

# ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

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MEETING #32  
**October 20, 2011**  
**Calgary, Alberta**

## **Executive Summary**

As is the tradition, this Board meeting was preceded by an event the night before to recognize outgoing directors and alternates. Ernie Hui, the new Deputy Minister of Alberta Environment and Water, and Dr. Eddy Isaacs, CEO of Alberta Innovates – Energy and Environment Solutions addressed the Council and guests.

At the business meeting, the Council appointed two new vice presidents for two-year terms: John Skowronski is the new vice president for the Industry broad category, and Ernie Hui is the new vice-president for the Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities broad category. Gord Edwards was formally appointed secretary-treasurer for another two-year term. The Board also supported the membership review proposed by the executive committee to ensure that membership needs continue to be met as new issues emerge.

The Board approved four major administrative items:

- The 2012 core operating budget,
- A new process for operational planning and project selection,
- A system for tracking implementation of Council recommendations, and
- The 2011-2013 Communications Strategy.

The forest sector presented its sector plan for water conservation, efficiency and productivity (CEP), the fourth sector plan to be completed. The plan was prepared by the Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA), and is expected to be approved by the AFPA Board before the end of 2011.

The Board also received updates from:

- The Sector Planning for CEP Project Team. The three remaining sectors plans (power generation, chemical and petrochemical) will come forward at the March 2012 meeting. This process has been very valuable in helping team members understand the issues and challenges faced by other sectors.
- The Government of Alberta. The name change to “Alberta Environment and Water” reflects the importance of water issues. The GoA Water for Life implementation progress report (from 2008 Renewal to March 31, 2011) is scheduled to be out by the end of 2011.
- Alberta Innovates – Energy and Environment Solutions, Water Resources. This presentation focused on the research and knowledge activities underway within the Water Resources section and possible opportunities to share information with key groups more efficiently and effectively.

The Board will meet on the following dates in 2012:

- March 22 (Operational planning on March 21)
- June 14
- October 25

## Summary of Discussion

Rob Pritchard convened the meeting at 9:05 am. He thanked Jay White and Aquality for their support of the previous evening's reception. Those present introduced themselves.

### 1 Administration

#### 1.1 Welcome and Approve Agenda

The chair reviewed the agenda, which was approved by consensus.

#### 1.2 Appointment of Executive Officers

John Skowronski has been designated as the new vice president for the Industry broad category and Ernie Hui as the new vice president for Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities broad category. Gord Edwards's term as Secretary Treasurer was also up for renewal.

*Decision 32.1: The Board approved:*

- a) *John Skowronski as the Industry Vice President and Ernie Hui as the Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities Vice President for terms ending in October 2013; and*
- b) *Gord Edwards as Secretary-Treasurer for a term ending in October 2013.*

#### 1.3 Summary Report from June 16, 2011 meeting

*Decision 32.2: The summary report for the June 16, 2011 meeting was adopted by consensus and will be posted on the Council website.*

#### 1.4 Action Items from June 16, 2011 Meeting

Gord Edwards reported that the three action items from the June 16, 2011 meeting have been completed; items 31.1 and 31.3 will be further addressed during this meeting.

#### 1.5 Management Report

Gord Edwards referred the Board to the management report in the briefing package. Updates on several project teams will be provided during the course of the meeting and the status reports feature updates on other teams. He advised that the Council is in good financial shape and is expected to come in under budget for 2011.

#### 1.6 2012 Core Operating Budget

Gord Edwards reviewed the budget as presented in the briefing book, noting that \$896,000 is budgeted for next year. Of note, the consultant budget is higher to cover for Meredith Walker who will be going on parental leave in January 2012. Also, four projects are expected to be completed in 2012 so printing and design costs will be higher next year. Gord advised that the wind-down fund is fully funded and is allocated to a GIC. It will be reviewed next year to ensure it remains sufficient to meet AWC needs.

