

Update to the Wetland Assessment and Impact Form

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is pleased to announce an update to the Wetland Assessment and Impact Form (WAIF), which will take effect on September 21, 2020.

The following activity has been added to the list of eligible low risk activities that now require a WAIF rather than a full Wetland Assessment and Impact Report (WAIR):

- widening, improvements or maintenance of existing roads that take place within a registered road plan right of way

In the previous version of the WAIF, road activities within 15 m from the centerline of an existing road were allowed to use the WAIF, whereas road work beyond this footprint required a field-based wetland assessment and a more comprehensive report. This change will reduce red tape by allowing more flexible and less costly wetland assessments within a larger project area (i.e., the registered road plan). The WAIF is supported by the desktop-based Alberta Wetland Rapid Evaluation Tool – D (ABWRET-D).

Additional measures to streamline the regulatory process and reduce wait times for *Water Act* approvals are under development.

To what activities does the change apply?

Tables 1 and 2 have been modified to state that a WAIF will be accepted for “*Widening, improvements or maintenance of an existing road within a registered road plan right of way or within 15 m from the centerline of an existing unregistered or private road. This does not include new road construction.*” **New road construction still requires a WAIR.**

A registered road is typically managed by Alberta Transportation or a municipality. An unregistered or private road is typically owned by an individual or company. Examples include a private driveway or access road.

How does this align with the Wetland Policy?

This change aligns with wetland policy requirements to complete a WAIF for activities that are low risk or have minimal permanent impacts to wetlands. The WAIF requires wetlands to be delineated and classified, and impacts to wetlands mitigated, in accordance with applicable wetland policy directives. Alberta Wetland Rapid Evaluation Tool – Desktop (ABWRET-D) results must be obtained, and replacement for the permanent loss of wetland area and relative value is still required for these activities. The WAIF must be signed by an authenticating professional and submitted with a regulatory application.

How will my road widening project be impacted?

The change to the WAIF will impact new applications submitted on or after September 21, and will not impact applications already submitted to the department or under review.

If you are uncertain whether or not a proposed activity is eligible, please submit your wetland assessment question to AEP.Wetlands@gov.ab.ca.

How to download the updated WAIF on the Alberta Wetland Policy Implementation webpage

1. Click on the following hyperlink to the Alberta Wetland Policy Implementation webpage:
<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-wetland-policy-implementation.aspx>
2. Scroll down to the **Policy requirements** section and click on Wetland Assessment to expand the content
3. Click on the downloadable WAIF PDF under the Alberta Wetland Assessment and Impact Form subsection

Contact information

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