

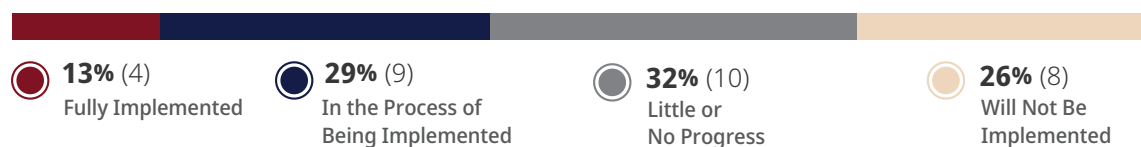
Follow-Up on the 2023 Performance Audit:

Ministry of Natural Resources

Management of Aggregate Resources

// Overall Conclusion

31 Recommended Actions



The Ministry of Natural Resources (Ministry), as of November 19, 2025, has fully implemented 13% of the actions we recommended in our 2023 audit, **Management of Aggregate Resources**. The Ministry has made progress in implementing an additional 29% of the recommended actions.

The Ministry has fully implemented recommendations such as providing on-the-ground staff training and mentorship in district offices, and working with other ministries to ensure that a full review of aggregate applications is conducted within prescribed timelines. The Ministry has also made progress on recommendations to develop and implement processes to address challenges in recruiting, training and retaining staff, as well as to consistently track when compliance assessment reports are received.

However, the Ministry has made little progress on 32% of the recommended actions, including on adopting additional enforcement tools to address non-compliance, and on developing a strategy to ensure that long-dormant sites that have completed extraction are rehabilitated and surrendered. In addition, the Ministry will not be implementing 26% of the recommended actions.

The status of actions taken on each of our recommendations is found in the **Appendix**.

// Status of Actions Taken on Recommendations

We conducted assurance work between March 2025 and June 2025. We obtained written representation from the Ministry of Natural Resources that, effective November 19, 2025, it has provided us with a complete update of the status of the recommendations we made in the original audit two years ago.

1. Ministry Inspections

In our original audit, we found that the Ministry had a significant shortage of experienced inspectors and that inspections were conducted infrequently. For example, we found that three out of four offices that we sampled had inspected fewer than 5% of sites over a five-year period. When inspections were conducted, we found that the resulting reports were often incomplete or of poor quality. We also found that Ministry offices were not properly planning annual inspections.

Recommendation 1: Action Item 1

To provide proper inspection coverage for aggregate pits and quarries, and ensure compliance with the *Aggregate Resources Act*, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry:

- develop and implement processes to address the challenges identified in recruiting, training, and retaining staff serving as aggregate inspectors;

Status:  In the process of being implemented by winter 2025/2026.

Details

We found that the Ministry was in the process of improving outreach materials to attract new aggregate inspectors, including posting new information on how to become an aggregate inspector on the Ministry website. The Ministry is also developing a divisional recruitment outreach strategy to both inform how it conducts outreach and assess its effectiveness. The Ministry plans to implement the strategy by winter 2025/26. As well, the Ministry has participated in several job fairs to promote Ministry positions, and plans to continue doing so.

In May 2024, the Ontario Public Service launched an exit survey for staff, which the Ministry encourages staff to complete when leaving. The Ministry has also developed its own exit survey.

The Ministry plans to develop a process to review and use the information provided through the survey by winter 2025/2026 to assist with staff retention.

We also found that the Ministry had adopted some strategies to improve staff training. The Ministry established regular Community of Practice virtual meetings. The Community of Practice is a group of staff who share knowledge and best practices across the aggregates program. As of February 2025, over 16 hours of additional aggregates training had been delivered through these meetings. The meetings were recorded and have been made available for viewing by current and future staff. The Ministry also updated the training requirements for designating inspectors and implemented a new training and accreditation procedure in February 2025.

Recommendation 1: Action Item 2

- provide on-the-ground training and mentorship in district offices.

