



ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

BOARD MEETING #69

June 12, 2025

QEII Building, Edmonton & MS Teams

Executive Summary

The board received a presentation on the Source Water Protection Phase 1: Risk Assessment Data and Tools project team. While work has progressed, the team has requested a timeline extension to allow time for improvements to the web tool's interface for usability and accessibility, and for time to complete project team and broad sector review on the project deliverables prior to seeking board approval. The board approved the decision request, and the project is now expected to be complete in November 2025.

Merry Turtiak, Executive Director, Regulatory Programs, Environment and Protected Areas (EPA) provided the board with an update on current drought conditions in the province. Conditions are currently drier than they were last year, with low precipitation in the northwestern and southeastern parts of the province, but central Alberta has had higher precipitation than normal due to multiple spring storms. Most basins in the province are in stage 0 or stage 1 drought, but the Oldman and Milk River basins are in stage 3 (severe drought).

Board members participated in a project selection process. Six project ideas were put forward based on ideas generated during the business planning workshop held in February. The board decided to begin working groups to develop terms of reference for projects on updating the drought resiliency guide and facilitating cross-sector technology education and planning. They also approved progressing work on a potential healthy aquatic ecosystems project to allow for fundraising. The projects that were not selected for working groups will be revisited in February.

Vicki Lightbown, of Alberta Innovates, provided an update on the Alberta Innovates Water Innovation Program. Project areas included wetland resilience in the context of agroecosystems and climate change, early detection and response to aquatic invasive species using environmental DNA and metabarcoding, assessing water connectivity in rural and urban wetlands, and tracking and forecasting cyanobacterial harmful algal blooms, among others. In 2025, Alberta Innovates will focus on supporting emerging or critical issues and knowledge translation and technology commercialization for existing projects.

Board members were given an opportunity to provide feedback to the Government of Alberta on proposed changes to the *Water Act* based on the outcomes of phase 1 of their water availability engagement. Several sectors provided feedback, including support for reductions in administrative burden and barriers to water reuse, and opposition to changes that would enable disclosing financial information related to water transfers.

The next board meeting will be held on October 23, 2025, at the QEII building in Edmonton. The annual recognition event and a field tour are scheduled for October 22, 2025.

Summary of Discussion – Board Meeting #69

The board meeting was convened at 10:07 a.m.

1 Convene business meeting and approve agenda

ADM Kate Rich Water and Circular Economy Division, EPA, GOA and AWC President chaired the meeting and reviewed the agenda. The agenda was adopted by consensus as written.

It was noted that there will be an opportunity for board members to provide feedback on (EPA's water availability engagement under the "New Business" agenda item.

Decision 69.1: The board approved the agenda by consensus.

2 Administration

2.1 Approve meeting summary from the February 20, 2025, board meeting

The summary was included in the briefing package. Several edits were submitted to staff and incorporated into the document prior to distribution in the meeting package. There were no further questions or revisions.

Decision 69.2: The board approved the February 20, 2025, board meeting summary by consensus and it will be posted to the website.

2.2 Review actions from February 20, 2025, board meeting

A written update on the action items was included in the briefing package.

2.3 Discuss and approve the AWC's 2025-2027 Business Plan

A workshop was held in Calgary to discuss areas of focus for the 2025-2027 AWC Business Plan. Results of the workshop were incorporated into a draft plan that was provided to the board for feedback in May. A clean version was included in the briefing package, and a track changed version was posted on the AWC's SharePoint site so board members could review the proposed changes.

Discussion

- Some strategies in the business plan are reflective of how the AWC does its work and its role on reporting on the implementation of *Water for Life*. That function is at the heart of a lot of the aquatic ecosystem concerns that are brought up at this table.
- **Q:** Will this business plan be revisited annually?
 - **A:** We don't update the business plan annually, but it can be tabled if the need arises. The business plan informs our annual operational plans which are approved by the board, and implementation updates are provided at every board meeting.

Decision 69.3: The board approved the AWC's 2025-2027 Business Plan by consensus.

The approved 2025-2027 Business Plan will undergo a design and layout process before it is shared publicly and posted on the AWC's website.

2.4 Disband the Improving Water Availability in Alberta Working Group

This group was established in the fall of 2024 but decided to pause developing terms of reference for a project team until results of other ongoing processes related to water availability were complete. Several statements of opportunity on different aspects of water availability have been developed because of the recent business planning workshop, so this working group is no longer required.

