PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

Annual Report 2025 – 2026

ALC PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

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Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture and Food
Parliament Buildings,
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report for the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission for the period April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026. This report has been prepared in accordance with section 59.2 of the Administrative Tribunals Act and section 28 of the Agricultural Land Reserve General Regulation.

Yours truly,

Jennifer Dyson, Chair
PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

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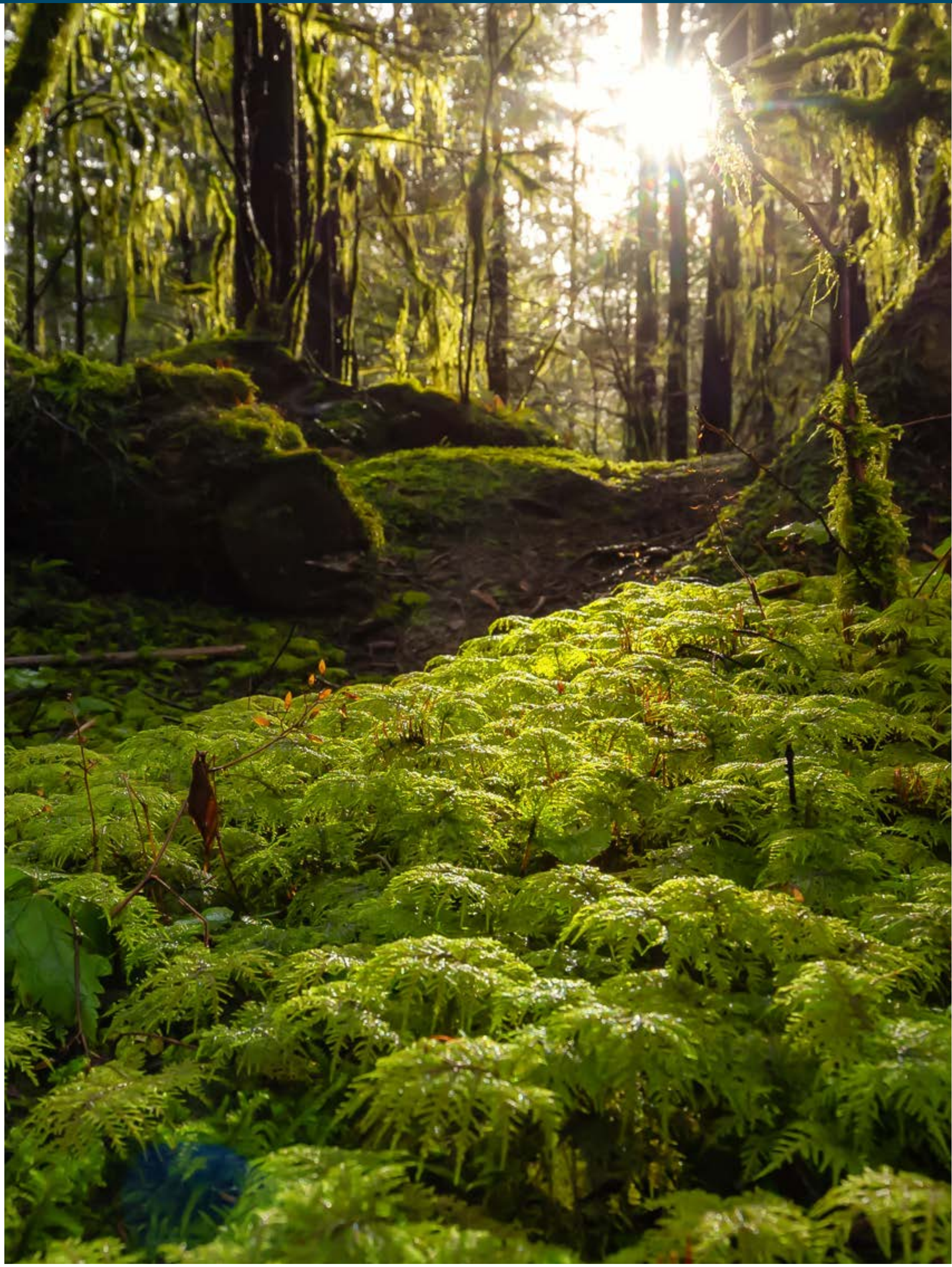
Land Acknowledgement

The Agricultural Land Commission gratefully and respectfully acknowledges that the Agricultural Land Reserve and our work spans across the traditional territories of over 200 First Nations in BC whose historic relationship with the land continues to this day.

We all have a role to play in the process of reconciliation. We invite you to learn more about the people whose traditional lands you reside on.

This report was prepared on the traditional territory of the hən̓ q̓əmin̓ əm ̓ and Sḵwx̱ wú7mesh speaking peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



Message From the Chair Jennifer Dyson

The Agricultural Land Commission's mandate is both simple and profound: to preserve agricultural land and encourage farming in British Columbia. Fulfilling that mandate requires responding to growing population pressures, competing land uses, and increasing demands on a finite and irreplaceable resource—pressures that are reflected in the volume and complexity of applications before the Commission.

Agriculture faces an uncertain future globally, and British Columbia is not exempt. Within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), agricultural use is declining, raising an urgent question: what pressures are driving this change?

Growing Pressures on Agricultural Land

The ALR was established to protect land capable of supporting agriculture across the province's diverse landscapes. Yet thousands of hectares of productive land are being lost from active use—not through formal exclusion, but through speculative purchase as holding properties, residential/estate lots and unauthorized commercial and industrial activities that is effectively removing land from production.

Due to topography and terrain, agricultural production in British Columbia is concentrated on a limited land base. Much of this pressure is concentrated in valley bottoms in regions such as the South Coast, the Okanagan, and Vancouver Island. Although these areas represent a relatively small portion of the Agricultural Land Reserve, they generate approximately 83% of British Columbia's farm gate receipts. They are also among the most expensive land markets in the province and the country.

At the same time, investment activity—including acquisitions by hedge funds, pension funds, and other large investors—has increased demand for farmland, contributing to rising land values and greater competition. In some instances, this activity is associated with shifts away from traditional agricultural production. Foreign ownership and speculative purchasing also play a role.

Farm Class, Taxation, and the Definition of a Farmer

Tax policy also plays an important role in shaping land use within the ALR. Farm class assessment is intended to incentivize agricultural production, yet British Columbia does not have a single, clear legal definition of who qualifies as a farmer. Is a farmer someone actively engaged in farming with a reasonable expectation of profit, or do we intend for that term to extend to hobby farmers, landowners, or estate holders with little or no production?

This lack of clarity has consequences. A growing number of property owners are purchasing land within the ALR and benefiting from farm class taxation without active or meaningful agricultural production, weakening the link between tax policy and actual farm use. Distinctions are increasingly evident between bona fide farmers, hobby farmers, and landowners whose primary interest is not farming.

Nonetheless, in many cases, property owners within the ALR continue to benefit from lower tax treatment, even when properties are assessed as residential, commercial, or industrial uses, and assessments do not reflect real market values. These factors further weaken the incentive structure that farm class was designed to create and raise questions about whether current policies are achieving their intended outcomes.

> "Soil is as critical as the air we breathe and the water we drink." Canada's Senate Committee on Agriculture & Forestry finds.
>
> Read their full report here "Critical Ground: Why Soil is Essential to Canada's Economic, Environmental, Human and Social Health."

Policy, Land Pressures, and Food Security

Ongoing pressure to expand non-farm uses within the ALR highlights a critical reality: protecting land alone does not ensure that it will be farmed. Policy decisions that enable or encourage non-agricultural uses can result in permanent loss of productive capacity and undermine long-term food security. In regions such as the Lower Mainland, high land costs, speculation, and development pressures are making it increasingly difficult for farmers to acquire and retain land. As land is valued more for non-farm uses, British Columbia becomes more dependent on external food systems that are vulnerable to disruption and rising costs.

Persistent Pressures Despite Decades of Study

Over decades, studies and reviews have consistently identified the same pressures: growing demand for land, increasing conversion to non-farm uses, and declining agricultural activity. These trends have not diminished. In many areas, they are intensifying as noted in Christina Dawn Gemino's recent study of farming activity in Metro Vancouver entitled "The Silent Death of Agriculture in Metro Vancouver: When Farmland Protection Isn't Enough".

The cumulative effect of incremental development of non-farm use in the ALR can be significant. Over time, they erode the agricultural land base and limit the province's ability to produce food locally and heighten reliance on imports at a time when global supply chains are becoming more uncertain.

Food Processing and Land Use Integrity

The BC Food and Beverage 2024 State of the Industry Report highlights the significant difference between ALR land values and industrial land values in British Columbia, underscoring the cost advantage of agricultural land for non-agricultural uses.

Food processing is an important component of the agricultural economy, and current policies allow it within the ALR when it is directly tied to agricultural production in British Columbia. Under current rules, at least 50% of the product processed in the ALR must be grown on the farm. This is permitted and does not require an application to the Commission. This linkage is intentional: it supports and incentivizes both farming and value-added processing in British Columbia.

A shift to allow large-scale, unrestricted food processing—without a connection to local production—raises important concerns. Such a change risks becoming, in effect, a real estate transaction—altering land values and land-use patterns, increasing competition for land, and displacing primary agricultural production. It may also encourage the relocation of existing industrial processing from established industrial areas into the ALR.

Some argue that expanding food processing within the ALR is the most practical way to increase capacity and attract investment. However, when processing is not anchored in BC agricultural production, or is driven primarily by broader industrial objectives, it risks undermining the very activity the reserve was created for. This creates a clear tension: should farmers producing food be required to compete for access to agricultural land with large-scale industrial processors?

The Commission's concern is not with food processing itself but with its connection to agricultural production in British Columbia. The ALR was established to: preserve agricultural land for farming, which supports farmers. The current policy supports processing where it is directly tied to and strengthens primary agricultural production. When that connection is weakened or removed, processing risks displacing farmers and the very activity the reserve was created to protect.

The impact of the B.C. floods post 2021 and the disruption of supply chains, raised dialogue with other regions of the province. These regions identified opportunities to expand processing, through lower land costs, existing infrastructure (including from other displaced industries), and capacity to support agricultural production. However, uptake in these areas has remained limited despite existing policy pathways.

Those seeking to process less farm product than current thresholds permit have a pathway to approval through application to the Commission. The Commission has a demonstrated track record of approving processing that supports agricultural production in British Columbia. Maintaining a clear connection between agriculture and processing is critical. Without that connection, agricultural land risks becoming a lower-cost alternative for industrial use.

Data, Evidence, Resources and Collaboration

The findings reflected in the Ministry of Agriculture's work on Agricultural Land Use Inventories (ALUI) highlight ongoing pressures from non-farm use activities and changing land-use patterns, reinforcing the need for careful, evidence-based

CANADA'S FARMLAND

Did you know?

Agricultural land makes up only 6.3% of Canada's land base and in 2019, it was 7.3% of Canada's land base. The reduction works out to a loss of 1.7 million hectares of farmland a year which is equal to 34,264 hectares a week. Over this same time period BC lost only 774 hectares of ALR.

decision-making and continued adherence to the purpose of the ALR. Protecting agricultural land requires not only strong policy, but sustained commitment.

At the same time, the Commission's ability to fulfill its mandate is directly affected by available resources. Responsibilities and workload have increased in recent years, while funding has not kept pace. This has resulted in staffing reductions, which are affecting the Commission's capacity to meet growing service demands.

As an independent administrative tribunal, the Commission must ensure that its decisions are fair, consistent, and grounded in evidence. Maintaining the effectiveness of this regulatory system requires adequate resourcing to meet growing demands. Despite these challenges, the Commission continues to benefit from the dedication and professionalism of its staff and commissioners, whose commitment ensures that decisions are made with care, rigour, and integrity.

Looking Ahead

There is urgency in this work. The question before us is not only how agricultural land is used today, but what will remain available for future generations. The decisions being made now will shape the long-term viability of agriculture in British Columbia.

The ALR is a foundational asset for the province. Its continued strength depends on clear policy, informed decision-making, and a shared commitment to protecting land for its intended purpose: agriculture.

British Columbia's agricultural strength lies in its diversity and its ability to support farming across a range of regions and scales. Preserving that strength requires ensuring that agricultural land remains accessible, viable, and actively farmed – today and into the future. Agricultural land should not become a lower-cost alternative for industrial land development where the effect is to price farmers out of the land base.

This tension—between the desire to farm and the ability to do so—underscores the continued importance of the Agricultural Land Reserve. The ALR was established with foresight to safeguard the land base necessary for agriculture, recognizing that once agricultural land is lost, it is rarely reclaimed. That foresight remains as relevant today as it was over 50 years ago.

Richard Weaver wrote:"…**the trouble with humanity is that it forgets to read the minutes of the last meeting**…" — a reminder that we often live in the present and fail to learn from those who came before us. Too often, the important work of the past is overlooked. Agricultural land—and the producers who depend on it—are both vital and increasingly scarce resources. Once lost, they are not easily replaced. It does not take long to forget where our food comes from, which is why communication and education remain essential.

Jennifer Dyson
Chair, Agricultural Land Commission

Did you know?

Not all agricultural lands are created equal and not all agricultural lands are capable of, or suitable for, producing all agricultural products.

There are seven agricultural capability classifications set out in both the Canadian Land Inventory and the BC Land Inventory systems that take into account the relative degree and type of limitation to agriculture; use and/or the range of possible crops. These systems also indicate the type and intensity of management practices required for good farm management of the soil. Class 1 lands are capable of producing the broadest range of crops and while Class 6 and 7 are the least agriculturally capable lands, they may still be agriculturally productive, where topography and climate allow, and/or where the agricultural activities are dedicated to closed environmental systems.

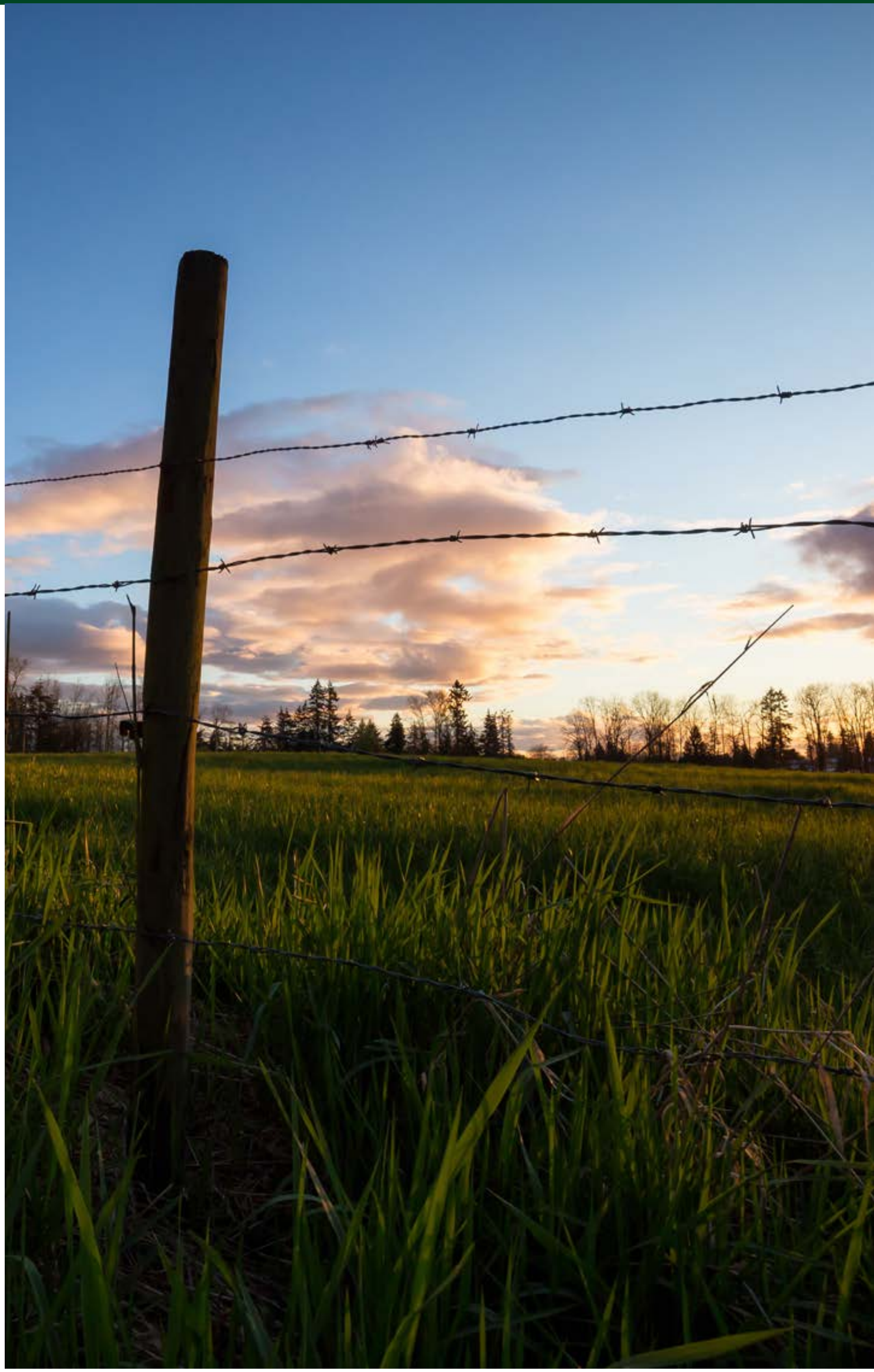
British Columbia's diverse agriculture industry needs all classes of land to thrive.

