



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Water for Life* Implementation Review 2016 to 2019**

The Alberta Water Council has released its latest report: *Water for Life* Implementation Review 2016–2019. The report is available [here](#). One of the primary tasks of the Alberta Water Council (AWC) is to steward the implementation of the Government of Alberta’s *Water for Life* strategy and to champion the achievement of the strategy’s goals. The AWC facilitates this through the standing *Water for Life* Implementation Review Committee, which convenes every few years to undertake a strategic review of the *Water for Life* implementation progress. The current review covers the period from 2016 to 2019 inclusive.

This work supports the direction of the AWC 2019–2021 Business Plan associated with the *Water for Life* Implementation Review, which identifies the following three strategies:

- identify and develop metrics for advancing the *Water for Life* goals
- identify gaps in the implementation of the *Water for Life* strategy
- prioritize actions and identify roles and responsibilities for achieving the outcomes of *Water for Life*

The 2016 to 2019 Implementation Review aligns with the completion of the 10-year *Water for Life: action plan* (2009) authored by the Government of Alberta. The recommendations provided in this review have the potential to provide direction and to suggest next steps for the provincial government’s water stewardship strategy.

“I want to thank the Alberta Water Council for their work on the *Water For Life* Implementation Review. Albertans place a high value on our province’s water resources and that’s why I look forward to continuing our work with the Council, Indigenous communities and other stakeholders to ensure Alberta has a safe and secure drinking water supply, healthy aquatic ecosystems, and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy, now and for future generations.”

– Honourable Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks

In the 2016 to 2019 *Water for Life* Implementation Review, the AWC observed the following:

- The actions outlined in the *Water for Life: action plan* are largely complete, and many actions have become part of daily business for people working in water management and stewardship across the province.

- Significant progress has been made toward all three goals outlined in the *Water for Life* strategy; however, it is recognized that some areas (e.g., healthy aquatic ecosystems) need more attention.

“A cornerstone of the Council's mandate is to steward and track the progress of the Government of Alberta's *Water for Life* strategy. The 2016 to 2019 *Water for Life* implementation review marks a major milestone for water management in Alberta, as the ten-year *Water for Life* action plan came to an end with significant progress being achieved. Water management is a shared responsibility, and Albertans have worked hard to steward and manage our water resources over the last decade and beyond, and we look forward to what comes next. The AWC is proud to report that tremendous progress has been made toward *Water for Life*'s three goals and key directions. Our implementation review report details our findings and provides strategic recommendations for the future of water management in Alberta.”

– Andre Asselin, AWC Executive Director

After gathering and synthesizing information, the AWC made 15 recommendations to improve *Water for Life* implementation progress and water and watershed management in Alberta on the following topics:

- Recommendation 1. New *Water for Life* Action Plan
- Recommendation 2. Improved *Water for Life* Reviews
- Recommendation 3. Small Systems Standards
- Recommendation 4. Drinking Water Safety Plan Audits
- Recommendation 5. State of Drinking Water Report
- Recommendation 6. One-Water Approach
- Recommendation 7. Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems Review
- Recommendation 8. Water Use Data
- Recommendation 9. Sustainable Economy
- Recommendation 10. Improved Modelling
- Recommendation 11. Preparedness
- Recommendation 12. Education and Outreach
- Recommendation 13. Knowledge Integration
- Recommendation 14. Partnerships Review
- Recommendation 15. Advancing Conservation, Efficiency, and Productivity

As part of the 2016 to 2019 *Water for Life* implementation review process, the AWC drafted a suite of performance indicators to help the committee better assess *Water for Life* implementation progress. However, these indicators will not be used to audit the Government of Alberta or *Water for Life* partners. The potential indicators could not be tested or verified because of the reduced capacity of AWC stakeholders due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is recommended that AWC staff test and finalize the indicators before the next review process.

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The Alberta Water Council is a collaborative partnership that provides leadership, expertise, and sector knowledge and perspectives to help governments, Indigenous Peoples, industry, and non-governmental organizations to advance the outcomes of Water for Life.

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