*Decision 32.3: The Board approved the proposed core operating budget for 2012.*

## **1.7 Changes in Signing Authority**

It is necessary to authorize another staff member as signing authority while Meredith Walker is on parental leave.

***Decision 32.4: The Board designated Terry Sly, senior project manager, as a financial signing authority for the AWC, with the authority to sign cheques up to and including \$25,000. Cheques over that amount continue to require the signature of the Executive Director plus a second signature of a designated Director.***

## **1.8 Membership Review**

Since its transition to an arm's length organization, the Council has not undertaken a membership review. The executive committee believes it is timely to review the current structure to ensure that membership needs continue to be met as new issues emerge. Other interests could add value to the Board, and the bylaws do allow for Board expansion. The executive proposes to establish a sub-committee, chaired by Jay White, to examine membership and report back to the executive by February 1, 2012, with the intent of discussing this item at the March Board meeting.

The following points were noted in the discussion of this item, and will be provided to the sub-committee as part of their work:

- It would be useful to have a formal presentation at the March meeting about the duties, responsibilities and expectations of Board members.
- Other issues and processes are emerging with the GoA, including the possible formation of a new environmental monitoring commission. The Council should ensure it stays abreast of such developments and looks for opportunities to build new relationships.
- The process guidelines will also be reviewed in 2012, and they should provide additional clarity on the Council's expectations with respect to accountability.

Jason Unger will represent the NGO broad category on the sub-committee and Keith Murray will represent the Industry broad category. The Government broad category and GoA and Provincial Authorities broad category will forward names of their representatives to Gord Edwards.

**Action 32.1: Staff will follow-up with Government, and GoA and Provincial Authorities broad categories to identify representatives for the membership review committee.**

## **1.9 Meeting Dates for 2012**

***Decision 32.5: The Board approved the following meeting dates for 2012:***

- ***March 22 in Calgary (Operational planning on March 21)***
- ***June 14 in Edmonton***
- ***October 25 in Calgary***

## **2 Operational Planning Process**

Gord Edwards reminded the Board that this material was presented in June and the Board provided feedback at that time. Some changes were made in response to that input and no further feedback was received. The key content change made since the last version are that watershed and emerging issues are to be considered as topics, not just WFL Action Plan priorities. There is also more flexibility in applying the screening criteria.

The following points were noted in the Board's discussion:

- The criteria give the Executive Director some discretion so a proponent can have an opportunity to make revisions before the final statement of opportunity is submitted to the Board.
- The document does allow for issues to come forward outside the usual planning process (section 3.2).
- Another criterion should be whether the project is appropriate for a consensus process. This change should be made in the following documents:
  - *AWC Operational Planning Process v3* - the list of criteria on page 5 and the table on page 8
  - *Bringing a Statement of Opportunity to the Alberta Water Council v2* on page 2

***Decision 32.6: The Board approved the new process for operational planning and project selection, with the addition of a criterion about suitability of the issue for a consensus process.***

## **3 WFL Implementation – GoA Update**

Sharon Willianen provided a brief update from the GoA, noting the name change to Alberta Environment and Water. The department remains committed to a cumulative effects management system to integrate policy and work across air, land, water and biodiversity. A wetland policy and the water allocation system review remain high priorities, and the intent is to engage Albertans in this discussion. A third priority area relates to the infrastructure associated with drinking water and wastewater and the resources needed to ensure the sustainability of that system. The GoA will review its implementation progress on WFL by the end of 2011, and additional priority areas may come to light.

Evelynne Wrangler advised that Alberta Sustainable Resource Development now has wet areas mapping information available for WPACs. Work on biodiversity is proceeding.

The Board will have an opportunity at the March operational planning session to have a high level stakeholder discussion about emerging issues and priorities for all sectors.

## **4 Proposed Implementation Tracking System for Council Recommendations**

Meredith Walker reviewed the purpose and main assumptions in developing a proposed tracking system for AWC recommendations. This process will be piloted for a year; two reports will be done in the first year but this may be adjusted to become an annual process. The intent is to make a detailed report available in the members section of the AWC website, and a shorter update report will be prepared for the Board. One Council staff member will be responsible for coordinating the process and updating the tracking reports.

