
ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

MEETING #4

**February 10, 2005
Greenwood Inn, Calgary, Alberta**

Summary Report

Key Points:

- Council members toured the Bow Habitat Station at the Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery in Calgary as part of continuing efforts to improve their understanding of water management and water issues in Alberta.
- Council received presentations on Alberta's drinking water program and on use of water by the oil and gas industry.
- Council formed a working group to begin preparing a report on the first year of implementation of the Water for Life strategy.
- Council is working with the Alberta Science and Research Authority to coordinate the development of water research priorities.
- Council agreed with the direction and intent of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy, made in its August 2004 report.

Attachments to the Meeting Summary:

1. Attendees
2. Action Item Log
3. Decision Log
4. Meeting Agenda

Additional Documentation and Presentations:

AWC-ASRA Working Group Recommendations and Report
Draft Report on Implementation of Water for Life Strategy, and Presentation
Presentation on AWC Reporting Responsibilities
Oil and Gas Industry Water Use and Water Conservation Presentation
Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy Presentation
Alberta Water Council – Defining Consensus
Alberta Water Council – Project Team Terms of Reference Template

Summary of Discussion

1. Introductions

Peter Watson convened the meeting at 9:05 am. Peter advised that he was recently named the new Deputy Minister for Alberta Environment, and is looking forward to being involved with the Water Council. Bob Barss, Reeve of the MD of Wainwright, was welcomed as the new member for the Rural sector. Joe Miller, Executive Director of Policy, Planning and External Relations with Alberta Energy, was asked by Deputy Ken Smith to assume that department's role on the Council. The Chair also welcomed Jim Vollmershausen, Regional Director General of Environment Canada, who was unable to attend previous Council meetings due to an injury.

Peter noted that ten members attended the February 9th tour of the Bow Habitat Station at the Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery. It was a very good event and he thanked Sustainable Resource Development for hosting it.

- a) **Review of Agenda.** The agenda was adopted by consensus as distributed.
- b) **Approval of Summary Report from December 10, 2004 Meeting.** The summary report was approved by consensus, and will be posted on the Council website.
- c) **Action Items from December 10, 2004 Meeting.** Terry Sly reported on the action items from the last meeting, noting that they are completed or on today's agenda for discussion, except for item 3.5. Items 2.9 and 3.1 have been modified slightly and were renumbered below in sections 1d and 1e. For item 3.5, work on the Council's public website is nearly complete, and after some final adjustments, it should be ready to launch within a week or so. Items 3.6 and 3.10 were addressed through brief oral reports, below.

Jonathan Thompson and David Hill, respectively, provided brief updates on the Wetlands Policy working group and the Water Conservation Targets working group. Both groups have identified opportunities for more government input and involvement, and they hope to bring draft terms of reference for a project team to the next Council meeting. Sustainable Resource Development, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and Environment Canada each indicated they would provide a representative to the Wetlands Policy group. Alberta Energy and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development each indicated they would provide a representative to the Water Conservation Targets group. It is important that project team representatives reflect the range of stakeholders on the Water Council, and Council members can designate individuals from their sector or department to sit on a project team.

Action 4.1: Council members who can identify additional representatives from their sector or department for the wetlands and water conservation working groups will advise Terry Sly by February 28, 2005.

- d) **Sector Communication Protocols.** Information on how sectors communicate will help the Council in developing communications materials, and is also a way for Council members to identify any areas where they need communications assistance from the secretariat. This is particularly important for members who represent a number of organizations.

Action 4.2: Members who have not done so will provide information on the communications and consultation protocols for their sectors to Terry Sly by March 11.

- e) **Asset Mapping.** Terry Sly presented a chart that summarized information received from members to date. This chart will be a valuable tool for understanding members' expertise and areas of interest, and can be used to ensure that those with an interest in a topic have an opportunity to be involved.

Action 4.3: Terry Sly will make adjustments to the chart and send it out for completion to members who have not yet responded with asset mapping information.

