
ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

MEETING #3

December 10, 2004
Radisson Hotel Calgary Airport, Calgary, Alberta

Summary Report

Highlights:

At this meeting, the Alberta Water Council:

- Finalized its terms of reference and communications plan, including direction to communications staff for a Council website
- Established a working group to examine options and develop a proposal on how the Council could work with the provincial government in developing the wetland policy.
- Established a working group to develop suggestions for how the Council should identify and advise on research priorities related to implementing the Water Strategy.
- Established a team to provide guidance to the secretariat and begin developing content and structure for the Council's first report
- Provided guidance to the Water Conservation Targets working group with respect to its process and work plan.

Attachments to the Meeting Summary:

1. Attendees
2. Action Item Log
3. Meeting Agenda

Additional Documentation and Presentations:

Terms of Reference
Policy Development Process and Role of the Alberta Water Council
Alberta Science and Research Authority Report to Alberta Water Council
Alberta's Water Strategy: Water Research Team Report
Water Efficiency and Productivity Targets

Summary of Discussion

1. Introductions

Paul Pellis convened the meeting at 9:10 am. Paul is Assistant Deputy Minister for Regional Services with Alberta Environment. With the recent appointment of Ron Hicks as Deputy Minister of Executive Council, Paul is presently Acting Deputy Minister. He brought greetings from the new minister, Hon. Guy Boutilier. Paul also thanked the City of Calgary for hosting the urban infrastructure tour for the Council on December 9. Those present introduced themselves.

- a) **New Members.** New members, Brad Pickering and Lisa King, were welcomed to the Council. Brad is Deputy Minister of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, and Lisa is with the Athabasca-Chipewyan First Nations. A new representative for Rural Government is expected to be appointed prior to the next Council meeting.
- b) **Review of Agenda.** A revised agenda was distributed and adopted by consensus.
- c) **Approval of Summary Report from October 5, 2004 Meeting.** The summary report was approved by consensus, and will be posted on the website.
- d) **Action Items from October 5 Meeting.** Terry Sly reported on the action items from the last meeting, noting that they are completed or on today's agenda for discussion, with the exception of items 2.9, which is ongoing.
- e) **Liability Insurance.** Terry Sly reported that no Council members had contacted him with any specific concerns regarding liability. Department lawyers have advised that the risk to Council members is very low. Terry also inquired about how the Environmental Appeal Board handles this issue; its mandate is quite different from the Council's and the Board is protected under section 220 of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act. The executive has discussed this matter and is of the view that it should be revisited as the nature of the Council's recommendations becomes clearer. Liability insurance can also be more easily obtained when the Council is incorporated as a non-profit society.
- f) **Asset Mapping.** Terry Sly has received information from ten members and requested the rest to complete the template and return to him.

Action 3.1: Members who have not already done so will complete the asset-mapping template and return to Terry Sly by January 27, 2005.

- g) **Correspondence Received.** The final report of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy was distributed to Council members. The report has implications for the Council's work and members agreed they would like more information.

Action 3.2: Council members will read the report of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy prior to the next meeting.

Action 3.3: Terry Sly will work with Kevin Stashin and Judy Smith to arrange a presentation on the Water Use Practice and Policy report for the next meeting.

2. Re-drafted Terms of Reference

Terry Sly reviewed the re-drafted terms of reference, noting the areas where changes had been made based on previous comments. Members proposed additional changes, which were discussed by the Council and, where there was agreement, these changes were made. Members felt they needed a broader discussion at some point about how to ensure that when the Council makes recommendations, all affected sectors have had a chance to provide their input. In discussing roles and responsibilities, one member noted that their sector expressed a strong preference to identify one person who would be appointed as their representative rather than identify two or three nominees from whom the Minister selects a member. The Chair advised that it is usual government practice to request two or three names of qualified individuals, and the Minister has discretion about who will be appointed.

Council agreed by consensus to the revised terms of reference, noting that they should be revisited in a year's time.

Action 3.4: Terry Sly will incorporate changes made at this meeting to the terms of reference, and arrange for them to be posted on the website.

