



ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL E-NEWSLETTER

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"News about water can't be dry"

Working together to ensure and sustain
↳ a safe water supply,
↳ a healthy environment
↳ and a prosperous economy



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The next AWC Board Meeting will be held Thursday June 14, 2012 in Nisku.

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.

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

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THE WATERFALL

A Director Profile of David Hill - Science and Research Sector

David Hill was one of the first individuals appointed to engage in the Council's early discussions around the *Water for Life* (WFL) strategy. At that time, he was representing the needs and interests of the irrigation sector. He has participated on the Council ever since, although a change in jobs meant he switched from representing the irrigation



sector to the science and research sector. David is currently Water Resources Executive Director for Alberta Innovates - Energy and Environment Solutions where he helps to connect Council members with water researchers to promote dialogue and understanding of water research in the province.

"Albertans have a great deal of passion around water and people want to do their part to protect this critical resource," he notes. David and his family are a good example, working for a number of years to reduce the

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 amount of water they use in their own home. During his time on Council, he has noticed that same passion around the table. "One of the Council's major successes has been its ability to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders and have meaningful, productive conversations about water use and management in Alberta. Not only are there opportunities for dialogue, but we are always learning from each other, which promotes significant positive impacts on what happens with water. The Council gives us a real opportunity to use our own knowledge and expertise to come up with workable, implementable solutions."

David also enjoys the discussions at the project team and working group tables, where members can see the commitment of others to improving water management. "This is where WFL gets much of its strength. The desired outcomes are fairly clearly defined, but the path to get there is much less clear. Listening to the interests and priorities of others is essential to understand common interests. With that understanding, it's much easier to find solutions that can meet everyone's needs rather than defending our favorite old positions." He believes that an advantage of being on a project team is that one will become a subject expert, regardless of their perspective on the issue. He thinks that everybody who's on a team, to one degree or another, changes their own behavior as a consequence of having worked on the subject. "We don't like to learn things and then not use them," he adds.



In David's view, the Council has achieved two major accomplishments. First is the work on Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity plans, which will be very important to the province in the long term. "This is a huge good news effort. All we have to do is look at what industries have said they are going to do voluntarily. Alberta will see major benefits from these plans, and those who are implementing the voluntary measures soon find their own business case for why they should be doing it in the first place." The second accomplishment, which David thinks we need to continue working on, is "gaining a common understanding of each other's positions, really appreciating where people are coming from and what their core interests are."

David's hope for the future is that everyone learns to be more open, transparent, adaptable, and increasingly focused on how to get to the outcomes we need to reach. "I'm hoping that the water stakeholder community will have really recognized its ability to lead in developing and implementing creative solutions and that the government will have evolved enough to let it happen."

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THE CONFLUENCE

Uncovering potential approaches for managing Non-point Source Pollution

Members of the NPS pollution project team have been busy gathering information to guide their final report and recommendations. Some of that information is coming from the project's Phase I report, which was submitted to the team in December. That report assessed the current state of non-point source pollution knowledge in Alberta.

Upon completion of Phase I, the team's next step was to work with a consultant for the Phase II of the project examining the policies, practices and procedures for managing NPS pollution from five major land uses in Alberta and other jurisdictions. During the research a vast amount of information on other jurisdictions was uncovered; the consultant found that there are several key components that can assist in a successful NPS pollution program:

- *Clear lead agency
- *Good baseline data
- *Careful development of NPSP plan
- *Sound regulatory framework
- *Partnerships
- *Awareness and education
- *Adequate funding
- *Implementation and enforcement
- *Ongoing monitoring and assessment
- *Watershed approach

This work is another key component to inform the team and it was completed by the consultant in March. The team will use the Phase II results to help identify management tools to minimize NPS pollution in Alberta.

The team is now working on its final report and recommendations and expects to present its results to the Board in October 2012.



Progress continues for the Water CEP Team

The Sector Planning for Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity team continues to support the seven major water using sectors that are developing CEP plans.



John Skowronski, Petrochemical Sector, presented the downstream petroleum sector plan, prepared by the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute (CPPI), at the March Board meeting. The plan describes the sector and how it uses water highlighting that:

- *The downstream petroleum industry has significantly improved water use efficiency over the past decade through continuous improvement (operating and technological), in spite of regulatory changes requiring more use of energy and water.

*The water use by the petroleum refineries in Alberta to 2009 has improved by 32 % on an actual basis and 30% on a normalized basis from the base line (2000-2002 average).

*The sector will continue to advance opportunities identified in the CEP plan to improve water use, while balancing social, economic, and environment priorities.

The plan covers three refineries, one asphalt plant and a large number of marketing and distribution facilities in Alberta that are operated or managed by CPPI member companies. The plan identifies 15 opportunities for a potential of 22 CEP outcomes. The plan is expected to be approved by the CPPI board and will then be posted, along with the other four completed CEP plans, on the Council's website at www.awchome.ca. More information on CPPI member perspectives on responsible stewardship of water resources can be found on their website www.cppi.ca.

The two remaining sector plans (power generation and chemical) will be completed later this year. The team's final report will be presented to the Board in October.

Understanding riparian land management

This team has been meeting monthly and has made significant progress. The team engaged a consultant to prepare a report on the *Current state of riparian lands in Alberta, and the management and stewardship “best practices” (policy, practices and procedures) in Alberta and other jurisdictions*. Part of the consultant’s work involved an online survey to gather knowledge about riparian habitat management in Alberta; specifically, understanding how riparian habitat management could be improved and what barriers may exist in achieving goals for riparian conservation in Alberta.

The team was very pleased with the 80% response rate from the survey; they expect that the once the results are analyzed the information gathered will add great value to the consultant’s report on riparian lands and their management in Alberta. Following receipt of the consultant’s report in late June, the team will begin work on its final report and recommendations.

The team is also finalizing a definition for *Riparian Lands*. Through sector engagement, the team received widespread interest in this important piece of the project and positive support from the sectors on the initial draft definition. The team is currently making further refinements and will present the final draft definition to the Board in October. The final report from the team is expected in March 2013.



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WATER PIPES

4th Review of Water for Life Implementation nears completion

Part of the Council’s core business is to regularly review implementation progress of the *Water for Life* strategy. The *WFL* Implementation Review Committee is now completing the Council’s fourth review, which will provide a snapshot of *Water for Life*’s status, effectiveness and progress as of December 31, 2011.

Part of the review process involved an online survey that aimed to gather input from sector members to help the committee better assess sector actions being taken to advance *Water for Life*.

The committee was pleased with the results as completed surveys were submitted from all corners of the Province! The Council also worked with the Alberta Stewardship Network Program of the Land Stewardship Centre of Canada to engage members of Watershed Stewardship Groups (WSGs) with the survey, which is the first time the WSGs have been engaged to contribute in the committee’s work. Interviews with key Government of Alberta staff were also used to gather information on 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.

After reviewing the results of the survey and interviews, the committee has developed high level themes and will present its conclusions and recommendations in June. Watch for more details on the committee’s report in the next issue!



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