

# BUDGET 2002

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THE RIGHT DECISIONS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



## FIRST QUARTER ACTIVITY REPORT

2002-03 QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT

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AUGUST 2002

**Alberta**  
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

# Updating Albertans

The government has three core businesses that make up its overall business plan and that guide government in its decision-making on behalf of Albertans. The core businesses are:

- **PEOPLE** - The goals for the *People* core business are directed at improving the quality of life in Alberta for individuals and their families through the government's priorities for health, education, our children, those in need, and Aboriginal Albertans.
- **PROSPERITY** - The goals for the *Prosperity* core business focus on protecting the quality of life in Alberta through the government's priorities for our economy, work force and work places, infrastructure, value-added industries, export trade and financial and fiscal position.
- **PRESERVATION** - The goals for the *Preservation* core business reflect the government's priorities for community safety, our renewable resources, the environment, our natural, historical and cultural resources, and Alberta's relations with other levels of government.

The purpose of quarterly Activity Reports is to show Albertans what activities the government undertook in the first three months of this fiscal year in support of People, Prosperity and Preservation. The following pages include some of those activities from each of the government departments.

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## LISTENING TO ALBERTANS

The activities that support Alberta's core businesses are often influenced by the input government receives from Albertans. Through public consultation, surveys, letters, phone calls, and e-mails, Albertans tell government what's important to them and what concerns them. In the First Quarter, Albertans had a say as government:

- 
- **released** the Alberta Future Summit 2002 Report, *Imagine our Tomorrow*, in May 2002. This work builds on a province-wide consultation where over 4,000 Albertans shared their visions of what a debt-free Alberta might look like. (Revenue)
  - **created** the Financial Management Commission to review Alberta's fiscal framework and make recommendations for improvements. The Commission received submissions from 89 individuals and organizations to help develop its report. (Finance)
  - **implemented** the park visitor satisfaction survey program to evaluate visitor satisfaction with facilities and services offered in provincial parks and recreation areas. (Community Development)
  - **held** a forum on Workplace Safety that included stakeholders from safety associations, employer groups and unions. (Human Resources and Employment)
  - **consulted** with Albertans on secondary suites and the proposed changes to the Alberta Building Code and Alberta Fire Code to increase their safety. (Municipal Affairs)
  - **began** province-wide consultations to examine legislation, programs, and services for victims of crime. (Solicitor General)
  - **conducted** a series of consultations with employers, workers, training providers and adult learners to develop a new Skills Investment Strategy that will set the direction for Alberta's adult training and employment programs and services. (Human Resources and Employment)
  - **sought** stakeholder comments on the Navigant Report, which provides recommendations on the further development of electricity and natural gas retail markets in Alberta. (Energy)
  - **launched** an MLA review committee to examine Alberta's corrections programs to ensure they meet the needs of community and staff safety, offender rehabilitation, and cost effectiveness. The committee is hearing from staff, stakeholders and other Albertans. (Solicitor General)
  - **released** the *Report on the Public Review of the Blind Persons' Rights Act*, asking Albertans for feedback on the recommendations. (Community Development)
  - **established** a task force to take a closer look at issues raised by Albertans over their electricity bills and customer service concerns. (Government Services)
  - **formed** a task force between Alberta Government Services and the Department of Energy to address Albertans' electricity billing concerns and work with industry on meter-reading accuracy. (Energy)

