

SAWRIDGE FIRST NATION

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACT

Introduced at a General Assembly held: June 13, 2026

First Reading: June 13, 2026

Second Reading: July 11, 2026

Third Reading: August 8, 2026

Coming into Effect: August 8, 2026

Whereas the health, safety, and wellbeing of Sawridge members and the Sawridge community is a primary concern of Sawridge First Nation;

Whereas Sawridge First Nation is the steward of Sawridge Lands and protecting Sawridge Lands from emergencies is a priority of Sawridge First Nation;

Whereas Sawridge First Nation has the inherent responsibilities, rights and powers, pursuant to Sawridge's sovereign authority, from time immemorial, to pass laws to mitigate, prevent, plan for, and respond to emergency situations for the safety of Sawridge members and Sawridge Lands, waters, and natural resources;

Whereas Sawridge First Nation's inherent right to govern ourselves was recognized in Treaty #8 which was entered into between our ancestors and the Crown as original signatories;

Whereas climate change threatens the security, health and wellbeing of Sawridge members and Sawridge Lands, as evident through increasing wildfires, floods, and climate emergencies throughout Sawridge Land and the world;

NOW THEREFORE the Assembly hereby enacts as follows:

PART 1 -

Citation

1. This Act may be cited as the "Sawridge Emergency Management Act".

Definitions

2. In this Act, including the preamble, the following definitions shall apply:

"Chief" means the Chief of the Sawridge First Nation, as selected in accordance with the Constitution of the Sawridge First Nation with the authority delegated by the Members of the First Nation;

"Council" means the governing body of the Sawridge First Nation as selected in accordance with the Constitution of the Sawridge First Nation and is composed of the Chief and Councillors;

"Declaration of a State of Emergency" means a declaration of a state of emergency made pursuant to this Act;

"Disaster" means an event or combination of events that has or could result in serious harm to the safety, health of people on Sawridge Lands, or widespread damage to property or the Natural World, including but not limited to fires or floods;

"Emergency" means an event, including a Disaster, that requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the safety, health or welfare of people or to limit damage to property or to the Natural World;

“Emergency Operations Centre” means any emergency coordination centre established by Council pursuant to this Act;

“Emergency Plan” is a written, actionable guide that outlines how individuals, households, or organisations will respond to unexpected Disasters;

“Notice” means multichannel communications regarding a Declaration of Emergency, and includes digital platforms regularly accessible to Members and Residents;

"Offence" means an offence under a Sawridge Law of the Sawridge First Nation;

“Resident” means a person who holds a permit to reside on Sawridge Lands or a person who is temporarily on Sawridge Lands pursuant to a Sawridge Law of the Sawridge First Nation;

“Sawridge First Nation Council Resolution” means a resolution passed by Council in accordance with the Sawridge Constitution;

“Sawridge Lands” are those lands set out as “Sawridge Lands” in the Constitution of the Sawridge First Nation and includes waters within or adjacent to Sawridge Lands;

“Sawridge Law” means a law of Sawridge First Nation passed by Sawridge First Nation, in accordance with the Constitution of the Sawridge First Nation, and includes any regulations enacted under the Sawridge Law.

PART 2 - ADMINISTRATION

Role of the Council of the Sawridge First Nation

3. Council, or its delegate, may exercise any emergency powers available to Sawridge First Nation under Sawridge Law, federal, or provincial law, including:
 - (a) issuing orders under this Act, including making a Declaration of a State of Emergency;
 - (b) approving an Emergency Plan;
 - (c) entering into agreements on behalf of Sawridge First Nation to facilitate implementation of an Emergency Plan;
 - (d) coordinating the delivery of emergency aid;
 - (e) creating an Emergency Management Advisory Group, or other advisory groups, to assist in the implementation of this Act;
 - (f) appointing a Director of Emergency Management or, engaging such other persons to assist Council in the implementation of this Act.

4. An order issued under this Act must be made by Sawridge First Nation Council Resolution, except for as otherwise provided for in this Act.

Council may delegate

5. Council may delegate, in writing, the performance of any of Council's duties or the exercise of any of Council's powers under this Act to:
 - (a) an advisory group established by Council; or
 - (b) an independent contractor, entity, or employee of Sawridge First Nation.
6. Despite section 5, Council must not delegate its power to enact a regulation under this Act. For greater certainty, this includes any power to revoke the delegation of such duties or powers under this Act.