Decision 69.4: The board disbanded the Improving Water Availability in Alberta Working Group by consensus.

3 Source Water Protection Phase 1: Risk Assessment Data and Tools project team update

Steph Neufeld, a co-chair of the Source Water Protection Phase 1 project team, provided an update on the team's work and requested a decision to extend the project timeline to November 2025 to allow the team sufficient time to complete sector engagement on their final deliverables.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Since the last board meeting, the THREATS interface has been revamped, to address feedback on usability received during workshops held in 2024. In addition, help functions and tutorials have been added to assist new users. The new features are still being implemented and are expected to be complete later this year.
- Webpages on source water protection and the THREATS platform have been added to the AWC's website. The pages contain general information on source water protection and resources to support users who would like to use THREATS.
- The project team is now reviewing the draft final report in preparation for distribution to the board for broad sector review over the summer.

Discussion

- The original platform was not user friendly; this new approach is appreciated.
- There is a lot of financial investment in this group and development of the THREATS platform, so it's worthwhile to take some extra time to make sure it is as useable and accessible as possible.

Decision 69.5: The board approved amending the Source Water Protection Phase 1: Risk Assessment Data and Tools project terms of reference to extend the timeline to November 2025 by consensus.

4 Update on current drought conditions

Merry Turtiak, Executive Director, Regulatory Programs, EPA, provided an update on the current drought conditions in the province. The update included the following:

- Information on the Drought Strategic Activities Project and the work it has completed. Deliverables of the project included the public release of a 2024 Water Sharing Memorandum of Understanding Summary Report, updates to the Alberta River Basin application, an updated Drought Response Plan, and enhanced internal processes and training.

- Information on Alberta's new Drought Index. It brings together four indices: 1) Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index, 2) Snow Water Equivalent Drought Index, 3) Normalized Difference Vegetation Index, and 4) Palmer Hydrological Index. Streamflow and reservoir levels are under review to be added.
- The 2025 drought outlook for the province. Conditions are drier now than last year at this time, and precipitation is low in northwestern and southeastern Alberta, but higher in central Alberta due to multiple spring storms.
- Detailed information about reservoirs is now available, particularly for southern Alberta. Reservoirs on the Bow and Red Deer River basins are normal or above normal. In the Oldman and South Saskatchewan Basin, they range from below normal to above normal.
- Alberta is maintaining drought stage 0 (adequate water supply) through stage 3 (severe drought), with most basins in stage 0 or 1. The Oldman and Milk River basins are in stage 3.

Discussion

- **Q:** Have you considering including different types of droughts to the drought map on a basin or sub-basin level? There are times when there is enough water supply, but there is still a soil moisture drought. We have to explain the difference to our members, and we have messaging, but it can be challenging when the maps are showing a single index, and it would be helpful if the differences were represented on the drought indices map.
 - **A:** We haven't considered changing the scale down to individual rivers, but there may be further refinement we could add, such as information on the type of drought being experienced in a basin.
- **Q:** How often are the drought stages reviewed?
 - **A:** The stages are assessed every two weeks and then immediately implemented following internal briefings on the water supply outlook. The river basins application is updated, and then messaging is sent to the Government of Alberta's (GoA) drought website. We also communicate with water license holders. The team meets every second Thursday and messaging will start to flow on the following Friday.
- **Q:** Are there triggers for public press releases, for example if we reach drought stage 3 or 4?
 - **A:** Right now, I'm not aware of any intent to do more public messaging.
- Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation has soil moisture maps. It may be possible to integrate those into the drought maps.
- Lesser Slave Lake is part of the Athabasca Watershed, but it has different conditions. The folks in that watershed would like to see that area identified as distinct from the rest of the Athabasca Basin, if possible.
- The water level in Great Slave Lake is down 12 feet, and there's a lot of concern about the northern rivers that are feeding into it.
- **Q:** Some basins have different water management triggers that aren't necessarily aligned with the provincial drought water management triggers. Are things like in-stream objectives considered for actions like reviewing temporary diversion licenses, for basins that have those?
 - **A:** For each river system, sub-basins, or even tributaries, the drought team meets bi-weekly, and they look at those from a water flow and shortage perspective. They may issue a water shortage advisory on a tributary to a main

stem, for example. In terms of the drought stages and messaging, it is about looking at a variety of factors and rolling it all up together. The management response is driven by the individual tributary or main stem, depending on what's happening locally, and EPA will work with all stakeholders in the basin on management actions like not granting temporary diversion licenses or applying water conservation objectives. We also encourage local communities to enact their own bylaws and water conservation approaches.

