

# Summary of Policy Changes

Following the policy direction established on February 28, 2024, Alberta's government is now implementing the following policy and regulatory changes for renewable power development:

## Agricultural lands

The new Electric Energy Land Use and Visual Assessment Regulation takes an "agriculture first" approach.

- Renewable energy developments will no longer be permitted on Land Suitability Rating System (LSRS) Class 1 and 2 lands unless the proponent can demonstrate the ability for both crops and/or livestock to coexist with the renewable generation project,
- In municipalities without Class 1 or 2 lands, Class 3 lands will be treated as Class 1 and 2.
- An irrigability assessment must be conducted by proponents and considered by the AUC.

## Reclamation security

Amendments to the Activities Designation Regulation and Conservation and Reclamation Regulation create consistent reclamation requirements across all forms of renewable energy operations, including a mandatory reclamation security requirement. There will be a mandatory security requirement for projects located on private lands.

- Developers will be responsible for reclamation costs via a mandatory security or bond.
- The reclamation security will either be provided directly to the province or may be negotiated with landowners if sufficient evidence is provided to the AUC.

## Viewscapes

The Electric Energy Land Use and Visual Assessment Regulation ensures pristine viewscapes are conserved through the establishment of buffer zones and visual impact assessment zones as designated by the province.

- New wind projects will no longer be permitted within specified buffer zones.
  - Other proposed electricity developments located within the buffer zones will be required to submit a visual impact assessment before approval.
- All proposed electricity developments located within visual impact assessment zones will be required to submit a visual impact assessment before approval.

## Municipalities

The AUC is implementing rule changes to:

- Automatically grant municipalities the right to participate in AUC hearings.
- Enable municipalities to be eligible to request cost recovery for participation and review.
- Allow municipalities to review rules related to municipal submission requirements while clarifying consultation requirements.