

Checklist for Preparing a Complete Reclamation Certificate Application for *EPEA*-Approved Activities



This checklist covers the minimum content requirements under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA)* and [Conservation and Reclamation Regulations, section 12\(1\)\(a\) and \(b\)](#) for applications for reclamation certificates for *EPEA*-approved activities, including the following:

- gas plants (sour gas plants)
- coal mines and processing plants
- oil sands mines and processing plants
- enhanced recovery in situ oil sands or heavy oil processing plants
- oil production sites (associated with a processing plant producing more than 2000 cubic metres per day)

We recommend that companies schedule preapplication meetings with us to discuss site-specific history, establish mutual expectations on the readiness of a reclaimed site for certification, clarify application requirements, and determine the status of other regulatory approval requirements.

To arrange a meeting with us, the company should contact its facility's *EPEA* contact at the AER or the Customer Contact Centre.

If a company is uncertain about the proper contact, contact our Customer Contact Centre at inquiries@aer.ca or 1-855-287-8311. You will need to provide your operator and facility name and your *EPEA* approval number.

1) **The most recent survey plan or sketch that was used to apply for, amend, or renew the surface rights for private and public lands**

If there is a facility or infrastructure that is associated with one of the *EPEA*-approved activities listed above and it is not covered on the activity's survey plan, a separate survey plan of the associated facility or infrastructure must be submitted if available. If a survey plan is not available, a sketch is required.

The content requirements for survey plans and sketches are set out in [Content Requirements for Survey Plans and Sketches for Disposition, Reservation and Notation Activities Affecting Public Lands](#).

A diagram can be used to supplement a survey plan or sketch to show any additional reclamation data set out in this checklist.

In addition:

- Use aerial photography or satellite images in a diagram.
- Clearly depict the mineral surface lease and other approval area boundaries and adjacent dispositions holders and land uses
- Provide geospatial information (e.g., GPS coordinates for features and sample locations, boundaries).
- Identify target end land use.
- For reclaimed areas over time, depict when each area was disturbed and reclaimed.

2) Particulars of the characteristics and properties of the conserved and reclaimed land, including topography, drainage, soils, vegetation, and land capability

Topography, drainage, and water resources

- Provide details on topography in the reclaimed area relative to the surrounding area (e.g., pre-to-post slope values including mapping with one to five metre contour intervals, elevations in mASL and cross-sectional diagrams).
- Confirm that abandonment and dam decommissioning has been completed as per the applicable requirements (for mines, see the mine closure process for further information).
- Provide information on the geotechnical stability of reclaimed areas.
- Provide a diagram and descriptions of drainage direction, ephemeral systems, basins and sub-basins, wetlands, reclaimed streams and aquatic features, inclusive of pre-to-post hydrology assessment.
- Identify end pit lakes and water bodies (water quality and quantity information).
- Summarize the groundwater monitoring program and discuss elevations and water quality.
- Identify landform development and substrates.

Detailed information on conserved and reclaimed soils (e.g., topsoil replacement depth)

- Provide a soil survey diagram (i.e., SIL 1).
- Describe material placement (soil profile description, substrate and landform development, and morphological and physical characterization).
- Describe soil sample locations with connection to data analysis.
- Describe reclamation cover materials and confirm that soil has been replaced as required under the approval conditions, including capping information.
- Include a chemical and laboratory analysis (e.g., ash dumps, tailings locations, spoils).
- Identify Tier 1 analysis parameters.
- Discuss site moisture regime, as it relates to targeted ecosite.

Details on vegetation characteristics (e.g., agricultural cropping, ecosite type), trends and performance (e.g., agricultural productivity, planting densities, cover), as supported by data from monitoring programs

- Describe vegetation planted (e.g., seed mixes, planting densities).
- Identify target ecosite trajectories.
- Compare to relevant forest regeneration standards.
- Discuss wildlife habitat assessment and achievement of suitability targets.
- Characterize weeds and management.
- Summarize vegetation monitoring programs.
- Provide information on agricultural productivity, fertilization, and cropping since reclamation.

Land capability characteristics

- Discuss the capability of the reclaimed land with reference to *EPEA* approval requirements.
- Discuss the achievement of equivalent land capability.
- Discuss the distribution of land uses.

- Compare the predisturbance ecosite distribution to the reclaimed ecosite distribution.
- Compare the reclaimed ecosite distribution to the adjacent land ecosite distribution.
- Soil and vegetation reclamation monitoring assessment points and summary information (e.g., GPS, tabular, or similar presentation).
- Evaluate and assess wildlife and fisheries habitat, with reference to information submitted under separate cover, if applicable.

3) Documentation of conservation and reclamation procedures

- Describe the approach taken and relevant site history.
- Describe the equipment utilized and the soil placement methods.
- Discuss the achievement of approval conditions.

4) Documentation of the history of surface disturbance

- Discuss when and how the surface disturbance occurred.
- Provide the conservation and reclamation requirements, including copies of the relevant approvals, at the time of surface disturbance.
- Provide the conservation and reclamation requirements, including copies of the relevant approvals, at the time the surface disturbance was reclaimed.

5) Documentation of and justification for any surface improvements to be left on the conserved and reclaimed land and written acceptance of the improvements by the registered owners of the land

- Present overlapping dispositions (e.g., pipelines, well sites).
- Identify and justify land-use changes, with supporting release information (e.g., roads) and with supporting land-title information with written acceptance, where applicable.
- Discuss infrastructure proposed to remain (e.g., concrete, coke, tailings).

6) A declaration that the operator has complied with all requirements

- Explain how the site meets all terms and conditions of any applicable approval, code of practice, environmental protection order, or enforcement order.

- Explain changes to approved reclamation plans that are relevant to the site.
- Explain how the site meets the directions of an inspector or the director.
- Explain how the site meets any applicable standards, criteria, or guidelines relevant to the facility, especially those established under section 3(1) of the *Conservation and Reclamation Regulations*.

7) The name, address, and telephone number of all of the registered landowners

- Include contact information (name, phone number, email address, and mailing address) for landowners and occupants and information related to current land uses, relevant concerns, and issues.
- Include relevant land-title information.
- Discuss application content was provided to owners and occupants, where applicable.

8) Particulars of any surface lease or right of entry order for the land, where applicable

- Include details of *Surface Rights Act* leases.
- Include details on rights of entry.

9) A description of any substance present as a result of the operator's activity on the land and a description of the nature and extent of the adverse effect caused by the presence of the substance

- Summarize historical contamination, spills, or releases.
- Summarize information relevant to the approved decommissioning plans.
- Justify contaminants, as appropriate, and provide information on substances with potential adverse effects.

10) Particulars of any remedial measures taken with respect to a substance referred to in 9

- Describe remedial measures taken with respect to substance release.
- Include confirmatory results and supporting information on chemical analysis.
- Outline historical alternative mitigations and remedial approaches applied, as approved.