



RESPONSIBLE MINING

Alberta Water Supplies are Strongly Protected by Regulation

There has been much discussion surrounding water availability and protection in Alberta.

To be clear, Alberta regulations do not allow water resources to be threatened, and anyone seeking to access water must do so within Alberta's water management rules.

It is simply not true to say that new projects in southern Alberta threaten the water supply of the Oldman River Basin. Alberta has strongly governed water withdrawals and use in the region for decades and this protection will not change going forward.

In 2003, the Oldman River Basin Water Allocation Order reserved 11,000 acre-feet of water each year for use within Alberta.

The water was reserved by the Government of Alberta for Irrigation, Municipal, Commercial, Recreation and Industrial use.

At the end of 2020, only 16% of the water reserved in 2003 has been assigned to Alberta users.

In 2007, the Oldman River Basin was closed to new water allocation licenses. The Bow, Oldman and South Saskatchewan River Basin Water Allocation Order allows new water allocations only for First Nations, conservation and storage to protect the environment and availability for existing water users.

The three most important points of the 2003 and 2007 Water Allocation Orders are that:

- Alberta has set a "hard cap" on the total amount of water that can be withdrawn from the Oldman River Basin. The Government of Alberta has repeatedly said this amount will not change under any circumstance.
- The Priority System – based on a "first in time, first in right" rule – means that older license holders will always get their water before newer license holders.
- All water allocations in Alberta, regardless of age, are subject to water flow and level objectives (called "instream objectives" or "IO") meaning that if river flows are low, water cannot be taken.