Who We Are and What We Do

The Agricultural Land Commission

The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC or Commission) is an independent administrative tribunal established under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*. The Commission is responsible for protecting agricultural land in British Columbia and for exercising decision making authority related to land use within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). In carrying out its mandate, the ALC operates at arm's length from the Provincial Government, and its decisions are made in accordance with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and applicable provisions of the *Administrative Tribunals Act*.

The purposes of the Commission, as set out in legislation, are to preserve agricultural land; to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest; and to encourage local governments, First Nations, the Province, and their agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land, and uses compatible with agriculture, in their plans, bylaws, and policies. In fulfilling these purposes, the Commission is required to give priority, when exercising its authorities, to protecting and enhancing the size, integrity, and continuity of the ALR land base and the use of ALR land for farming. Through its decisions, policies, and oversight activities, the ALC contributes to the long term sustainability of British Columbia's agricultural sector.



Mandate and Core Functions

The Commission's mandate is carried out primarily through the following activities:

Decision Making on Applications Related to:

- The inclusion or exclusion of land in to or from the Agricultural Land Reserve;
- The use of land in the ALR for non-agricultural activities and for agricultural-related uses that exceed the limits permitted under the ALCA and its regulations.
- The subdivision of land in the ALR;
- The construction of larger or more residential structures than permitted in the ALR;
- The removal of soil or placement of fill in the ALR.

Administration of Notices of Intent

- Authorizing Notices of Intent for the placement of fill or removal of soil in the ALR.

Compliance and Enforcement

- Responding to reports of alleged contraventions of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and its regulations; and
- Issuing enforcement orders and administering penalties for non compliance, where applicable.

Policy, Planning, and Advisory functions

- Reviewing local government bylaws and policies for consistency with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and its regulations;
- Providing opinions to government or the Minister on matters submitted under legislation for which the Commission is responsible and making recommendations where appropriate.

Commission Structure

The Agricultural Land Commission is governed by a Commission appointed under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, which is responsible for exercising the Commission's statutory authorities and ensuring accountability in decision making. Decisions on applications are made by panels consisting of two or more members of the Commission, appointed by the Chair, acting under delegated authority. A panel has all the powers, duties, and functions of the Commission, and its decisions are decisions of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

Under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, the Commission must consist of at least 11 members, with a minimum of one but no more than three members appointed from each of the six ALR administrative regions in the Province. Collectively, Commission members serve as the board of directors of the ALC.

The Chair is appointed by Order in Council of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Commission members are appointed by Ministerial Order of the Minister of Agriculture and Food following a merit based process and consultation with the Chair, based on experience and expertise in areas specific to agriculture, land use planning, local government, and First Nations governance.

The Full Board of the Commission meets at least twice each year to establish policies governing ALC operations, provide guidance on legislative interpretation, and pass resolutions and bylaws related to the conduct of the Commission's affairs.

An Executive Committee, composed of the Chair and Vice Chairs, exercises delegated decision making authority on behalf of the Commission, including deciding certain applications and reconsideration requests within its jurisdiction, and serves as a forum for receiving updates on Commission staff activities and workload.

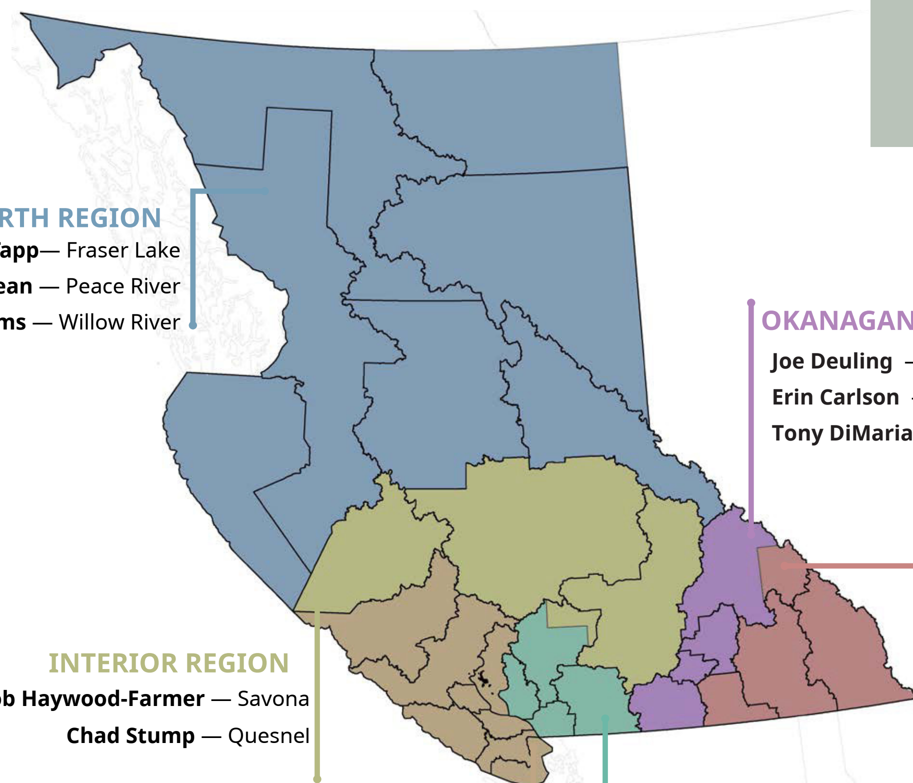
To support effective and timely decision making, the Chair has established regional and specialized panels of Commissioners. Regional panels adjudicate most applications originating within their respective areas, while specialized panels consider soil and fill use applications and non farm use applications related to film production. Commissioners appointed to specialized panels receive additional training to support technical review and analysis.

Commission Members By Administrative Region

Commission Chair: Jennifer Dyson — Port Alberni

LEGEND

- North Region
- Interior Region
- Island Region
- South Coast Region
- Kootenay Region
- Okanagan Region



NORTH REGION

Janice Tapp— Fraser Lake
Karen McKean — Peace River
Andrew Adams — Willow River

OKANAGAN REGION

Joe Deuling — Lumby
Erin Carlson — Summerland
Tony DiMaria — Kelowna

KOOTENAY REGION

Jerry Thibeault — Cranbrook
Wayne Harris — Creston
Donna O'Donnell — Grand Forks

INTERIOR REGION

Bob Haywood-Farmer — Savona
Chad Stump — Quesnel

ISLAND REGION

Brenda Schoepp — Victoria
Jeff McCallum — Nanaimo
Jan Slomp — Comox Valley

SOUTH COAST REGION

Ione Smith — Sechelt
Holger Schwichtenberg — Agassiz
Susie Gimse— Pemberton (term expired Oct.2025)

Chair: Jennifer Dyson

Vice Chairs: Ione Smith, Janice Tapp, Jerry Thibeault, Joe Dueling, Bob Haywood-Farmer

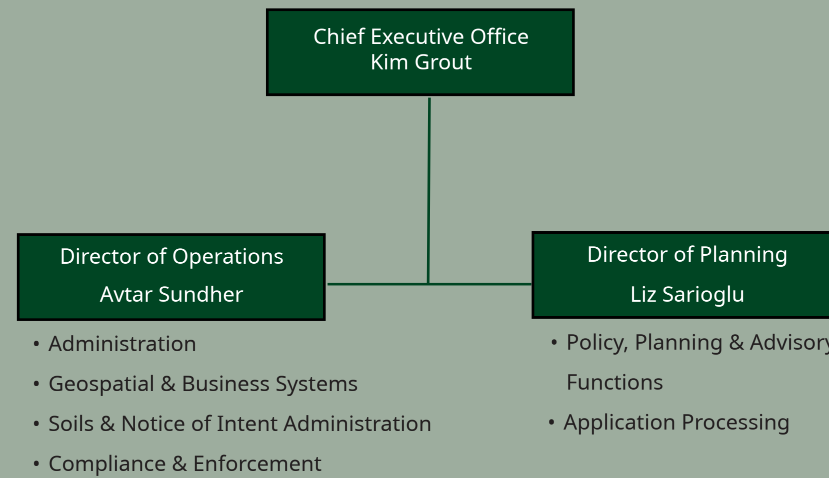
Members: Chad Stump, Karen McKean, Andrew Adams, Wayne Harris, Danna O'Donnell, Erin Carlson, Tony DiMaria, Brenda Schoepp, Jeff Mc-Callum, Jan Slomp, Holger Schwitchtenberg

Organizational Structure

The Commission is supported by a professional staff team that provides operational, analytical, and administrative support necessary for the effective and timely discharge of the Commission's responsibilities.

In March 2026, the Commission issued 90 day lay off notices to six staff positions due to fiscal constraints. As the notices take effect after the end of the reporting period, staffing numbers reported below remain unchanged for the 2025/26 fiscal and will be adjusted in the subsequent reporting period.

Agricultural Land Commission Organization Chart



Staffing by Area of Activity as of March 31, 2026

	Staffing Numbers
Policy, Planning & Regional Advisory	7
Application Processing	13.5
Soils & Notice of Intent Authorization	7
Compliance & Enforcement	8
Geospatial & Business Systems	4
Administration	4
Total	**43.5**

2025/26: AT A GLANCE

At A Glance*

2025/26		2024/25	
343	Applications Received	303	Applications Received
287	Applications Decided	374	Applications Decided
490	NOIs Submitted	446	NOIs Submitted
474	NOI Decisions	445	NOI Decisions
1,238	C&E Active Case Files	1,049	C&E Active Case Files
27	Stop Work Orders	27	Stop Work Orders
4	Remediation Orders	8	Remediation Orders
4	Penalty Orders	9	Penalty Orders
6	C&E Orders Under Appeal	1	C&E Orders Under Appeal

Application decision volumes in 2025/26 were affected by a five week period of labour action, which temporarily reduced decision making capacity.

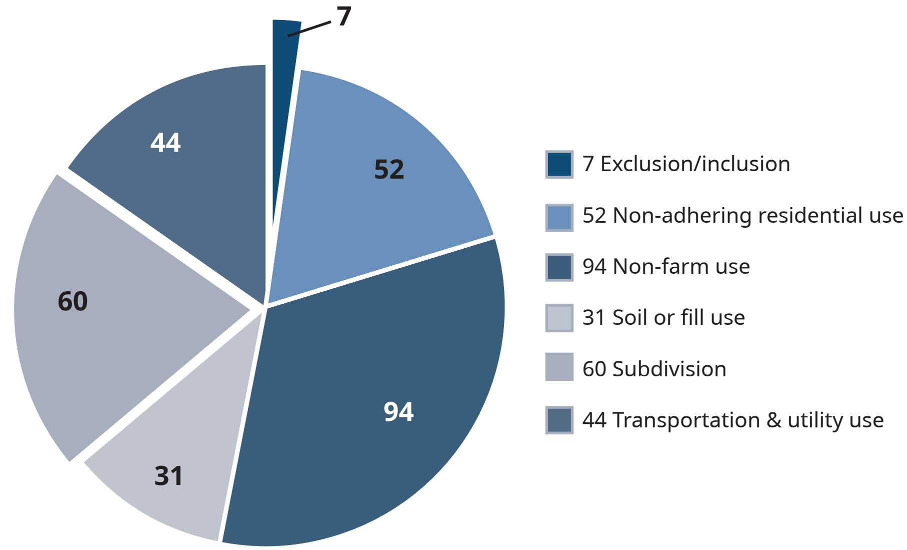
Seventy-two (72%) percent of all the applications decided by the Commission in 2025/26 were approved.

ALR Change

	2025/26	2024/25
Net Change in ALR	-11,168 ha	-11,158 ha
Commission Approved Inclusions/Exclusions	-79.2 ha	-5.6 ha
ALR Land added to Federal Reserves	+1,933 ha	+127 ha

**Net ALR change reflects multiple factors, including Orders in Council, federal reserve designations, and Commission decisions.*

Applications Decided by Type (2025/26)



*The distribution of application types decided in 2025/26 is discussed in detail in Section 7.

Legislative Amendments

Renewable Energy Projects in the Agricultural Land Reserve

In 2025, the Province enacted the Renewable Energy Projects *(Streamlined Permitting*) Act and the Renewable Energy Projects *(Streamlined Permitting)* Regulation, which introduced a new permitting framework for certain renewable energy projects in British Columbia.

This legislation represents a significant change to the governance of non farm uses in the ALR. Approval authority for all wind and solar renewable energy projects has been shifted from the Agricultural Land Commission's application process to the BC Energy Regulator (BCER). While the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* continues to apply, except where modified by the new legislation, BCER is not required to apply the section 6 priorities of the Act, which emphasize protecting and enhancing the size, integrity, and continuity of the ALR and its use for farming.

During the reporting period, the Chair of the Commission wrote to the Premier and the Minister responsible for this legislation to outline the ALC's concerns related to agricultural impacts, land remediation, and cumulative effects of non-farm development on ALR.

The Commission will continue to work collaboratively with BCER to clarify regulatory roles and emphasize the importance of considering agricultural land capability, soil resources, and cumulative impacts of approving renewable energy projects within the ALR.

The Agricultural Land Reserve

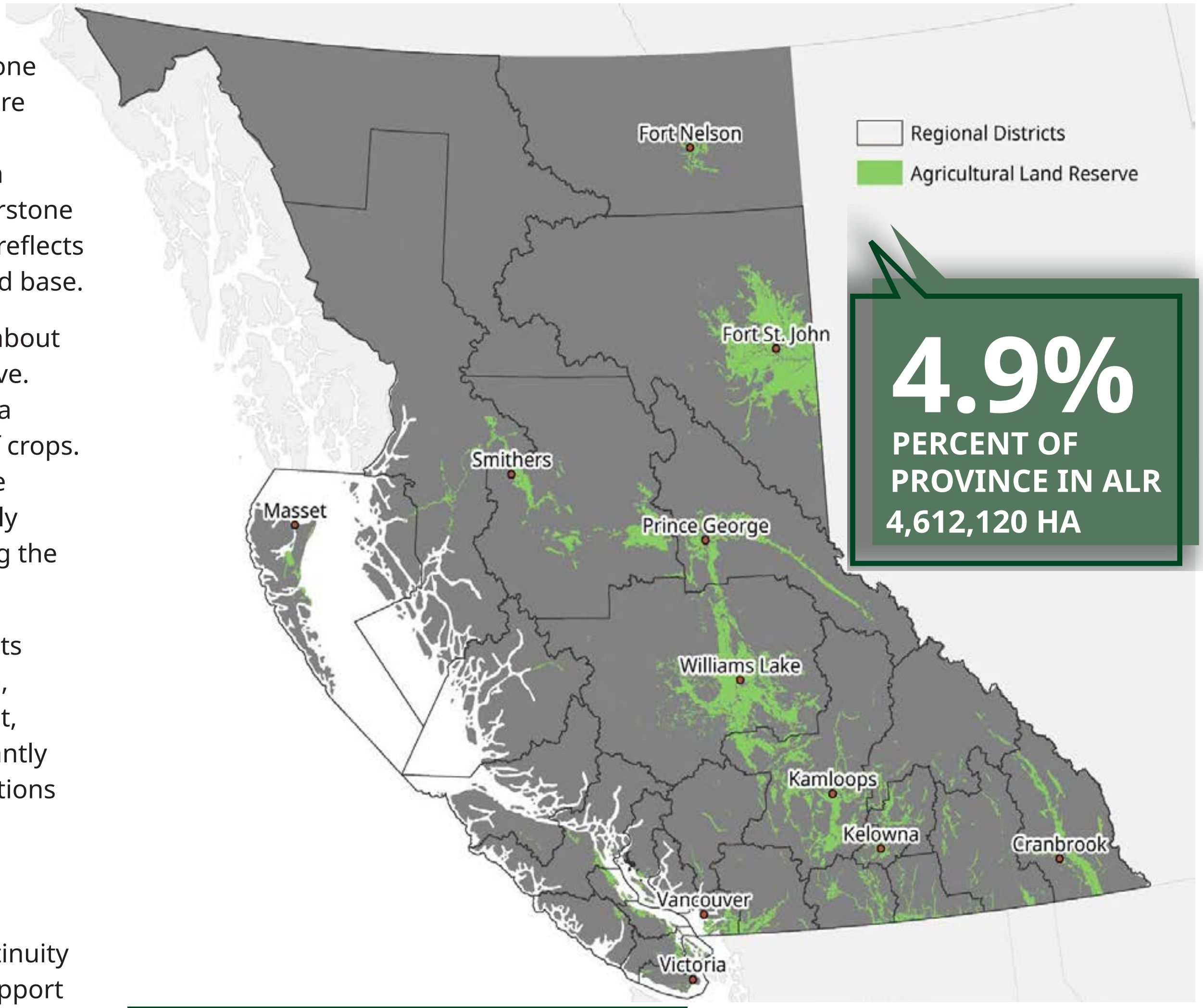
Purpose and Extent of the Agricultural Land Reserve

The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a provincial land use zone established to preserve agricultural land for present and future generations, encourage farming as the priority use, and limit non-farm development that could compromise the long-term viability of agriculture in British Columbia. The ALR is a cornerstone of the Province's agricultural land protection framework and reflects the importance of safeguarding a finite and irreplaceable land base.

Approximately 4.9% of British Columbia's total land base, or about 4.6 million hectares, is designated as Agricultural Land Reserve. While the ALR encompasses a wide range of land types, only a portion of this land is capable of supporting a broad range of crops. An estimated 2.7% of BC's land base within the ALR is suitable for a wide range of agricultural production, and approximately 1.1% consists of prime agricultural land capable of supporting the greatest diversity and intensity of cropping.

The ALR includes both privately owned and Crown land, and its composition reflects the Province's varied geography, climate, and historic land use patterns. Across the province, the extent, quality, ownership, and accessibility of ALR land vary significantly by region. These regional differences have important implications for agricultural activity, land use pressures, and the types of applications and inquiries received by the Commission.

