

# Policy Bulletin

February 2019

**February 5, 2019**

## **Advocacy Update: Revenue Sharing**

Yesterday, Premier Moe **announced** the new municipal revenue sharing formula. The formula will now be based on three quarters of one point of the provincial sales tax (PST) revenue collected from the fiscal year two years prior to the current year. Previously, municipal revenue sharing was 1 point of the 5% PST. As the PST is now 6%, municipalities will still receive the same portion as under the previous formula. In the 2019-20 fiscal year, \$251 million will be distributed through the municipal revenue sharing program. This is an increase of \$10 million, or four per cent from the current fiscal year. The program will also see \$1.5 million from the total municipal revenue sharing amount co-managed with municipal partners to invest in initiatives that support good governance, capacity building and regional planning.

SARM advocated strongly for rural municipalities during the consultations that preceded this announcement. We were firm that we did not believe the municipal revenue sharing formula should drop below 1 point of a 5% PST.

More details will be made available when the provincial budget is released on March 20, 2019. We will share more information as we receive it.

## **INFORMATION: Support for Ag Industry in Regina and Treaty Four Territory**

On February 1, Minister Goodale on behalf of Minister Navdeep Bains announced \$250,000 in funding through the Western Diversification Program to Economic Development Regina. EDR received \$250,000 to implement a regional strategy to add value to the agri-foods industry in and around Regina. This includes working with **File Hills Qu'Appelle Developments** to identify agri-value assets of Indigenous communities throughout Treaty Four Territory and determine how to develop new commercial partnerships. They will also work with Information Systems Management Canada, the region's leading agri-food companies, small- and medium-sized businesses, and entrepreneurs to build the workforce and access new commercial opportunities

This announcement aligns with the Proteins Supercluster that is headquartered in Regina.

## **INFORMATION: Board of Revision Survey Results**

Thank you to those RMs that completed the Board of Revision survey that was sent out to members in December. We received 188/296 possible responses. To view the survey results please click **[here](#)**. The results can also be found on the **[What's Trending](#)** page on the **[SARM website](#)**.

## **INFORMATION: OH&S Snow Removal Exemption**

Please view the **[current exemption](#)** for RM residents who do snow removal for the RM.

This exemption form is to take the place of the exemption that expired November 30, 2016. This exemption is in effect until November 30, 2019. The **[checklist](#)** will ensure that specific conditions

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of the exemption are being met. This checklist is not mandatory and is simply meant to help you ensure that you are not in violation of *The Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

## **INFORMATION: Resolution Responses**

SARM has received a response from the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure on the following resolutions:

- [10-18M Tarping and Sealed Contaminated Waste Containers](#)
- [11-18M Pipeline Installation Depth Through Road Allowances](#)
- [12-18M Municipal Appeal Mechanism – Pipeline and Other Underground Facilities](#)

## **INFORMATION: FCM Webinar: Practical advice for common asset management challenges**

Are you interested in how municipalities successfully approach common asset management challenges? Join a webinar on Tuesday, February 26, 2019, to learn key lessons and tips from Canadian municipalities that you can action in your asset management journey.

You'll discover tips on how to better engage employees from across your municipality, enhance your staff's asset management knowledge, and develop realistic objectives.

[Register for the webinar today.](#)

## **February 12, 2019**

### **INFORMATION: Consultation on Proposed Amendments to Schedule I – *Species at Risk Act***

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) are consulting on proposed amendments to the at risk status for four Schedule I (List of Wildlife Species at Risk) species found in Saskatchewan. The proposed amendments are: the Red-headed Woodpecker up-listed from Threatened to Endangered (normal consultation period [January 11, 2019-May 13, 2019](#)), the Common Nighthawk and Olive-sided Flycatcher down-listed from Threatened to Special Concern and the Peregrine Falcon *anatum tundrius* down-listed from Special Concern to Not at Risk (extended consultation period [January 11, 2019-October 14, 2019](#)). More information on the proposed amendments can be found [here](#).