The Drought Mutual Support Committee is in abeyance, and board members were reminded that it can be reconvened if there is a request from board members to do so.

5 Project Selection Process

During the February business planning workshop, board members had identified seven potential project areas for further discussion via ad hoc groups. The ad hoc groups met in April 2025, and six of these developed statements of opportunity (SoOs) for their project areas, and one decided the topic was not appropriate for the AWC at this time. The SoOs and a briefing note were distributed to board members for review in May and was also included in the briefing package.

A brief presentation was provided for each of the project ideas. The ad hoc group for the project on exploring opportunities for cross-sector water reuse recommended that a project not be started in this area as there is an existing community of practice operating out of the University of Alberta (UofA) on that topic. The discussion on each is summarized below.

Community of Practice for Full-Cost Accounting and Asset Management

- The budget estimate of \$10,000 to run a conference isn't realistic; it would cost much more.
 - The ad hoc group didn't discuss costs in any detail, and a working group would need to refine this. An in-person conference would likely be more; however it could also be done remotely at much less cost.
- **Q:** What are the main assets the ad hoc group was thinking about?
 - **A:** It could be things like irrigation infrastructure, water treatment plants, and pipes. There's a lot of different infrastructure across sectors. There could be commonalities between asset management and full-cost accounting that could be shared between sectors to properly value and account for replacement and management costs. This project would likely need to be phased to understand how to best move it forward and identifying the fundamental objectives in the beginning would be very important to determine the long-term timeframe for this potential project.

Evaluating the Water License Transfer System

- **Q:** Was there consideration for how long to continue having conversations on this going forward? A conference is a one-time event, but license transfers are ongoing.
 - **A:** We didn't discuss that, but if it was well attended and successful there would probably be requests to repeat it in the future. This initial conference could be a pilot. It does make sense to repeat it in the future, as there will be new people looking to make transfers. The ad hoc group did say that there would likely be some recommendations for next steps from this initial group.

- **Q:** This could provide a snapshot to complement GoA's water availability engagement and provide some basis for the GoA as well as for people who have participated and will participate in the future. Who would be invited? Current and potential water license holders?
 - **A:** The SoO contains a list of potential participants. If we communicate broadly about the conference there may be a wide range of interested groups, including land developers, municipalities, and industry.
- A conference like this could give some groups a market edge, which is a challenge for the working group. It either needs to be broad enough so everyone can participate, or very narrow, for example, only including people who have experience to share.
 - We have a system that is enabled by legislation, but it's not well used. We want to share experiences on what worked well and what didn't, and that could be from brokers, sellers, and buyers. We want to identify things we could adopt to improve how the system works.
 - One of the challenging pieces would be the role of consultants and brokers. The ad hoc group recognized this isn't intended to be an opportunity for a broker to corner a market; it might help to make the system friendly enough that brokers aren't needed. The working group will have to carefully consider it.
- There is a lot that could be learned from this through an academic endeavour rather than a conference. There are systems used elsewhere that can be reviewed and assessed and successful aspects could be applied to our system. Transparency is also a consideration. The SoO doesn't capture everything a working group would need to consider when scoping this project.

Leveraging Untapped and Under-tapped Alternative Water Supplies

- This is timely because of the GoA water availability engagement. The SoO stated this would apply to raw water, but it could also be applied to things like treated industrial wastewater. The working group would need to be clear about what types of water we're including in this.

Facilitating Cross-sector Technology Education and Planning

- However this project is framed, the working group will have to be thoughtful and make sure it's based on actual experiences and doesn't turn into a sales pitch.

State of Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems

- **Q:** Did the ad hoc group consider the linkage of healthy aquatic ecosystems to instream flow needs? There's an opportunity to do something like the freshwater health index instead of just doing basin assessments.
 - **A:** The ad hoc group talked about instream flow needs as an important component of what makes a health ecosystem, and the SoO does mention the freshwater health index as an approach the working group should consider.

Updating the Drought Resiliency Guide

- The terms of reference for this project could be developed quickly, so electronic approval could be considered for a quicker turnaround.