Together, the purpose and extent of the ALR underscore the Commission's mandate to protect the size, integrity, and continuity of the agricultural land base, while providing for uses that support farming and are compatible with long term agricultural objectives. Subsequent sections of this report describe how the ALR was originally designated and how it is distributed across British Columbia's six administrative regions.



The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a provincial zone found in almost every region of the Province of BC where the land is protected, farming is encouraged and non-farm uses are restricted.

Agricultural Land Reserve Designation History

The Agricultural Land Reserve was established in the early 1970s in response to growing concern about the permanent loss of agricultural land to urban and non farm development. Under the 1973 *Land Commission Act*—the predecessor to today's *Agricultural Land Commission Act*—regional districts across British Columbia were required to prepare agricultural reserve plans for review by the Agricultural Land Commission.

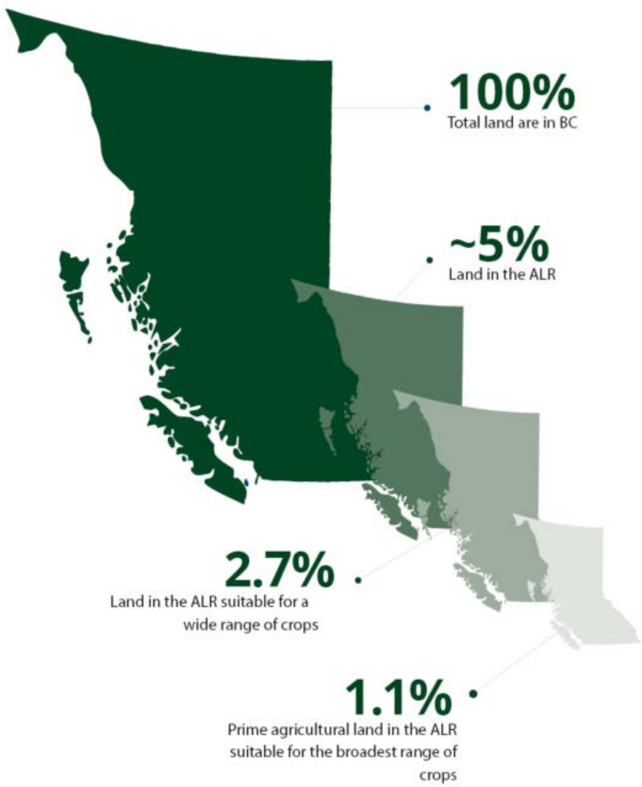
To support this process and promote consistency across the province, the provincial Ministry of Agriculture developed proposed ALR base maps identifying lands with the soil and climatic characteristics capable of supporting agriculture. These maps drew primarily on soil survey information and the Canadian Land Inventory (CLI) agricultural capability classification system, combined with consideration of existing development patterns and anticipated community growth needs.

In general, the following principles guided the initial designation of the ALR:

- **Class 1 to 4 agricultural lands** that were not already developed were included in the ALR, encompassing both Crown and privately owned land; Where non-agricultural land was not immediately available for urban expansion, limited areas of lower capability land were excluded to accommodate approximately five years of anticipated community growth;
- **Class 5 and 6 lands** were included where historic use demonstrated their importance for agriculture, such as fruit tree orchards and grazing lands associated with ranching operations; and
- **Small areas of Class 7** land were included where their exclusion could have resulted in undesirable intrusion or incompatible land uses within agricultural areas.

Following review by the Agricultural Land Commission, agricultural reserve plans, along with recommended changes, were approved by Cabinet, resulting in the formal establishment of the ALR across British Columbia. The province wide designation process was completed in approximately 18 months, creating a consistent and enduring agricultural land use zone.

This original designation framework continues to shape the ALR today. As a result, the ALR includes land with varied agricultural capability, ownership patterns, and development pressures, reflecting both the Province's diverse geography and historic land use decisions. Understanding this designation history provides important context for the Commission's present day decision making and helps explain regional differences in the composition and function of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

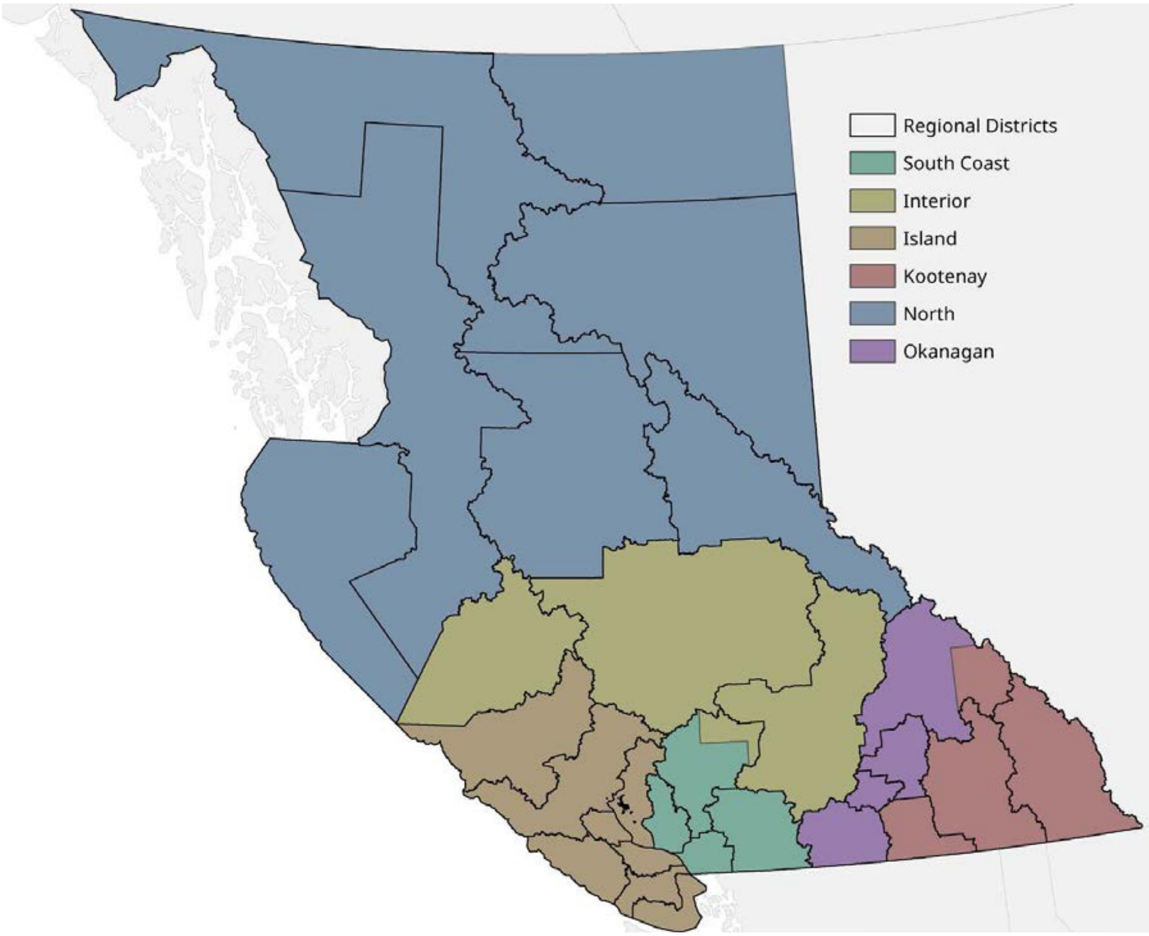


Regional Distribution of the Agricultural Land Reserve

Across British Columbia, Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land is held under a mix of Crown* and private ownership*. Provincially, approximately 54% of the ALR is Crown owned, while 46% is privately owned, although this balance varies significantly by region. Regions with higher proportions of privately owned ALR land typically experience greater development pressure and a higher volume of land use applications, while Crown-dominated regions face different agricultural, access, and land management considerations.

The ALR is not uniformly distributed across the province. Historic designation decisions, combined with regional differences in terrain, climate, land ownership, and settlement patterns, have resulted in significant variation in the size and characteristics of the ALR. The following section describes the distribution of the ALR across the Commission's six administrative regions.

Agricultural Land Reserve Administrative Regions



*__Private Ownership__ = Properties in the Integrated Cadastral Fabric (ICF) where the Ownership Class is defined as Private, First Nations, or Municipal

**__Crown Ownership__ = Unsurveyed crown land, or properties in the ICF where the Ownership Class is defined as Crown Federal, Crown Provincial, Crown Municipal, None, or Unknown.

Data sources: ALC, Integrated Cadastral Information Society, and BC geographic warehouse.

Contains information licensed under Open Government License - British Columbia. Map for reference only. Accuracy not guaranteed. Map created June 2021.

The ALR is divided into six geographic regions and the Commission must consist of at least one, but no more than three Commission members, other than the chair, from each one of these regions.

INTERIOR ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The Interior administrative region extends from the Central Coast (Bella Coola Valley) to the community of Chase at the western end of Shuswap Lake.

The region includes the Central Coast, Cariboo, Squamish-Lillooet (Lillooet area only), and Thompson-Nicola Regional Districts.

Major Settlements

- 100 Mile House
- Bella Coola
- Kamloops
- Merritt
- Quesnel
- Williams Lake

Total ALR area in Region: ~1,529,010 hectares

9% of the region is in the ALR.

32% of the ALR in the Interior region is in Private Ownership.

68% of the ALR in the Interior region is in Crown Ownership*.

The Interior region contains extensive agricultural land, much of it Crown owned, reflecting its large geographic scale and the importance of grazing, ranching, and resource based agricultural systems.

THE ALR IN THE INTERIOR REGION REPRESENTS **33%** OF THE TOTAL ALR IN THE PROVINCE

*Definition of Crown Ownership defined on page 16

ISLAND ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The Island administrative region encompasses Vancouver Island, most of the Gulf Islands, and a number of coastal mainland areas that are part of Regional Districts headquartered on Vancouver Island or are more readily accessed from the Island than from mainland centres.

The region includes the Alberni Clayoquot, Capital, Comox Valley, Cowichan Valley, Mount Waddington, Nanaimo, qathet, and Strathcona Regional Districts.

Major Settlements

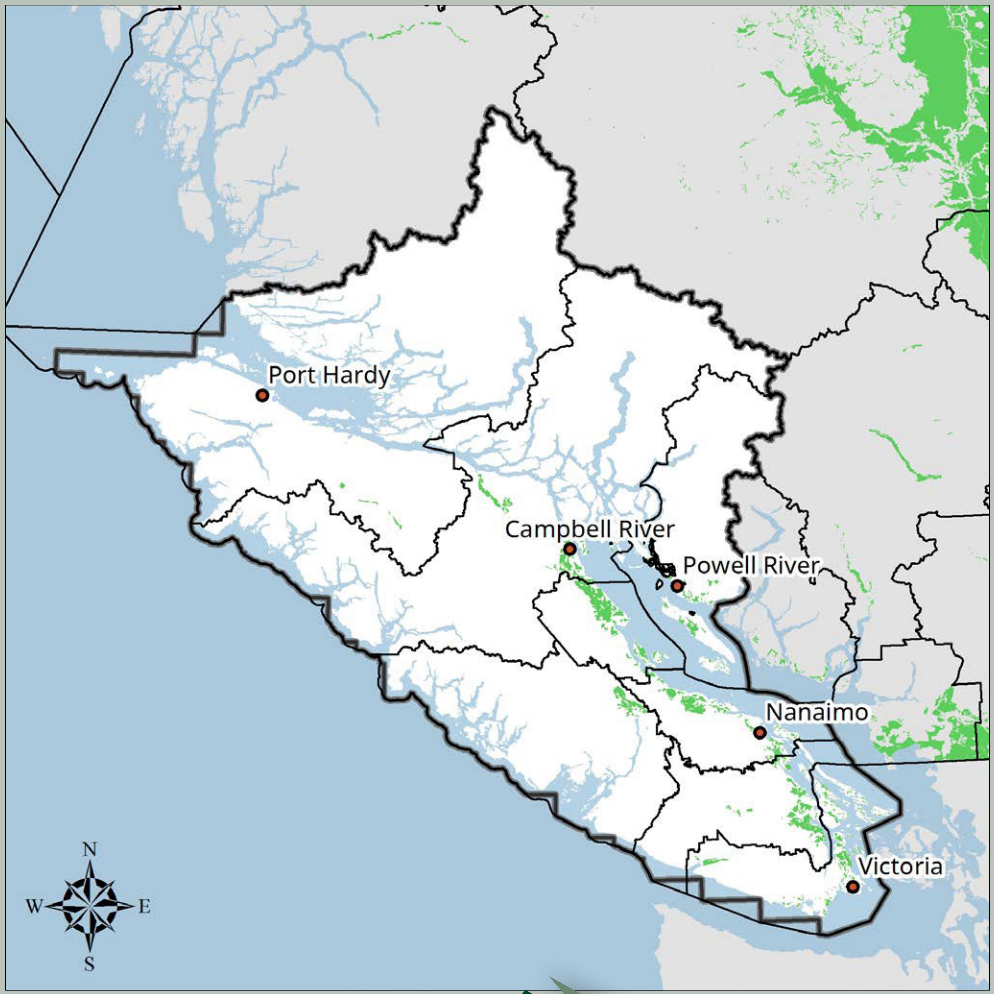
- Campbell River
- Comox
- Duncan
- Nanaimo
- Port Alberni
- Powell River
- Saanich

Total ALR area in Region: ~115,449 hectares

1.4% percent of region is in the ALR.

79% of Island region is in Private Ownership.

21% of Island region is in Crown Ownership*.



THE ALR IN THE ISLAND REGION REPRESENTS 3% OF THE TOTAL ALR IN THE PROVINCE

The Island Administrative Region contains a relatively small share of the province's ALR land and is predominantly privately owned. Nearly 40% of ALR parcels are under 2 hectares, reflecting limited land availability, fragmented agricultural areas, and heightened development pressure at the agricultural–urban interface.

*Definition of Crown Ownership defined on page 16

KOOTENAY ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The Kootenay administrative region encompasses the southeasterly portion of BC extending from the BC/Alberta border in the east to the Grand Forks and Kootenay Boundary.

The region includes the Central Kootenay, East Kootenay, and Kootenay Boundary Regional Districts and a portion of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Golden area only).

Major Settlements

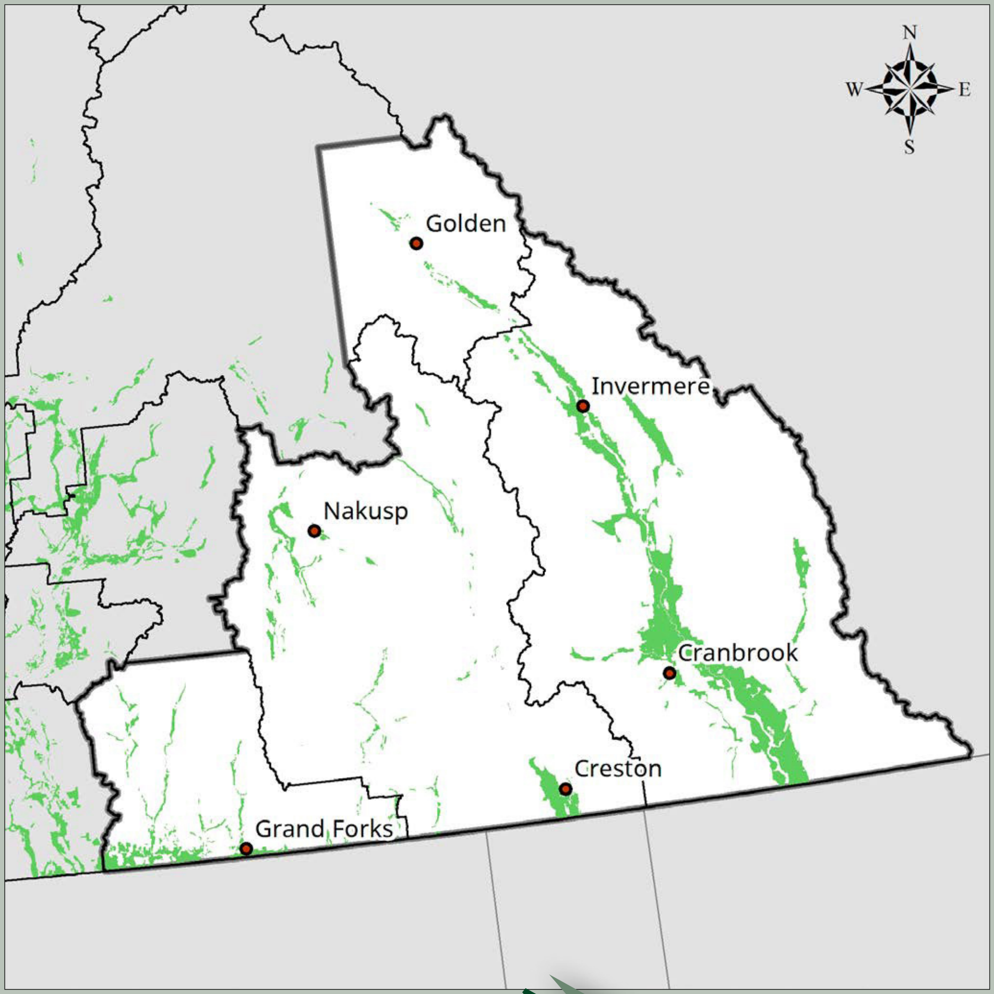
- Creston
- Cranbrook
- Grand Forks
- Kimberly
- Invermere
- Sparwood

Total ALR area in Region: ~388,244 hectares

5.8% percent of region in ALR.

42.5% of the Kootenay region is in Private Ownership.

57.5% of the Kootenay region is in Crown Ownership*.



