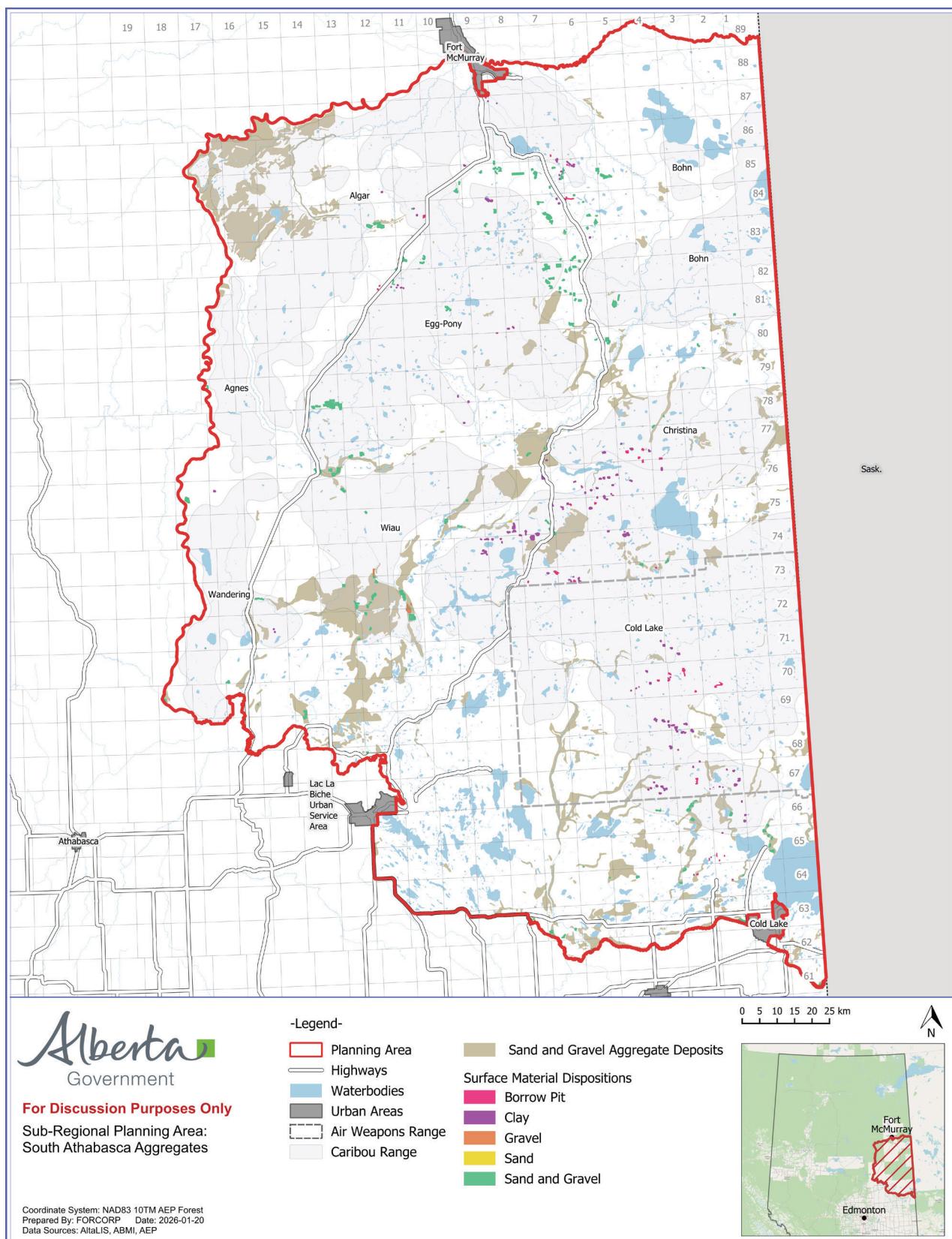
In this sub-region:

- 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).



For more information: alberta.ca/south-athabasca-sub-regional-plan-engagement
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