

ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

MEETING #1

**August 24 and 25, 2004
Kananaskis Guest Ranch**

Summary Report

Purpose of Meeting

This meeting was held to build a foundation for the future work of the Alberta Water Council (see attachment 1 for a list of attendees). The meeting focused on team-building, knowledge-building among Council members, and identification of operating principles and initial issues (see attachment 2 for meeting agenda).

Outcomes of Meeting

Council members began to establish a working relationship; in particular, they reviewed a draft terms of reference and directed changes that will be finalized at the next meeting. They also identified the following priority roles for Council:

- provide impartial oversight and encourage implementation of the *Water for Life* strategy,
- review of the proposed Wetlands Policy,
- lead identification of water conservation efficiency and productivity guidelines for all sectors using water in Alberta, and
- involvement in studies addressing the potential value of economic instruments in water management.

Council members noted the importance of establishing the profile of the Council as an independent body that will oversee the implementation of the water strategy and will identify and address water issues in the province. They will report on the progress of water strategy implementation, but have not yet resolved when their first report will be made public.

DAY ONE DISCUSSIONS

1. Introductions

On the first day, Council members were getting to know one another. They raised questions and comments intended to clarify the role of the Alberta Water Council in relation to government, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils, and Watershed Stewardship Groups (see page 17 of the Water for Life strategy). Council members understood they have an important leadership role, and they want to support (not duplicate) existing agencies and organizations involved in implementing the water strategy.

The Minister of Environment attended part of the day and noted that the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders and participation in “distributed problem solving” will be important to the successful implementation of the water strategy. He noted that four other government departments are represented on the Council and this communication path is an important strength of the Council.

Bev Yee, Alberta Environment, provided an overview of the key outcomes in the water strategy and of the strategic direction that Alberta Environment is moving toward (see attachment 3 for presentation “Three Goals, Many Opportunities”).

John Sparks from Burlington Resources Ltd. provided a “philosophical overview” for Council members. He encouraged them to consider the needs and expectations of everyday Albertans, and to learn from the experience of other efforts.

2. Key Roles

Council members identified a list of expectations about the work of the Alberta Water Council. With regard to the full list of expectations, they agreed the primary responsibilities of Council will be the following:

- Provide an independent public review of water strategy implementation.
- Be an education leader on water issues.
- Be an advocate for improved water management and conservation.
- Be a catalyst for collaboration among water management organizations.
- Provide public advice on water management priorities and issues.
- Recommend research priorities.

DAY TWO DISCUSSIONS

1. Asset Mapping (Member Profile Statements)

Council member were asked what skills, experiences and knowledge they bring to the Council.

Action: Council secretariat will compile information provide by member on their skills and interests and ask them to extend their description with the intention to develop an inventory of skills, connections and interests that will help Council in future initiatives.

2. Consensus Decision Process

Council members discussed the importance of a consensus decision process and determined their process could benefit from an examination of both the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) and the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) processes.

Action: Council secretariat will work with Executive to develop a draft Consensus Decision Making Process document for distribution prior to the next meeting.

2. Terms of Reference

Council members reviewed draft terms of reference and directed several changes to the draft. Through extensive discussion, Council provided direction regarding the terms. Council also nominated an executive committee: Dave Hill will represent industry, Ray Wanuch will represent government, Bill Berzins will represent the non-government organizations, and Ron Hicks will represent the Province of Alberta (as chair of the Alberta Water Council).

Action: Council secretariat will work with Review Team (David Hill, Ron Pearson, Richard Quail and Ron Hicks) to revise draft terms of reference for distribution prior to the next meeting.

Action: Council secretariat will work with Executive to develop a draft template for project team for distribution prior to the next meeting.

Action: Council secretariat will provide information on member liability and insurance for distribution prior to the next meeting.

3. Short-Term Actions

Taking into account fiscal budgeting, Council noted several urgent issues for which they would like to initiate short-term actions as soon as possible. An initial list of short-term actions was created. This list will be refined and initiated at the next meeting.

Action: Council secretariat will revise and distribute the list of short-term actions prior to the next meeting.

Council noted it should play an important role in the finalization of current policy initiatives such as the Wetland Policy. However, it should not have any direct approval or review of basin water management plans—other than to perhaps help coordinate content and format among the basins.

Action: Council secretariat will work with key provincial government staff to prepare a draft process for policy review by Council and distribute it prior to the next meeting. The Wetland Policy will be the first policy to be reviewed by Council.

Council would like to issue a report on the current status of the implementation of the water strategy as soon as it can reasonably do so. However, the members did not want to “rush” a report that should be thoughtful and credible. Council members agreed to temporarily establish spring 2005 as a deadline, but many members felt it may not be possible to issue a report until late summer or early fall of 2005.