THE ALR IN THE KOOTENAY REGION REPRESENTS 8% OF THE TOTAL ALR IN THE PROVINCE

The Kootenay Administrative Region contains a moderate share of the province's ALR land with a relatively balanced mix of private and Crown ownership, reflecting valley based agricultural areas interspersed with mountainous terrain and a diverse range of farming and livestock operations.

*Definition of Crown Ownership defined on page 16

NORTH ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The North administrative region encompasses north-east, north-central and north-west BC, from Prince George to the BC/Yukon border.

The region includes Bulkley-Nechako, Fraser-Fort George, Kitimat-Stikine, Peace River, and North Coast Regional Districts and the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality.

Major Settlements

- Fort Nelson
- Fort St. John
- Prince George
- Telkwa
- Terrace
- Smithers
- Vanderhoof

Total ALR area in Region: ~2,206,811 hectares

3.4% of region is in the ALR.

51% of the North region is in Private Ownership.

49% of the North region is in Crown Ownership*.

THE ALR IN THE NORTH REGION REPRESENTS **48%** OF THE TOTAL ALR IN THE PROVINCE

The North Administrative Region contains the largest share of Agricultural Land Reserve land in the province, much of it Crown owned, reflecting the region's vast geography, lower settlement density, and the prominence of larger parcels and extensive agricultural and grazing systems alongside access and infrastructure constraints.

*Definition of Crown Ownership defined on page 16

OKANAGAN ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The Okanagan administrative region encompasses the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys, the Columbia Shuswap, and Princeton areas.

The region includes the Central Okanagan, Columbia Shuswap (except Golden area), North Okanagan, and Okanagan Similkameen Regional Districts.

Major Settlements

- Kelowna
- Osoyoos
- Oliver
- Penticton
- Princeton
- Revelstoke
- Salmon Arm
- Vernon

Total ALR area in Region: ~224,677 hectares

5% of region is in the ALR.

59.5% of the Okanagan region is in Private Ownership.

40.5% of Okanagan region is in Crown Ownership*.

The Okanagan Administrative Region contains a relatively small but highly productive share of the province's ALR land and is predominantly privately owned. Many ALR parcels are small in size, including a substantial share under 4 hectares, reflecting intensive agricultural specialization, valley-based geography, and strong development pressures within a constrained landscape.

*Definition of Crown Ownership defined on page 16

THE ALR IN THE OKANAGAN REGION REPRESENTS **5%** OF THE TOTAL ALR IN THE PROVINCE

SOUTH COAST ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The South Coast administrative region encompasses the lower mainland region of BC from Hope to the Fraser River delta and north to the Sunshine Coast and the Squamish River.

The region includes the Fraser Valley, Metro Vancouver, Squamish-Lillooet (except the Lillooet area), and Sunshine Coast Regional Districts.

Major Settlements

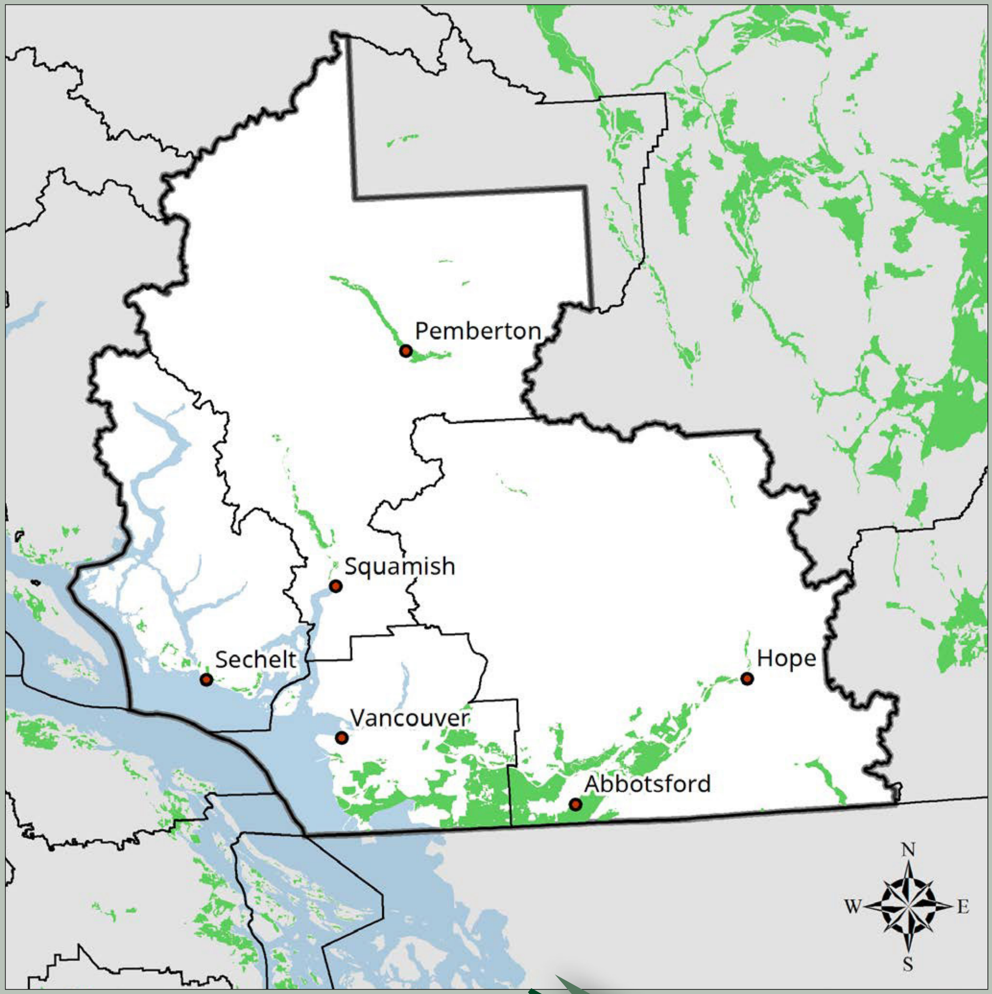
- Abbotsford
- Chilliwack
- Langley
- Mission
- Pitt Meadows
- Richmond
- Surrey
- Vancouver

Total ALR area in Region: ~148,126 hectares

4.1% of region is in the ALR.

76% of the South Coast region is in Private Ownership.

24% of the South Coast Region is in Crown Ownership*.



The South Coast Administrative Region contains a relatively small share of the province's ALR land but a high proportion of private ownership. Nearly half of ALR parcels in the South Coast are under 2 hectares, reflecting its highly urbanized context, fragmented agricultural areas, and significant development pressures at the agricultural–urban interface.

THE ALR IN THE SOUTH COAST REGION REPRESENTS 3% OF THE TOTAL ALR IN THE PROVINCE

*Definition of Crown Ownership defined on page 16

Activities of the Commission

Building Understanding and Consistency in Agricultural Land Protection

Although British Columbia's agricultural land protection framework has been in place for more than 50 years, it remains complex and, at times, poorly understood. During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) continued to prioritize education, outreach, and coordinated planning to improve understanding of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), its benefits, and the roles decision makers play in protecting agricultural land.

This work focused on supporting the consistent application of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and its regulations amid increasing pressures related to housing demand, infrastructure expansion, rising land values, and non farm development.

Supporting Local Governments Through Planning and Bylaw Review

Local government land-use planning and zoning bylaws apply to approximately 89 per cent of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Where these bylaws are in effect, they must be consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and ALR regulations. Alignment between local bylaws and provincial requirements is essential to effective and coordinated protection of agricultural land.

During the reporting period, the Commission received 106 major planning referrals, representing an increase of approximately 212 per cent over the previous fiscal year. This significant increase was driven largely by new provincial housing legislation requiring local governments to update Official Community Plans and zoning bylaws.

In parallel with formal bylaw and plan reviews, the Chair, CEO, Commissioners, and staff engaged with councils, boards, planners, provincial approving officers, and agricultural advisory committees across the province to address pressures related to housing, accessory residential structures, building scale, and fill placement within the ALR. These engagements supported greater clarity and understanding, with the objective of reducing compliance risk and improving alignment between local government bylaws and provincial legislative requirements.

Through bylaw review and engagement, the Commission supports land use planning outcomes that protect agricultural land consistent with its mandate.

Major Bylaw/Plan Referral Type	Received
Growth Strategy Plans/Amendments	5
Official Community Plans/Amendments	82
Zoning Bylaws/Amendments	17
Agricultural Plans/Strategies	1
Transportation Plans	-
Parks, Trails & Open Space Plans	-
Other Plans/Bylaws	1
Total	**106**

Regions	Major Bylaw/Plan Referral Received
Interior	11
Island	22
Kootenay	7
North	12
Okanagan	27
South Coast	27
Total	**106**

Engaging Farmers and Agricultural Organizations

During the reporting period the Commission engaged directly with farmers, ranchers, and agricultural organizations to strengthen understanding of agricultural land protection and to hear firsthand perspectives on emerging challenges. During BC Agricultural Days 2025, Commission representatives met with producers and agricultural organizations from across the province to discuss agricultural viability, land use pressures, and the role of the ALR in supporting active farming.

In addition, the Commission engaged with provincial agricultural organizations, including the BC Agriculture Council and member associations, to discuss broader policy issues affecting producers and how agricultural land protection supports long term food security and farm resilience.

Strengthening Cross Government Coordination

Commission staff worked with provincial ministries to promote consistent understanding and application of the ALR framework across government. Engagements included guidance for Provincial Approving Officers on subdivision authority within the ALR, briefings for officials involved in treaty negotiations on ALR land transfer implications, and collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food through the resumption of the joint Agri Teams forum.
In partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, the Commission supported development of a provincial Farm Tourism Guide, providing plain language guidance to farmers on diversification and agri tourism opportunities while navigating ALR requirements. Ongoing coordination also included policy discussions with the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch.

Advancing Relationships with First Nations

In January, the ALC Chair and CEO participated in one-on-one meetings with more than 20 First Nations during the BC Cabinet and First Nations Leadership Gathering, at the invitation of the Minister of Agriculture. Discussions focused on food security, food sovereignty, agricultural production and processing opportunities with First Nations communities. These engagements reinforced the importance of agricultural land as a foundation for long term economic and community well being.

Leading Provincial and National Dialogue

The Commission contributed to broader provincial and national conversations on farmland protection through participation in forums such as AgEx 2024, Keeping it Rural Conference, and the Union of BC Municipalities Annual Convention. These engagements addressed farmland scarcity, speculative pressures, agricultural viability, and the importance of coordinated policy approaches to support long term food security.

Looking Ahead

Through continued education, collaboration, and policy alignment, the Commission is working to strengthen shared understanding of the importance of agricultural land protection and helping to ensure that land use decisions across British Columbia better support farming and the long term integrity of the ALR.

Applications and Decisions

Applications Received

In the 2025/26 fiscal, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) received 343 applications. The South Coast and Okanagan regions continued to account for the largest share, together comprising approximately 50% of all of the submissions in BC.

Applications were received across all legislated categories. Non-farm use, non-adhering residential use, and subdivision applications represented the majority (69%) of total applications. Decisions vary by application type and are based on the specifics of each proposal, including its support for agriculture and alignment with the objectives of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

Applications Received by ALR Administrative Region

ALR ADMINISTRATIVE REGION	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Interior	28	32	21	24	32
Island	34	52	43	30	41
Kootenay	51	47	40	33	37
North[1]	69	66	70	56	64
Okanagan	76	74	66	55	73
South Coast	93	115	118	105	96
Total	**340**	**364**	**358**	**303**	**343**

[1]Includes applications submitted to the BC Energy Regulator (formerly the Oil and Gas Commission) under the ALC/BCER Delegation Agreement in the North Administrative Region.

Applications Received by Application Type

APPLICATION TYPE	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Inclusion	7	1	4	4	9
Exclusion	22	16	10	7	11
Non-Farm Use[1]	68	110	87	79	104
Non-Adhering Residential Use	79	77	65	55	66
Subdivision	79	91	105	68	67
Transportation and Utilities	60	34	43	57	48
Soil or Fill Use	36	47	44	36	38
Total	**340**	**364**	**358**	**303**	**343**

[1]Includes applications submitted to the BC Energy Regulator (formerly the Oil and Gas Commission) under the ALC/BCER Delegation Agreement in the North Administrative Region.

Distribution of Applications Received[1] by Type and ALR Administrative Region

(April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026)

INTERIOR ALR REGION

9	Subdivision
8	Non-Farm Use
8	Transportation and Utility Use
3	Soil or Fill Use
2	Non-Adhering Residential Use
2	Inclusion
0	Exclusion
32	**Total**

ISLAND ALR REGION

13	Non-Farm Use
12	Non-Adhering Residential Use
7	Subdivision
4	Transportation and Utility Use
4	Soil or Fill
1	Inclusion
0	Exclusion
41	**Total**

OKANAGAN ALR REGION

19	Non- Farm Use
17	Transportation and Utility Use
16	Non-Adhering Residential Use
9	Subdivision
8	Soil and Fill Use
3	Exclusion
1	Inclusion
73	**Total**

KOOTENAY ALR REGION

9	Subdivision
8	Non-Farm Use
8	Transportation and Utility Use
5	Soil or Fill Use
5	Exclusion
1	Non-Adhering Residential Use
1	Inclusion
37	**Total**

NORTH ALR REGION

17	Subdivision
31	Non-Farm Use
6	Soil or Fill Use
4	Non-Adhering Residential Use
4	Transportation and Utility Use
1	Exclusion
0	Inclusion
63	**Total**

SOUTH COAST ALR REGION

30	Non-Adhering Residential Use
25	Non-Farm Use
16	Subdivision
12	Soil or Fill Use
7	Transportation and Utility Use
4	Inclusion
1	Exclusion
96	**Total**

Application Decisions Released

Between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026, the Commission released **287 application decisions**. This represents a **23 per cent decrease** from the previous fiscal year, due in large part to a five week period of job action in the fall that temporarily reduced decision making capacity. Decisions include applications carried forward from previous fiscal years.

Number of Application Decisions Released by the ALR Administrative Region

ALR ADMINISTRATIVE REGION	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Interior	33	22	26	28	31
Island	19	38	45	38	34
Kootenay	44	42	40	49	32
North[1]	46	57	69	73	57
Okanagan	62	64	85	62	55
South Coast	111	85	127	124	78
Total	**315**	**308**	**392**	**374**	**287**

[1] Includes application decisions decided by the BC Energy Regulator (formerly the Oil and Gas Commission) under the ALC/BCER Delegation Agreement in the North Administrative Region. See page 42 for information on application decisions made by the BC Energy Regulator.

Approval rates varied by application type, reflecting differences in legislative criteria, agricultural impacts, and alignment with agricultural use. The following sections summarize decision outcomes by application type.

Inclusion and Exclusion Applications

Inclusion and exclusion applications represent a small proportion of overall application volume (2%) but have lasting implications for the size and composition of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Applications to include land in the ALR may be initiated by landowners, while exclusion applications may only be initiated by the Commission, local governments, First Nation governments, or other prescribed public bodies under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*. No inclusion or exclusion applications were initiated by the Commission during the reporting period.

100% of inclusion applications decided in 2025/26 were approved.

Inclusion Applications

Inclusion applications seek to add land to the ALR where soils, climate, or a combination of both demonstrate agricultural capability.

In 2025/26, the Commission decided two inclusion applications, both of which were approved. These approvals permit the net addition of approximately 11.4 hectares of land to the ALR. Inclusion applications represented less than one per cent of all decisions during the reporting period.

While limited in number, approved inclusion applications were strategically significant, supporting the Commission’s mandate to strengthen the ALR where lands demonstrate agricultural potential.

Exclusion Applications

Exclusion applications seek the removal of land from the ALR and may only be initiated by specified authorities.

In 2025/26, the Commission decided five exclusion applications, approving four and refusing one. These decisions permit the removal of approximately 90.6 hectares of land from the ALR and accounted for approximately two per cent of all applications decided during the fiscal year.

In 2025/26 80% of exclusion applications were approved.

Net Change to the Agricultural Land Reserve

Although infrequent, inclusion and exclusion decisions are closely monitored due to their cumulative impact. In 2025/26, approved decisions are expected to result in a net reduction of approximately 79.2 hectares of ALR land. These changes take effect only once all decision conditions have been met, which may occur in subsequent fiscal years. For changes that took effect during the reporting period, see Cumulative Change in the Area of the ALR section on page 62.

ALR change approved by Commission Decision by ALR Region April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026

REGION	INCLUSION (ha)		EXCLUSION (ha)		APPROVED NET CHANGE (ha)
	APPROVED	REFUSED	APPROVED	REFUSED	
Interior	9.8	-	-	-	9.8
Island	-	-	-	-	-
Kootenay	-	-	-	-	-
North	-	-	20.4	5	-20.4
Okanagan	-	-	68.8	-	-68.8
South Coast	1.6	-	1.4	-	0.2
Total	11.4	-	90.6	5	-79.2

ALR change approved by Commission Decision by Regional District April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026

REGIONAL DISTRICT	INCLUSION AREA (ha)	EXCLUSION AREA (ha)	NET CHANGE (ha)
Central Okanagan	-	3.4	-3.4
Columbia Shuswap	1.6	31.4	-29.8
Metro Vancouver	-	1.4	-1.4
Okanagan Similkameen	-	34	-34
Peace River	-	20.4	-20.4
Thompson Nicola	9.8	-	9.8
Total	11.4	90.6	-79.2

Subdivision Applications

Subdivision applications accounted for 21 per cent of all applications decided in 2025/26, reflecting continued pressure to further divide agricultural land within an ALR.

In 2025/26, 53 per cent of subdivision applications were approved, a lower approval rate than for other application types. Regional differences in decision volumes noted in the table below reflect variation in application activity, with the South Coast and Okanagan accounting for a larger share of submissions, rather than differences in decision-making approach.