- f) **Media Contacts.** A new standing agenda item on “media and communications updates” is proposed, to enable Council members to get a sense of the coverage it is getting and how it is being regarded by the media and others. Members were asked to keep track of any interviews they do with print and electronic media (including weekly papers and newsletters), as well as any speaking engagements they undertake to audiences outside their own stakeholder group. People who want only general information about the Council can be referred to the website.

Action 4.4: Terry Sly will send a template to members to assist them in preparing a summary of their major media, communications and outreach activities between meetings. Members will email the completed form to Terry at least three weeks prior to each Council meeting; Terry will compile the information and distribute a short report to Council in advance of each meeting.

- g) **Correspondence.** No correspondence was received.

2. Presentation: Alberta’s “Multi-Barrier Source to Tap” (MBSTT) Drinking Water Program

Pat Lang from Alberta Environment and Kevin McLeod from Alberta Health and Wellness highlighted the elements that comprise Alberta’s approach to protecting drinking water. Overall, Alberta’s water supply is very safe. About 580 waterworks systems approved by Alberta Environment serve about 2.5 million Albertans. Approximately 600,000 people are served by private water systems. To ensure that safe drinking water is provided to Albertans, Alberta Environment has adopted a Source-to-Tap, Multi-Barrier approach. The five “barriers” are the key elements of the drinking water program that are required to manage water from the source to the consumer; they are: legislation, protection, waterworks systems, performance assurance, and knowledge. A key recent initiative is the Facility Assessment Project, in which Alberta Environment undertook an assessment of approved waterworks systems in the province to ensure that each community has a long-term solution to its water supply challenges. Key drinking water challenges from a public health perspective are complacency; quality of source waters; aging infrastructure; emerging pathogens; and vulnerability of source, systems and distribution. The main areas of public health interest are the ability of regional health authorities to provide around the clock emergency response to drinking water hazards, provincial laboratory capacity to analyze a growing volume of samples, and surveillance and research into various drinking water issues such as antibiotic-resistant organisms that may be found in source waters.

During discussion with Council members, Pat Lang briefly described how the facility assessment was done. The assessment noted areas where improvements were needed as well as potential solutions. Alberta Environment is leading resolution of the issues, in collaboration with others. Research needs and areas that need more work are being identified, and the outcome will be a strategic plan and identification of funding requirements for the next ten years or so. It is recognized that changes may be needed in the way municipal grants are made. Alberta Environment is revising the 1997 water quality standards and there will be an opportunity for public feedback shortly. Water quantity is also important to ensure that communities have a supply that can accommodate projected population growth. Where quantity is a concern, regional solutions are likely to be needed.

Kevin McLeod noted that there is no mandatory requirement for sampling of private water supplies, but at the homeowner's request, public health officials will give advice and take water samples and interpret results. At times it is difficult to attribute diseases to water because there are often other factors involved. The hope is that the Water for Life strategy and ensuing priorities will enhance capacity and performance in the three main areas of public health interest.

Alberta Water Council (AWC) members discussed the need for performance measures and indicators to monitor and track initiatives and outcomes to ensure that Alberta's drinking water quality remains high and that protection initiatives are effective. To help it report on implementation of the Water for Life strategy, the AWC will need clear measurement tools, including some that look at security of water supply, to show where we are at and what progress is being made. Council agreed that drinking water is a critical priority and that a strong performance measures template would assist in reporting on implementation and accountability. The AWC could then look at ways to improve or enhance the measures to cover the entire scope of the program, and determine a reporting format to ensure that the program is delivering on its objectives.

Action 4.5: The secretariat will work with Alberta Environment and Alberta Health and Wellness to (a) identify existing drinking water program performance measures, for review by the AWC, and (b) propose draft performance measures to address any gaps.

3. Water Research

Linda Van Gastel reviewed the activities of the working group on water research priorities. She presented two options for the AWC to consider for identifying and advising on research priorities related to implementing the Water for Life strategy. Linda noted that the updated strategy mentioned in option two should be available in about six months. Alberta Science and Research Authority (ASRA) will involve a network of stakeholders in identifying priorities for this document, including the AWC.