Status:  **Fully implemented.**

Details

We found that the Ministry made changes to the training requirements for staff to receive their aggregate inspector designation. In February 2025, the Ministry launched a new training and accreditation procedure that includes opportunities for both mentorship and experiential learning. As indicated in the first action item, the Ministry holds regular Community of Practice virtual meetings through which experienced staff provide mentorship to staff in district offices.

Recommendation 2: Action Item 1

To maximize inspection resources for higher-priority aggregate pits and quarries, and better ensure compliance with the *Aggregate Resources Act*, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry require every district office to develop an inspection plan before the start of each inspection season that sets out a sufficient number of planned inspections according to priority level, and to follow the plan when conducting inspections for that season.

Status:  **In the process of being implemented by September 2026.**

Details

We found that the Ministry has established an internal working group to focus on compliance planning and risk management, including inspection planning. For the 2025/26 fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, the Ministry set a goal that 20% of all licensed or permitted sites across all regions would be inspected. If this goal is reached, it would mean that all sites would be inspected over a five-year period. This goal is to be factored into district-level annual compliance and inspection planning.

To assist districts in how they plan and prioritize inspections, the Ministry updated and finalized its risk assessment framework. The Ministry recognized that some districts would face challenges in achieving the 20% goal due to the shortage of designated inspectors in those districts. The Ministry plans to analyze the 2025/26 compliance data to determine whether an increase in the number of trained inspectors is required for future years. The Ministry expects to complete this work by September 2026.

Recommendation 3: Action Item 1

So that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has accurate and reliable inspection records to inform compliance activities and program improvements, we recommend that the Ministry develop and implement processes to ensure that inspection records are filled out consistently, completely, and properly.

Status:  **Little or no progress.**

Details

We found that the Ministry updated its training program for aggregate inspectors. Part of the program focuses on training inspectors to accurately and properly complete inspection reports. The training includes group exercises on properly completing inspection reports. As well, inspection reports is a topic that has been discussed through the regular Community of Practice virtual meetings (described in **Recommendation 1, Action Item 1**). At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry had not implemented processes or controls, beyond training, to ensure that inspection records are filled out consistently, completely and properly. The Ministry advised our Office that it will consider incorporating quality control processes, such as reviews or audits of reports, as part of its broader compliance initiatives.

2. Enforcement of Non-Compliance

In our original audit, we found that while there was a high rate of non-compliance within the aggregate sector, the Ministry rarely pursued charges. We also found that the Ministry's enforcement tools and practices were too weak to deter violations. For example, the Ministry rarely pursues charges for unpaid fees and does not charge interest on unpaid fees.

When fines are imposed on aggregate operators, municipalities are responsible for collecting them. We found that the Ministry did not have a mechanism through which it would be notified by municipalities of unpaid fines, so that it could suspend or deny an aggregate permit or licence.

Recommendation 4: Action Item 1

So that compliance with the *Aggregate Resources Act* is effectively encouraged and enforced, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry:

- centrally track annual compliance data based on the results of Ministry inspections and the reports from The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation;

Status:  In the process of being implemented by December 2026.

Details

We found that in March 2024, the Ministry began reviewing its internal information and tracking systems, and identified the Natural Resource Information Portal (NRIP) as a potential tool that could be used to centrally track compliance and enforcement information. At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry was in the process of determining which functionalities needed to be developed within NRIP. The Ministry plans to add these capabilities into NRIP and transition to using them by December 2026.

Recommendation 4: Action Item 2

- review the Ministry's processes and practices for district office staff to make referrals to the Enforcement Branch and, based on the outcome of the review, implement any changes to its compliance and enforcement policies and practices;

Status:  In the process of being implemented by winter 2025/26.

Details

We found that the Ministry's Regional Operations Division, along with its Enforcement Branch, launched a project to improve the referral process. As part of this project, in January 2025, management from each group met to discuss potential improvements. At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry had drafted a directive that provides an overview of the referral process and was testing an online tool for referrals. The Ministry plans to finalize the directive and tool, and provide training, by winter 2025/26.