3. Communications Plan

Sherri-Dawn Annett reviewed the draft communications plan and presented a proposed structure for a dedicated Alberta Water Council website. The proposed site will have several pages, including links to other related websites, educational tools and resources, information about project team and working group activities, and recommendations. Members provided several suggestions for the communications team to consider, including a potential website for members only where draft documents and other materials for the Council's internal use could be posted. The intent is to secure a domain name that the Council could use in perpetuity; for now, the site will redirect to the Water for Life pages, but when the Council becomes a non-profit organization, the site will be independent. Members agreed they did not need to review the site before it goes live.

By consensus, the Council approved the Communications Plan and directed the communications team to proceed with developing the public website.

Action 3.5: The communications team will proceed with development of the Council's public website.

4. Wetlands Policy Development and Council's Role

Ian Rudland and Robert Harrison presented an overview of the policy development process using the wetlands policy as an example. Since the late 1800s, Alberta has lost about 64% of its slough/marsh wetlands in the settled area due to various reasons, and continues to lose wetlands at the rate of about 0.5% per year. The quality of many remaining wetlands has also been compromised. In 1993, Cabinet approved a wetlands policy for the settled area of Alberta and a draft policy for the non-settled ("Green"

area) was also released in 1993. The hope now is to develop one wetlands policy that would address issues in all of Alberta. A government team is developing a new wetland policy and there are several options for the Alberta Water Council to consider in deciding how it wishes to provide input to this process and when the Council should become engaged in development of the policy.

Members noted that although the Water Act is powerful legislation, enforcement seems to be lacking, which is likely contributing to the demise of wetlands. Further, the Alberta Water Council can provide input, but a mechanism is also needed to gather input from the scientific community, and traditional knowledge from the Aboriginal community.

Members agreed by consensus to set up a working group to examine options and develop a proposal for discussion at the next meeting on how the Council could work with the provincial government in developing the wetlands policy.

Action 3.6: Jonathan Thompson will lead a Wetland Policy working group that includes Jay White, Judy Smith, David Hill, Margaret Reine, Tom Daniels, and Lisa King. The secretariat will assign a staff person to support the working group. Terry Sly will canvass Council members not in attendance today to test their interest in joining this group.

5. Presentation: Alberta Science and Research Authority

Linda Van Gastel provided an overview on the mandate and activities of the Alberta Science and Research Authority and its potential role in developing a water research strategy. She asked the Council to consider what role it wished to play in providing advice with respect to water research.

Members noted that a lot of water research is being done in Alberta and that Council should determine what its policy priorities are and how these fit with current research activity before advising on future research needs. Members agreed to establish a working group to develop suggestions for how the Council should identify and advise on research priorities related to implementing the Water Strategy, and report back at the next meeting.

Action 3.7: Bill Berzins, Ray Wanuch and Linda Van Gastel will form a joint working group between the AWC and ASRA to develop suggestions as to how the Council should identify and advise on research priorities related to implementing the Water Strategy, and report back at the next meeting. The Secretariat and Alberta Innovation and Science will assign staff to support the working group. If any other members wish to sit on this group, they should contact Terry Sly as soon as possible, and Terry will also canvass those not present to determine their interest in being involved.

6. Water for Life – Role of Council

Kate Rich provided an update on implementation of the Water for Life strategy and presented a proposal for ongoing reporting. She requested feedback on the level of detail required by the Council to meet its reporting requirements with respect to strategy implementation. She also asked for input on the process for preparing the Council's first progress report.

Following discussion, members agreed to use the reporting format proposed in the presentation for two or three reporting periods and adapt it as needed.

Action 3.8: Kate Rich will prepare a report on stewarding implementation of the water strategy for discussion and feedback at the next Council meeting.

Council then discussed timing and a process for preparing its first report. The target date for release will be Environment Week (early June) of 2005. The secretariat and communications staff will provide support for report preparation, with guidance from a team of Council members. It was suggested that assistance be requested from the Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs), who will also be releasing detailed reports shortly. Members were asked to provide any further ideas on content and structure to Kate Rich as soon as possible.

Action 3.9: The secretariat will work with Ron Pearson and any other Council members who wish to be involved, to prepare an annotated draft table of contents for the first status report; this will be discussed by the Council at its next meeting. Bill Berzins will identify two members from the WPACs to provide input to the document. Members will send any ideas for content and structure to Kate Rich by January 6, 2005.