21%
OF ALL 2025/2026 APPLICATIONS

Subdivision Application Decisions by Region

REGION	APPROVALS	REFUSALS	TOTAL DECISIONS
Interior	6	1	7
Island	4	5	9
Kootenay	2	7	9
North	7	6	13
Okanagan	15	4	9
South Coast	8	5	13
Total	**32**	**28**	**60**

53% of subdivision applications decided in 2025/26 were approved.

Context: Parcel Size and Subdivision Pressure

The ALR contains approximately 165,000 fee simple parcels, more than half of which are 4 hectares (10 acres) or smaller, with parcels under 1 hectare representing the most common size category province-wide. This reflects an agricultural land base that is already significantly fragmented. Comparable patterns are also observed in all regions of the province including the North Administrative Region, where approximately 39 per cent of parcels are smaller than 4 hectares, indicating that fragmentation pressures are not limited to southern regions. Subdivision pressure is evident across all regions. In 2025/26, subdivision applications most frequently sought to create parcels of 4 hectares or less, including a substantial number of proposals under 1 hectare, despite higher refusal rates associated with residentially oriented subdivisions. Of the 32 approved applications, half (50 per cent) involved road dedications (e.g., road widening or reconfiguration), rather than the creation of new fee simple parcels.

While individual proposals may appear limited in isolation, incremental fragmentation can constrain opportunities for commercial-scale agriculture, reduce operational flexibility, and increase land use conflicts. Over time, these pressures can weaken the integrity of the ALR and limit the economic viability of agriculture in British Columbia.

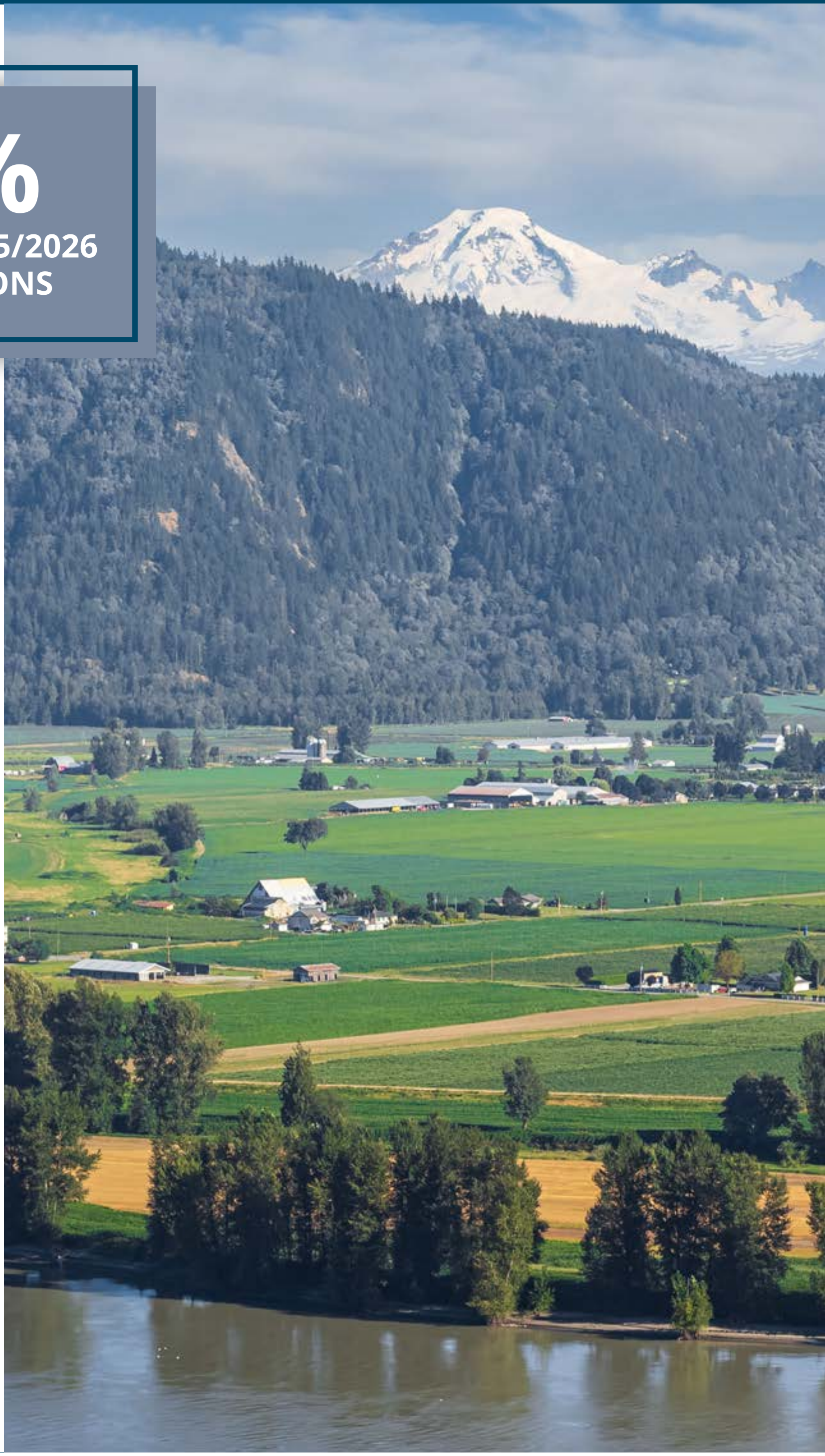
Non-Farm Use Applications

Non-farm use applications accounted for 32 per cent of all decisions in 2025/26 and included infrastructure, utility, community, recreation, and value-added agricultural uses.

In 2025/26, 79 per cent of non-farm use applications were approved, reflecting continued support for proposals that are compatible with agricultural use, limited in scale, and appropriately conditioned. Approval rates were highest where proposals were ancillary to farming, enabled agricultural production or service delivery, or supported regional infrastructure.

In the North Administrative Region, 68 per cent of decisions were decided by BCER under the ALC–BCER Delegation Agreement, reflecting the concentration of energy-related infrastructure activity in Northeast BC.

32%
OF ALL 2025/2026 APPLICATIONS



Non-Farm Use Application Decisions by Region

REGION	APPROVALS	REFUSALS	TOTAL DECISIONS
Interior	7	1	8
Island	10	4	14
Kootenay	8	2	10
North	28	3	31
Okanagan	12	5	17
South Coast	9	5	14
Total	**74**	**20**	**94**

79% of non-farm use applications decided in 2025/26 were approved.

Non-Adhering Residential Use Applications

Non-adhering residential use applications involve proposals that exceed the size or number thresholds permitted under the ALR Use Regulation for housing. These applications accounted for 18 per cent of all decisions in 2025/26.

In 2025/26, 75 per cent of non-adhering residential use applications were approved. Approvals were primarily associated with temporary farm labour accommodation and construction sequencing, where conditions ensured there was no net increase in residential units once construction was complete. Proposals involving permanent residential expansion faced greater scrutiny, particularly where an agricultural rationale was not demonstrated.

Section 25(1.1)(b) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* requires that additional residences be necessary for farm use. In assessing applications, the Commission considers existing residences and the contribution of their occupants to the farm operation. This framework ensures residential development remains tied to agricultural needs and avoids incremental fragmentation or non-farm pressures on the land.

75% of non-adhering residential use applications were approved.

18%

OF ALL 2025/2026 APPLICATIONS

Non-Adhering Residential Use Decisions by Region

REGION	APPROVALS	REFUSALS	TOTAL DECISIONS
Interior	2	0	2
Island	5	2	7
Kootenay	0	1	1
North	2	1	3
Okanagan	10	2	12
South Coast	20	7	27
Total	**39**	**13**	**52**

Non-Adhering Residential Use Decisions by Sub-Type

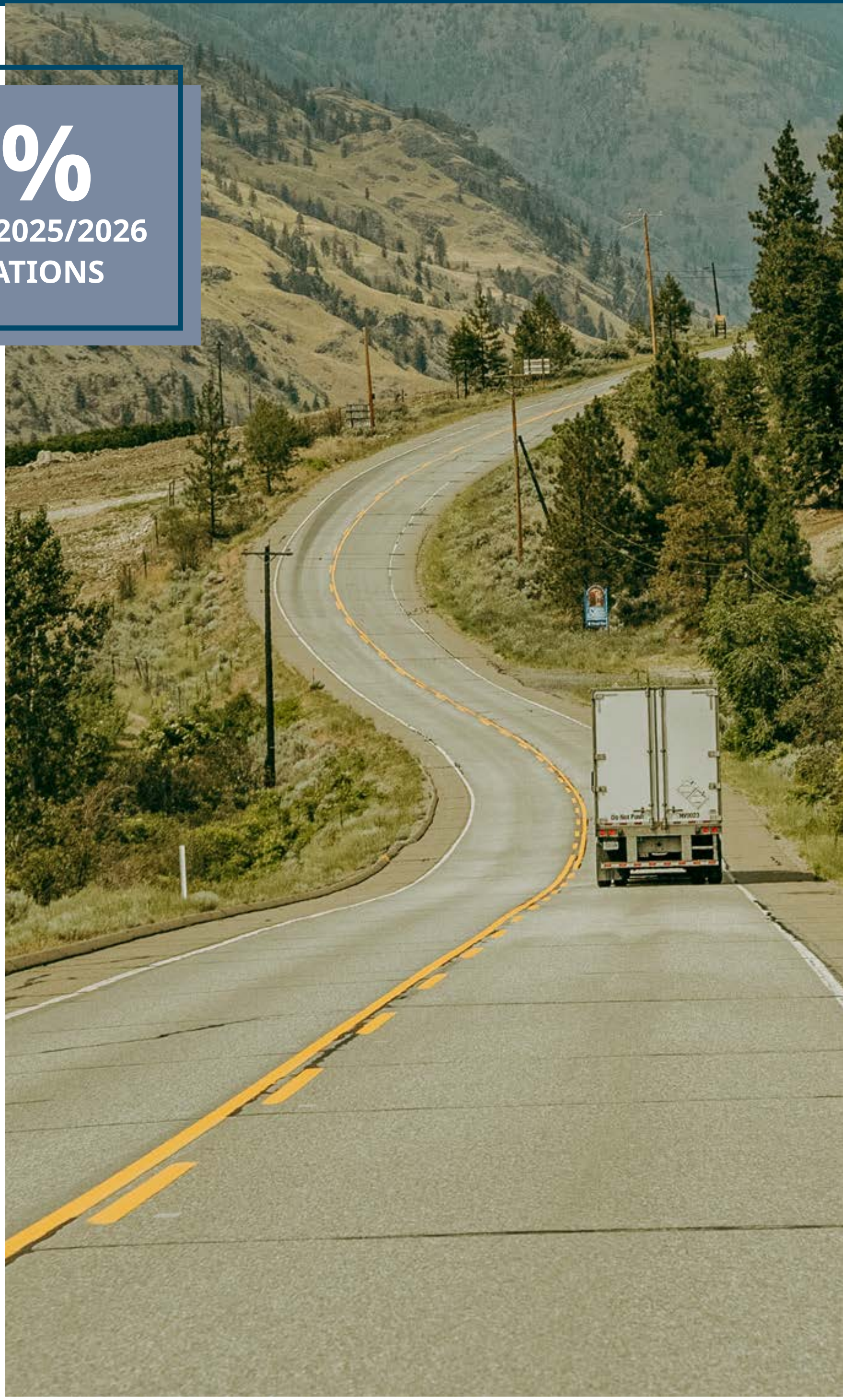
APPLICATION SIB-TYPE	2025/26	APPROVAL RATE
Additional Residence	22	63%
Principle >500m^2	1	0%
Temporary Foreign Worker Housing	9	100%
Reside & Replace*	18	100%

*Reside & Replace applications authorize temporary occupancy of an existing residence while a new residence is constructed in situations where doing so would otherwise result in more residences on a parcel than permitted under the ALCA. Approvals include conditions respecting siting, a registered covenant, and financial security to ensure removal of the original existing residence.

Transportation and Utility Applications

Transportation and utility applications accounted for 15 per cent of all decisions in 2025/26. During the reporting period, 98 per cent were approved, reflecting that most proposals involved maintenance, expansion, or upgrading of existing infrastructure.

15%
OF ALL 2025/2026 APPLICATIONS



Transportation and Utitlity Applications by Region

REGION	APPROVALS	REFUSALS	TOTAL DECISIONS
Interior	10	0	10
Island	1	0	1
Kootenay	9	0	9
North	3	0	3
Okanagan	13	0	13
South Coast	7	1	8
Total	**43**	**1**	**44**

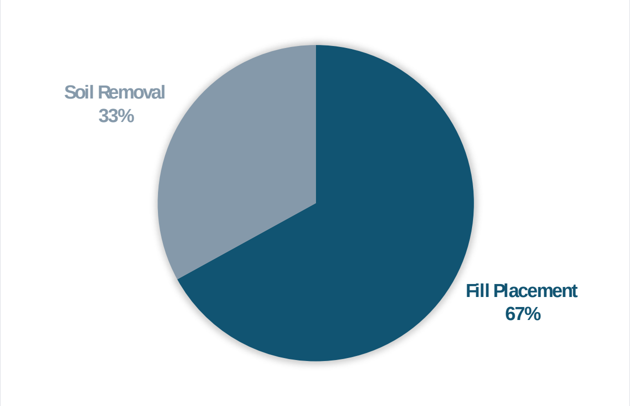
98% approval consistent with earlier sections.

Soil or Fill Use Applications

Soil or fill use applications accounted for 11 per cent of decisions in 2025/26. These applications involve soil removal or placement that exceeds regulatory exemptions.

Approval rates varied by proposal and location, with 76 per cent approved overall. Many applications were submitted following direction through the Notice of Intent process.

11%
OF ALL 2025/2026 APPLICATIONS



Soil or Fill Use Applications Decided by Region

REGION	APPROVALS	REFUSALS	TOTAL DECISIONS
Interior	2	1	3
Island	2	1	3
Kootenay	3	0	3
North	5	1	6
Okanagan	2	0	2
South Coast	6	8	**14**
Total	**20**	**11**	**31**

76% of soil or fill applications were approved.

Decisions Characteristics

Most soil and fill use decisions in 2025/26 involved fill placement rather than soil removal, reflecting increasing pressure to use agricultural land for the disposal of excess material generated by development and infrastructure activity. Applications continued to highlight persistent compliance challenges, particularly requests to retain fill placed without prior authorization.

Approvals were typically limited in scope, clearly linked to agricultural improvement, and subject to conditions requiring remediation and restoration of soil profiles. In contrast, proposals driven primarily by disposal needs—especially those involving unauthorized fill, non-farm purposes, or permanent alterations that reduced agricultural capability—were more frequently refused. These decisions reinforce the Commission's expectation that fill activities must be agriculturally justified and not compromise long-term land productivity.

Disposal-driven pressure is expected to remain a key issue, with continued demand for fill placement and retention posing risks of soil degradation and reduced agricultural flexibility. Sustained attention to compliance, remediation, and cumulative impacts will be essential to preventing incremental loss of agricultural capability and protecting the integrity of the land base.

Delegated Decisions Making Under Section 27 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*

Under section 27 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALC Act), the Commission may, by resolution, delegate to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) the authority to make certain application decisions, subject to criteria established by the Commission.

In accordance with section 27, the Commission has delegated authority to the CEO to approve specified types of use and subdivision applications. Where the CEO determines that an application does not meet the purposes set out in section 6 of the ALC Act, does not meet the criteria established by the Commission, or is otherwise not appropriate for approval, the application must be referred to the applicable panel for decision. Decisions issued by the CEO under this delegation have the same legal effect as decisions of the Commission.

During the 2025/26 fiscal year, the CEO rendered a total of 67 decisions, representing a decrease from 90 decisions in 2024/25, due in part to a five-week period of labour action that temporarily reduced capacity.

On average, these decisions were issued within 32.8 active business days, with a median processing time of 28 days, indicating that most applications were decided within approximately one month.

Applications related to temporary foreign worker housing (n=4) were processed more quickly, with decisions issued on average within 16.7 days and a median of 17 days from the date the submission was received by the ALC.

CEO delegated decisions were distributed across Administrative Regions as follows: the Okanagan (25%), the Interior (25%), the South Coast (16%), the Kootenay (13%), the North (10%), and the Island (9%).

Most approvals (46%) involved linear infrastructure and utility upgrades, including pipelines, electrical services, road improvements, and bridge or culvert replacements, predominantly within existing rights of way; an additional 12% involved the dedication of existing publicly travelled road.

CEO Delegated Decisions by Fiscal Year

FISCAL YEAR	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
DECISIONS	67	90	75	76	71	83

Delegated Decisions Under Section 26 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*

Under s.26 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALC Act), the Commission may enter into delegation agreements with a First Nation government or another authority to exercise some or all of the Commission's powers to decide use or subdivision applications. Under s.26(5) of the ALC Act, a decision made by a delegated authority has the same legal effect as a decision of the ALC.

BC Energy Regulator

Since 2004, the BC Energy Regulator (BCER) formerly the Oil and Gas Commission (OGC), has been delegated authority to make decisions on applications for non-farm use associated with oil and gas activities within the Peace River Regional District and the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality.

The original premise of the delegation agreement was that oil and gas activities would be temporary and that lands would be reclaimed and returned to agricultural use following resource extraction. While amendments have strengthened agricultural considerations over time, the agreement continues to allow oil and gas activities up to 20 hectares per section to proceed without application. Activities exceeding this threshold require approval by the BCER acting on behalf of the ALC.