- **received** and investigated approximately 2,887 calls from stakeholders and other Albertans regarding environmental concerns around the province. (Environment)
- **conducted** 11 public information and feedback sessions on the MLA Farm Property Assessment Review Committee's final report. (Municipal Affairs)
- **began** a series of public consultations regarding the North South Trade Corridor route in and around the City of Lethbridge. Consulted with Albertans on an amendment to the Integrated Resource Plan for the Fort McMurray-Athabasca region. (Transportation)
- **launched** public consultations, a telephone survey and mail-outs on the challenges and priorities for water management and supply and sought input from Albertans on responsible solutions to the challenges. (Environment)
- **sought** the input of health authorities and health care providers and professionals on aspects of health reform, including funding and revenue generation, inter-regional collaboration and workforce issues. (Health and Wellness)
- **held** an open house in Bonnyville on June 25 to give landowners and industry representatives an opportunity to learn more about the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board and discuss concerns about energy development in the area. (Energy)
- **conducted** an Aboriginal focus group on the provincial water strategy held in co-operation with Alberta Environment. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **responded** to over 42,000 calls to the Alberta Seniors Information Line (Seniors)
- **released** the Fines and Demerit Points Discussion Paper to give Albertans opportunities to voice their opinions on fines and demerit points. (Transportation)
- **released** a draft report on the provincial ambulance review for further public and stakeholder feedback on the proposed recommendations. (Health and Wellness)

## PEOPLE

The following activities support the *People* core business and particularly areas that Albertans have identified as priority areas including health, education and children.

### Promoting Health and Wellness

The state of Alberta's health care system is a priority for all Albertans. The Alberta Government continues to search for innovative ideas and initiatives to improve the sustainability of the health system and reassure Albertans that their health care needs will be addressed. In the First Quarter, the government continued to focus on the health of Albertans as it:

- 
- **introduced** a routine meningococcal vaccine program for infants. This program is the first of its kind in the country and is directed to all infants born after September 1, 2001 during routine immunization appointments. (Health and Wellness)
  - **launched** the Alberta Brain Injury Network to provide province wide community support services for adults with acquired brain injury and their families so that they may live, work and participate in their communities. (Community Development)
  - **increased** tobacco taxes with the goal of promoting wellness and encouraging healthy behaviours as part of our efforts to build a sustainable public health care system. (Revenue)
  - **launched** the 2002 Summer Active campaign to promote physical activity and healthy active living in Alberta. (Community Development)
  - **authorized** the David Thompson Health Region to proceed with three public-private partnership long-term care projects in Red Deer, Sylvan Lake, and Rocky Mountain House. (Infrastructure)
  - **proclaimed** the Highway Traffic Bicycle Safety Helmet Amendment Act, requiring all cyclists under age 18 in Alberta to wear approved helmets. (Transportation)
  - **continued** the "Collision Prime Time" radio campaign to promote safe driving behaviours. (Transportation)
  - **authorized** the Capital Health Region and the Chinatown Multi-Level Care Foundation to proceed with a \$9.9 million long-term care public-private partnership project for the development and operation of a new 75-bed nursing home in Edmonton. (Infrastructure)
  - **led** discussions with the federal government to achieve a third party process to resolve intergovernmental disputes in the interpretation of the *Canada Health Act*. The model, which will ensure a fair and open process to health disputes, was agreed to by Alberta, the federal government and supported by other provinces. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)

## Supporting Education and Lifelong Learning

The Alberta Government supports learning as a lifelong process and offers Albertans access to a variety of learning opportunities. In the First Quarter, the provincial government honoured its commitment to education and lifelong learning as it:

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- **established** a new \$3.3 million Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund endowment through a government and industry matching-funds program. Under the program 165 scholarships of \$1,000 each will be awarded annually to Alberta apprentices. (Learning)
- **awarded** the Grant MacEwan Author's Award of \$25,000 to two Alberta writers and the Grant MacEwan Young Writer's Scholarships of \$2,500 each to four young Albertans. (Community Development)
- **recognized** 22 outstanding teachers across Alberta as 2002 provincial Excellence in Teaching Awards recipients. (Learning)
- **funded** a number of projects under the *Northern LINKS* Program with goals to assist northern Alberta students in making decisions related to the transition from secondary to post-secondary education. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **awarded** \$20,000 in career development scholarships to working Albertans through the Michael Luchkovich and the Arts Career Development Scholarships. Awarded annually, the scholarships help Albertans enhance their academic and artistic skills. (Learning)
- **developed** the Bonnyville Petroleum Careers Training program to help local Aboriginal adults prepare themselves for entry into long-term careers in the petroleum industry. (Energy)
- **created** the Queen's Golden Jubilee Scholarship for the Visual and Performing Arts. (Community Development)
- **awarded** \$555,000 through Arts Graduate Scholarships, the Sir James Loughheed Awards of Distinction and the Ralph Steinhauer Awards of Distinction to 35 of Alberta's top graduate students. (Learning)
- **announced** the reinstatement of 10 deferred school facility capital projects across the province. (Infrastructure)
- **financed** cutting-edge education through the Alberta Science and Research Investments Program, which recently injected \$39 million into 55 research initiatives across the province. (Innovation and Science)
- **established** a nine-member panel representing a broad cross-section of Albertans and education experts to conduct the first comprehensive review of Alberta's education system since 1972. (Learning)
- **created** an activity booklet of games, puzzles, and activities by the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board that teaches children about the energy industry. The booklet is linked to the Alberta science and social studies curricula for grades 3-5 and is available in schools. (Energy)



## Supporting Families and Children

Every government ministry is responsible for initiatives that contribute to an atmosphere where Alberta families can succeed and flourish. In this Quarter, the government:

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- **provided** \$300,000 to help support 93 youth justice committees across the province. The committees assist in the administration of the Alternative Measures Program and can provide a sentence advisory role to the local youth court judge. (Solicitor General)
- **began** a three-part review of foster care in Alberta that will examine the delivery of foster care and training for foster parents. (Children's Services)
- **increased** the Alberta Seniors Benefit qualifying thresholds for cash benefits from \$18,440 to \$18,745 for single seniors and from \$27,925 to \$28,530 for senior couples, effective July 1, 2002. (Seniors)
- **approved** approximately 2,100 applications from lower-income seniors under the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program for a total expenditure of approximately \$4.4 million. (Seniors)
- **introduced** the *Adult Interdependent Relationships Act* (Bill 30). The bill proposes amendments to several Alberta laws that set out financial and property benefits and responsibilities for people in non-married relationships involving economic and emotional interdependency. (Justice)
- **developed** "A Lawyer's Guide to the Maintenance Enforcement Program," which is now posted on Alberta Justice's web site. The guide builds on existing efforts to communicate with family law lawyers. (Justice)
- **initiated** the 2002 Alberta's Future Leaders program in eight Aboriginal communities across Alberta to assist in coordination of recreation, sport, arts, and leadership programs targeted at Aboriginal youth. (Community Development)
- **passed** the *Intestate Succession Amendment Act*, which amended the previous legislation to address the needs of Albertans in common-law and same-sex relationships. The act enables partners of these relationships to access all or a portion of the partner's estate should their partner die without a will. (Justice)
- **provided** approximately \$13.3 million through various housing grant programs to support low-income families, seniors, people with special needs and the homeless. (Seniors)
- **presented** "Hooked for Life," an opportunity for single mothers and their children to learn about fishing through a free hands-on clinic. Instruction was followed by a fishing trip on the Bow River. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **passed** the *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act*. The Act simplifies the process of obtaining, changing and enforcing maintenance orders under provincial/territorial legislation where the parties live in different Canadian jurisdictions. (Justice)

- **relocated** the Calgary Seniors Information Service Centre to the more centrally located Kerby Centre, the Lethbridge Seniors Information Service Centre to the Lethbridge Seniors Citizens Organization, and the Red Deer Seniors Information Service Centre to the Golden Circle Resource Centre to enable seniors to access information on provincial programs and services from a more convenient and seniors' friendly location. (Seniors)
- **donated** hail insurance premiums on the 3,200 acres grown in support of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank in 2002 through the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation. The donated hail insurance will provide up to \$256,000 worth of coverage for the non-profit charity. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **completed** the first phase of the *Gaps in Community Supports* project, focusing on improving the transition between child and adult support systems. (Community Development)
- **held** a retreat with stakeholders on a review of the *Child Welfare Act*. (Children's Services)
- **began** routine pneumococcal vaccinations for infants. Alberta is the first province in Canada to introduce the conjugate vaccine as part of its routine infant immunization program. (Health and Wellness)

## PROSPERITY

The following activities support the *Prosperity* core business and contribute to a better quality of life for Albertans.