During discussion with AWC members, it was noted that the 2003 research report done by a cross-government team did include a review of research needs, some of which were identified as high priorities. Council members noted that various agencies are doing water research and there is value in engaging them in discussions to ensure that work is not duplicated. Also, over the next few months, “state of the basin” reports will be released that will help identify research gaps.

The Water for Life strategy identifies a number of information needs that are not regarded as traditional research (e.g., databases and other monitoring information), and the AWC needs to consider how these will be addressed. These components are part of the mandates for different departments, including Alberta Environment.

The AWC agreed that the 2003 cross-department research report should be reviewed to compare its priorities with the priorities in the Water for Life strategy. Members also agreed that they would wait to receive an updated water research strategy from ASRA later in the year, but that an interim progress report should be presented at the June Council meeting.

Decision 4.1: Council agreed that ASRA would take the lead in developing the water research strategy, and that Council would have an opportunity to provide input to a draft strategy.

Action 4.6: The secretariat will review the 2003 cross-department research report to compare its priorities with the priorities in the Water for Life strategy, and report back to the AWC at the next meeting.

Action 4.7: Linda Van Gastel will provide an interim progress report on the updated water research strategy at the Council’s June meeting.

Action 4.8: Alberta Environment will provide a summary of information on inventories and monitoring activities related to its mandate.

4. Reporting on Water for Life Strategy Implementation

Kate Rich presented a progress report on the implementation of the Water for Life strategy and outlined the structure of the draft report to the AWC. Ron Pearson reviewed the reporting responsibilities of the Council. Council has obligations to report on both implementation progress of the Water for Life strategy and on its progress against its own terms of reference (that is, an annual report).

Members discussed the need for two reports from the Council as well as the sequencing and timing of the reports. Alberta Environment’s report on implementation progress will be released in early June. Council agreed that its first annual report would be targeted for September 2005.

Decision 4. 2: Council agreed to form a working group to lead the preparation of:

- **Council’s assessment of implementation progress, which will result in a report by the AWC to be published following Alberta Environment’s report. A draft assessment will be ready for discussion at the next Council meeting.**
- **Council’s first annual report by developing a draft table of contents for the AWC to consider at its next meeting.**

Action 4.9: Al Kennedy, Margaret Reine, Jim Vollmershausen, Ron Pearson, Mike Kelly, and representatives from Alberta Environment and the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association (to be named) will form a working group to (a) lead the preparation of the AWC’s assessment report on implementation progress and (b) lead the preparation of Council’s first annual

report, targeted for September 2005, by developing a draft table of contents for discussion at the next AWC meeting.

Council members recommended the implementation report be expanded to include performance indicators, at least those that the Government of Alberta has developed to date, acknowledging that they will be further developed and refined especially over the next year.

Council members provided the following initial feedback to Alberta Environment on the draft implementation report:

- Add information on the amount of funds being allocated to the various initiatives.
- Indicate who is working on the various initiatives (e.g., which department or agency or partnerships, as appropriate)
- Add details on whether implementation is occurring on a basin or sector basis for the various initiatives.
- Compare progress with the timelines in the original Water for Life report to assess if implementation is on track.
- It would be helpful to see an assessment of the percentage completion of tasks, based on the time initially allocated to them, and an estimate of how much time will be needed to complete them.
- For tasks that have not been completed in the time allocated to date, it would be helpful for the AWC to see an explanation of why they have not been done.

Action 4.10: Council members who have additional comments on the draft implementation report will email them to Terry Sly by February 18.

Action 4.11: Alberta Environment will revise the implementation progress report and distribute another draft for discussion at the next AWC meeting.

5. Presentation: Oil and Gas Industry Use of Water

David Pryce with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) presented an overview of why and how the oil and gas industry uses water. The presentation described the regulations governing the industry's use of both surface and groundwater, as well as the industry's record with respect to water use.

During discussion, it was noted that major efforts are underway to better assess groundwater resources, and that better coordination of data collection and dissemination is needed. To the extent that staff resources permit, CAPP and its member companies participate in community and basin initiatives related to water. Coal bed methane is an important emerging issue and a multi-stakeholder task force is now looking at rules that will need to be in place for coal bed methane development.