The Board's discussion focused on transparency and whether the detailed report should be publicly available. It was noted that the detailed report would be circulated by directors and alternates, which would essentially place it in the public domain. The detailed report will indicate the status of implementation and any barriers to implementation. Directionally, Board members felt the Council should make public as much of its work as possible. The first report will come forward in March, and the Board will have further discussion about whether to make the detailed information public.

***Decision 32.7: The Board approved the proposed implementation tracking system for Council recommendations, with the proviso that at the March 2012 meeting the Board will decide whether to make the detailed report public.***

## **5 Communication Strategy**

Gord Edwards presented the final version of the Communications Strategy, which was initially presented at the June meeting and revised in response to Board input. Strategy 5.2 regarding the use of social media to increase the AWC profile has been removed as this is not likely to be effective or appropriate for the Council. Board members supported the idea of a field trip in the next year. Meredith Walker provided a short progress report on communications activities.

***Decision 32.8: The Board approved the AWC Communications Strategy, 2011-2013, v2.***

## **6 Sector Planning for CEP Project Team**

John Skowronski presented the sixth update from the Sector Planning for CEP Project Team, directing the Board to the "What We've Learned" report in the briefing book. Four sector CEP plans have now been completed: urban municipalities, irrigation, upstream oil and gas and oil sands mining, and forestry. Power generation, chemical, and petrochemical plans will come forward at the March 2012 meeting. This process has been very valuable in helping team members understand the issues and challenges faced by other sectors. John reviewed the concerns raised by the AEN Water Caucus about what happens to conserved water and the potential for this water to provide environmental benefits. The team has responded to these concerns and will provide further clarification in its final report to define the scope of the CEP planning framework with respect to environmental benefits.

The Board had a lengthy discussion about the same issues presented to the project team by the AEN Water Caucus. Much of the discussion focused on whether the outcomes of implementation of sector CEP plans should or could address degraded aquatic ecosystems. It was recognized that sector CEP plans may play a role in addressing degraded aquatic ecosystems, but this would require changes to the current water allocation system. In the interim, the team will continue its work to address any outstanding issues so they can complete their final report.

The team has made remarkable progress in bringing all sectors together to have this discussion. It was noted that Alberta is the only jurisdiction in the world with water-using sectors voluntarily committing to developing and implementing sector CEP plans. Further movement is expected in the coming months on the water allocation review and how it may contribute to ensuring healthy aquatic ecosystems.

## 7 Sector Planning for CEP – Forestry Plan

Keith Murray presented the forest sector CEP plan, prepared by the Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA). It identifies four key factors for measuring forest sector success with respect to CEP:

- Rivers are healthy
- Effluent quality maintained or improved
- Water diversion is decreased
- Water intensity is reduced (m<sup>3</sup> per tonne)

A number of CEP opportunities for the sector were also identified. The plan is expected to be approved by the AFPA Board of Directors by the end of 2011.

A brief discussion period followed the presentation.

Q: It's good to see that the sector has reduced diversions by about 5% since 2000. Is there a target for further reductions?

A: It's almost impossible to set a hard target as the sector's production is market based. If sales are there, production goes up. The sector is committed to efficient water use.

Q: Could efforts to improve the environment be made clearer in the plan?

A: Material is still being added over the next week to finalize the draft plan.

Q: Is the number of mills expected to increase?

A: Pretty well all the timber is allocated and existing mills are all permitted, but the use of carbon fibre could be expanded. There could be growth in terms of dollar value, but new mills are unlikely.

Q: Can the sector set a target related to water intensity?

A: Each operation would have to do that. The sector focus is that they are reducing diversions and maintaining water quality as a whole. Individual mills are committed to this approach.