Recommendation 4: Action Item 3

- charge interest for overdue annual fees and royalties;

Status:  Little or no progress.

Details

We found that the Ministry continues not to charge interest for overdue annual fees and royalties. The Ministry advised our Office that the Province has paused charging interest on fees and royalties. The Ministry noted that the Province will review this decision at a later date. The Ministry indicated that in the interim, it will continue to follow up on overdue accounts and use the compliance tools available under the *Aggregate Resources Act*.

Recommendation 4: Action Item 4

- review and adopt additional enforcement tools needed to address non-compliance;

Status:  Little or no progress.

Details

We found that the Ministry had not yet considered additional enforcement tools to address non-compliance. The Ministry noted that additional tools would require government direction. At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry was exploring ways to increase its use of existing enforcement tools, including suspending licences or permits.

Recommendation 4: Action Item 5

- determine options to further improve fine payments to municipalities.

Status:  Will not be implemented.

Details

We found that the Ministry will not take any steps to further improve fine payments to municipalities. The Ministry noted that the responsibility for collecting fine payments rests with municipalities and that municipalities have other tools that can be used, including using third-party collection agencies.

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario continues to support the implementation of this recommendation.

3. Self-Inspection and Self-Reporting by Operators

In our original audit, we found that the Ministry did not have processes in place to ensure that the self-reports submitted by aggregate operators were timely and complete. We also found that the Ministry did not enforce suspensions for those operators that did not submit reports on time, or at all.

Recommendation 5: Action Item 1

So that annual compliance assessment reports serve as an effective tool for ensuring compliance with the *Aggregate Resources Act*, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry implement and standardize processes across all districts to:

- consistently track when compliance assessment reports are received;

Status:  In the process of being implemented by winter 2025/26.

Details

As discussed in **Recommendation 4, Action Item 1**, in March 2024, the Ministry initiated a review of its information and tracking systems, and identified opportunities for integrating compliance information into its NRIP system. For the 2025 submission period, the Ministry developed and implemented an interactive form that allowed aggregate producers to fill out and submit compliance assessment reports electronically on NRIP. This will assist with tracking compliance assessment reports received through NRIP.

The Ministry also updated training materials on compliance assessment reports for staff, and recommended that district offices track the receipt of compliance assessment reports, as some reports are still received by email or hand delivered. The Ministry advised us that it is working on this initiative, with the goal of fully implementing the recommendation by winter 2025/26.

Recommendation 5: Action Item 2

- review compliance assessment reports in a timely and thorough manner to identify reports that are late, incomplete or improperly completed;

Status:  **Fully implemented.**

Details

We found that the Ministry implemented improved processes to review compliance assessment reports. In particular, the Ministry developed additional training to further educate staff on how to properly review a compliance assessment report. In addition, the topic of reviewing compliance assessment reports was discussed at two Community of Practice virtual meetings (see **Recommendation 1, Action 1**). These meetings were held during the month following the final submission date for aggregate operators to submit their reports, which is the period in which staff should be reviewing the reports.

Recommendation 5: Action Item 3

- enforce suspensions of operators who do not comply with the reporting requirements, and reflect that status in internal Ministry systems.

Status:  **In the process of being implemented by winter 2025/26.**

Details

We found that the Ministry implemented improved processes to enforce suspensions of non-compliant operators. In particular, the Ministry developed additional training to further educate staff on the compliance options to take against aggregate approval holders who fail to submit a compliance assessment report.

The Ministry also completed a preliminary analysis to identify aggregate sites that may have been operating while under automatic suspension for failing to submit a report. The Ministry conducted the analysis by comparing production reports against submitted compliance assessment reports. The Ministry is also working on improving enforcement referral work to contribute to more effective and timely enforcement of suspensions (see **Recommendation 4, Action Item 2**). The Ministry expects to complete this work by winter 2025/26.

The Ministry acknowledged that additional work is required to confirm which sites were operated while suspended. The Ministry informed our Office that it will prioritize inspecting sites suspected of operating while suspended. It also indicated that it will take steps to address non-compliance, including issuing warning letters and, where appropriate, will recommend sites for investigation by its Enforcement Branch.