6. Presentation: Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy Final Report

David Trew of Alberta Environment provided background on the report of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy, reviewing the findings of the committee and describing the challenges the committee faced. The committee dovetailed its water conservation recommendations into the Water for Life implementation schedule. Council members briefly discussed the presentation, with one member noting the multi-stakeholder committee approach was an excellent process for a sector to review ways to improve its management of water.

Decision 4.3: The AWC agreed:

- **With the direction and intent of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy (ACWUPP).**
- **That progress on the recommendations of the ACWUPP should be incorporated into the implementation reporting on the Water for Life strategy.**
- **To ask the ACWUPP to clarify what it would like the Water Council to do with respect to its recommendations.**

The AWC has struck a working group to begin investigating water conservation targets. A goal of W4L strategy calls for conservation targets to be set using 2005 as the benchmark for measuring improvement. The ACWUPP report recommends that by 2007 the Government of Alberta should ensure that specific targets are established and that actions to achieve those targets are initiated. The AWC would like to know the rationale for this recommendation.

Action 4.12: David Trew, on behalf of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy (ACWUPP), will (a) clarify what the ACWUPP would like the Alberta Water Council to do with respect to the Committee's recommendations, and (b) provide the rationale for the schedule for setting conservation targets for underground injection by the oil industry.

7. Consensus Process Document and Project Team Terms of Reference Template

Terry Sly reviewed the few changes made to the consensus document in response to feedback from AWC members.

Decision 4.4: The AWC agreed to adopt a consensus document for its decision-making and other processes.

Terry presented and reviewed the project team terms of reference template and asked for any feedback. Members recognized that teams would use many of the same guiding principles as the Council. It was suggested that an item be added to the guiding principles, asking project teams to identify potential research needs early in their work and bring this information back to the Council.

Decision 4.5: The AWC agreed to adopt a template that will guide its working groups in developing terms of reference for project teams.

Action 4.13: Terry Sly will incorporate final changes to the consensus process document and project team terms of reference template and distribute to AWC members.

8. Key Points from this Meeting

The following key messages were proposed and accepted:

- Council members toured the Bow Habitat Station at the Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery in Calgary as part of continuing efforts to improve their understanding of water management and water issues in Alberta.
- Council received presentations on Alberta's drinking water program and on use of water by the oil and gas industry.
- Council formed a working group to begin preparing a report on the first year of implementation of the Water for Life strategy.
- Council is working with the Alberta Science and Research Authority to coordinate the development of water research priorities.
- Council agreed with the direction and intent of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy, made in its August 2004 report.

9. Member Feedback

The chair asked members for feedback on how the process is working and the pace at which things are progressing; the following comments were provided:

- To the extent they are able, members should identify others from their organizations to participate on project teams to ensure that team composition accurately reflects that of the Council, and to help with the workload.
- Agendas have been very full. More time is needed for members to absorb, integrate and discuss the information they are receiving.
- Council may need to look at its priorities more carefully to ensure that it is able to do all the things it wants to do.

10. Next Meeting

Due to unforeseen conflicts, there was a request to reschedule the April meeting. Council tentatively agreed that the next meeting would be held May 5-6 in Fort McMurray, with the field trip on May 5. Fallback dates are April 26-27.

Action 4.14: Terry Sly will poll Council members to determine their availability on May 5-6 for meeting 5.

Potential agenda items for the next meeting include:

- Communications and outreach activities by members
- Draft Terms of Reference from Wetlands Policy Working Group
- Report from Water Conservation Targets Working Group
- Review of implementation progress report from Alberta Environment (action item 4.11)
- Reports from Report working group on (a) draft assessment of Alberta Environment's implementation progress and (b) draft table of contents for AWC annual report (action item 4.9)
- Report on research priorities emerging from review of 2003 cross-department research report (action item 4.6)
- Update on work on performance measures for drinking water (action item 4.5)

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 pm.