The Region of the Province Covered by the ALC/OGC Delegation Agreement

Overview of 2025/26 Oil and Gas Activity

Applications submitted to the BCER increased significantly during the reporting period, increasing from 12 in 2024/25 to 28 in 2025/26, reflecting a higher volume of development proposals, although the total area affected by this activity declined over the same period.

A total of 21 applications were approved with 890 hectares affected by activities requiring approval and an additional 1,214 hectares affected by exempt activities not requiring application.

In total, approximately 2,100 hectares of ALR land were affected by oil and gas activities in 2025/26, compared to approximately 2,300 hectares in 2024/25, indicating a reduction in overall disturbance.

Exempt Activities

Exempt activities, those permitted under the 20-hectare delegation threshold without application, continued to account for a substantial share of overall land disturbance during the reporting period.

- **105 Schedule A reports** were submitted for exempt activities
- Exempt activities accounted for **over half of the total area affected** by oil and gas activities in 2025/26

Although exempt activity levels declined compared to the previous year, the exemption framework remains a significant factor in shaping ALR impacts under the delegation agreement.

Cumulative Effects on the Agricultural Land Reserve

Cumulative disturbance associated with oil and gas development continues to increase across North-east BC:

- Approximately **32,343 ha** of ALR land has been affected by oil and gas activities
- This represents **2.43% of the ALR land base** in the region
- Of the 3,644 sections in the Peace River Block that contain ALR land, 95 sections have more than 20 hectares of oil and gas and ancillary activities (excluding pipelines) and 86 sections have more than 20 hectares of oil and gas activities and ancillary activities (excluding pipelines and power-lines).

Cumulative Footprint by Oil and Gas and Ancillary Activity Type

ACTIVITY	TOTAL AREA (ha)	AREA (ha)	
		CROWN	PRIVATE
Pipelines	11,699	5,304	6,395
Wellsites/Facilities	11,836	4,014	7,822
Roads	3,993	2,923	1,070
Ancillary	4,815	2,160	2,655
Total ALR Area Affected	**32,343**	**14,401**	**17,942**
Total ALR Area in the Northeast	1,333,192	617,751	715,441

Reclamation and Oversight of Oil and Gas Activity

- **957 ha** were reported as reclaimed in 2025/26 (estimated), a significant increase from the 348 ha (estimated) reclaimed in 2024/25
- **128 inspections** were conducted by BCER in the ALR; down from 1,701 inspections in 2024/25
- **3 complaints** were received with issues related to reclamation, soil handling, weeds, and drainage; no enforcement actions were undertaken

While reclamation continues, new disturbance exceeded reclamation during the reporting period.

The reduction in inspections reported within the ALR reflects changes to BCER's risk based inspection model, rather than a decrease in overall inspection activity or regulatory oversight. Oil and gas activities within the ALR continue to be subject to targeted, risk informed compliance monitoring, and BCER has noted that these sites will continue to receive a high degree of compliance oversight.

BCER Application Summary

BCER APPLICATION SUMMARY	2025/26	2024/25
Applications Submitted	28	12
Applications Approved (distributed)	21	20
Total Area Approved (ha)	125.8	213.4

Note: Approval counts include applications submitted in prior fiscal years but finalized in the reporting year.

Additional detailed statistics, including activity breakdowns and multi-year trends reported by BCER, are provided in the Appendix.

Types of Activities Under Application

The primary contributors to ALR disturbance in 2025/26 were:

ACTIVITY TYPE	AREA (ha)		TOTAL AREA (ha)
	CROWN	PRIVATE	
Pipelines	137	290	427
Wellsites/Facilities	31	111	142
Roads	33	49	82
Ancillary	85	154	239
Total	**286**	**604**	**890**

These results indicate that associated infrastructure, particularly ancillary uses and linear pipelines, represents a significant portion of the footprint.

Reconsideration Requests by Affected Party[1]

Decisions of the Agricultural Land Commission are final; however, the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* provides a limited mechanism for reconsideration. Under section 33, the Commission may reconsider a decision upon written request from an affected party[1] or on its own initiative where:

- new evidence has become available that could not have been made available through the exercise of due diligence at the time of the original decision, or
- the original decision relied, in whole or in part, on evidence that was incorrect or false.

This discretionary authority allows the Commission to revisit a decision where it may have been affected by incorrect information or where new, material evidence is provided that would have informed the Commission's understanding at the time of the original decision. Section 33 does not permit the re-argument or re-weighing of previously considered evidence. Where a panel determines that no grounds for reconsideration exist, no further action is taken.

During the reporting period, the Commission received 49 requests for reconsideration and reviewed a total of 56 requests, including those carried over from prior reporting periods. Of those reviewed, the Commission declined 33 and reconsidered 26 decisions.

Of the 26 decisions reconsidered, 3 were reaffirmed, 2 were reversed, and 21 were varied. Most variations involved minor amendments to approval conditions.

[1] See ALC Policy P 08 for the definition of "affected party."

RECONSIDERATION REQUESTS SUBMITTED AND RECONSIDERED BY REGION

REGION	REQUESTS SUBMITTED					REQUESTS CONSIDERED				
	2020/21	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2020/21	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Interior	5	9	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	3
Island	11	5	7	10	9	2	2	1	1	4
Kootenay	7	6	10	8	5	3	1	1	1	3
North	8	4	7	8	5	4	1	2	5	6
Okanagan	16	6	14	13	10	6	5	3	1	8
South Coast	21	9	21	23	15	16	8	16	20	2
Total	**32**	**39**	**62**	**66**	**49**	**26**	**20**	**26**	**31**	**26**

Reconsiderations Directed by the Chair Under S.33.1 of the ALC Act

Pursuant to s. 33.1 of the ALC Act, the Chair may direct the Executive Committee to reconsider an application decision made by a panel if the Chair finds that the application decision may not fulfill the purposes of the Commission as set out in s. 6 of the ALC Act. The purpose of s. 33.1 is to provide the Chair with oversight to ensure consistency of decision considerations according to the ALC Act.

Subsequent to a decision being released to the applicant, the Chair is given 60-days to review a decision and direct the Executive Committee to reconsider the application. The Executive Committee must review the application and then may confirm, reverse, or vary the decision.

There were no Chair directed reconsiderations in 2025/26.

Chair Directed Reconsiderations (S.33.1 of the ALC Act)

REGION	DECISIONS DIRECTED TO RECONSIDERATION				
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Interior	0	0	0	0	0
Island	0	0	0	0	0
Kootenay	0	0	0	0	0
North	0	0	0	0	0
Okanagan	0	0	1	0	0
South Coast	0	1	0	0	0
Total	0	1	1	0	0

2025/26 Notification and Decision Processing Timelines

The Commission aims to acknowledge receipt of complete application submissions within five business days and to issue most decisions within 90 business days. These timelines apply to the Commission's portion of the process only and exclude time associated with local government review processes, and applicant-initiated delays.

Timelines may be paused where necessary to accommodate additional review steps, such as site visits, meetings with applicants or affected parties, or requests for further information.

Consistent with administrative tribunal best practice, the Commission reports performance using decision time distributions and median decision times. Processing timelines are influenced by statutory requirements, application complexity, and case-specific review requirements.

Performance is also influenced by application volume and available decision-making capacity, with staffing levels remaining the primary determinant. During the reporting period, a five-week period of labour action temporarily reduced capacity and contributed to variability in processing timelines. Despite these pressures, the Commission continued to prioritize timely decision-making within available resources.

Application Intake Notification Timelines

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2025/26
Percentage of Applicants notified within 5 business days that application submission is complete	98%
Percentage of Applicants notified within 5 business days that applications submission is deficient	98%

Note: Intake notification timelines reflect the Commission's internal review of application completeness only and do not include subsequent processing, referrals, or decision making timelines

Decision Timelines by Region

Percentage of decisions issued within 60 and 90 business days

	WITHIN 60 DAYS	WITHIN 90 DAYS
Interior	50%	63%
Island	21%	39%
Kootenay	28%	31%
North	41%	59%
Okanagan	49%	65%
South Coast	34%	54%
Total	38%	54%

Regional variation reflects differences in application volume, application types, statutory requirements, and supplemental information needs.

Decision Timelines by Application Type

Percentage of decisions issued within 60 and 90 business days

	WITHIN 60 DAYS	WITHIN 90 DAYS
Exclusion	25%	25%
Inclusion	0%	0%
Non-adhering Residential Use	29%	48%
Non-Farm Use	36%	53%
Soil or Fill Use	10%	26%
Subdivision	35%	55%
Transportation & Utility	77%	86%
All Decisions	38%	54%

Shorter timelines for transportation and utility applications reflect more standardized review pathways and the typically minor nature of these requests, which often involve upgrades to existing infrastructure. Longer timelines for inclusion, exclusion, and soil-related applications reflect greater statutory complexity and more extensive evidentiary requirements.

Median Decision Time by Application Type

(Business days)

APPLICATION TYPE	MEDIAN DECISION TIME 2025/26
Exclusion	108
Inclusion	115
Non-adhering Residential Use	97
Non-Farm Use	71
Soil or Fill Use	140
Subdivision	68
Transportation & Utility	38

Interpretation

Median decision times varied by application type, reflecting differences in statutory requirements, application complexity, and the need for additional information or site visits. Median timelines provide a representative view of typical decision-making experience.

Notice of Intent (NOI)

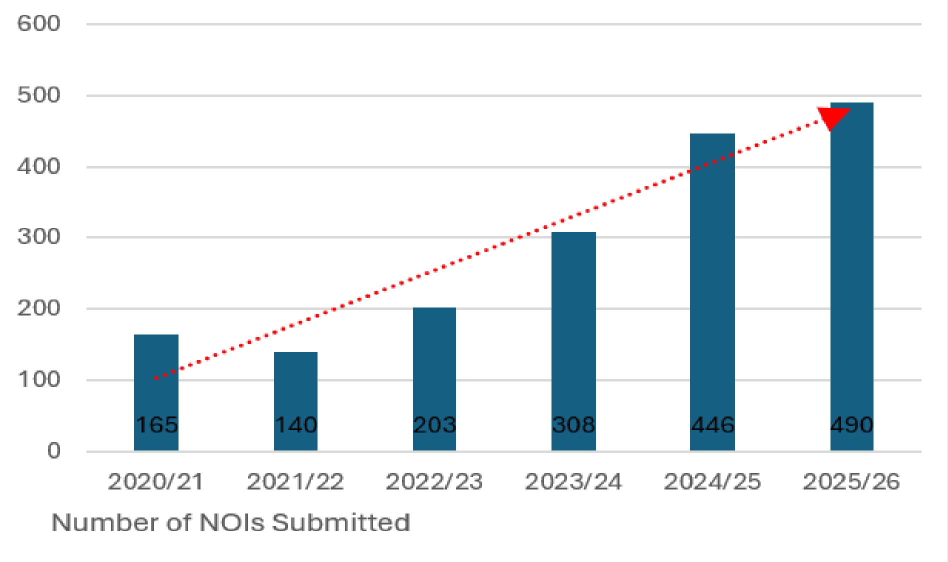
Under the *Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation*, the placement of fill or the removal of soil or aggregate within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) may proceed without involvement of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) only in very limited circumstances set out in sections 26 and 35. Outside of these exemptions, authorization from the Commission is required, including where the activity supports a designated farm use or a permitted non farm use.

Where a proposal does not qualify for an exemption, proponents may submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the ALC. The NOI process allows the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their delegate to determine whether a proposal may proceed as submitted or whether a full soil or fill use application is required. Once all required information is received, the ALC has 60 days to respond to an NOI. The NOI process does not provide authority to ALC staff to approve non farm uses within the ALR.

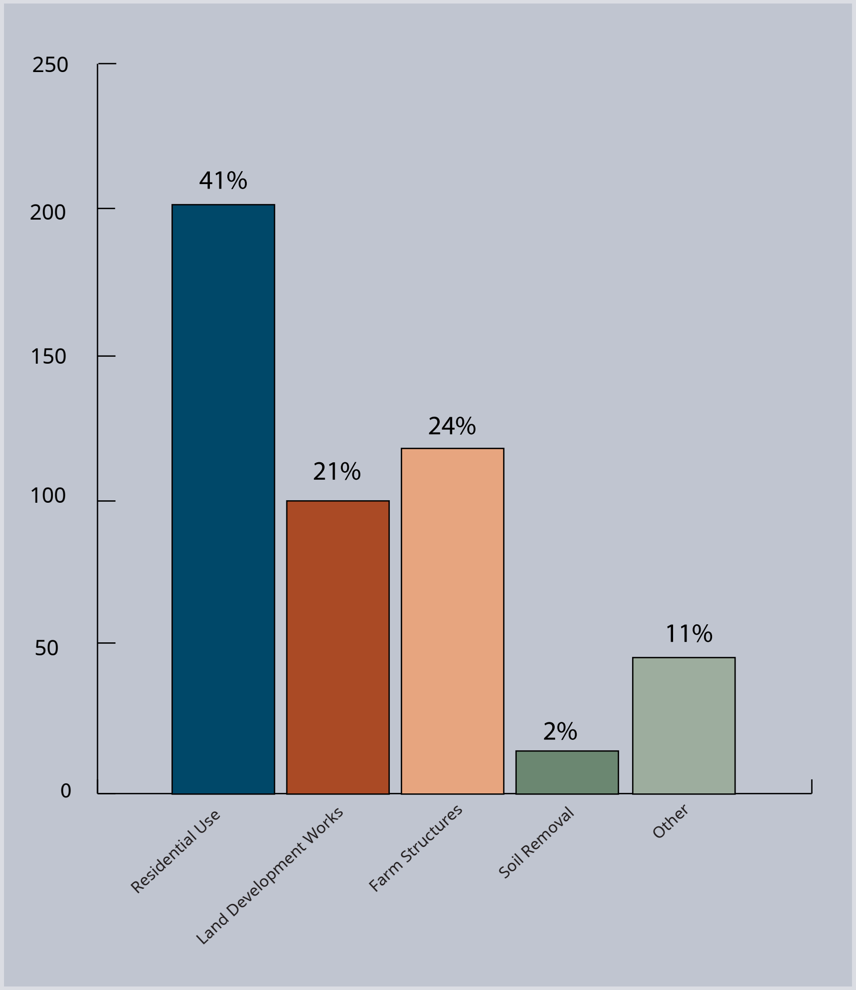
Notice of Intent Submissions

NOI submissions continued to increase during the reporting period. In the 2025/26 fiscal year, submissions increased by 9.9 per cent, rising from 446 in 2024/25 to **490** in 2025/26. This growth reflects increased awareness of soil and fill authorization requirements following the release of the ALC's *Necessary Farm Structure* and Accessory Structure Guidelines, as well as ongoing engagement with local governments.

NOI Submissions by Fiscal Year (2020/21-2025/26)

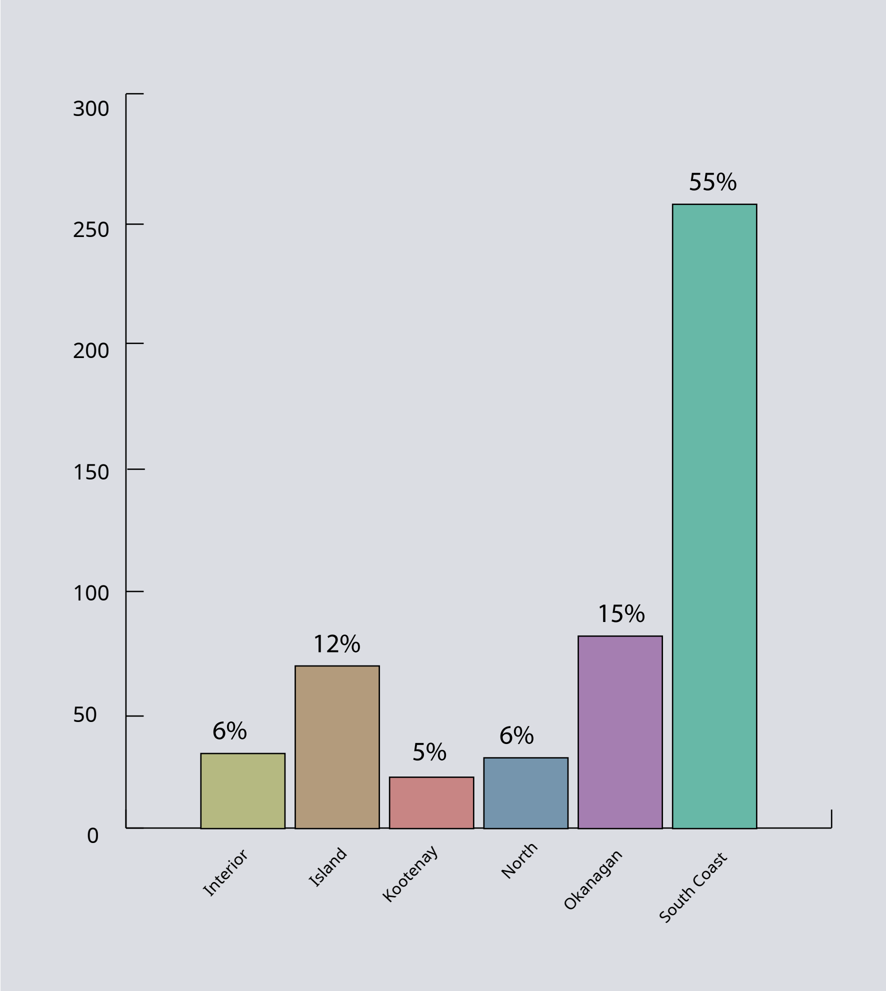


NOI Submissions by Category, 2025/26



Residential and accessory residential development accounted for a growing share of NOI submissions. In 2025/26, 41 per cent of all NOIs related to residential structures, an increase from 196 submissions in 2024/25 to **200** in 2025/26. This shift has contributed to increased regulatory complexity and processing demands.