4. Fees to Extract Aggregates Likely Too Low to Cover Program Costs

In our original audit, we found that while the Ministry aims to recover the full cost of all services it provides for the aggregate program, the fees it charged likely did not cover the Ministry's full costs, including its inspection and enforcement activities.

Recommendation 6: Action Items 1 and 2

To effectively deliver the mandate of the *Aggregate Resources Act*, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry:

- assess the Province's full cost of operating its current aggregate program, as well as the additional resources necessary to adequately enforce aggregate policies; and
- explore options to recover the full program costs, including those related to enhanced enforcement.

Status:  **Will not be implemented.**

Details

The Ministry advised us that it does not plan to assess the Province's full cost of operating the current aggregate program, or explore options to recover the full program costs. This would require direction from the Province to do so, and no direction has been provided. The Ministry noted that fees were updated in 2017 and that, at that time, approximately 80% of the program costs were recovered. It also noted that fees are adjusted yearly with the consumer price index.

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario continues to support the implementation of this recommendation.

5. Final Rehabilitation

In our original audit, we found that the Ministry did not have processes in place to ensure that aggregate sites are rehabilitated in a timely manner once extraction is complete. We also found that the Ministry does not require long-term monitoring to confirm that rehabilitation efforts are successful. Further, we found that the Ministry did not have processes to ensure that legacy aggregate sites on Crown land have been, or are being, rehabilitated.

Recommendation 7: Action Item 1

To give credence to the Provincial Policy Statement's recognition that aggregate extraction is an interim land use, and to ensure that disturbed land is returned to productive use in a timely manner that accommodates subsequent land uses, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry develop and implement a strategy to assess sites that have been dormant for more than 10 years and ensure that sites that have completed extraction are rehabilitated and surrendered.

Status:  **Little or no progress.**

Details

We found that the Ministry has identified the percentage of sites with no reported production within the last five and 10 years, but has made little progress on developing a strategy to assess whether these sites have completed extraction and should be rehabilitated and subsequently surrendered. The Ministry has internally identified options to ensure that resource availability is maximized while holding approval holders accountable for site rehabilitation. At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry has not chosen which option to pursue and has no set date for implementation.

Recommendation 8: Action Item 1

To help ensure that final rehabilitation measures at aggregate pits and quarries have been effective, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry develop and implement procedures for confirming, at the time of surrender of approvals, that final rehabilitation measures have been successful and have not resulted in any unintended consequences.

Status:  **In the process of being implemented by winter 2025/26.**

Details

We found that the Ministry has reviewed its 2006 procedure for the surrender of aggregate approvals and updated this procedure to align it with the current legislative and regulatory framework. At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry was moving the updated draft of the procedure through the final review process, with an aim to have it finalized by winter 2025/26. Additionally, the Ministry continues to train compliance staff to ensure that rehabilitation is completed as per the approved site plan.

Recommendation 9: Action Item 1

So that risks associated with legacy aggregate sites on Crown land are addressed, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry work with The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation to:

- update and clarify responsibility for rehabilitating legacy sites on Crown land;

Status:  **Little or no progress.**

Details

During our follow-up, the Ministry indicated to us that it is working to identify abandoned aggregate sites on Crown land (see **Recommendation 9, Action Item 2**). A change in responsibility for rehabilitating these legacy sites would require an update to the indenture agreement between The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation and the Ministry. This would require government direction for this work to proceed. As such, the Ministry has not had any discussions with The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation to update and clarify responsibility for rehabilitating legacy sites on Crown land.

Recommendation 9: Action Item 2

- identify and assess legacy sites on Crown land, including the level of risk to public safety, and undertake the rehabilitation of any high-risk sites where feasible.