Attachment 1: Meeting #4 Attendees

Council Members

Bob Barss, Government (Rural)
Bill Berzins, Non-government Organization (Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils)
Tom Daniels, Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Economic Development Authority)
Rick Denton, Industry (Forestry)
David Hill, Industry (Irrigation)
Mike Kelly, Industry (Power Generation)
Al Kennedy, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)
Lisa King, Government (First Nations)
John Knapp, Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
Joe Miller, Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Energy)
Larry Nolan, Industry (Livestock)
Ron Pearson, Non-government Organization (Fishery Habitat Conservation)
Brad Pickering, Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development)
Richard Quail, Government (Small Urban)
Margaret Reine, Non-government Organization (Environmental)
Judy Smith, Industry (Mining)
Kevin Stashin, Industry (Oil and Gas)
Jonathan Thompson, Non-government Organization (Wetland Habitat Conservation)
Linda Van Gastel, Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Science and Research Authority)
Jim Vollmershausen, Government (Environment Canada)
Ray Wanuch, Government (Metis Settlements)
Peter Watson, Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Environment)
Jay White, Non-government Organization (Lake Environment Conservation)

Observers:

Cam Lane, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Kevin McLeod, Alberta Health and Wellness
Grant McIntyre, Alberta Innovation and Science

Non-AWC Presenters:

Pat Lang, Alberta Environment
Kevin McLeod, Alberta Health and Wellness
David Pryce, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
Kate Rich, Alberta Environment
David Trew, Alberta Environment

Support Staff:

Kim Sanderson
Terry Sly
Bev Yee

Absent with Regrets:

Nick Bayliss, Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Health and Wellness)
Al Maurer, Government (Large Urban)

Attachment 2: Meeting #4 Action Item Log

Action	Who	By when
4.1: Council members who can identify additional representatives from their sector or department for the wetlands and water conservation teams will advise Terry Sly.	Council members	February 28
4.2: Members who have not done so will provide information on the communications and consultation protocols for their sectors to Terry Sly.	Council members	March 11
4.3: Make adjustments to the chart and send it out for completion to members who have not yet responded with asset mapping information.	Terry Sly Council members	Distribution to members by Feb. 21; completion by March 11.
4.4: Send a template to members to assist them in preparing a summary of their major media, communications and outreach activities between meetings. Members will email the completed form to Terry at least three weeks prior to each Council meeting; Terry will compile the information and distribute a short report to Council in advance of each meeting.	Terry Sly Council members	Distribution to members by Feb. 28; completion as described in action item.
4.5: (a) Identify existing drinking water program performance measures, for review by the AWC, and (b) propose draft performance measures to address any gaps.	Secretariat, Alberta Environment, Alberta Health and Wellness	AWC Meeting 6
4.6: Review the 2003 cross-department research report to compare its priorities with the priorities in the Water for Life strategy and report back to the AWC at the next meeting.	Secretariat	Ready for distribution by April 21
4.7: Provide an interim progress report on the updated water research strategy.	Linda Van Gastel	AWC Meeting 6
4.8: Provide a summary of information on inventories and monitoring activities related to its mandate.	Alberta Environment	Ready for distribution by April 21
4.9: Form a working group to (a) lead the preparation of the AWC's assessment report on implementation progress and (b) lead the preparation of Council's first annual report, targeted for September 2005, by developing a draft table of contents for discussion at the next AWC meeting.	Al Kennedy, Margaret Reine, Jim Vollmershausen, Ron Pearson, Mike Kelly, and representatives from Alberta Environment and the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association (to be named)	a) Draft assessment ready for distribution by April 21 b) Draft TOC ready for distribution by April 21
4.10: Council members who have additional comments on the draft implementation report will email them to Terry Sly.	Council members	February 18
4.11: Revise the implementation progress report and distribute another draft for discussion at the next AWC meeting.	Alberta Environment, Kate Rich	Ready for distribution by April 21
4.12: On behalf of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy (ACWUPP), (a) clarify what the ACWUPP would like the Alberta Water Council to do with respect to the Committee's recommendations, and (b) provide the rationale for the schedule for setting conservation targets for underground injection by the oil industry.	David Trew	Ready for distribution by April 21
4.13: Incorporate final changes to the consensus process document and project team terms of reference template and distribute to AWC members.	Terry Sly	March 1
4.14: Poll Council members to determine their availability on May 5-6 for meeting 5.	Terry Sly	February 18

Attachment 3: Meeting #4 Decision Log

At this meeting, the Alberta Water Council made the following decisions:

Decision 4.1: Council agreed that ASRA would take the lead in developing the water research strategy, and that Council would have an opportunity to provide input to a draft strategy.