### **INFORMATION: Nominations Closing Soon for Saskatchewan Waste Minimization Awards**

The Saskatchewan Waste Minimization Awards recognize excellence in waste reduction in Saskatchewan and are intended to promote leadership and inspire all sectors of the province to undertake waste reduction activities. We hope not only to provide well-deserved recognition, but also to highlight success stories for others to consider adopting.

Get your nominations in soon! The deadline is **February 15th, 2019**.

The Awards Ceremony will be held in conjunction with the Waste ReForum on April 11, 2019 at the Sheraton Cavalier Hotel in Saskatoon.

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## Award Categories

- Lifetime Achievement
- Individual
- Youth/School/Youth Service Organization
- Corporation
- Small Business
- Non-profit Organization
- Municipality
- Partnerships
- Festival or Event

For a full description of each award category click [here](#).

Nominations must include a two-page summary highlighting the amount of waste diverted, impact on the environment and economy, leadership and innovation.

## [Submit a Nomination](#)

### **INFORMATION: Spring Run Off Expected to be Below Normal**

With the dry conditions in the summer and fall of 2018 combined with below normal winter precipitation so far, below normal spring runoff is expected across most of southern Saskatchewan.

The spring runoff outlook could change as there is potentially another 8-10 weeks of winter remaining. However, with dry fall conditions and below average winter precipitation to date, it would take well above average precipitation in February, March and April to produce an above average spring runoff within most areas.

Unless conditions change significantly, WSA will be aggressive in storing water during the snowmelt runoff period to ensure water supplies are adequate and lake levels are desirable for recreational uses through 2019.

As conditions change and get closer to spring runoff WSA will issue another updated forecast in March.

## [Read more](#)

### **INFORMATION: FCM Funding**

Are you looking to learn more about how FCM funding can benefit your municipality? Visit FCM's website to explore the range of funding opportunities offered to Canadian communities of all sizes, from grants for plans, feasibility studies, pilot projects to loans combined

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with grants for capital projects. You can target your search by filtering by topic — such as waste, water and energy — project type and audience.

Visit [FCM.ca/funding](http://FCM.ca/funding) to find the funding solution that's right for your community.

## **INFORMATION: FCM Webinar: RETScreen Leading tool to help unlock energy saving opportunities**

FCM and CanmetENERGY Varennes (Natural Resources Canada) are holding a webinar to showcase how municipalities can use RETScreen Expert to:

- Track energy performance of their facilities
- Identify opportunities for energy and cost savings
- Assess the technical and financial viability of clean energy projects

Want to attend? Register here:

- [English webinar](#) (March 6, 1:00 p.m. ET)
- [French webinar](#) (March 6, 10:30 a.m. ET)

*Municipal staff can obtain a **free one-year subscription to [RETScreen Expert](#) (offer valid until March 31, 2019)**. To sign up, complete and email the order form through the downloaded software (File/Subscribe/Step 1). Indicate in your email that you are requesting a "one-year free software key for the Canadian public/para-public sector."*

## **February 19, 2019**

### **INFORMATION: Resolutions Submitted for Annual Convention 2019**

Thank you to everyone who submitted resolutions to be debated and voted on this March. See the full list of submitted resolutions [here](#).

### **Advocacy Update: *The Municipalities Act***

Early in January, SARM submitted comments to the Government of Saskatchewan's request for feedback on early drafting instructions for *The Municipalities Act* to be proposed for fall 2019. The Ministry of Government Relations has since provided SARM with an update regarding potential adjustments being considered to the proposed amendments. Further consultation on the drafting instructions is planned for later this spring should the government decide to proceed with amending the municipal Acts in 2019-20.