Action: Council secretariat will work with Alberta Environment staff to provide an update on the Water for Life strategy for distribution prior to the next meeting.

4. Water Conservation Targets

Council has been asked to address the water conservation target noted in the Water for Life strategy. Many Council members felt there will have to be a series of targets that take into account the costs and benefits associated with each sector. Another committee (Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy) has requested that the Council address the broader concept of effective water management in all sectors. Council agreed that discussions of this item has to begin at its next meeting, starting with a briefing about the projections that led to the current water conservation target—30% improvement in efficiency and productivity by 2015.

It was noted by the chair and others that water conservation planning will have to include a combination of both a top-down and bottom-up assessment (overall goal setting and working with sectors on what's doable).

Action: Council secretariat will work with key provincial government staff to provide background information on the rationale for the conservation targets as identified in the Water for Life strategy for distribution prior to the next meeting.

Action: *Council secretariat will work with key provincial government staff to provide background information on current assessment of economic instruments when they become available.*

5. Next Meeting

Council agreed their next meeting should be within one month, noting a preference for the first week of October. They asked for confirmation that adequate preparation can be made prior to that time, given that they would like to receive review items in advance of the meeting.

At the next meeting, Council will begin the information-sharing process with reports describing the work and role of the Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (by Bill Berzins) and an update of current initiatives and perspective from the irrigation sector (by David Hill).

Action: *Bill Berzins and David Hill will make presentations at the next meeting. Council Secretariat working with the Executive to create the agenda for the next meeting, will communicate with Bill and David on presentation timing and equipment needs.*

6. Meeting Dates

It was agreed meetings should be held bi-monthly until Council feels a longer interval is preferable. Sector updates should continue at these meetings for the foreseeable future.

Action: *Council secretariat will work with members to establish the dates for the next three meetings.*

7. Communications

It was agreed that communication from Council members to stakeholders about Council meetings should be consistent. At each Council meeting, a short list of “highlights” will be agreed upon. It was also agreed the Council needs a Communication Plan as soon as possible.

Action: *Council secretariat will prepare and distribute a list of meeting highlights.*

Action: *Council secretariat will work with Executive to prepare a Summary Report for distribution prior to the next meeting.*

Action: *Council secretariat will work with Executive to develop a draft Communication Plan for distribution prior to the next meeting.*

Action: *Council secretariat will investigate an internal website for members and report findings to Council.*

MEETING #1 ACTION LOG

ACTION	ASSIGNED TO:	TARGET DATE
Prepare “meeting highlights” for immediate distribution	Secretariat	Aug 27
Prepare and distribute Summary Report	Secretariat with Executive	Sep 17
Revise and distribute preliminary short-term actions list	Secretariat	Sep 17
Revise and distribute draft terms of reference for Council	Secretariat with Review Team	Sep 21
Prepare and distribute draft project team template	Secretariat with Executive	Sep 21
Prepare and distribute draft consensus document	Secretariat with Executive	Sep 21
Prepare and distribute draft communications plan	Secretariat with Executive	Sep 21
Ensure Council members receive pre-meeting background information on policy process for how Council can become involve in policy with Wetlands Policy the first policy to be reviewed	Secretariat	Sep 21
Ensure Council members receive background information on the rationale for the conservation targets identified in the water for Life strategy	Secretariat	Sep 21
When it becomes available ensure Council members receive background information on current assessments of economic instruments	Secretariat	TBA
Prepare a presentation on current initiatives and perspectives of Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils	Bill Berzins	Next meeting
Prepare a presentation on current initiatives and perspectives of irrigation sector	Dave Hill	Next meeting
Prepare information about member liability and insurance	Secretariat	Sept 21
Prepare discussion document about use of an internal website for Council communications	Secretariat	Sept 21
Improve member profile statements	All members	Ongoing

Attachment 1 – List of Attendees

The Honourable Lorne Taylor, Minister of the Environment, attended for part of the first day to welcome the Council. Ken Faulkner accompanied him.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Nick Bayliss, Province (Alberta Health and Wellness)
Bill Berzins, Non-government (Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils)
Tom Daniels, Province (Alberta Economic Development Authority)
Rick Denton, Industry (Forestry)
Bob Fessenden, Province (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development)
Bart Guyon, Government (Rural)
Ron Hicks, Province (Alberta Environment), Chair
Dave Hill, Industry (Irrigation)
Mike Kelly, Industry (Power Generation)
Al Kennedy, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)
John Knapp, Province (Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
Al Maurer, Government (Large Urban)
Joe Miller, Province (Alberta Energy)
Larry Nolan, Industry (Livestock)
Ron Pearson, Non-government (Fishery Habitat Conservation)
Richard Quail, Government (Small Urban)
Margaret Reine, Non-government (Environmental)
Judy Smith, Industry (Mining)
Kevin Stashin, Industry (Oil and Gas)
Jonathan Thompson, Non-government (Wetland Habitat Conservation)
Linda Van Gastel, Province (Alberta Science and Research Authority)
Ray Wanuch, Government (Metis Settlements)
Jay White, Non-government (Lake Environment Conservation)

SUPPORT STAFF (ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT)

Terry Sly
Petra Rowell
Bev Yee
Robert Harrison
Sherri-Dawn Annett
Val Mellesmoen
Neil Chymko

FACILITATOR

Bill McMillan, Equus Consulting Group Inc.