### Strengthening the Alberta Economy

Alberta is expected to lead the country in economic growth in 2002-2003 and various government ministries are involved in a number of initiatives to ensure that trend continues.

In this Quarter, the government:

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- **announced** a series of guiding principles that reflect the government's philosophy for current and future electricity exports from Alberta. (Energy)
- **formed** the Savings Review Panel to look at government's savings policies, including the role of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. (Revenue)
- **reduced** corporate taxes by half a percentage point - from 13.5 to 13.0 per cent on the general corporate income tax rate and from 5.0 to 4.5 per cent on the small business rate. The small business tax exemption level rose to \$350,000 from \$300,000. These initiatives will save Albertans \$81 million in 2002-03, and maintain Alberta's overall tax advantage. (Finance)
- **organized** and delivered a Home Care and Rehabilitation Workshop and Trade Show in partnership with Alberta Health Industry Alliance, Western Economic Diversification, and Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. The event facilitated the growth and development of Alberta suppliers of products and services to the home care and rehabilitation markets. (Economic Development)
- **approved** approximately 376 oil and gas wells and pipelines on public lands, and processed more than 1,200 additional transactions related to industrial activities. Each approval included criteria to minimize the industrial footprint on the environment. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **released** the 2001-02 Government Annual Report showing the province's finances remained solid despite extreme revenue volatility. The report recorded a \$772 million economic cushion, which was set aside for future debt repayment. (Finance)
- **approved** forest management agreements for Spray Lake Sawmills, Millar Western Forest Products and a joint FMA for Footner Forest Products and Tolko Industries. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **moved** to a monthly gas cost recovery rate, as part of retail restructuring, that will better reflect the market price of natural gas on consumers' bills and allow consumers to make more informed purchasing decisions. (Energy)
- **implemented** the Alberta Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). The PNP program facilitates the immigration of critical skills workers into Canada. (Economic Development)
- **participated** in the planning and undertaking of Premier Klein's successful mission to Alaska that created more formal connections with the Government of Alaska and committed Alberta and Alaska to work together in areas such as energy, transportation, and tourism. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)