Decision 4.2: Council agreed to form a working group to lead the preparation of:

- The Council's assessment of implementation progress, which will result in a report by the AWC to be published following Alberta Environment's report. A draft assessment will be ready for discussion at the next Council meeting.
- The Council's first annual report by developing a draft table of contents for the AWC to consider at its next meeting.

Decision 4.3: The AWC agreed:

- To the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy (ACWUPP).
- That progress on the recommendations of the ACWUPP should be incorporated into the implementation reporting on the Water for Life strategy.
- To ask the ACWUPP to clarify what it would like the Water Council to do with respect to its recommendations.

Decision 4.4: The AWC agreed to adopt a consensus document for its decision-making and other processes.

Decision 4.5: The AWC agreed to adopt a template that will guide its working groups in developing terms of reference for project teams.

Attachment 4: Meeting #4 Agenda

Alberta Water Council

Agenda for 4th Meeting

February 10, 2005

Greenwood Inn, Calgary

Purpose: Council will hear presentations on and discuss a number of issues including:

- Report on Alberta's "Multi-Barrier Source to Tap" Drinking Water Program
- Report from the Water Research working group proposing Council involvement in setting research priorities
- A progress report on implementation of the Water for Life strategy and proposed format and structure for a Council report.
- Report from the Oil and Gas Industry on their use of water for enhance oil recovery
- *Advisory Committee on Water Use Practise and Policy Final Report*, which identified the Council in some of its recommendations

9:00 Introduction – Chair

- Welcome Bob Barss and Joe Miller
- Review of current agenda
- Approval of Summary Report (December 10, 2004 meeting)
- Review of actions from last meeting
- Sector communication protocol
- Asset Mapping
- Media contacts
- Correspondence received

9:30 Presentation: Alberta's "Multi-Barrier Source to Tap" (MBSTT) Drinking Water Program

Pat Lang and Kevin McLeod will highlight the elements that comprise Alberta's approach, and identify the various groups that play vital roles in the delivery of the MBSTT. While the majority of Albertans currently receive their drinking water from regulated systems, a number of Albertans continue to rely on their own individual water supply systems for their drinking water. You will hear what assurance programs are in place for those Albertans and the roles various government organizations must play in the assurance program.

10:30 Coffee Break

10:45 Water Research

Linda Van Gastel will report on the working group's findings and lead discussion on a proposal for Council involvement in identifying and advising on research priorities related to implementation of the Water for Life strategy.

12:00 Lunch (to be provided in the room)

1:00 Water for Life Strategy

- Kate Rich will provide a progress report on the implementation of the strategy.
- Ron Pearson will lead discussion on proposed format and structure for a Council public report on the implementation of the strategy.

2:00 Presentation: Oil & Gas Industry Use of Water

David Pryce, CAPP, will provide an overview of the use of water for enhance oil recovery.

2:45 Presentation: Advisory Committee on Water Use Practice and Policy Final Report

Dave Trew will provide a background on the purpose and intent of this report and review report recommendations, which identifies the Council.

Council members will be asked to take afternoon refreshment as discussion proceeds. Refreshments will be brought into the room.

3:30 Consensus Process Document and Project Team TOR Template – Facilitated by Terry Sly

- Consensus process document
- Project Team Terms of Reference template

3:45 Key Messages and Preparation for Next Meeting (Chair)

Confirmation of the key messages from this meeting will be requested. The chair will confirm the next meeting and ensure that any actions required for the next meeting are assigned.

4:00 Adjournment