



Reference: 417014

July 30, 2025

Kevin Jardine
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Environment and Parks
PO Box 9339 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8V 9M1

Sent via email: DM.ENV@gov.bc.ca

Dear Deputy Minister Jardine:

I am writing in response to the July 8, 2025, submission of an updated version of the Elk Valley Water Quality Plan (2025 EVWQP), developed by the Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) in response to Ministerial Order No. M232-2024 (Order M232) issued pursuant to the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) Section 90.2 by the former Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.

This updated 2025 version of the EVWQP has been submitted for my consideration for approval as an amended Area Based Management Plan (ABMP) for the Elk Valley.

I have reviewed the 2025 EVWQP and supporting documentation related to its development. I am satisfied that the ministry has properly taken responsibility to prepare the amendment in accordance with the directions and scope provided, and the process has followed the consultation requirements of Order M232.

With respect to consultation requirements, it is clear to me the ministry has engaged deeply and sought consensus with Ktunaxa at all milestones in the process, in accordance with an agreed-upon Engagement Plan that was developed by the parties prior to issuance of Order M232. This has included extensive engagement and dialogue with each of the four Ktunaxa First Nation Governments (KFNGs) in Canada, and I would like to express my sincere appreciation for their significant efforts and important contributions to the Amended ABMP. Consultation was also carried out through committees including a multi-stakeholder advisory committee with representatives from governments, industry and KFNGs. Input received was considered and incorporated into the 2025 EVWQP where possible. A public consultation process invited input from other stakeholders and the public in May 2025.

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I am also satisfied that the 2025 EVWQP addresses the scope, requirements and issues set out in Order M232. It is my conclusion that the updated plan will further support the ministry in carrying out its environmental protection responsibilities under the EMA. It provides greater clarity and certainty to staff, decision-makers, industry and interested parties regarding the ministry's expectations for improving water quality, while recognizing the social and economic benefits from continued mining. Please see the Reasons for Decision for more information.

I am aware that there is significant interest amongst some of the participating organizations and the local community to strengthen water quality requirements over time as we work together towards the shared vision defined in the plan. I am committed to supporting ministry staff to advance this important work, which will begin immediately with planning for Amendment #2 as required in Order M232 and Ministerial Order No. M162-2025.

Pursuant to Section 90.2, I hereby approve the 2025 EVWQP as the amended Area Based Management Plan for the Elk Valley.

In accordance with section 90(2) of the *Environmental Management Act*, I hereby order that any decisions under the *Environmental Management Act* undertaken by a director or a delegate of a director related to the discharge of waste, or the protection or rehabilitation of the environment, in the Designated Area as defined in Schedule A of Ministerial Order No. M113 – 2013, take into consideration the 2025 EVWQP.

I am confident that this important milestone demonstrates British Columbia's commitment to effective environmental management and decision-making in the Elk Valley. I would like to thank ministry staff, Ktunaxa representatives and all other parties who contributed to the development of recommendations for amendments to the ABMP. I am looking forward to receiving a proposed Terms of Reference for Amendment #2 in early 2026 so we can continue to make progress towards the plan's goals and our long-term vision for water quality in the Designated Area of the ABMP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tamara Davidson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tamara Davidson
Minister of Environment and Parks

Attachment

cc: Kathryn Forge, Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Protection Division, Ministry of Environment and Parks
A.J. Downie, SE Coal Mining Team Director and ABMP Amendment Order Manager, Environmental Protection Division, Ministry of Environment and Parks

Nasu?kin Cheryl Casimer, ?a?am

Nasuk?in Heidi Gravelle, Ya?it ?a·knuq?i'it First Nation

Nasu?kin Jason Louie, Ya?an nu?kiy First Nation

Nasu?kin Don Sam, ?akisq?nuk First Nation

Christian Baxter, EVR Operations Limited