- **facilitated** Alberta private-sector participation in the Nanotechnology Investing and Partnering Conference in Mountain View, California. The trip was part of the Alberta Government's Alberta-California Venture Channel program, promoting business growth in the knowledge economy. (Innovation and Science, Economic Development)
- **released** the 2001-02 Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Annual Report. The Fund earned \$206 million for priority programs. (Revenue)
- **completed** successful research and development missions to Belgium, France, China, North Carolina, and Atlanta to identify collaborative research opportunities, build a foundation for future business relationships, and showcase Alberta as an ideal location for high technology investment and business development. (Innovation and Science, Economic Development)
- **joined** U.S. state leaders to discuss cross-border issues including agriculture, energy and security at the Pacific Northwest Economic Region and the Montana-Alberta Bilateral Advisory Council meetings. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **issued** *Alberta's Reserves 2001 and Supply/Demand Outlook 2002-2011*. This report describes Alberta's oil, gas and mineral reserves to year-end 2001 and provides a 10-year forecast of supply and demand. (Energy)
- **co-ordinated** the International Business Centre (IBC) at the Global Petroleum Show in Calgary in partnership with the Canadian Commercial Corporation, Export Development Canada and Industry Canada. The IBC promoted product sales, tourism, and investment opportunities to representatives from over 80 countries and facilitated matchmaking opportunities for more than 600 Alberta companies. (Economic Development, Energy)
- **participated** in the planning and undertaking of Premier Klein's participation in the Western Premiers' Conference to discuss priority items including climate change, cross-border energy issues, agriculture, trade, post-secondary education and health care. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **participated** in an Alberta Showcase venue at the G8 Media Centre in the Telus Convention Centre in Calgary during the G8 Summit in June. The province's capabilities, technology, and investment and trade opportunities were promoted to over 2,500 media personnel from around the globe. (Economic Development)
- **renewed** Alberta's twinning relationship with the South African province of Mpumalanga through a memorandum of understanding to cooperate on government reform projects, explore trade and commerce opportunities, and share information. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **promoted** Alberta's industrial capabilities at the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston. OTC draws more than 45,000 oil and gas industry leaders from over 80 countries. (Economic Development)
- **announced** the implementation of the Alberta Drought Risk Management Plan, a coordinated response in the face of possible drought conditions. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **continued** a strong defense of Alberta's forestry practices in response to the U.S. softwood lumber trade action. Continued participating in Canada's NAFTA and WTO challenges to punitive U.S. subsidy rulings. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **completed** a major research project about Alberta employers' perspectives on human rights in the workplace in order to assist the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission in meeting employers' needs for information on building inclusive workplaces, preventing discrimination in the workplace and human rights law. (Community Development)
- **expanded** cooperation in agriculture, additional funding for educational partnerships, and the opening of new business offices during Premier Klein's mission to Ukraine and the United Kingdom. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **provided** each of the province's NHL teams with over \$1 million from the successful first *Break Away to Win* Scratch N Win lottery ticket event. This initiative recognizes the teams' tremendous economic benefit to the province. (Gaming)

- **strengthened** relations between Alberta and Japan, the province's largest overseas trading partner, by participating in a foreign dignitary information program. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **enhanced** Agriculture Financial Services Corporation's Beginning Farmer Program, reducing short-term interest rates, and shortened loan turnaround time. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **proclaimed** the *Racing Corporation Amendment Act*, which increases the accountability of the horse racing industry through development of multi-year business plans and performance measures as well as restructuring of the industry governance. (Gaming)
- **signed** the federal/provincial/territorial Agricultural Policy Framework to establish a strategic, long-range agricultural policy in five key areas: food safety and quality, environment, science and innovation, sector renewal and risk management. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **launched** a new, state-of-the-art initiative to assist youth and adults in exploring their learning, career, and employment options, called "Careers in Motion." A 1975 motor home renovated into a mobile Labour Market Information Centre (LMIC), "Careers in Motion" is equipped with four laptop computers linked to the internet through wireless data technology as well as a wide range of written resources, to assist people in researching and achieving their learning, career, and employment goals. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **launched** a pre-emptive strike against the threat of the worst grasshopper infestation in 30 years by providing producers with \$4/acre to use towards grasshopper control. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **issued** EPCOR an *Environmental Protection & Enhancement Act* approval for a new coal-fired generating unit at the Genesee Power Plant. The approval requires greenhouse gas offsets and reporting, future pollution control equipment to meet evolving standards, and significant regional monitoring of various environmental media. (Environment)
- **extended** the Alberta Farm Water Program to make it easier for producers to develop and maintain long-term water supplies. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **moved** towards 2002-03 target of \$30 million in land sales with \$5.6 million in completed sales and unconditional offers and \$3.3 million in conditional offers. (Infrastructure)

## Improving Efficiency and Innovation

Albertans have worked hard to establish our province as a leader in technology and innovation. In addition the government is constantly examining ways in which it can provide services to Albertans more efficiently. In this Quarter, the government:

- 
- **released** draft of Alberta's action plan on climate change. The plan outlines a proposed target for Alberta and details a range of actions including energy conservation and efficiency, and technological innovation. (Environment)
  - **conducted** testing of recycled rubber tire crumb in asphalt in various locations across the province. Research shows rubber crumb pavements have a longer life than traditional asphalt and require less repair work due to greater resistance to cracks and rutting. (Transportation)
  - **established** a three-year contract with Advanis Inc. for the provision of Travel Alberta Contact Centre and Distribution Centre services. The contractor will provide enhanced visitor information services to the general public and the tourism industry. (Economic Development)
  - **launched** a study to explore opportunities for using advanced intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technology, such as changeable message signs, to advise the traveling public of current road and weather information on the Highway 2 corridor between Calgary and Edmonton. (Transportation)
  - **created** a technology toolkit for not-for-profit organizations to develop increase awareness of all aspects of information technology. (Community Development)
  - **received** approximately 80 submissions of good administrative and governance practices for the Municipal Excellence Program on-line database. This information will be available to all Alberta municipalities so they can benefit from the good ideas of others. (Municipal Affairs)
  - **implemented** a Pavement Preservation Strategy in June. The strategy allows the department to ensure a consistently smooth road condition is maintained, extend the service life of the pavement and maintain more kilometres of highway within existing budgets. (Transportation)
  - **undertook** a new funding relationship with the 20 Friendship Centres in Alberta and the provincial friendship centre organization that requires Friendship Centres to submit a business plan in order to access AAND funding. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
  - **participated** in the official opening of Canada's first linear alpha olefins (LAOs) plant at BP's \$400 million facility in Joffre. The facility uses ethylene upgraded in Alberta from natural gas to produce LAOs, which are used to make plastics, synthetic lubricants, detergents, drilling fluids and synthetic motor oils. (Energy)

- **announced** that the Alberta government has surpassed its target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in government buildings. Alberta Infrastructure's Energy Retrofit Program implemented energy improvements to 70 government facilities between 1995 and 2001. (Infrastructure)
- **invested** \$5.5 million in the Alberta Food Processing Development Centre expansion in order to help ensure Alberta's agriculture industry reaches its goal of \$20 billion in value-added production by 2010. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **implemented** a new information system for the Office of the Public Guardian. The system will result in more efficient service delivery for dependent adults, as staff will have access to information on a 24-hour basis. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **launched** the new Service Alberta web site and call centre as a first step to make it easier for Albertans to obtain information, products and services from the province. (Government Services)
- **participated** in the official opening of the Williams Energy "hydrocarbon liquids conservation project" in which liquids-rich gas previously burned as fuel at Suncor Energy's oil sands site is channelled to a nearby Williams extraction unit. Currently, propane, butane and other natural gas liquids are "stripped" and sent to Williams' Redwater facility for fractionating and shipment to market. (Energy)
- **began** restructuring Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's Industry Development Sector to better serve producers. Restructuring included the creation of the Alberta Ag-Info Centre, a call centre that provides producers with immediate access to specialist information anywhere in the province through one toll-free number. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **announced** the fifth year of the Municipal Sponsorship Program, which will provide \$12.5 million for projects that promote innovation, excellence and cooperation in municipal government. (Municipal Affairs)
- **launched** pilot projects of the Pharmaceutical Information Network in Westlock and Leduc. The network provides physicians, pharmacists and health facilities with electronic access to patients' medication records with the patient's permission. (Health and Wellness)



## PRESERVATION

The following activities support the Preservation core business by ensuring Alberta's communities are strong and safe and Alberta's natural, cultural and historical resources are protected.

### Building Stronger and Safer Communities

Albertans take pride in their communities. They require leadership from government on issues of safety, and flexibility from government on determining what initiatives will best strengthen their communities. The government supported numerous initiatives that improved safety and helped build stronger communities. In the First Quarter of 2002-2003, the Alberta government:

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- **introduced** the *Security Management Statutes Amendment Act* that proposes amendments to 17 different Alberta laws to further protect the safety and security of all Albertans, and the province's infrastructure, industry, natural resources and environment. (Justice, International and Intergovernmental Relations)
  - **led** the province's involvement in G8 Summit preparations with the federal government to ensure that the security, economic, and environmental interests of Albertans were protected during the Summit, held in Kananaskis in June 2002. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
  - **directed** \$22.3 million towards 53 infrastructure projects in 40 Alberta Communities under the Infrastructure Canada-Alberta Program (ICAP). (Transportation)
  - **launched** a new Community Initiatives Program on June 24, 2002 to provide \$30 million per year for three years from Alberta Lottery Fund allocations to non-profit groups for a wide range of community projects not eligible for other lottery grant programs. (Gaming)
  - **developed** and distributed a new FireSmart video and homeowners' manual. About 44,800 manuals and 495 videos were distributed to many municipalities, communities and department offices throughout Alberta. (Sustainable Resource Development)
  - **provided** municipalities with nearly \$30 million in grants under the Unconditional Municipal Grant Program. This program provides flexible grant assistance to municipalities so provincial funds can be allocated to local needs and priorities. (Municipal Affairs)
  - **provided** over \$3.5 million in grants to communities for capital projects like hockey and curling rinks through the Community Facility Enhancement Program - a program funded by the Alberta Lottery Fund. (Gaming)
  - **held** Crime Prevention Week highlighting community projects to prevent crime. Crime prevention awards were handed out to 13 recipients from across Alberta. (Solicitor General)
  - **collaborated** with the Northwest Corridor Development Corporation on northern air, rail and road transportation issues. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
  - **coordinated** emergency operations with other government departments and municipalities, including securing military assistance, to help suppress wild-land fires in northern and north-central Alberta. (Municipal Affairs)



- **developed** and implemented a new enforcement process for dealing with off-lease hydrogen sulphide gas odours. (Energy)
- **increased** funding for victim's assistance programs by five per cent. (Solicitor General)
- **opened** the Rotary Millennium House officially in June. This 25-unit facility increases the amount of safe and affordable housing in Edmonton's inner city. The \$1.9 million project was jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments through the Infrastructure Canada-Alberta Program (ICAP) and the Edmonton Downtown Rotary Club. (Transportation)
- **provided** \$15 million to municipalities and individuals during the spring flooding in southern Alberta. (Municipal Affairs)
- **completed** 622 investigations related to consumer protection, recovered \$350,000 for Alberta consumers and laid 110 charges. (Government Services)
- **conducted** extensive liaison, coordination and planning activities to ensure the safety and security of Albertans during the G8 Summit in Kananaskis from June 26 to 27, 2002. (International and Intergovernmental Relations, Municipal Affairs, Community Development, Solicitor General and Sustainable Resource Development)
- **presented** three individuals and two Alberta organizations with Minister's Seniors Service Awards to recognize their dedication to enhancing the lives of seniors in their communities. (Seniors)
- **distributed** \$4.9 million in operational grants to the 70 agricultural service boards across Alberta. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **launched** a web site to identify offenders who present a risk of significant harm to the community. An offender's information and photograph are added to the site when the Chief of Police or the Assistant Commissioner of the RCMP issues a public notification. (Solicitor General)
- **updated** the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board's Facility Inspection Manual (Guide 64) to include the EUB's new hydrogen sulphide gas odor management process and Emergency Response Protocol. (Energy)
- **developed** and coordinated the framework for the Provincial Crisis Management Plan, under the direction of the Ministerial Task Force on Security, to protect Albertans from potential terrorist activities, developed and coordinated the framework for the Provincial Crisis Management Plan. (Municipal Affairs)
- **issued** consumer alerts to caution Albertans on unscrupulous businesses and provided consumer tips for dealing with a variety of situations in the marketplace. (Government Services)
- **expanded** Alberta's Emergency Public Warning System to the Red Deer area on May 6, 2002. The system now covers the Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer regions and will be extended province-wide by 2004. (Municipal Affairs)
- **implemented** a new consumer protection law for Albertans who join travel clubs. The additional protection was established after a consultation with more than 1,000 Albertans. (Government Services)
- **distributed** over \$4.9 million to 281 agricultural societies throughout rural Alberta. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **delivered** 42 notices and warnings to businesses in northwest Edmonton in June for infractions involving improper storage of hazardous waste and hazardous recyclables (used oil and solvents). Businesses were also provided information packages designed to promote awareness about proper waste storage. (Environment)
- **signed** the *Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Agreement* with the Government of Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation that will give Alberta access to \$67.12 million in federal funding over five years to help increase the supply of low-cost housing in the province. (Seniors)
- **issued** an Expression of Interest to gather ideas and options on the possibility of building of new law courts in Calgary as a public-private partnership. (Infrastructure)
- **distributed** training manuals and provided advice to provincial government departments on preparing business resumption plans. These plans will ensure that the Alberta government can quickly resume service to Albertans if business is disrupted by an emergency or disaster. (Municipal Affairs)