Status:  **Little or no progress.**

Details

We found that, in March 2025, the Ministry held preliminary discussions with the Ministry of Energy and Mines on ways to retrieve information from the Abandoned Mines Information System (AMIS). AMIS is a database that contains information on known abandoned mine sites on both Crown and private lands. It includes information on aggregate sites that may have been abandoned and never rehabilitated. The Ministry stated that obtaining the AMIS information is necessary to begin strategizing implementation of this action item.

At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry had not set a date to review the AMIS data to identify potentially abandoned aggregate sites on Crown land. As such, the Ministry has not assessed legacy sites on Crown land or, where feasible, undertaken rehabilitation of any high-risk sites.

6. Supply and Demand for Aggregates

In our original audit, we found that the Ministry had not provided the public with complete and accurate information about the supply and demand for aggregates in Ontario.

Recommendation 10: Action Item 1

To improve public trust, better inform government decision-making and support more informed discussions with and among stakeholders, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry:

- implement processes to obtain accurate and complete data, including on the amounts, types and quality of available supply of aggregates;

Status:  **Will not be implemented.**

Details

We found that, while the Ministry took some steps to improve the accuracy of data on total aggregates, it has not fully implemented this recommendation and does not intend to take further steps to do so. Our Office only assesses a recommended action as fully implemented when all aspects of it have been implemented. We continue to support full implementation of this recommendation.

The Ministry released an updated consultant study in October 2024 of aggregate supply and demand in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region around Toronto. In contrast to a 2016 study, which examined only select sites, the 2024 study examined the total remaining aggregate reserves within all licensed sites in the region. This improved the estimate of the total amount of aggregate supply.

We found, however, that the study did not improve the accuracy of data on the quality of available reserves. This information is needed to help the Province understand how much of the total aggregates is usable and make informed decisions about managing aggregate resources.

The 2024 study noted that limitations, based on the study approach used, tend to “exaggerate or overestimate” the aggregate reserves available. The study estimated that the total remaining reserves for licensed sites in the region is 6.2 billion tonnes. This estimate includes materials that may be of low quality, uneconomical to extract or unmarketable.

As part of the study, the Ministry sent out a voluntary survey asking members of the aggregate industry about the quality of their remaining reserves. The Ministry received 105 responses, each representing an active site in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region.

The study concluded, based on the results of this survey, that there is a shortage of high-quality aggregates in the region. However, the study recommended that “a better understanding of the quality of licensed reserves, and the geographic distribution of high-quality reserves, is necessary to fully appreciate the status of the reserve supply.”

The Ministry told our Office that it is satisfied with the results of the study, and that the only way to address its data limitations would be to conduct a costly site-by-site field verification of hundreds of sites.

There are other potential ways to improve the data on aggregate quality. For example, the consultant suggested that a system to track data that is reported by large aggregate producers on aggregate quality and quantity would be extremely valuable to create a more accurate assessment of remaining reserves. Further, the Ministry could expand the requirements it has for industry to provide such data, while maintaining corporate confidentiality.

Recommendation 10: Action Item 2

- establish a regular interval for updating supply and demand data;

Status:  Will not be implemented.

Details

The Ministry advised us that while it recognizes the importance of updating supply and demand data, and has undertaken periodic updates in 2009, 2016 and 2024, it will not establish a regular interval for doing so.

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario continues to support the implementation of this recommended action.

Recommendation 10: Action Item 3

- regularly publish all non-confidential aggregate supply and demand data online, including information on estimated amounts, types and quality of supply.

Status:  Fully implemented.

Details

We found that the Ministry published a detailed summary of the information it received through the October 2024 aggregate supply and demand study (see **Recommendation 10, Action Item 1**), and made the full report available upon request.

7. Recycled Aggregate

In our original audit, we noted that the use of recycled aggregates can, if of sufficient quality, reduce the need for virgin aggregate from new or expanded pits and quarries. We found that the Ministry had a policy to “encourage the reduction, reuse and recycling of aggregate materials.” Despite the policy, we found that the Ministry lacked up-to-date information on how much recycled aggregate is used annually. We also found that the low fee charged by the Ministry to extract virgin material provided little incentive to use recycled aggregate, and that the Ministry had made little progress in addressing the barriers that prevent a greater uptake of recycled aggregate.