Exploring Opportunities for Cross-sector Water Reuse

- **Q:** The existing community of practice through the UofA is very academic, and that gets in the way of practicality. Some of the discussions are restrictive about what could be used for water reuse. It could be made more practical by having the end-users of the water weigh in on the conversation. Is that what participation from the AWC would look like?
 - **A:** The ad hoc group didn't get into any details about what participation from the AWC could look like, but we did talk about things like public perception. There would be a lot of concern if there was a suggestion to start using tailings water for irrigation, for example. We've asked for the ToR for the UofA's community of practice, but we haven't received it yet.
- The existing community of practice is multi-stakeholder, but participation is heavily skewed towards municipalities. Their work has slowed down, and there are some questions about funding.

Action 69.1: Andre to begin including updates from the UofA's community of practice on water reuse in his executive director reports.

It was noted that AWC staff have the capacity to start two new working groups immediately, and any others would need to be staggered.

Each sector was asked for their top choices, and to decide on which projects should be progressed to working groups now or in the future. The following project ideas were identified as a priority across several sectors:

1. Updating the drought resiliency guide
2. Facilitating cross-sector technology education and planning
3. State of healthy aquatic ecosystems
4. Community of practice for full-cost accounting and asset management

Discussion

- The projects on the water license transfer system and leveraging untapped and under-tapped alternative water sources should be delayed as they potentially overlap with the GoA's water availability engagement.
 - They can be reconsidered later when the results of the ongoing engagement are available.
 - The GoA is engaging on legislative changes right now, which could impact either of those two projects. There will be outcomes ready as early as the fall, and any policies and guidance will be turned around quickly.
- Some sectors will have limited capacity to participate on project teams right now. Many are heavily engaged in the GoA's water availability engagement.
- Updating the drought resiliency guide is a project that is timely, could be done quickly, and will have a lot of value in the future.
 - The current drought isn't over and there will be another soon. The AWC had great timing with the first project and updating it now would also be well timed.
- The project on technology education and planning is an opportunity for the AWC to take on some forward-looking work that is timely and relevant.
 - This work could set the basis for many future projects and the use of technology in water management continues to increase.

- This project aligns well with Alberta Innovates' mandate, and they would be interested in partnering with the AWC on it.
- The full-cost accounting project is large and complex, and overwhelming to start.
 - The scope is broad as written, but it could be a phased project. We should keep this project on our list and start thinking about what the approach could look like, as it has the potential to underpin a lot of future work.
 - The board could provide direction to a working group on what the first one or two phases would look like.
 - We would need to sequence phases of this project, and we would need access to expertise that isn't currently available to us. It could take us a decade to complete something like this.
 - The outcomes of a project on technology education and planning could influence the scope of this work. We should revisit this one after the technology education and planning project is complete.
 - The scope of this work could also be broadened to include green infrastructure.
- **Q:** Is the drought project being presented as a full project? We aren't starting from zero with that one.
 - **A:** It may be an expedited project or require less work from project team members as there is already a basis for the work, but it will still require as much dedicated staff time as a typical project while it is running. At the moment, we don't have a full staff, so our ability to take on new work is somewhat constrained. We can start two working groups now, but if there is interest in a third that will have to be initiated after the first two are complete. The working groups can be sequenced in a way to avoid significant delays.
- How quick the drought project is will depend on the scope. There may need to be more rigour or detail in the drought guide than we anticipate. It's also possible the working group could consider expanding the scope to include climate resiliency, as it is interconnected with drought.
 - We may need to reconsider sequencing and capacity once the working groups have defined the project scopes.
- Healthy aquatic ecosystems have been a concern for a long time; it's the one goal of *Water for Life* that is lagging behind and hasn't received the attention it should.
 - Work on healthy aquatic ecosystems would be foundational for future projects.
 - This project would need some additional work to ensure the scope is appropriate given other ongoing initiatives, such as the state of the watershed and aquatic ecosystem reports being done by WPACs. The timing is also difficult from a capacity perspective.
 - There is a broader question for this work around pursuing metrics, and when and how we could do this work.
 - We can't just continue to ignore healthy aquatic ecosystems. The freshwater health index was developed for use in developing countries where data isn't available to give a general index of how healthy the aquatic ecosystems are in comparison to reference conditions. We do have the data in Alberta, and it should be a priority. It is the foundation of watershed management.
 - Resourcing would be a concern for this work. The statement of opportunity identified potential costs for a consultant, and we would need to fundraise for those.

- We could investigate potential funding opportunities while other projects are being complete so that we are in a better position to begin it later.