Comment: There are questions about how the "Criteria for Reviewing Sector Plans" apply to CEP plans. The criteria seem to be less applicable than originally intended.

Q: Is it possible to look at earlier data on water use when the mills were built? Water use and discharge volumes would have been much higher then.

A: It was difficult to get data and there may not be anything prior to 2000.

Q: Do all the certification processes cover water?

A: ISO 14000 covers water. All mills with ISO certification have an audit process that requires them to reduce water. Sustainable forest management systems deal with water quality in the woodland. Envirovista requires companies to show improvement in performance, including water.

## **8 Energy and Environment Solutions, Water Resources Update**

David Hill presented an update on the research and knowledge activities underway within the Water Resources section of Alberta Innovates – Energy and Environment Solutions (AI-EES). Operations began in October 2007 with a \$30-million investment that was leveraged to \$50-million. More than 35 initiatives have been completed or are underway. Much of the work is occurring through research teams at Alberta universities and more than 10 international groups are also involved. Almost one-third of the work focuses on water in the oil sands region, and 10% of resources are being spent in knowledge translation. David reviewed the role of Water Resources in AI-EES. The key program areas are:

- Water security, risk and vulnerability
- Watershed stewardship and ecosystem management
- Conservation, efficiency and productivity of surface water and groundwater use

A new funding proposal is asking for a commitment of \$5-million per year for the next six years. Leveraging is expected to be higher in the next round of projects due to the number of people involved. EES is looking at ways to share information with key groups more efficiently and effectively, including the idea of a water “boot camp” for elected officials. Their mandate has been in knowledge and research, but this work needs to be relevant to policy and practice, and usable by AWC and others.

The following points were noted during the Board’s discussion:

- An annual or biannual conference to share results of research work with the WFL partnerships would be a valuable activity.
- EES could make available all of its reports to the AWC as soon as they are available.
- EES-Water Resources is looking at interactions among water-using sectors and projects (e.g., biofuels) with the aim of reducing gross water intensity by 50%.

## **9 Status Reports**

The Chair directed Board members to the status reports in the briefing package as information.

## **10 New or Other Business**

There was no new or other business.

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

## **Attachment 1: Meeting #32 Attendees**

### **Council Directors and Alternates**

Maureen Bell, NGO (Environmental)  
Rachel Bocoock, Government (Large Urban)  
Ken Brown, NGO (WPACs)  
Bob Cameron, NGO (Environmental)  
Carolyn Campbell, NGO (Environmental)  
Lars DePauw, Industry (Oil and Gas)  
Chris Fordham, Industry (Mining)  
Les Gammie, NGO (WPACs)  
Jim Hackett, Industry (Power Generation)  
David Hill, GOA and Provincial Authorities  
(Alberta Innovates – Energy-Environment  
Solutions)  
Rick Istead, Industry (Cropping)  
Al Kennedy, Industry (Chemical and  
Petrochemical)  
John Kolk, Industry (Livestock)  
Stuart Lunn, Industry (Mining)  
Perry McCormick, NGO (Wetland Habitat  
Conservation)  
Ron McMullin, Industry (Irrigation)

Keith Murray, Industry (Forestry)  
Tara Payment, Industry (Oil and Gas)  
Rob Pritchard, Government (Large Urban)  
Tracy Scott, NGO (Wetland Habitat  
Conservation)  
John Skowronski, Industry (Chemical and  
Petrochemical)  
Jeff Surtees, NGO (Fisheries Habitat  
Conservation)  
Jason Unger, NGO (Environmental)  
Jay White, NGO (Lake Environment  
Conservation)  
Evelynne Wrangler, GOA and Provincial  
Authorities (Alberta Sustainable Resource  
Development)  
Jamie Wuite, GOA and Provincial Authorities  
(Alberta Agriculture and Rural  
Development)  
Gord Edwards, AWC Executive Director