7. Water Conservation Targets

David Hill provided an update on the work to date of the Water Conservation working group. The group will meet face-to-face before the next Council meeting to better define the terms of reference for the activities it proposes. No decision has yet been made on whether targets should be sector-based, apply across the board, or be different for each basin. Targets must be realistic and achievable. The group has discussed a range of approaches that would encourage changes in behavior but has not gone into detail.

Discussion

The working group was encouraged to articulate a clear and solid rationale for why water conservation is necessary and to identify behavioral changes that are needed to achieve the conservation targets. Albertans need to understand how water quantity and quality are being affected and the role that conservation can play. Even the areas that are at present "not constrained" need to be considered, because actions can be taken there proactively and with greater ease than in areas that are already experiencing

problems. The goal of safe drinking water is very important and is a common theme in the discussion of conservation targets.

Action 3.10: The Water Conservation Targets working group will take comments from today's meeting and flesh out a proposed process and work plan, including more discussion about "why conserve," for discussion at the next meeting.

8. Schedule for the First Business Year

Members agreed that the matters proposed for discussion under this agenda item had already been addressed.

9. Key Messages and Preparation for Next Meeting

Bev Yee summarized key messages from this meeting:

- Council members toured water infrastructure in Calgary as part of continuing efforts to improve their understanding of water management in the province.
- Now that the terms of reference have been finalized, Council members are investigating their role in setting water conservation targets, water research and developing wetland policy.
- Council will report on the Water for Life strategy's implementation in June 2005.

The next meeting of the Council will be held February 10, 2005. Potential agenda items include:

- Presentation and discussion of the Water Use Practice and Policy report
- Discussion of consensus document and terms of reference template for project teams
- Report from Wetlands Policy Working Group on a proposal for Council engagement in policy development
- Report from Research Working Group on how the Council should determine what its role will be in advising on research
- Discussion of five-year work plan
- Progress report on implementation of the water strategy
- Discussion of draft table of contents and next steps for Council's first progress report on implementation of water strategy
- Report from Water Conservation Targets Working Group on their work plan

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Attachment 1: Meeting Attendees

Council Members

Nick Bayliss, Province (Alberta Health and Wellness)
Bill Berzins, Non-government Organization (Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils)
Tom Daniels, Province (Alberta Economic Development Authority)
Rick Denton, Industry (Forestry)
David Hill, Industry (Irrigation)
Mike Kelly, Industry (Power Generation)
Lisa King, Government (First Nations)
Larry Nolan, Industry (Livestock)
Ron Pearson, Non-government Organization (Fishery Habitat Conservation)
Paul Pellis, Province (Alberta Environment)
Brad Pickering, Province (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development)
Richard Quail, Government (Small Urban)
Margaret Reine, Non-government Organization (Environmental)
Judy Smith, Industry (Mining)
Ken Smith, Province (Alberta Energy)
Kevin Stashin, Industry (Oil and Gas)
Jonathan Thompson, Non-government Organization (Wetland Habitat Conservation)
Linda Van Gastel, Province (Alberta Science and Research Authority)
Ray Wanuch, Government (Metis Settlements)
Jay White, Non-government Organization (Lake Environment Conservation)

Observers:

Bill Gummer, Government (Environment Canada)
Grant McIntyre, Province (Alberta Innovation and Science)
Peter Watson, Province (Alberta Environment)

Support Staff:

Sherri-Dawn Annett
Robert Harrison
Irwin Huberman
Kate Rich
Ian Rudland
Kim Sanderson
Terry Sly

Absent with Regrets:

Al Kennedy, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)
John Knapp, Province (Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
Al Maurer, Government (Large Urban)
Jim Vollmershausen, Government (Environment Canada)