## Protecting Alberta's Natural and Cultural Heritage

Albertans want to ensure Alberta's awe-inspiring natural beauty and rich cultural heritage is preserved for future generations. In the First Quarter, the Alberta government:

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- **received** national recognition from Attractions Canada for the Remington Carriage Museum, with the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology, the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village and Dinosaur Provincial Park, receiving provincial honours. (Community Development)
- **initiated** a program to Improve Alberta's Fisheries, including reducing the number of commercial fishing operators active in the province. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **worked** with Sustainable Resource Development to coordinate the implementation of fire bans in parks and protected areas and helping with public communications about bans, safe campfire practices and outdoor recreation impacts. (Community Development, Sustainable Resource Development)
- **issued** 123 permits to conduct archaeological investigations in the province. (Community Development)
- **participated** in the "Shifting Gears" program in the Eastern Slopes region of Alberta's foothills, to enforce the responsible enjoyment of recreational areas by campers and off-road vehicle enthusiasts, and promote a climate of environmental stewardship. (Environment)
- **launched** *Wild Alberta*, a project to redevelop the *Habitat Gallery* at the Provincial Museum. The project is being coordinated in partnership with the Federation of Alberta Naturalists. (Community Development)
- **monitored** fire hazard conditions and issued fire bans to protect human life, communities and natural resources. Two fire bans were issued, with a number of amendments regarding locations and area size. One forest closure was launched and subsequently expanded. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **held** discussions with Alberta Infrastructure and Aboriginal veterans who proposed having a monument on the Legislature grounds. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **announced** the expansion of the Fluorescent Tube and Computer Recycling Programs into the private sector. This phase targets Alberta businesses to keep lead from computer monitors and mercury from bulbs out of landfills by recycling. (Environment)
- **provided** specific grant funding to four organizations for National Aboriginal Day celebrations across the province and participated in several events. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)

- **initiated** a proactive mountain pine beetle monitoring program to ensure that any pine logs coming into Alberta from B.C. are beetle-free. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **opened** a new interpretive centre in Fish Creek Provincial Park in partnership with the University of Calgary Department of Archaeology. The centre includes a range of interactive archaeological displays and a working laboratory, giving visitors the chance to learn more about the valley's earliest Aboriginal communities and European settlers. (Community Development)
- **fought** 813 wildfires in Alberta's Forest Protection Area, including the challenging House River fire. These fires burned approximately 479,385 hectares. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **held** the annual Highway Clean-up Campaign. In May, over 7,500 volunteers cleaned the ditches and rights of way along 5,000 kilometres of highway. Volunteers collected over 27,000 bags of garbage or enough to fill 20 average homes from floor to ceiling. (Transportation)
- **held** environmental educational activities including a Clean Air Day in Edson; Connecting Generations to the Land - a Family Festival in Grande Cache, and the Red Deer River Cleanup. (Environment)
- **recognized** over 2,000 Albertans who volunteer almost 100,000 hours of their time to Alberta Parks and Protected Areas during the Alberta Parks' annual volunteer recognition event. (Community Development)
- **appointed** nine members to the board of the new Alberta Forestry Research Institute to develop a strategic research plan and set research priorities to address the sustainability and prosperity of our forestry sector and protect the province's natural beauty. (Sustainable Resource Development)



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