### **Presenters:**

Gord Edwards, *Management Report; 2012 Core Budget; Operational Planning Process, Communication Strategy* (Items 1.5, 1.6, 2.0, 5.0)  
Sharon Willianen, *GoA Update and WFL Implementation* (Item 3.0)  
Meredith Walker, *Implementation Tracking of AWC Recommendations, Communications Update* (Items 4.0, 5.0)  
John Skowronski, *Sector Planning for CEP Project Team* (Item 6.0)  
Keith Murray, *Sector Planning for CEP – Forestry CEP Plan* (Item 7.0)  
David Hill, *Energy and Environment Solutions, Water Resources Update* (Item 8.0)

### **Guests:**

Curtis Horning, Alberta Environment and  
Water  
Scott Millar, Alberta Sustainable Resource  
Development

Sharon Willianen, Alberta Environment and  
Water

### **AWC Staff and Contractors**

Andre Asselin, Alesha Hill, Meredith Walker, Kim Sanderson

### **Absent with Regrets:**

Neil Boyd, Industry (Cropping)  
Dawn Friesen, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Health and Wellness)  
Ernie Hui, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Environment and Water)  
Colin Jeffares, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development)  
Al Kemmere, Government (Rural)  
Louis Pawlowich, Government (Métis Settlements)  
Richard Quail, Government (Small Urban)  
Jennifer Steber, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Energy)



**Attachment 2: Meeting #32 Action Item Log**

Action	Who	By when
32.1 Staff will follow-up with Government, and GoA and Provincial Authorities broad categories to identify representatives for the membership review committee.	Staff	November 15, 2011

**Attachment 3: Decision Log**

*Decision 32.1: The Board approved:*

- a) *John Skowronski as the Industry Vice President and Ernie Hui as the Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities Vice President for terms ending in October 2013; and*
- b) *Gord Edwards as Secretary-Treasurer for a term ending in October 2013.*

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*Decision 32.3: The Board approved the proposed core operating budget for 2012.*

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ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL  
AGENDA, MEETING #32

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**October 20, 2011**  
**McDougall Centre – Calgary**

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**NOTE: Broad Category caucusing from 8:00 to 9:00 am.**

**GENERAL BUSINESS OF COUNCIL**

- 9:00 1.0 Administration – Chair 45 min**
- 1.1 Welcome and approve agenda
  - 1.2 Appointment of Executive Officers – Industry and GoA and Provincial Authorities and Secretary-Treasurer
  - 1.3 Approve Summary Report from June 16, 2011 meeting
  - 1.4 Review of Actions from last meeting
  - 1.5 Management Report
  - 1.6 Approve proposed 2012 AWC Core Operating Budget
  - 1.7 Approve change to Signing Authority
  - 1.8 Membership Review
  - 1.9 Approve meeting dates for 2012
- 9:45 2.0 Operational Planning Process 30 min**  
Approve a new process for operational planning and project selection.
- 10:15 3.0 WFL Implementation - GoA Update 15 min**  
Hear an update from the GoA on *WFL* implementation priorities and direction.
- 10:30 Break 15 min**
- 10:45 4.0 Proposed Implementation Tracking System of Council Recommendations 30 min**  
Approve the proposed implementation tracking system of Council recommendations.
- 11:15 5.0 Communication Strategy 15 min**  
Approve a new three-year communications strategy.
- 11:30 6.0 Sector Planning for CEP Project Team 15 min**  
Hear a presentation on the team’s findings in their “What We’ve Learned” report.
- 11:45 Lunch (provided in the room) 60 min**
- 12:45 7.0 Sector Planning for CEP – Forestry Plan 30 min**  
Hear a presentation on the CEP plan prepared by the Alberta Forest Products Association.
- 1:15 8.0 Energy and Environment Solutions, Water Resources Update 30 min**  
Receive an update on AI-EES-WRSA program connections to Alberta Strategic Goals, Objectives and Outcomes.
- 1:45 9.0 New or Other Business 15 min**  
New items of business or other items of information for Council
- 2:00 Adjournment**