Recommendation 11: Action Items 1 and 2

To make informed decisions regarding recycled aggregate, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry work with other relevant ministries to:

- implement a system to track major sources of recycled aggregate supply and use in Ontario; and
- regularly report publicly on summarized results.

Status:  **Will not be implemented.**

Details

The Ministry advised us that it will not be implementing a system to track major sources of recycled aggregate supply and use, or regularly report on summarized results, as the production and use of recycled aggregates outside of pits and quarries are beyond its mandate.

Given the Ministry's lead role in managing the province's aggregates, the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario continues to support the implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation 12: Action Item 1

To support the increased use of recycled aggregate and responsible recycling processes, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry work with stakeholders to develop and implement a plan to reduce educational, informational and financial barriers and establish best practices for the production and use of recycled aggregate.

Status:  **Will not be implemented.**

Details

The Ministry advised us that it will not develop or implement a plan to reduce barriers or establish best practices for the production and use of recycled aggregate, as the production and use of recycled aggregates outside of pits and quarries are beyond its mandate.

Given the Ministry's lead role in managing the province's aggregates, the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario continues to support the implementation of this recommendation.

8. Approvals for Aggregate Licences and Permits

In our original audit, we found that while aggregate applications undergo external technical review by other ministries and agencies with specialized expertise, these reviews were not always done in a timely manner, or at all. We also found that the Ministry did not have processes to consider the cumulative impacts of multiple nearby aggregate operations when considering applications for approvals. The Ministry also did not have processes to ensure that self-filed amendments were properly reviewed to confirm regulatory compliance.

Recommendation 13: Action Item 1

So that important expert input from other agencies is incorporated into aggregate licences and permits to mitigate the negative impacts from proposed new aggregate pits and quarries, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry work with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs; and any other commenting agencies to ensure a full review of aggregate licence and permit applications within the prescribed timelines.

Status:  Fully implemented.

Details

We found that the Ministry met with a number of ministries and commenting agencies to ensure a full review of the aggregate approval process, including the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, and Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. During these meetings, the Ministry outlined the aggregate application requirements and review process and discussed best practices for agencies to use during the aggregate application comment period. In addition, staff in the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness set up a working group that meets quarterly to discuss any implementation issues related to the aggregate resource standards.

Recommendation 14: Action Item 1

To minimize the cumulative impacts of aggregate pits and quarries on the environment and nearby communities, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry develop a framework to incorporate consideration of cumulative impacts of aggregate operations when making decisions on new or amended approvals.

Status:  Little or no progress.

Details

We found that the Ministry has made little progress in developing a framework that incorporates cumulative impacts of aggregate operations on aggregate approvals. The Ministry indicated that it was gathering information on approaches to assess cumulative effects across Ministry business lines, such as the aggregates program, as it relates to Indigenous and treaty rights. This work includes seeking out best practices in other jurisdictions. The Ministry indicated that it is moving forward to develop a cumulative effects framework as it relates to Indigenous and treaty rights, which it intends to be operational by December 2027. Such a framework would not cover cumulative impacts on all non-Indigenous nearby communities.

Recommendation 15: Action Item 1

To ensure compliance with Ontario Regulation 244/97 under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry create and implement a system to review all submitted self-filed amendments to ensure the proposed activities are permissible.

Status:  **Little or no progress.**

Details

The Ministry informed us that it will be implementing our recommendation to create and implement a system to review submitted self-filed amendments, with March 2026 as the goal for completion. The Ministry indicated that a likely possible approach for ensuring compliance in the future may be through auditing self-filed amendments. At the time of our follow-up, the Ministry could not confirm any specifics.

9. Information Systems and Policies

In our original audit, we found that the Ministry's outdated information systems made it difficult for staff to perform their duties and for applicants of aggregate approvals to track the status of their submissions. We also found that outdated policies caused confusion and delay in the approval process.