NOI Submissions by Region, 2025/26



NOI submissions were concentrated in regions experiencing the highest development pressure. In 2025/26, the South Coast accounted for more than half of all NOI submissions, followed by the Okanagan and Island regions. This regional distribu-tion reflects broader residential and agricultural development patterns and contributes to workload pressures in those regions.

Notice of Intent Decisions and Processing Capacity

Under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, the CEO or their delegate must respond to an NOI within 60 days of receiving all required information.
In response to increasing volumes, the Commission undertook internal restructuring in 2024/25 and 2025/26 to strengthen NOI processing capacity, creating two additional Soil Resource Officers and an additional statutory decision maker. These measures brought the NOI processing team to six positions province wide.

While these changes improved the Commission's ability to respond to rising volumes, ongoing fiscal pressures affected the sustainability of these capacity investments. As a result, a reduction in the size of the NOI processing team is scheduled to take effect in the upcoming fiscal year, contributing to continued capacity pressures. As NOI submissions continue to increase, maintaining timely decision-making and post-decision compliance monitoring remains a key operational challenge.

As of March 31, 2026, 99 per cent of NOIs received during the fiscal year had been responded to within the legislated 60 day timeframe.

Notice of Intent (NOI) Decisions and Timelines (2025/26)

MEASURE	COUNT
NOIs Received	490
NOIs Decided	474
Percentage responded to within 60 days	99%

Footnote *Notice of Intent submissions are not considered applications under the Agricultural Land Commission Act and are therefore excluded from application statistics reported elsewhere in this Annual Report.*

Key Trends in Notice of Intent Submissions (2025/26)

Increasing Volume and Shifting Composition

NOI submissions have increased steadily over recent fiscal years, reflecting improved compliance and understanding of authorization requirements. Residential related proposals have continued to represent the largest share of NOI submissions, accounting for 41% of submissions received in 2025/26, a proportion that has remained consistently higher than other categories. These proposals often require more complex assessments, particularly with respect to scale and total floor area of residential structures, and therefore contribute disproportionately to overall workload.

Expansion of Residential Floor Area

An increasing number of NOIs involve accessory structures which, when considered cumulatively with the principal and additional residences, result in residential floor areas exceeding the maximums permitted by the ALR Use Regulation. While accessory structures serving reasonable residential purposes remain permitted, proposals that allocate residential floor space across multiple buildings frequently require assessment and approval through the Commission application process to ensure compliance, contributing to the variability in approval rates within this category.

Farm Structures with Limited Agricultural Connection

A recurring trend involved submissions for structures identified as farm buildings where the proposed design, scale, or intended use does not clearly demonstrate an operational connection to active farming. Examples included buildings configured for event hosting, commercial fleet operations, or other non agricultural purposes. These proposals comprise a significant share of NOIs ordered not to proceed and directed to the Commission application process.

Additional Residence Size and Siting Considerations

Additional residence proposals continued to represent a substantial portion of residential related NOIs. Despite published guidance, many submissions did not align with siting expectations or total floor area requirements, particularly where residences were proposed outside established clusters of residential buildings or encroached on productive agricultural land.

A recurring issue involved proposed mixed-use structures combining residential and farm or other accessory uses, where only a portion of the building was identified as residential. Under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act,* a farm use expressly excludes residential use, and a residential structure is defined broadly to include any structure used, in whole or in part and at any time of year, as a residence or prescribed accommodation.

As a result, mixed-use design does not exempt a proposal from residential requirements under the Act and its regulations, and such proposals generally require approval through a Non-Adhering Residential Use application to the Commission, unless a specific exemption applies.

These siting and scale considerations contributed to lower approval rates within this subcategory.

Area Wide Filling and Development Works

The Commission continued to observe a clear distinction between proposals involving small-scale, targeted fill placement for agricultural improvements and those proposing broader, area-wide earthworks requiring approval through the Commission's application process. In some cases, the scope of proposed fill placement was more consistent with fill disposal activities than with improvements directly supporting active farming. As a result, approval rates for NOIs related to area wide filling and development works were lower.

Early Engagement and Capacity Building

To support improved compliance and more efficient adjudication, Commission staff continued targeted engagement with local governments during the reporting period. Workshops and working sessions focused on early identification of proposals unlikely to align with the ALR Use Regulation, supporting better informed submissions and reduced processing delays.

Notice of Intent (NOI) Decisions by Outcomes and Types (2025/26)

NOI CATEGORY	NUMBER SUBMITTED	NUMBER APPROVED	APPROVAL RATE (%)
Farm Structures	120	84	70%
Area-Wide Filing/Land Development Works	105	31	30%
Residential & Accessory Residential Structures	200	149	75%
Other	55	35	64%
Soil Removal	10	2	20%
Total	**490**	**301**	**61%**

In 2025/26, 61 per cent of Notice of Intent submissions were approved, with 99 per cent of decisions issued within the legislated 60 day time-frame.

Looking Ahead

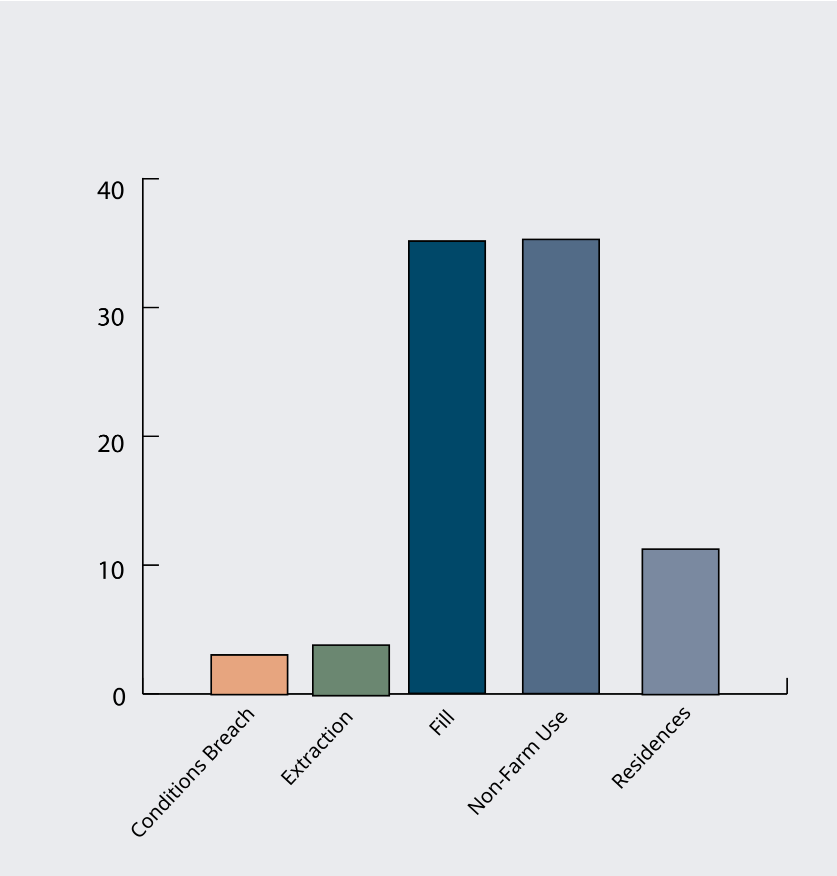
The Commission expects NOI submission volumes to remain elevated, particularly for residential related proposals and area wide earthworks in regions experiencing sustained housing development pressure. Reduced NOI processing capacity in the upcoming fiscal year will place additional pressure on the program, increasing the importance of early engagement, clear guidance, and collaboration with local governments. Within these constraints, the Commission will continue to prioritize timely decision making and focus on proposals that clearly demonstrate consistency with the purposes and requirements of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

Compliance and Enforcement - Protecting Agricultural Land from Unauthorized Violations

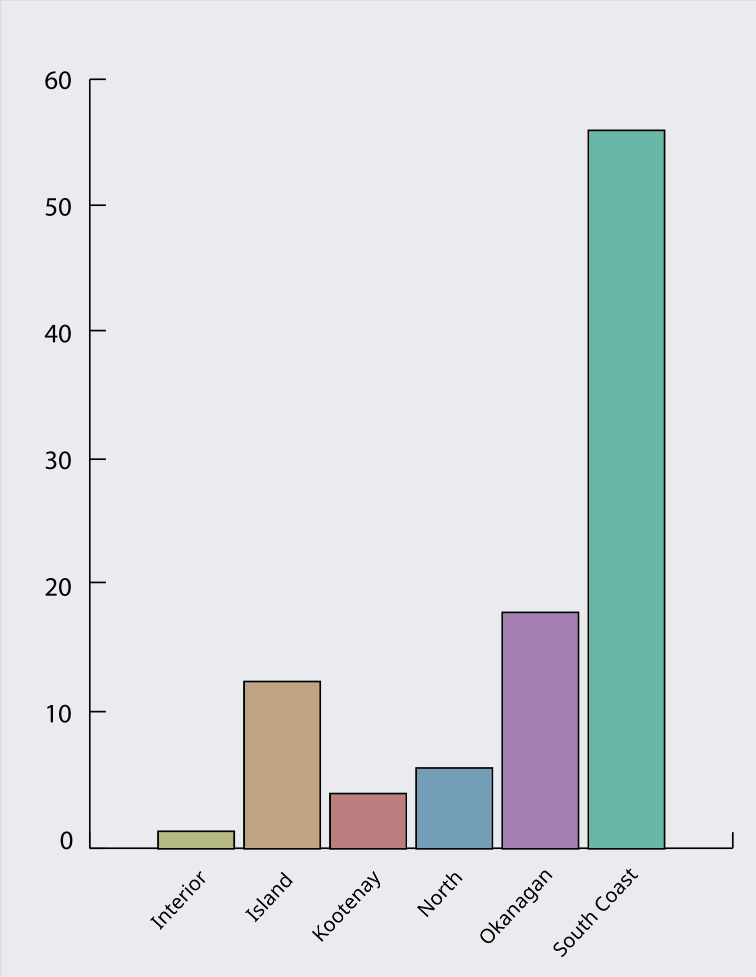
The Agricultural Land Commission's Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) program plays a critical role in protecting the long term agricultural capability of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Established in 2007 in response to growing concern about ongoing damage to agricultural land from unauthorized activities, the C&E program continues to be a critical tool for protecting the ALR as development pressures intensify. The purpose of the program is to strengthen delivery of the Commission's legislative mandate by ensuring that activities within the ALR are consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, its regulations, and Commission orders. This is achieved through a gradu-ated approach that emphasizes education and compliance, with enforcement action taken where voluntary compliance cannot be achieved.

Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) files are initiated primarily in response to complaints received from the public and referrals from local governments and other agencies. The number of active Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) files increased to 1,238 as of March 31, 2026, compared to 1,049 at the end of the prior fiscal year. During the reporting period, 311 new C&E files were received. Compliance activity remains concentrated in areas experiencing the greatest development pressure, with 58% of active files in the South Coast, followed by the Okanagan (17%) and Vancouver Island (13%) as shown in the following figures.

Active C&E Files by Contravention Type



Active C&E Files by ALR Region



Growing Compliance and Enforcement Workload

As shown in the following table and figure, the Commission's compliance and enforcement workload has increased steadily over time. While the number of new complaints and referrals fluctuates annually, the number of active case files has grown consistently, from 304 files in 2017/18 to 1,238 files in 2025/26, reflecting both the cumulative nature of compliance work and the time and resource intensive nature of investigating, managing, and resolving enforcement cases.

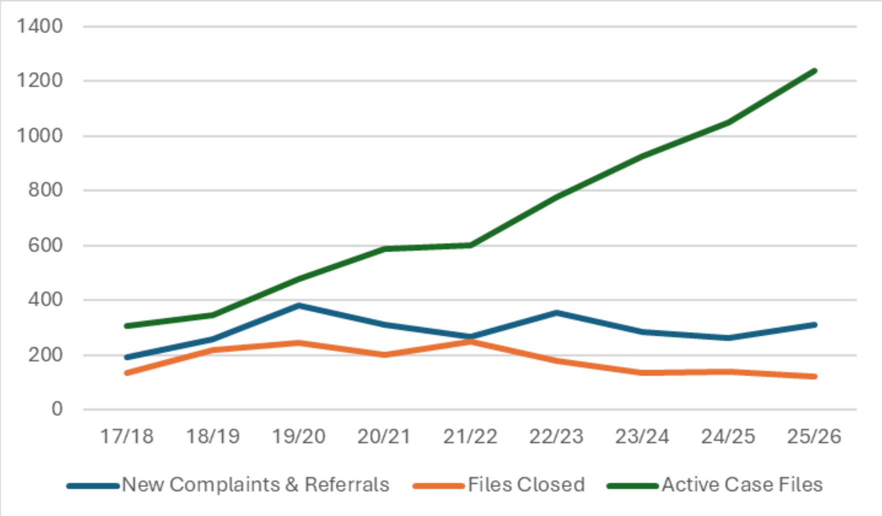
As of March 31, 2026, this workload was being managed by six Compliance and Enforcement Officers and one Supervisor, resulting in an average caseload of more than 200 active files per officer. Many enforcement files involve complex fact finding, multiple site visits, coordination with other agencies, appeals, and extended timelines to achieve compliance, which means cases often remain active for prolonged periods.

Sustained growth in active files continues to place pressure on program capacity, particularly for complex and resource intensive investigations, and underscores the need for enforcement capacity that is aligned with the scale and complexity of the Commission's provincial mandate.

Compliance and Enforcement Activity by Fiscal Year (2017/18 to 2025/26)

	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
New Complaints & Referrals	193	257	381	310	265	353	285	260	311
Files Closed	135	219	245	200	250	179	133	139	122
Active Case Files	304	344	476	587	602	776	928	1049	1238

Increasing Active Compliance and Enforcement Case Load Over Time



Unauthorized fill placement continues to be the most prevalent contravention, accounting for 45% of all active C&E files, followed by unauthorized commercial activity (37%), non adhering residential use (11%), and breaches of conditions (3%).

Given its scale, persistence, and impact on agricultural land capability, unauthorized fill placement represents the Commission's most significant compliance and enforcement challenge.

Priority Enforcement Issue: Unauthorized Fill Placement

Unauthorized fill placement remains one of the most serious compliance challenges facing the Commission. Incidents of illegal dumping of soil and construction overburden in the ALR have increased 347% since 2017, with activity concentrated in regions experiencing the greatest development pressure, particularly the South Coast, Vancouver Island, and the Okanagan. These materials frequently degrade agricultural capability by burying topsoil, introducing low fertility subsoils, altering drainage patterns, and compromising soil structure, threatening both short term agricultural production and the long term viability of farmland in the ALR.

The Commission has had mixed success addressing this issue. In cases where landowners unknowingly import fill, compliance outcomes are generally positive, with filling stopping once ordered and remediation efforts undertaken. By contrast, compliance outcomes are significantly more challenging on contractor owned parcels, where financial incentives strongly favour non compliance. In these cases, stop work orders, administrative penalties, and municipal fines—sometimes exceeding upwards of $200,000 per site—have often proven insufficient deterrents, with meaningful compliance frequently achieved only through BC Supreme Court proceedings.

Enforcement Tools and Oversight

When voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, the Commission uses its statutory enforcement authorities to protect agricultural land. As of March 31, 2026, the Commission had issued:

- 27 Stop Work Orders
- 4 Remediation Orders
- 4 Administrative Penalty Orders, totaling $355,000

Approximately 77% of all enforcement orders issued during the reporting period were for unauthorized fill dumping, underscoring the scale and seriousness of this issue.
ALC C&E inspection records and orders relating to private or public organizations can be reviewed at the Natural Resource Compliance and Enforcement Database (gov.bc.ca)

C&E Activity	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	% Change from Previous Fiscal
Active Files at Beginning of Fiscal (April 1)[1]	588	602	776	928	1049	**+13%**
Incoming Complaints/ Referrals	265	353	285	260	311	**+19%**
Files Closed	250	179	133	139	122	**-12%**
Active Files at End of Fiscal (March 31)	602	776	928	1049	1238	**-16%**
Inspections	292	346	332	289	242	**-16%**
Compliance Actions[2]	230	224	136	108	105	**+8%**
Enforcement Actions[3]						
• Stop Work Orders	17	17	34	27	27	
• Remediation Orders	1	1	7	8	4	
• Penalty Orders	1	-	0	9	4	
Total	**19**	**18**	**41**	**44**	**35**	**-20%**

1. Number of active files at the beginning of fiscal; includes files carried forward from previous fiscal years.
2. This figures are updated from previous years reports to include notices of consideration of penalty orders in addition to compliance notices, notices of contravention, and notices of consideration of remediation orders
3. Include stop work, remediation and administrative penalty orders

Enforcement Appeals Under S.55 of the ALC Act

Individuals subject to an enforcement determination, order, or penalty under sections 50, 52, or 54 of the Act have the right to appeal to the board of the Commission. During the reporting period, the Commission received six appeals, with one appeal decision released by March 31, 2026.

Number of Orders Under Appeal

2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
6	1	1	2	3

To view appeals decided by the ALC visit the ALC website at: https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/alc-act-alr-regulation/compliance-and-enforcement

Looking Ahead

Unauthorized fill placement and other non compliant activities continue to be driven by broader development pressures and economic incentives. As development pressures on the ALR increase province wide, so too does the demand for compliance monitoring, investigation, and enforcement.

The Commission remains committed to a balanced approach that combines enforcement, education, early engagement, and collaboration with local governments, industry, and provincial partners. However, ensuring timely, consistent, and effective compliance and enforcement across the entire province requires sufficient and sustainable enforcement capacity. Without it, the Commission's ability to respond proactively and provide a strong deterrent to non compliance is increasingly constrained.