Attachment 2: Meeting #3 Action Item Log

Action	Who	By when
2.9 Create a one-page document how each member is communicating with their sector and forward to Terry Sly.	All members who haven't already done so	Jan. 27, 2005
3.1 Submit asset-mapping information to Terry Sly.	All members who haven't already done so	Jan. 27, 2005
3.2 Read the report of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy.	Council members	Feb. 10, 2005
3.3 Arrange for a presentation on the Water Use Practice and Policy report for Feb. 10 meeting.	Terry Sly and Kevin Stashin	Jan. 20, 2005
3.4 Incorporate changes made at this meeting to the terms of reference, and arrange for them to be posted on the website.	Terry Sly	Jan. 20, 2005
3.5 Proceed with development of the Council's public website.	Communications team	
3.6 Jonathan Thompson will lead a Wetlands Policy working group that includes Jay White, Judy Smith, David Hill, Margaret Reine, Tom Daniels, and Lisa King. The secretariat will assign a staff person to support the working group. Terry Sly will canvass Council members not in attendance today to test their interest in joining this group.	Jonathan Thompson, Jay White, Judy Smith, David Hill, Margaret Reine, Tom Daniels, Lisa King Terry Sly	Report for Feb. 10 meeting ready by Jan. 24
3.7 Bill Berzins, Ray Wanuch and Linda Van Gastel will form a joint working group between the AWC and ASRA to develop suggestions as to how the Council should identify and advise on research priorities related to implementing the Water Strategy, and report back at the next meeting. The Secretariat and Alberta Innovation and Science will assign staff to support the working group. If any other members wish to sit on this group, they should contact Terry Sly as soon as possible, and Terry will also canvass those not present to determine their interest in being involved.	Bill Berzins, Ray Wanuch, Linda Van Gastel Terry Sly	Report for Feb. 10 meeting ready by Jan. 24
3.8 Prepare a report on stewarding implementation of the water strategy for discussion and feedback at the next Council meeting.	Kate Rich	Report for Feb. 10 meeting ready by Jan. 24
3.9 The secretariat will work with Ron Pearson and any other Council members who wish to be involved, to prepare an annotated draft table of contents for the first status report; this will be discussed by the Council at its next meeting. Bill Berzins will identify two members from the WPACs to provide input to the document. Members will send any ideas for content and structure to Kate Rich by January 10, 2005.	Ron Pearson, Secretariat staff, Bill Berzins	Annotated draft table of contents for Feb. 10 meeting ready by Jan. 24
3.10 The Water Conservation Targets working group will take comments from today's meeting and flesh out a proposed process and work plan, including more discussion about "why conserve," for discussion at the next meeting.	Water Conservation Targets working group	Report for Feb. 10 meeting ready by Jan. 24

Attachment 3:

Alberta Water Council
Agenda for 3rd Meeting
December 10, 2004
Radisson Hotel Calgary Airport, Calgary

Purpose: Council will learn about the role of ASRA in coordinating water research and receive a report from the working group on their findings into the water conservation target issue. Council will also finalize its terms of reference and communication plan.

- 9:00** **Introduction – Chair**
- Welcome New Members
 - Review of current agenda
 - Approval of Summary Report (Oct 5, 2004 meeting)
 - Review of actions from last meeting
 - Liability Issue
 - Asset Mapping
 - Correspondence received
- 9:30** **Re-Drafted Terms of Reference – Facilitated by Terry Sly**
- Council members will be asked to identify any concerns, gaps or recommended changes to the draft
 - Discussion is intended to gain unanimous consent to a shared terms of reference
 - Consensus process document
 - Project Team Terms of Reference template
- 10:00** **Coffee Break**
- 10:15** **Communication Plan– Facilitated by Communications**
Based on the direction received by Council members at the last meeting, members will be asked to:
- Identify any concerns, gaps or recommended changes to the draft communication plan
 - Review external website content and provide advice on any missing items
- 10:45** **Policy Development - Role of Council**
Council will discuss a process for policy review, with Alberta's Wetland Policy as the development example case (*Robert Harrison/Ian Rudland*)
- 12:00** **Lunch** (*to be provided in the room*)
- 12:30** **Presentation: Alberta Science and Research Authority**
Linda Van Gastel will provide a background on ASRA, outline her role on Council and review the need for and the elements of an Alberta Water Research Strategy.

1:15 Water for Life – Role of Council

Council will discuss what information it requires from Alberta Environment to effectively provide guidance and to report on Water Strategy implementation.
(Kate Rich)

1:50 Water Conservation Targets

David Hill will report on the working group findings.

2:30 Schedule for the First Business Year *Facilitated by Terry Sly*

The list of short-term actions will be reviewed to confirm a path forward, including a process for reporting on the “state of Water for Life strategy”, a process for policy review (wetland policy), and the next steps in addressing the water conservation target issue. The discussion may lead to working groups and project team assignments.

2:50 Key Messages and Preparation for Next Meeting *(Chair)*

Confirmation of the key messages from this meeting will be requested. The chair will confirm the next meeting and ensure that any actions required for the next meeting are assigned.

3:00 Adjournment