The board decided to start working groups for the projects on updating the drought resiliency guide and facilitating cross-sector technology education and planning now, with the caveat that other four potential projects will be revisited at a future board meeting when there is capacity to begin work again.

Calls for members for the new working groups will be distributed to the board over the next couple of weeks with a deadline of approximately three weeks for submission of names.

Decision 69.6: The board agreed by consensus to strike a working group for Updating the Guide for Building Resiliency to Multi-Year Drought in Alberta.

Decision 69.7: The board agreed by consensus to strike a working group for Facilitating Technology Education and Planning.

6 Alberta Innovates Water Innovation Program update

Vicki Lightbown, Executive Director, Environmental Innovation, Alberta Innovates provided a presentation on the Alberta Innovates Water Innovation Program. The presentation included:

- Information on Alberta Innovates structure and programs, including statistics on their active projects, investments, leveraged funding, and greenhouse gas emission reduction potential for the work being undertaken through the Clean Resources division.
- Updates on projects being undertaken through the Water Innovation Program. Topics included wetland resilience in the context of agroecosystems and climate change, early detection and response to aquatic invasive species using environmental DNA and metabarcoding, assessing water connectivity in rural and urban wetlands, and tracking and forecasting cyanobacterial harmful algal blooms, among others.
- Information on their plan for 2025, which included support for emerging or critical issues and a focus on knowledge translation and technology commercialization for existing projects.

Discussion

- **Q:** Has there been any public feedback about the use of oilfield water for irrigation?
 - **A:** This project is more at the proof-of-concept stage and hasn't been opened for feedback. It's recognized that it would need to be addressed. It's necessary for the producer, water treatment operator, and user of water to be on board for that project to move ahead. It's possible that even if those players are in place, it still won't be able to go ahead.
- **Q:** Of all the projects that have come across your desk, what's your favourite?
 - **A:** There have been a lot of projects in the last 15 years, but my favourites are the ones that have an impact. For example, one of the ones Alberta Innovates worked closely with started in a garage, and they now have international contracts.
- **Q:** The project on wetland resilience focuses on the impact of agricultural practices and climate change on wetland health and one of the outcomes is to inform agricultural best

practices. When would industry be brought into this process to provide feedback on what practices are practical and relevant?

- **A:** We try to involve as many relevant stakeholders as we can. As a key funder we can provide advice, and that could include recommending the owners of the project engage with relevant stakeholders. The group who owns the project is largely responsible for that, however. We also try to get industry involved through knowledge dissemination.
- **Q:** Are projects generally viewed through the lens of technological feasibility, or is economical feasibility also included?
 - **A:** Alberta Innovates tried to look at economic, environmental, and social feasibility. Some projects are only focused on the feasibility of the technology. In the case of the wetland resilience project, it's looking at environmental and economic feasibility, but not social.
- **Q:** Does Alberta Innovates fund projects related to healthy aquatic ecosystems?
 - **A:** Yes, through the continuous uptake program.
- **Q:** One of the projects is about using water treatment residuals to improve phosphorous removal. Could that approach be used to reduce algal blooms?
 - **A:** For that project, the residuals are being used in a purposefully built biofilter. It's unknown how that would work on an actual lake, but it would probably be more manageable if the outflow was in the lake. This is being looked at from a commercialization perspective, and not for lake treatment.

7 Information Reports

7.1 Executive Director's Report

The executive director's report was included in the briefing package.

Andre noted that while the AWC didn't win an Emerald Award for the drought resiliency project, all the finalists should be acknowledged, and he congratulated EPCOR, the Oldman Watershed Association, and the City of Lethbridge on winning awards.

He also acknowledged Tracy Scott, who was a long-time AWC board member representing the wetlands conservation sector and has recently retired.

7.2 AWC Sector Updates

The AWC sector update report was provided in the briefing package and posted on the AWC's SharePoint.

There were no questions or comments on this item.

7.3 Clean Air Strategic Alliance Project Updates

The update report was provided in the briefing package. There were no comments or questions.

There were no questions or comments on this item.

7.4 2023 Water Conservation, Efficiency, and Productivity Update

The update report was included in the briefing package. The report has been completed and is now undergoing a technical edit and design and layout process prior to public release.

There were no questions or comments on this item.

New or other business

Project Selection – Revisit

Andre informed the board that upon reflecting on staff capacity for new working groups and the interest in progressing work on the proposed healthy aquatic ecosystems project idea that had strong support, it would be possible to sequence the working groups to allow one on healthy aquatic ecosystems to be started later in the year. An approved terms of reference would support efforts to identify potential funding sources for the project and avoid delays in the future.