Effective compliance and enforcement remains essential to protecting British Columbia's limited agricultural land base for current and future generations.

Statutory Rights of Way Notifications

Effective September 30, 2020, amendments to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALC Act) introduced a notification requirement for statutory rights of way (SRWs) within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Under these provisions:

- Any person seeking to register a charge granting or creating a statutory right of way (SRW), as described in section 218 of the *Land Title Act*, either fully or partially over land in the ALR, must provide notice to the ALC in the prescribed form and manner; and
- The Registrar of Titles at the Land Title and Survey Authority (LTSA) must not register an SRW affecting ALR land unless satisfied that the ALC has been notified in accordance with the Act.

Advisory:

A response from the ALC acknowledging receipt of a statutory right of way notification does not constitute authorization to conduct a non-farm use, construct works, remove soil, or place fill (including gravel) for a use other than those prescribed by the legislation within the ALR.

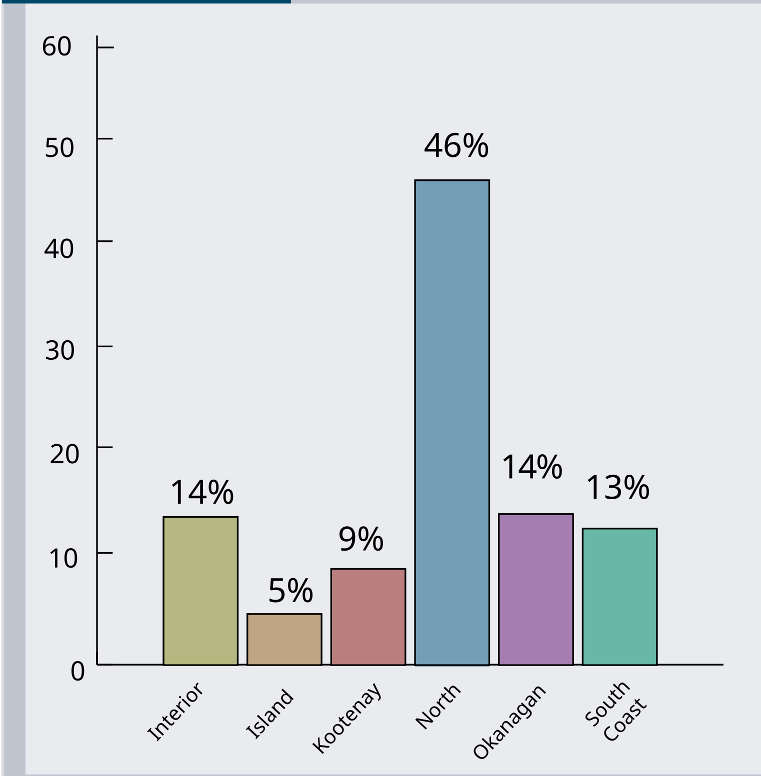
SRW Notification Activity

In fiscal year 2025/26, the ALC received and responded to 790 statutory right of way notifications, representing a 29% decrease compared to the 1,111 notifications received in 2024/25. The year over year reduction in SRW notifications appears to be driven primarily by a 37% decline in submissions from oil and gas companies, which account for nearly half of all SRW submissions.

REGION	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Interior	52	73	41	87	107
Island	47	84	51	49	36
Kootenay	96	97	74	81	74
North	266	244	198	619	361
Okanagan	184	178	169	160	109
South Coast	108	86	84	115	103
Total	**753**	**762**	**617**	**1,111**	**790**

Regulation requiring notification to the ALC effective September 30, 2020

SRW by Region



Regional and Proponent Breakdown

- Forty six percent (46%) of all SRW notifications received in 2025/26 were located in the North Administrative Region.
- Ninety nine percent (99%) of SRW notifications in the North Administrative Region relate to oil and gas activities.

By proponent type, SRW notifications submitted in 2025/26 were distributed as follows:

- **45% –** Oil and gas companies
- **27% –** BC Hydro
- **11% –** FortisBC
- **6% –** TELUS
- **5% –** Local governments

Judicial Review

Judicial Review

The legislation does not provide for appeals of tribunal decisions. Instead, a party may apply for judicial review in BC Supreme Court. A judicial review is not a re-trial or a rehearing of an application. In this type of review, a sitting Supreme Court judge will review a decision that has been made by an administrative tribunal or an administrative decision maker. The judge does not focus on whether they would have made a different decision than that of the original decision maker. Instead, the judge focuses on determining whether the decision maker had the authority to make a particular decision and whether the decision maker exercised that authority reasonably and fairly.

In the 2025/26 fiscal year, there were no judgements made in the BC courts (in this case the BC Supreme Court) related to the Agricultural Land Commission decisions.

Cumulative Change in the Area of the ALR

Cumulative ALR Inclusions & Exclusions (April 1, 2012 - March 31, 2026)

The figures in the table below reflect both application-related and non-application-related changes to Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) boundaries. All figures are calculated using GIS data based on the final completion date of each change.

Application-related changes result from the completion of conditions attached to decisions issued by the Commission. Non-application-related changes arise from actions taken by the Provincial government, such as Orders in Council, cadastre updates, and other minor boundary corrections. These minor corrections are not tracked individually due to their limited scope and infrequent occurrence.

Cumulative ALR Inclusions, Exclusions, and Net Changes

FISCAL YEAR	INCLUSIONS (ha)	EXCLUSIONS (ha)	NET CHANGE (ha)	CURRENT TOTAL ALR (ha)
April 1, 2012				4,623,289
2012/13	238	1,709	-1,471	4,621,818
2013/14	1,296	1,957	-662	4,621,156
2014/15	792	1,090	-298	4,620,858
2015/16	79	4,283	-4,204	4,616,654
2016/17	198	943	-745	4,615,909
2017/18	223	2,970	-2,747	4,613,162
2018/19	65	212	-147	4,613,015
2019/20	127	238	-111	4,612,904
2020/21	103	137	-34	4,612,870
2021/22	39	383	-344	4,612526
2022/23	18	204	-186	4,612340
2023/24	1	252	-251	4,612,089
2024/25	129	88	41	4,612,130
2025/26	108	118	-10	4,612,120
Total	3,416	14,854	-11,168	

The largest driver of change in the ALR during the reporting period was the return of 101.5 hectares of land that had been temporarily excluded for development related to the Site C Dam (gravel extraction and road construction) under a Provincial Order in Council issued in 2022.

Applicant Related Boundary Changes:

Application-related changes to the ALR only take effect the year all conditions of approval are met. In the 2025/26 reporting period, conditions were completed on exclusion decisions dating as far back as 1996.

Non-Application Related Changes:

- In January 2026, 101.5 ha that were 'temporarily' excluded from the ALR for Site C Dam in 2022 by the Provincial government, were included back in the ALR.
- In January 2025, 109 ha that were 'temporarily' excluded from the ALR for Site C Dam in 2015, by the Provincial government were included back in the ALR.
- In March 2023, the Provincial government by Order in Council 147 excluded an additional 60.8 hectares of land from the ALR for Ecowaste Industries Ltd.
- In February 2022, the Provincial government by Order in Council 53 'temporarily' excluded an additional 101.5 hectares of land from the ALR for Site C Dam.
- In October 2017, the ALC on its own initiative excluded 2875.6 ha from the ALR in the Regional District of East Kootenay; 1284.8 ha was excluded from Electoral Area B and 1590.8 ha was excluded from Electoral Area E.
- In accordance with paragraph 30 of the Lands Chapter of the Tla'amin Final Agreement and section 9 of the Tla'amin Final Agreement Act, 835.8 hectares of land was excluded from the ALR effective April 5, 2016.
- In April 2015, the Provincial government by Order in Council 148 'permanently' excluded 2,775 hectares and 'temporarily' excluded an additional 941 hectares of land from the ALR for Site C Dam. The total area excluded from the ALR is 3,716 hectares.
- In April 2014, the ALC on its own initiative included 684 ha in the ALR and excluded 1545 ha from the ALR in the Regional District of East Kootenay for a net change of -861 ha.

Federal Reserve Land Additions

Under federal law, First Nations may seek to have land added to their reserve land base through a federal process commonly referred to as an addition to reserve. This process allows land to be set apart by the federal Crown for the use and benefit of a First Nation.

When land is added to a First Nation's reserve land base, it comes under exclusive federal jurisdiction pursuant to section 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*. As a result, provincial statutes, including the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, no longer apply.

While the Commission does not have authority over whether land is added to a First Nation's reserve land base, these changes affect the overall size and composition of the ALR and are tracked for reporting purposes.

During the 2025/26 reporting period, 1,933 hectares were added to the Agricultural Land Reserve through the designation of federal reserves, the majority (95%) of which were located in the North Administrative Region.

ALR Added to Federal Reserves*

ALR REGION	2025/26 (ha)	2024/25 (ha)
Interior	62,500	62,501
Island	3,715	3,644
Kootenay	18,295	18,295
North	23,825	21,981
Okanagan	23,544	23,527
South Coast	9,745	9,743
Total	**141,624**	**139,691**
Change	**+1,933 ha**	**+127 ha**

*Cadastre updates and other minor boundary corrections are included in these figures

Financial Report

Finacial Overview and Budget Pressures

The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC operates within a fixed operating budget approved through the provincial Estimates process. While nominal funding increases have occurred since 2020/21, these increases have not kept pace with rising salary costs, inflationary pressures, or growth in service demand.

In 2019, amendments to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* significantly expanded the ALC's mandate, introducing new application, notification, and authorization requirements that the Commission is legally required to administer. Although additional funding was approved in principle at the time of these amendments, it was subsequently withdrawn. As a result, the Commission has been required to implement and sustain expanded statutory responsibilities within its existing operating budget.

Operating Budget Trends

The table below shows the ALC's operating budget over the past seven fiscal years.

Fiscal Year	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
ALC Budget ($ millions)	4.943	5.001	5.001	5.315	5.453	5.5	5.5

As illustrated above, the ALC's operating budget has remained essentially flat in real terms since 2020/21. Over the same period, the Commission has experienced sustained growth in application volumes and compliance and enforcement complaints, alongside rising costs driven by negotiated wage increases, inflationary pressures, and general cost escalation.

The increase reflected in 2023/24 was primarily associated with collective agreement obligations and did not resolve the underlying unfunded staffing base. Temporary Ministry support was provided in prior years to address these pressures; however, in January 2026 the ALC was advised that this support would no longer be available.

Service Implications and Sustainability

The ALC remains committed to protecting agricultural land and supporting farming in British Columbia. However, staffing reductions resulting from sustained budget pressures are expected to affect overall service capacity, including longer processing times and response timelines for applications, notifications, and authorizations.

Long term organizational sustainability depends on adequate and stable funding that is aligned with the Commission's legislated mandate. The ALC will continue to work with government to seek funding arrangements that support effective service delivery while meeting fiscal requirements.

Operating Budget: Estimates, Actuals, and Variances (2024/25 AND 2025/26)

DESCRIPTION	2025/26 ESTIMATES	2025/26 ACTUAL	VARIANCE	2024/25 BUDGET	OTHER AUTHORIZATIONS	2024/25 REVISED BUDGET	2024/25 ACTUAL	VARIANCE
Salaries & Benefits	4,307,000	4,679,050	(372,050)	4,252,000	39,889	4,291,889	4,911,060	(619,171)
Commission – Expenses & Fees	414,000	238,269	175,731	414,000		414,000	404,754	9,246
Staff Travel	60,000	8,619	51,381	60,000		60,000	39,530	20,470
Centralized Support Services	28,000	0	28,000	28,000		28,000	0	28,000
Professional Services – Legal	392,000	435,799	(43,799)	392,000		392,000	297,322	94,678
IT Expenses	0	0	0	140,000		140,000	67,755	72,245
Office Supplies & Business Expenses	201,000	27,244	173,756	69,000		69,000	49,505	19,495
Statutory Advertising & Publications	21,000	0	21,000	21,000		21,000	0	21,000
Utilities, Materials & Supplies	26,000	2,428	23,572	26,000		26,000	10,557	15,443
Vehicle Expenses	5,000	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	3,666	1,334
Amortization	41,000	5,707	35,293	41,000		41,000	5,852	35,148
Building Occupancy Charges	5,000	104,942	(99,942)	5,000		5,000	107,338	(102,338)
Government Transfers	0	0	0	0		0	0	0
Other Expenses	3,000	115	2,885	3,000		3,000	0	3,000
Recoveries (Internal & External)	(3,000)	0	(3,000)	(3,000)		(3,000)	(404,450)	401,450
TOTAL	5,500,000	5,502,173	(2,173)	5,453,000	39,889	5,492,889	5,492,889	0

Appendix

Appendix A:

ALR Included and Excluded by Calendar Year (Database) | 1974 – March 31, 2012

The ALR data on this table were calculated using manual methods (i.e. Dot Matrix or electronic planimeter). The ALR maps were not digitized into GIS until April 1, 2012.

FISCAL YEAR	INCLUSIONS	EXCLUSIONS	NET FIGURE	CURRENT ALR AREA
At Designation				4,717,519
1974	0	628	-628	4,716,891
1975	2,561	3,193	-632	4,716,259
1976	517	2,365	-1,848	4,714,411
1977	4,300	18,924	-14,624	4,699,787
1978	19,141	10,524	8,617	4,708,403
1979	3,252	9,758	-6,507	4,701,897
1980	242	6,131	-5,889	4,696,008
1981	1,275	16,474	-15,199	4,680,809
1982	3,634	6,212	-2,578	4,678,231
1983	6,233	4,228	2,005	4,680,235
1984	7,545	5,047	2,498	4,682,733
1985	19,440	9,229	10,211	4,692,944
1986	1,807	4,662	-2,855	4,690,089
1987	5,152	2,868	2,283	4,692,373
1988	6,714	1,238	5,476	4,697,848
1989	947	1,180	-233	4,697,615
1990	10,680	2,195	8,485	4,706,100
1991	768	2,075	-1,306	4,704,794
1992	3	1,081	-1,078	4,703,716
1993	5,843	823	5,020	4,708,736
1994	2,877	1,642	1,235	4,709,971

FISCAL YEAR	INCLUSIONS	EXCLUSIONS	NET FIGURE	CURRENT ALR AREA
1995	1,095	1,171	-75	4,709,896
1996	1,868	1,574	294	4,710,190
1997	869	5,252	-4,383	4,705,808
1998	678	2,861	-2,184	4,703,624
1999	1,961	1,864	97	4,703,721
2000	23,204	5,797	17,407	4,721,127
2001	973	553	420	4,721,548
2002	41,792	1,530	40,262	4,761,809
2003	428	746	-318	4,761,491
2004	1,559	1,497	62	4,761,553
2005	1,670	2,241	-572	4,760,981
2006	977	531	446	4,761,428
2007	1,263	1,628	-365	4,761,063
2008	801	1,457	-655	4,760,408
2009	1,385	2,172	-787	4,759,620
2010	658	555	103	4,759,723
2011	682	632	50	4,759,773
March 31,2012	16	6	10	4,759,783

[1] All figures between 1974 and 2008 include both final decided and conditionally approved decisions.
[2] Figures from 2009 forward include only final approved and completed conditions decisions.
[3] ALR area at designation is based on manual mapping method (dot Matrix or electronic planimeter 1974).

APPENDIX B:

BCER Delegation - Detailed Statistics (2025/26)

This appendix provides detailed statistical information reported by the BC Energy Regulator (BCER) under the ALC–BCER Delegation Agreement for the 2025/26 fiscal year, including multi-year trends where available.

A1. Activity by Type and Land Tenure (Area in ha)

Activity	Crown	Private	Total
Pipelines	137	280	427
Wellsites/Facilities	31	111	142
Roads	33	49	82
Ancillary	85	154	239
Total	286	604	890

A2. Exempt Activities (No Application Required)

Activity	Total Area (ha)
Pipelines	453
Wellsites/Facilities	391
Roads	85
Ancillary	285
Total	1,214

A3. Agricultural Capability of Affected Lands

Capability Class	Area (ha)
Organic (O)	6
Class 2	145
Class 3	384
Class 4	210
Class 5	135
Class 6-7	10
Total	890

A4. Cumulative Footprint in the ALR

Category	Area (ha)	Percent of ALR
Total Footprint	32,343	2.43%

A5. Reclamation Summary

Activity	Schedule B Reports Submitted	Area Reclaimed (ha)
Pipelines	41	767
Wellsites/Facilities	95	190
Total	136	957

Note: Reported reclamation areas are estimates and may include partially reclaimed sites; some reported values remain subject to BCER review

A6. Compliance and Oversight

Metric	Total
Inspections	128
Complaints	3
Enforcement Actions	0

Note: Inspections reported in 2025/26 were lower than in 2024/25 due to changes to BCER's risk based inspection model rather than a reduction in overall inspection activity or regulatory oversight. Oil and gas activities within the ALR continue to receive a high degree of compliance oversight.

A7. Activity by Type - Multi-Year Comparison (Area in ha)

Activity Type	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Pipelines	427	333	42	72
Wellsites/Facilities	142	185	177	27
Roads	82	145	112	12
Ancillary	239	395	53	80
Total	890	1,058	384	191

A8. BCER Application Summary (Multi-Year)

Metric	2025/26	2024/24	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Applications Submitted	28	12	15	26	19
Applications Approved	21	20	17	14	4
Total Area Approved (ha)	125.8	213.4	154.1	33	3.4

Note: Approval counts include applications submitted in prior fiscal years but finalized in the reporting year.

A9. Exempt Activity Over Time (Area in ha)

Activity	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Pipelines	453	484	330	112	102
Wellsites/Facilities	391	443	189	17	11
Roads	85	101	55	2	8
Ancillary	285	309	129	88	96
Total	1,214	1,337	703	219	217

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