### **INFORMATION: Resolution Responses**

SARM has received resolution responses from the Ministry of Energy and Resources on the following resolutions:

[8-18M Underground Pipelines](#)

[9-18M Oil and Gas Wellsite Flare Stacks](#)

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## 13-18M Resource Company Tax Enforcement

## 14-18M Oil Companies Failure to Pay Arrears of Land Taxes While Continuing to Operate

### **INFORMATION: Government of Canada invests over \$50 million to help the agriculture sector**

On February 12, Canadian Agriculture Day, Minister MacAulay **announced** the new Canadian Agricultural Strategic Priorities Program (CASPP), an investment of \$50.3 million over five years. Funding available through this program will help facilitate the sector's ability to address emerging issues and capitalize on opportunities.

The CASPP focuses on four priority areas: adoption of new technology; environmental sustainability; strategic development and capacity building; and, emerging issues. Examples of potential projects could include those addressing artificial intelligence technology, tools to assess future labour and skills needs, bio-crops, environmentally sustainable farming techniques and strategies to help the sector adapt to changes in consumer preferences.

### **INFORMATION: Crown Lands Spring Auction**

Check out the Sask. Ag Crown Lands that are for sale through public auction in advance of the 'go live' date. Please find attached the **Spring Auction Catalogue** and **sale fact sheet** for the Spring 2019 offering. You can access the auction through the "Purchase Agricultural Crown Land" link on **Saskatchewan.ca/Agricultural Crown Land** or directly through the Ritchie Bros. auction site at **ironplanet.com/realestate-skgov**.

The auction opens on February 25, 2019, and will have staggered closing dates of March 11 and 14.

The Ministry of Agriculture is not responsible for any errors, omissions or amendments that may occur on the list.

Questions? Contact Wally Hoehn **wally.hoehn@gov.sk.ca** or 306-787-1045

### **INFORMATION: Canada Saskatchewan Job Grant**

On December 3, 2018 the provincial government **announced** mandatory minimum training requirements for commercial semi drivers. Beginning on March 15, 2019, drivers will have to undergo a minimum of 121.5 hours of training to obtain a Class 1 commercial licence in Saskatchewan. Existing Class 1 drivers will be grandfathered in as of the implementation date. The Province is currently consulting with the agriculture industry on potential impacts of mandatory training in the sector. Effective March 15, 2019, anyone wishing to drive a semi used in farming operations will need to successfully obtain an "F" endorsement on their existing driver's licence and will be restricted to operating within Saskatchewan's borders. The "F" endorsement will not be required if they already have a Class 1 licence or have taken the mandatory training.

The Ministry of Immigration and Career Training has confirmed that once these changes take effect, the Canada Saskatchewan Job Grant program will consider applications for 1A truck

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driver training for trainees that do not currently hold the licence. Through the program, the employer contributes one-third of the training cost, while the federal and provincial governments contribute the remaining two-thirds. More information on the Canada Saskatchewan Job Grant can be found [here](#).

Please note: municipalities are currently not eligible to apply for the Canada Saskatchewan Job Grant. SARM has been lobbying the federal and provincial governments to allow rural municipalities to access the program.

**February 26, 2019**

## **INFORMATION: Resolution Responses**

SARM has received resolution responses from the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure on the following resolutions:

[21-18M Railway Right-of-Way Environmental and Safety Transformation](#)

[22-18M MREP Rating Factors](#)

[24-18M Ditch Mowing](#)

[25-18M Spread of Noxious Weeds](#)

## **Advocacy Update**

Important pipeline projects provide sustained economic benefits to rural Saskatchewan and Canada as a whole, while bringing Canadian resources to tide water in a safe and efficient manner. Oil pipelines also up free-up rail capacity to move grain and other agricultural products.

The cancellation of the Energy East Projects and hold-ups with the Trans Mountain pipeline aggravate the critical need for energy infrastructure in Canada.

The National Energy Board (NEB) last week delivered its Reconsideration Report to the Government of Canada with an overall recommendation that the Trans Mountain Expansion Project is in the Canadian public interest and should be approved.