Recommendation 16: Action Item 1

To deliver the services of its aggregate program more efficiently, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry integrate all existing approval information, as well as compliance information, into the Natural Resources Information Portal [NRIP] in a timely manner.

Status:  **In the process of being implemented by December 2026.**

Details

We found that the Ministry has deployed an interactive compliance assessment report form and has also established a management committee to help integrate approval and compliance information into NRIP (see **Recommendation 4, Action Item 1**). The Ministry stated that it will integrate parts of the aggregate program into NRIP, focusing on user needs, compliance and document management. Work is expected to continue through to December 2026.

Recommendation 17: Action Item 1

To provide clearer guidance to staff about how to implement the *Aggregate Resources Act*, and to applicants about their obligations during the application process, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry update all sections of the *Aggregate Resources Policies and Procedures Manual* by 2025, and release updated sections as completed.

Status:  **In the process of being implemented** (Ministry could not provide an estimated completion date).

Details

We found that the Ministry has made some progress in updating some sections of the Aggregate Resources Policies and Procedures Manual. In June 2024, the Ministry completed and publicly posted a new policy regarding amendments to the existing aggregate procedures. This policy combines and replaces 14 previous policies and procedures into a single comprehensive policy and clarifies guidance on the requirements of the aggregate resources framework.

Throughout 2025, the Ministry plans to release several new policies for consultation and to review and release several procedural documents. As there are more than 150 policies and procedures that need to be reviewed by the Ministry, the Ministry anticipates that updates will continue to occur over the next several years in a phased approach.

10. Ministry Lacked Performance Measurement Framework for Aggregate Program

In our original audit, we found that the Ministry had not developed a performance measurement framework, nor performance indicators to measure outcomes of the aggregate program as they relate to the purposes of the *Aggregate Resources Act*.

Recommendation 18: Action Items 1 and 2

To assess the effectiveness of its aggregate program at achieving intended objectives, improve public transparency about the impacts of aggregate operations on the environment and nearby communities, and to drive continuous improvement, we recommend that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry:

- develop a performance measurement framework for its aggregate program, including meaningful, measurable, and outcome-based performance indicators with targets and timelines; and
- regularly report to the public on the status of these performance indicators and targets.

Status:  Little or no progress.

Details

We found that, at the time of our follow-up, the Ministry had implemented two service standards for the aggregates program. The first standard is to advise applicants as to whether their application is complete within 25 days of receipt, and the second is to provide written comments to an applicant within 60 days from the start of the consultation period if the Ministry has any concerns. Both standards were developed to comply with the *At Your Service Act, 2022*. This law requires the Ministry to establish service standards for issuing all licences and permits, and to track and publicly report on them.






The Ministry advised us that it is tracking performance against these standards and planned to publicly report on them in 2025. Tracking and reporting on the two service standards will provide transparency to the regulated community about the Ministry's adherence to legislated requirements.

The Ministry also advised us that staff are exploring potential performance targets related to compliance activities, but no finalized targets yet exist.

We found, however, that the Ministry has not developed and finalized an overall performance measurement framework or outcome-based performance indicators to improve public transparency about the impacts of aggregate operations on the environment and nearby communities.

// Appendix

Recommendation Status Overview

		Fully Implemented 	In the Process of Being Implemented 	Little or No Progress 	Will Not Be Implemented 	No Longer Applicable 
Recommendation 1	2	1	1			
Recommendation 2	1		1			
Recommendation 3	1			1		
Recommendation 4	5		2	2	1	
Recommendation 5	3	1	2			
Recommendation 6	2				2	
Recommendation 7	1			1		
Recommendation 8	1		1			
Recommendation 9	2			2		
Recommendation 10	3	1			2	
Recommendation 11	2				2	
Recommendation 12	1				1	
Recommendation 13	1	1				
Recommendation 14	1			1		
Recommendation 15	1			1		
Recommendation 16	1		1			
Recommendation 17	1		1			
Recommendation 18	2			2		
Total	31	4	9	10	8	0
%	100	13	29	32	26	0