Attachment 2 - Meeting Agenda

Alberta Water Council

Agenda for 1st Meeting

August 24-25, 2004

Brewster's Kananaskis Guest Ranch (map attached)

Purpose: This is the first meeting of the new Council and will provide an opportunity for members to meet each other, determine how Council will operate, and what tasks it will accomplish. [Please dress casual and be prepared for outdoor activities weather permitting.]

Day 1 – August 24

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 Welcome from the Chair and Introductions – Ron Hicks

Welcome from the Deputy Minister of Environment and introduction/background of members.

9:30 Opening Comments from the Minister – Dr. Lorne Taylor

The Vision: Water is our challenge and our opportunity. The future of our way of life depends on successful water management. This Council will help Alberta become a world leader in water management.

**9:45 Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability – Peter Watson
Three Goals, Many Opportunities**

Peter will provide an overview of AENV's strategic shifts, the Water for Life Strategy, and the 2004-05 priorities for implementation.

**10:15 Water and Watershed Management in Alberta – Facilitated by Bill McMillan
Member Perspectives on Where We Are and Where We Have to Go**

The Minister will attend this open discussion. All Council members will be invited to:

- Ask the AENV Minister and staff questions on AENV's direction and current water strategy initiatives; and
- Voice their opinions on what the challenges and opportunities are before Council

10:45 Coffee Break

11:15 Information at Hand – Terry Sly

Terry will introduce members of the Secretariat and explain the role of the Secretariat. He will then give an overview of the material provided to members in the reference binder.

12:00 Lunch – Speaker (to be determined)

Will speak about water issues in Alberta and the Council's important leadership role.

1:00 The Most Valuable Things This Council Could Do - Facilitated

Working in groups, members will discuss what goals they want council to achieve.

2:00 Comparing Thoughts About Valuable Enterprises for Council - Facilitated

Each working group will present their list to the plenary. Council will create a single list based on this discussion. There will be an opportunity for Council members to note any support they feel Council may require to achieve these goals.

3:00 Coffee Break

- 4:00** **Comparing Thoughts About Valuable Enterprises for Council - *Facilitated***
Continue discussions from above and prioritize the list created or select some goals/issues to start moving forward on.
- 4:30** **Adjourn Day One Discussions – Weather permitting, outdoors activities**
- 7:00** **Dinner – BBQ**
-

Day 2 – August 25

- 8:00** **Breakfast**
- 9:00** **Asset Mapping – *Facilitated by Bill***
Each member will be asked to jot down what assets they bring to the council
- 9:15** **How this Council will operate – *Facilitated***
Discussions about how Council will make decisions (what is consensus), how they will communicate with others (interested Albertans, stakeholders, the media, the Government, etc) including what they will post to their website
- 10:00** **Draft Terms of Reference for Council – *Chair, Facilitator***
The Chair will walk members through the draft terms of reference. Council members are encouraged, through discussion and modification, to make these terms of reference their own. Based on the discussion, a revised terms of reference will be distributed for adoption at the next meeting.
- 10:30** **Break**
- 11:00** **Resume Terms of Reference – *Chair, Facilitated***
If there is general agreement on executive structure, could move forward with appointment of council executive (co-chairs)
- 12:00** **Lunch**
- 1:00** **What support does this Council require? - *Facilitated***
An “open circle” discussion of expectations for support for research, monitoring of activities and results, education/information, record keeping and administration, etc. What skills, experiences and knowledge does each member bring to the Council (review summary of asset map created earlier)
- 2:00** **Current Reports to AWC – *Bev Yee***
Council members will be provided an overview of several water strategy initiatives including:
- Advisory committee on Water Use Practice and Policy
 - Drinking water supply and safety
 - Progress on establishing other partnerships
 - Water Use Monitoring – Water Data Warehouse
 - Value of Water / Merits of Economic Instruments
- 3:00** **Other Business – *Chair***
Actions required to follow up this meeting and prepare for the next meeting
- 3:15** **Setting the Next meeting and Closing remarks - *Chair***
3:30 **Adjourn and Safe drive home**
-