Once terms of reference are approved, the board does not need to begin a project team immediately. A project team for healthy aquatic ecosystems can be considered along with the other potential projects discussed during the meeting and any other work that may arise, such as from recommendations from the source water projection project or from outcomes of the GoA's water availability engagement process.

Discussion

- We need to ensure that the other projects under consideration are given a fair shake once the GoA engagement is complete, and we have a better understanding of the water availability landscape. It's not clear where healthy aquatic ecosystem fits in with these other projects.
 - The terms of reference can be completed without committing to selecting it for a project team. We can revisit project selection during the February board meeting and plan for the next new project then, when we have more information.
- **Q:** If there are policy changes coming out of the GoA water availability engagement, is the AWC a good place for that to happen?
 - **A:** The engagement has targeted those most directly impacted and who have the most information to share. Not to say the AWC does not have that, but it's aiming to engage those people directly. The AWC is of course invited, as are many others, to take part.

Decision 69.8: The board decided by consensus to strike a working group to develop terms of reference based on the healthy aquatic ecosystems SoO to support potential fundraising for the project. This work will only begin once the working groups for updating the drought resiliency guide and facilitating technology education and planning are complete or near complete.

GoA Water Availability Engagement – Feedback Opportunity

The GoA's water availability engagement has entered phase two, and the GoA is seeking feedback on proposed *Water Act* amendments that were identified based on the feedback received during the first phase of the engagement.

Board members were asked if they had any feedback to share on the proposed changes.

Discussion:

- **Q:** Has the team at EPA had the time to go through the phase 1 engagement results, and will there be a report back on what was heard?
 - **A:** There was a lot of feedback submitted in a lot of different formats, and not all of it was about water availability. We do not plan to release a report on what we heard, but we tracked the responses. Legislation is the first place where we intend to act, but you will see more coming forward over time.
 - As someone who participated in the engagement, it's not clear that some of the biggest concerns that were voiced by some sectors are being addressed. Without a report on what was heard, there is a lack of transparency and no ability to reconcile what was heard with what was acted on.
 - The GoA is looking at the feedback in the spirit of effective water management to meet all uses and needs, and all the feedback was considered through the lens of *Water for Life* and avoiding adverse impacts to the environment or other water users. There was a variety of opinions on most topics, but there was alignment in some areas, such as improvements to measuring and reporting. The GoA is committing to conversation and continuing to engage but won't be producing a report on what was heard.
- A lot of the water availability questions are around risk of intensifying uses and trade-offs and how that might play out into the future. Alberta has large economic and population ambitions, which makes water availability a large concern. Water license transfers could potentially have more of a role.
- **Q:** In the documentation from GoA on phase 1, it was communicated that there would be no changes to things like FITFIR and volumetric pricing, however it is so important to our sector that we included it in our submission. Are changes to FITFIR and volumetric pricing still off the table for phase 2?
 - **A:** They were purposely outlined in phase 1 as something we don't intend to change in the *Water Act*, and that is true for phase 2 as well.
- **Q:** The changes to reduce administrative burden and improve availability without adverse impact are positive, but there is some concern about disclosure of financial information related to water transfers. What is the intention behind disclosing that data?
 - **A:** In phase 1 we heard a lot about transparency and what data is needed. Water is a crown resource, and part of this process was looking at what information is needed for effective management. Not just for the GoA, but for anyone who needs water. If there is better knowledge about what's needed to acquire water, it helps with investments and planning. There is recognition that water is scarce, and it's important to be able to make informed choices. The legislation changes enable making that information more available.
 - **Q:** Is this type of data publicly available for any other industry?
 - **A:** We're seeing it more. It is an economic tool that could be used to achieve environmental and economic goals.
 - There could be unintended consequences from this change. Other commodities are being traded and crossing borders and are going to the highest bidder.

- **A:** GoA recognizes that the information could be taken out of context, so we are working to understand this and plan how and when the information would be available.
- A lot of the changes seem to support goals of improved water availability without increasing allocations in basins, such as by making it easier to do things like increase the use of effluents for energy projects. There are currently barriers to this, so there are some opportunities. However, we would be opposed to disclosing information on financial transactions.
- The survey is open until June 30th and you are invited to submit your input early and often as new ideas arise. <https://your.alberta.ca/water-availability>

An evaluation survey will be sent to board members following the meeting.