Role of Chief where quorum not possible

7. The Chief may, where it is not possible to assemble a quorum of Council, and provided the Chief has made every effort to do so:
 - (a) where necessary or advisable, make, extend or cancel a Declaration of a State of Emergency in accordance with this Act;
 - (b) authorize or direct one or more response measures authorized under section 26 while Declaration of a State of Emergency is in effect; and
 - (c) exercise any other power of Council described in this Act.

Role of Director of Emergency Management

8. Council will appoint:
 - (a) a Director of Emergency Management who may be member of Council; and
 - (b) a Deputy Director of Emergency Management who may be a member of Council.
9. The Director of Emergency Management, unless varied by Council, will have the following duties:
 - (a) developing, maintaining, and coordinating an Emergency Plan for Sawridge First Nation in accordance with this Act, provincial, and federal law;
 - (b) coordinating emergency services, departments, and external partners to ensure efficient and coordinated emergency response operations;
 - (c) maintaining and advising on compliance with provincial and federal emergency standards and programs;

- (d) reporting to Council on matters of emergency preparedness, coordination, developing information, among any other matter of importance to Council related to this Act; and
 - (e) assisting Council in developing regulations and policies for the implementation of this Act, including emergency preparedness.
- 10. The Director of Emergency Management is accountable to Council and must meet the requirements set by Council in the exercise of their functions.
- 11. The Deputy Director of Emergency Management will assume the duties of the Director of Emergency Management in the event the Director of Emergency Management is unable to do so or requires assistance in the fulfillment of their duties.

Role of Emergency Management Advisory Group

- 12. Council may establish an Emergency Management Advisory Group and determine its composition, which may include:
 - (a) the Director of Emergency Management;
 - (b) the Deputy Director of Emergency Management;
 - (c) members of Council;
 - (d) Sawridge Elders and other Sawridge members; or
 - (e) such other persons as determined by Council.
- 13. The Emergency Management Advisory Group may have the following responsibilities:
 - (a) advising Council on matters of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for disasters and other emergencies, as designated by Council;
 - (b) providing strategic direction to Council on the implementation of this Act;
 - (c) identifying funding opportunities and partnerships for Sawridge First Nation; and
 - (d) any other activities and responsibilities as determined by Council.

Accountability

- 14. The Emergency Management Advisory Group, or any other advisory group established under this Act, shall be accountable to Council and must meet any requirements set by Council in the exercise of its functions.

PART 3 - PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Declaration of a State of Emergency

15. Where necessary or advisable, Council may make an order to declare, extend or cancel a Declaration of a State of Emergency on all or any part of Sawridge Lands.
16. While a Declaration of a State of Emergency is in effect, Council may do all acts and implement all procedures that it considers necessary or advisable to prevent, respond to or alleviate the effects of an Emergency, health hazard, environmental emergency or Disaster, including any or all of the response measures which may be implemented by a local authority under provincial or federal law.
17. Upon making a Declaration of a State of Emergency, Council will provide notice to:
 - (a) Sawridge Members and Residents;
 - (b) Provincial or federal partners as required; and
 - (c) such other persons, partners, or governments Council determines requires notification.
18. A Notice of a Declaration of a State of Emergency will include the following information:
 - (a) a description of the nature of the Disaster or Emergency;
 - (b) the area to which the Declaration of a State of Emergency applies;
 - (c) the duration of the Declaration of a State of Emergency and the copied text of section 19 of this Act; and
 - (d) information directing to trusted sources of information and resources.
19. A Declaration of a State of Emergency expires at the earlier of the following:
 - (a) at the end of 7 days or according to provincial or federal regulations;
 - (b) when the order is terminated by Council.
20. Council may renew a Declaration of a State of Emergency by Sawridge First Nation Council Resolution.
21. At the expiration or termination of a Declaration of a State of Emergency, Council will:
 - (a) provide Notice to Sawridge members and residents and include the following:
 - (i) confirmation that the Declaration of a State of Emergency was ended by expiration or by order;

- (ii) when Sawridge members and residents may return to Sawridge Lands previously subject to the Declaration of a State of Emergency; and
 - (iii) any other information, including conditions, rules for re-entry, and advisories as determined necessary or advisable by Council.
- (b) notify provincial and federal partners of the termination of the Declaration of the State of Emergency in compliance with provincial or federal standards.

Emergency Operations Centre

22. Under a Declaration of a State of Emergency, Council may establish and maintain an Emergency Operations Centre at a location determined by Council.

