

# Alberta Water Council

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John Donner

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 28, 2007

### Alberta Water Council invites input on renewal of *Water for Life* strategy

*Edmonton* ... Albertans are invited to share ideas and input on *Water for Life* as part of a process to review and renew the provincial water strategy to ensure it is effectively managing and sustaining Alberta's water supply.

The Alberta Water Council -- the multi-stakeholder partnership group responsible for overseeing the implementation of *Water for Life* -- has developed a workbook questionnaire to seek input from key stakeholders and sectors involved and effected by water management in the province.

The workbook focuses on the outcomes and actions in the three-year old water strategy to assess whether the strategy is working, whether it is still relevant, and where the priorities are for the future. All Albertans have the opportunity to complete the workbook on-line up to August 24, 2007.

The Council is leading the renewal at the request of Alberta Environment Minister Rob Renner. The renewal is part of Premier Ed Stelmach's Mandate Letter to Minister Renner, and a priority for Government.

Renner said the renewal is an important step to ensuring the provincial water strategy remains relevant and effective.

"This renewal is about making a good strategy better, and ensuring its goals are relevant as the province and our economy grows," said Renner. "I'm pleased the Alberta Water Council has agreed to lead the *Water for Life* renewal and I look forward to receiving the Council's recommendations so we can ensure the province's priorities for water management are on the right track."

On May 1, the Council released its second report on progress on implementation of the strategy, which includes a full evaluation and some specific recommendations on priorities and areas needing more attention and focus as the government moves ahead.

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“Based on our recent review and other evaluations to date, there is consensus that the strategy is working well, but that there are some areas could be improved with some additional focus or action,” said Bill Berzins, Chair of the Bow River Basin Council and a member of the Alberta Water Council. “So while we believe we have a good understanding of what needs to be done, we feel it is important to validate our recommendations, and perhaps seek new ideas on renewing – but not re-doing – *Water for Life*.”

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Kirk Popik, who represents small municipalities on the Council and is a member of the project team for the *Water for Life* renewal, said it is important that Albertans, and specifically sectoral stakeholders, have a voice in the process.

“Because water management is everyone’s responsibility, as we define specific recommendations on renewal, Albertans need to have an opportunity to provide educated, informed input on the water strategy,” said Popik. “We believe taking the time to seek out additional input and ideas will help ensure they are indeed best, and most effective recommendations we can make to the Minister and the Government.”

The Council will be conducting the renewal process over the next six months, and providing recommendations to the Minister in early 2008.

The renewal workbook questionnaire, along with more information on the Council and *Water for Life*, can be found at [www.waterforlife.gov.ab.ca/awc](http://www.waterforlife.gov.ab.ca/awc)

*Established in 2004, the Alberta Water Council is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 25 members from governments, industry, and non-government organizations. Its primary task is to monitor and steward implementation of the Water for Life strategy and to champion 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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