The next board meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2025, at the QEII Building in Edmonton. There will be an option for board members to attend virtually via MS Teams. The annual recognition event and a field tour are scheduled for October 22, 2025.

The board meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

Attachment 1: Board Meeting #69 Attendees

In Attendance

*Denotes attendance via MS Teams.

Italics denotes an alternate attending while their sectors' director attended.

AWC Directors and Alternates

Amber Link, Government (Rural)*	Lesley Peterson, NGO (Fisheries Habitat Conservation)*
Brian Deheer, NGO (Environmental)	Lindsay McBlane, NGO (Wetlands Conservation)
Bill Chapman, Government (Small Urban)	Margo Jarvis Redelback, Industry (Irrigation)
Dan Moore, Industry (Forestry)*	Melody Garner-Skiba, Industry (Livestock)
<i>Deanna Cottrell, Industry (Oil and Gas)*</i>	Nancy Mackay, Government (Large Urban)
Doug Kaupp, NGO (WPACs)	<i>Nicola Lewin, Government (Large Urban)</i>
Emily Jobson, Industry (Oil & Gas)	Nevin Rosaasen, Industry (Cropping)*
Jamie Wuite, GoA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation)	Rob van Diemen, Industry (Livestock)
Jason Unger, NGO (Environmental)	<i>Stephanie Neufeld, NGO (Lake Environment Conservation)</i>
Jay White, NGO (Lake Environment Conservation)*	Vicki Lightbown, GoA and Provincial Authorities (Science and Research)
Jeanette Sarac, GoA and Provincial Authorities (Health)	
<i>Jeff Shipton, Industry (Forestry)</i>	
Kate Rich, GoA and Provincial Authorities (Environment and Protected Areas)	Andre Asselin, Executive Director (ex-officio)

Guests & Observers:

Megan Van Ham, City of Calgary
Natalia Vojno, Our Living Waters
Lieserl Woods, Canada Water Agency
Amy Mannix, Alberta Environment and Protected Areas* (New business)
Jaclyn Schmidt, Alberta Environment and Protected Areas* (New business)

AWC Staff:

Alec Carrigy, Anuja Hoddinott, Katie Duffett

Presenters:

Steph Neufeld, Alberta Lake Management Society (Item 3.0)
Merry Turtiak, Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (Item 4.0)
Andre Asselin, Alberta Water Council (Item 5.0)
Alec Carrigy, Alberta Water Council (Item 5.0)
Doug Kaupp, Oldman Watershed Council (Item 5.0)
Anuja Hoddinott, Alberta Water Council (Item 5.0)
Vicki Lightbown, Alberta Innovates (Item 5.0 and 6.0)
Lesley Peterson, Fish Habitat Conservation Collective (Item 5.0)
Margo Jarvis Redelback, Alberta Irrigation Districts Association (Item 5.0)
Melody Garner-Skiba, Intensive Livestock Working Group (Item 5.0)

Absent with Regrets:

Alan Corbett, NGO (WPACs)

Darren Calliou, Government (Métis Settlements)

Janice Linehan, Industry (Mining)

John Conrad, GoA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation)

Rob Hoffman, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)

Attachment 2: Board Meeting #69 Decision Log and Action Items

Decisions

Board Meeting #69

Decision 69.1: The board approved the agenda by consensus.

Decision 69.2: The board approved the February 20, 2025, board meeting summary by consensus and it will be posted to the website.

Decision 69.3: The board approved the AWC's 2025-2027 Business Plan by consensus.

Decision 69.4: The board disbanded the Improving Water Availability in Alberta Working Group by consensus.

Decision 69.5: The board approved amending the Source Water Protection Phase 1: Risk Assessment Data and Tools project terms of reference to extend the timeline to November 2025 by consensus.

Decision 69.6: The board agreed by consensus to strike a working group for Updating the Guide for Building Resiliency to Multi-Year Drought in Alberta.

Decision 69.7: The board agreed by consensus to strike a working group for Facilitating Technology Education and Planning.

Decision 69.8: The board decided by consensus to strike a working group to develop terms of reference based on the healthy aquatic ecosystems SOO to support potential fundraising for the project. This work will only begin once the working groups for updating the drought resiliency guide and facilitating technology education and planning are complete or near complete.

Action Items

Action 69.1: Andre to begin including updates from the UofA's community of practice on water reuse in his executive director reports.