PART 4 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

Regulations

23. Council may make regulations which it considers necessary or advisable for the implementation of this Act.
24. Without limiting section 23, Council may make regulations respecting:
- (a) implementation of an Emergency Plan;
 - (b) communication and providing Notice;
 - (c) the establishment or operation of an Emergency Operations Centre as established under this Act; and
 - (d) the establishment or implementation of a disaster financial assistance fund for Sawridge Members.

Emergency Powers

25. Upon issuing a Declaration of a State of Emergency, Council may issue any emergency order necessary or advisable to prevent or limit the loss of life, harm, or damage to the safety, health, or welfare of the Sawridge community, property and environment.
26. Without limiting section 25, Council may issue emergency orders respecting:
- (a) use of any real or personal property necessary to prevent, combat, or alleviate the effects of any Emergency;
 - (b) control, permit, or prohibit travel to or from any area or on any road, street or highway within the Sawridge Lands;
 - (c) cause the evacuation of persons and provide for the adequate protection and care thereof;

- (d) control or prevent the movement of people from any area that poses a risk to health and safety, including exposure to a contaminating disease;
- (e) authorize the entry into any building, or upon any land, without warrant;
- (f) cause the demolition or removal of any trees, structures, or crops in order to prevent, combat, or alleviate the effects of an Emergency;
- (g) authorize the procurement and distribution of essential resources and the provision of essential services;
- (h) regulate the distribution and availability of essential goods, services, and resources;
- (i) expend such sums as are necessary to pay expenses caused by the Emergency; and
- (j) any other such action as is deemed necessary by Council to respond to circumstances of the emergency being confronted.

PART 5 - COMPENSATION AND RECOVERY

Compensation for loss

27. If a person suffers a loss of personal or real property as a result of any action taken by Council, or a delegate under this Act, in preventing, combating, or alleviating the effects of an Emergency or Disaster, the Sawridge First Nation may compensate that person for all or part of the loss.

Recovery of costs

28. If an Emergency, health hazard or a Disaster is threatened or caused in whole or in part by the acts or omissions of a person and expenditures are made by Sawridge First Nation to prevent, respond to or alleviate the effects of the Emergency, health hazard or Disaster,
- (a) Council may deliver a demand to that person requiring them to pay to Sawridge First Nation the portion of Sawridge First Nation's expenditures attributable to their acts or omissions; and
 - (b) that person must pay to Sawridge First Nation the amount specified in the demand within the time specified in the demand.
29. A demand made under section 28 will,
- (a) describe the named person's acts or omissions that threatened, caused, or contributed to the Emergency, health hazard, or Disaster;
 - (b) detail the portion of Sawridge First Nation's expenditures attributable to the named person's acts or omissions; and
 - (c) specify the date by which the amount demanded must be paid.

30. No later than 14 days after receipt of the demand, the named person may request a meeting with Council to review and respond to the demand.

Dispute Resolution

31. If a person named in the demand disputes the order, in whole or in part, they may seek review under the Sawridge First Nation Constitution or another applicable Sawridge Law.

Offences

32. A person who:
- (a) contravenes this Act, or
 - (b) interferes with or obstructs any person in the exercise of any power or the performance of any duty conferred or imposed under this Act, commits an Offence which may be enforced by fine or other penalty in accordance with Sawridge Laws.
33. If Council finds a person has committed an Offence, Council may:
- (a) issue a compliance order compelling the person to immediately refrain from the activity in violation of this Act;
 - (b) issue a fine not exceeding \$1,000; and
 - (c) take any action necessary and reasonable to remedy the Offence.

Monies Owning

34. A fine, penalty or compensation order issued under this Act does not relieve a person from any other potential liability.
35. An amount demanded under this Act will be a debt owing to Sawridge First Nation by the named person and may be collected by Council.
36. Nothing in this Act prevents Sawridge First Nation from seeking enforcement of any fine, penalty, and order issued under the Act from a court of competent jurisdiction.

Liability

37. Sawridge Members and residents are responsible for adequately insuring their personal belongings and adhering to any insurance requirements in compliance with Sawridge Laws.

PART 6 - COMING INTO FORCE

Severability

38. If any section of this Act is for any reason determined to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalid section or subsection will be severed from this Act, and the remaining sections of this Act will continue to apply.

Commencement

39. This Act comes into force and supersedes and replaces An Act Respecting Emergency Management (July 7, 2018), on the date it is enacted.