[Learn more](#)

## **INFORMATION: Release of the Blueprint for Wildland Fire Science in Canada**

The Canadian Forest Service has been working with a cross-country partnership of provincial and territorial governments, experts and other interested organizations to develop the *Blueprint for Wildland Fire Science in Canada (2019-2029)*.

The *Blueprint* is a business case to grow Canada's capacity to conduct wildland fire science. It identifies existing research gaps and priorities and contains a series of recommendations to enhance research capacity over the coming decade.

The Blueprint is available for free download at the Natural Resources Canada Bookstore, in both French and English:



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- *Blueprint for Wildland Fire Science in Canada (2019-2029)* (English):  
<https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/fire-insects-disturbances/fire/21614>
- *Plan directeur pour une science des feux de forêt au Canada (2019-2029)*:  
<https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forets/feux-insectes-perturbations/feux/21615>

If you have any questions regarding the Blueprint, or would like to discuss further, please contact:

**Mike Norton**, Director General – Northern Forestry Centre, Canadian Forest Service (CFS)  
Ph: 780-435-7202

**Stacey Sankey**, Senior Policy Analyst, CFS  
Ph: 780-435-7346

**Rhonda Burke**, Senior Policy Analyst, CFS  
Ph: 343-292-8508

## **INFORMATION: Recent Changes to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement**

On February 12, 2019 the Ministry of Government Relations sent important correspondence and information to all municipalities in the province related to recent changes to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CTFA) and its effects on the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, and the Bid Protest Mechanism. The CTFA also requires that all municipalities report annually on the number and total value of covered procurements conducted. Municipalities must fill out the reporting form that was attached to the correspondence covering the period of January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017.

SARM has received inquiries regarding the recent changes announced by the Ministry of Government Relations to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA). Questions and completed forms should be emailed to Natalie Chatterson with the Ministry of Trade and Export Development at [natalie.chatterson@gov.sk.ca](mailto:natalie.chatterson@gov.sk.ca) or call her at 306-787-7515.

## **INFORMATION: Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI)**

Cando and FCM launch a call for applications for one (1) new First Nation – Municipal Partnership to participate in the First Nations – Municipal Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI) program 2019-2021.

The CEDI program supports First Nations and adjacent municipalities to develop and implement joint community economic development or land use initiatives while building a resilient, sustainable partnership. The CEDI program typically works with partner communities over a three-year time frame, but this application intake requires an accelerated timeline to complete the deliverables.

Application deadline is midnight **March 15, 2019**.

Who should apply?

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- First Nation and municipal governments – jointly
- First Nation and municipal partners who have a shared interest in joint economic development planning

What is joint community economic development?

- Joint Community Economic Development is a process by which community partners initiate and generate their own innovative solutions to their common economic problems, thereby building mutual long-term community capacity. This approach integrates economic, social, and environmental objectives that benefit members of both of communities, building stronger, and more sustainable communities.

More information on the CEDI can be found [here](#).

## **INFORMATION: New Federal Immigration Program for Rural and Northern Communities**

Late last month the federal government announced the creation of a five-year Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, aimed at involving communities and provincial and territorial governments to test new, community-driven approaches to address the diverse labour market needs of smaller communities. This initiative builds on the success of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot launched in 2017, and aligns with FCM's calls to the federal government to investigate opportunities to promote rural communities to new Canadians through international partnerships that encourage and increase immigration to smaller, rural communities.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada is currently accepting applications from interested communities in Ontario, Western Canada and the territories, with an **application deadline of March 1**. For more information, please see the [eligibility criteria](#)

## **ACTION REQUIRED: Provincial Disaster Assistance Program**

As part of our on-going efforts to ensure government programming meets your needs, we are asking members to complete a short survey on the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP). The purpose of this survey is to gain a better understanding of the aspects of the current program that are working well for RMs and those that need improvement in order to guide SARM's advocacy efforts on this file.

Please respond to the survey by the end of day on **April 1st**

[Complete survey](#)