



Working together to ensure and sustain

- a safe water supply,
- a healthy environment
- and a prosperous economy



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Drips and Drops

Next AWC Board Meeting

The next AWC Board Meeting will be held Thursday March 22nd in Calgary.

Moving from Words to Actions Final Report

The Moving from Words to Actions Final Report is now available on the Council website www.awchome.ca

Spotlight on Board Members

Check out our board member profile in *The Waterfall* section. This is a regular feature about a Council director or alternate, along with interesting water news from their sector.



THE WATERFALL

A Director Profile of Rob Pritchard - Large Urban Sector

Rob Pritchard joined the Council in 2006 initially as the alternate and then as a director in 2007, he has also been a member of the executive committee since 2008. The large urban sector has two members, Edmonton and Calgary, and the Director position alternates between the two cities. Rob follows Al Maurer, former City Manager of the City of Edmonton.

Rob has been involved in the water industry for most of his 38-year career. Before joining the City of Calgary he worked in consulting engineering for 13 years in the UK, Iraq and here in Alberta, gaining experience in water supply, water and wastewater treatment, irrigation and drainage, dams and geotechnical engineering. He joined the City of Calgary Waterworks Division in 1986, and became General Manager of Utilities and Environmental Protection in 2004. He is responsible for the water, wastewater and drainage utilities, as well as waste and recycling services, and environmental and safety management for the City of Calgary. "The neat thing about Calgary's approach to water

Council's Newsletter

The Council's newsletter will arrive at your inbox three times per year, shortly after each board meeting, providing a quick update for board members and other interested stakeholders. Comments and suggestions are welcome, so please tell us what you think. Email your feedback to info@awchome.ca. We look forward to hearing from you!

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Susan Sly (Nature Pictures), Rob Pritchard (Spotlight Article), Keith Murray (CEP)

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and wastewater management is that we regard water as one resource from source to tap and back to the river," he says. "This creates much better opportunities for truly integrating water management; the less you take out of the river for domestic and other uses, the less you have to treat before you put it back."

Rob notes that Calgary is also committed to managing storm water quality and quantity and pre-treating storm water to reduce total loadings on the Bow River. He believes that strong leadership from City Council and City Administration over the years has put Calgary in a very good position with respect to both water supply and wastewater treatment.



He stresses that it is important for the large urban sector to be involved with the Council. Roughly two-thirds of Alberta's population lives in the two largest cities and this sector's positive actions and responsible stewardship can have a big impact on the goals of Water for Life. Rob also notes that large cities depend on similar commitments from other sectors to ensure the long-term

sustainability of communities. "Being involved with Council enables us to interact with other sectors and learn about the challenges they face. It's a way to meet and work with some incredibly talented and committed people to better understand their perspective. To get the most out of it, though, you need to be prepared to commit enough time to understand the issues, and fully engage your sector, and yourself, in working groups, project teams and committees."

In Rob's view, *Water for Life* is a ground breaking strategy for water resource management and a phenomenally visionary document. "The three goals and three key directions clearly focus on the issues that we as a society need to address in managing this precious resource. The Alberta Water Council, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils, and Watershed Stewardship Groups together provide an exceptional model for advancing the strategy through collaboration and participation of all stakeholders, across every sector, from grassroots to government, and everyone in between."

Three key projects stand out in his mind as important accomplishments for the Council: the Water Allocation Transfer System Upgrade Project (WATSUP); efforts to develop water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (CEP) plans; and the Wetlands Project. "WATSUP was very important to us because the South Saskatchewan Basin is closed to new allocations and the City of Calgary has a large water allocation, much of which we aren't using at this time, due in large part to a significant investment in CEP measures."

"I think the Council has done excellent work to support the development of CEP plans for Alberta's major water-using sectors, including municipalities," he notes. "Calgary has a '30 in 30' policy, where the City aims to be taking the same amount of water out of the river in 2033 as we did in 2003. So, even though we expect our population to grow by 30% over those 30 years, we need to reduce per capita consumption by 30%. This is the foundation of our conservation policy, so it was easy for us to get behind the idea of CEP. We need to work on these pieces for our own sector but it's very encouraging to see that other sectors are contributing to CEP too."

