

September 23, 2019

RMA Minister Meeting Update

RMA board members had the opportunity to discuss important issues for rural Alberta with Environment and Parks Minister, Hon. Jason Nixon

RMA had the opportunity to meet with Environment and Parks Minister, the Honourable Jason Nixon last week. Minister meetings are crucial for building relationships with the new government and discussing issues of importance for rural Alberta. The following key areas were discussed with Minister Nixon:

- **Water Act Approvals**
 - Delays in the *Water Act* approvals process have financial implications for municipalities.
 - The importance of reviewing the current *Water Act* approval process to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to improve and streamline the *Water Act* process.
- **Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) Review**
 - The need for a review that focuses on AER accountability. The current ongoing AER review focuses on streamlining the regulatory review process to support industrial development. RMA suggested a second review focused on the AER approval process for license transfers and the AER liability management rating to better prevent insolvencies.
- **Regional Land-use Planning**
 - Delays in regional land-use plans have left municipalities in limbo as they develop their own municipal land-use plans without overarching provincial direction.
 - The importance of reviewing the current land-use framework process to address critiques and revise issues that result in delays and the bogging down of the system.
- **Climate Change**
 - The importance of balancing economic development with environmental responsibility.
- **Caribou Range Planning Update**
 - RMA will be engaged in caribou sub-regional task forces to advise government on land-use planning on a local scale and expressed the importance of working together to balance conservation methods without negatively affecting economic development.
- **Agriculture Plastics and Recycling**
 - While there is an agricultural plastics recycling pilot program, a permanent program for all agricultural plastics is necessary.

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