



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 11, 2009

Better communication and education the foundation for future success of provincial water strategy

Edmonton Enhancing education and communication among water users and emphasizing activities around source water protection are two key areas of focus for continued success around implementation of *Water for Life*, according to the multi-stakeholder group set up to monitor and assess progress of the provincial water strategy.

In its *Review of Implementation Progress of Water for Life, 2006-2008*, released September 11, 2009, the Alberta Water Council also calls for better integration with other strategies and actions related to land, air, biodiversity and cumulative impacts of development – specifically ensuring good coordination and integration with the *Land Use Framework* -- and the need for reliable, consistent resources to support all aspects of implementation.

“Because the Council recognizes resourcing may be an issue in the current economic climate, we believe one of the best ways to ensure continued success, even with limited resources, is to develop strong and effective leaders and champions in all sectors, including government, industry, and the environmental community,” said Gord Edwards, Executive Director of the Alberta Water Council. “As communication and education are the foundation for creating champions, we firmly believe one of the best investments the government can make is in improving its efforts in both of these areas.”

A source water protection framework aimed at addressing the effects of non-point source pollution on provincial water quality is another key area that can help leverage success to all three *Water for Life* goals, Edwards said.

“The Council believes that improving the management of water quality at the source will ensure healthy aquatic ecosystems, support a multi-barrier approach to drinking water safety, and directly affect the availability of reliable, quality water supplies for sustainable economic development.”

One of the primary roles of the Alberta Water Council – an independent, consensus-based group made up of stakeholders from all key sectors involved in water management and use in Alberta – is to regularly review the implementation progress and effectiveness of the *Water for Life* strategy. The 2006-2008 report is the third review conducted by the Council.

Copies of the report and more information on the Alberta Water Council can be found at www.awchome.ca

Established in 2004, the Alberta Water Council is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 24 members from governments, industry, and non-government organizations. Its primary task is to monitor and steward implementation of Alberta's Water for Life strategy and to champion the achievement of the strategy's three outcomes of a safe, secure drinking water supply, healthy aquatic ecosystems, and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

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