Rob regards the Wetlands project as a huge early learning experience for the Council in terms of policy development, expectations and what you think you can get out of a project. "Calgary had a 'no net loss' policy in place before that project was done, but it was important to see that the other sectors were on board and to provide the large urban sector's experience on the project team."

For the future, Rob hopes that effective regional land use planning on a watershed basis will become a reality, particularly in the South Saskatchewan Basin. "Integrated water resource management across all sectors is essential for the long-term sustainability of our communities, especially in the face of climate change."

THE CONFLUENCE

The State of Non-point Source Pollution Exposed

The health of our aquatic ecosystems is affected by both point and non-point sources of pollution. John Englert, a co-chair of the Non-Point Source Pollution project team, noted "much is known about the effects of point sources of pollution, as withdrawals and discharges tend to be highly regulated and monitored by government agencies. But NPS pollution is not so well understood, as these sources tend to be much more diffuse in origin and difficult to control."

The project's Phase I report, which assessed the current "state of" non-point pollution knowledge in Alberta, is in its final stages and will be approved by the team in December. Team member Andrea Kalischuk with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, explains that "the report synthesizes our NPS knowledge from various land use practices, including forestry, transportation, oil and gas, agriculture, urban development and recreation; while we have a lot of knowledge about some aspects of NPS pollution, it is important to see the opportunities for improvement in knowledge and management. What the team has learned from this report will provide the basis for comprehensive discussions about the sources and risks of NPS pollution in each of Alberta's river basins." John notes that the "project team includes representation from a broad range of stakeholders, and we are all very excited to be part of an initiative that will help identify the state of knowledge, and more importantly, management tools to help minimize non-point source pollution here in Alberta."

The team's next step is underway working with a consultant for the Phase II report which will examine the policies, practices and procedures for managing NPS pollution in Alberta and other jurisdictions. The team expects the Phase II results will identify opportunities to improve management tools to minimize NPS pollution in Alberta. The two reports will inform the team's final report and recommendations, which will come forward to the Board in October 2012.



Final Stretch for the Water CEP Team

The Sector Planning for Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity team continues to provide support to the seven major water using sectors that are developing CEP plans. The CEP project has been very valuable in helping team members understand the issues and challenges faced by other sectors. Four sectors have now completed CEP sector plans and the three remaining plans (power generation, chemical and petrochemical) will come forward at the March 2012 Board meeting. The team's final report is currently expected to come to Council in March 2012.

The Forest sector plan, prepared by the Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA), was presented by Keith Murray at the October Board meeting. Their plan 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 (m³ per tonne)

The Forest sector plan is expected to be approved by the AFPA board in the near future and will then be posted, along with the other completed CEP plans, on the Council's website, www.awchome.ca.



Project Team to Define Riparian lands

The Riparian project team met for the first time in September. The team's first task is developing a definition for *Riparian Lands*; they are currently collecting sector feedback for their definition. The definition for *Riparian Lands* is expected to come forward to the March 2012 Board meeting for approval.

The team is also developing a Request for Proposals to hire a consultant to assess the *Current state of riparian lands in Alberta, and the management and stewardship "best practices" (policy, practices and procedures) in Alberta and other jurisdictions*. The consultant's report will inform the team's discussions in their development of a final report and recommendations.



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WATER PIPES

4th Review of *Water for Life* Implementation is underway

Part of the Council's core business is to regularly review implementation progress of the *Water for Life* strategy. The *WFL* Implementation Review Committee has begun the fourth review. This review will assess progress at a strategic level and provide a snapshot of *Water for Life's* status, effectiveness and progress as of December 31, 2011.

Part of the review process involves a survey that aims to gather input from sector members to assist in assessing the actions being taken by sectors to advance *Water for Life*. The survey was launched this fall and responses are due by mid-November. The Government of Alberta (GoA) interviews are also underway and will be completed by mid-November as well. The committee will review the results of the GoA interviews at its

December meeting.

The survey results and interviews will help the committee examine the progress and effectiveness of the identified actions in achieving the outcomes under each of the *Water for Life* strategy's goals and key directions.



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