

ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

MEETING #21

September 16, 2008

Edmonton, Alberta

Executive Summary

The AWC Members accepted the resignations of two Members (the Alberta Economic Development Authority and Bow RiverKeeper) and welcomed Water Matters as a new Member.

The Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (CEP) Sector Plan Project Team presented its final report and 23 recommendations for advancing CEP sector plans in Alberta. The team developed a framework to guide sectors in developing their CEP plans and has identified seven priority water using sectors, all of which have committed to preparing plans by 2010. The Council will be establishing a new project team to, among other things, work with sectors as they complete their CEP plans and advise the board on changes that may be needed as the recommendations are implemented.

The board approved the wetland package to be transmitted to the Minister of Environment, with consensus from 23 of 25 sectors represented on the board. A communication strategy was also approved, and the package will be posted in its entirety on the Council website.

The board also received the Shared Governance Framework from that project team and will be transmitting that document to targeted stakeholders, including the Minister of Environment. The working definition of “healthy aquatic ecosystem” as proposed by the Healthy Aquatic Ecosystem Project Team was approved in principle

Alberta Environment advised the board that in November, it will be issuing a formal response to the Council’s report and recommendations for renewing *Water for Life*. A special event to celebrate the five-year anniversary of the *Water for Life* strategy is also being planned.

Summary of Discussion

MEMBERS MEETING

1 Administration

1.1 Welcome, Introductions and Approve Agenda

Rick Quail convened the meeting of Members at 9:20 am. He thanked West Fraser, AFPA, and Keith Murray for the excellent field trip on September 15. Those present introduced themselves.

1.2 Accept Resignations and Approve New Member

Members agreed by consensus to accept resignations from the Alberta Economic Development Authority and Bow RiverKeeper, and to approve Water Matters as a new Member of the Alberta Water Council Association.

The meeting of Members was adjourned at 9:30 am.

GENERAL BUSINESS OF COUNCIL

1 Administration

1.1 Welcome, Approve Agenda

Rick Quail convened the general business meeting at 9:30 am and reviewed the agenda, which was approved by consensus.

1.2 Appointment of Executive Officer

Decision 21.1: Danielle Droitsch was confirmed as an officer of the Alberta Water Council Association and will continue her position as NGO Vice President for the initial one-year term.

1.3 Approve Summary Report from June 17, 2008 meeting

One change was proposed to the executive summary and was distributed previously with the briefing package.

Decision 21.2: The revised summary report for Meeting 20 was adopted by consensus and will be posted on the Council website.

1.4 Action Items from June 17, 2008 Meeting

All action items are complete or in progress.

1.5 Approve Auditor

Decision 21.3: Hawkings Epp Dumont LLP was appointed to complete the 2008 year-end audit for the Alberta Water Council.

1.6 Executive Director's Report

Gord Edwards directed the board to his report in the briefing book. He presented highlights of the report and introduced Jennifer Beepat, the Council's new office manager. He advised that the documents the executive is working on will come forward in December.

1.7 Signing Authority

Decision 21.4: In addition to Peter Watson, Keith Murray and Gord Edwards, Jennifer Beepat and Lorie Wagner were designated as financial signing authorities for the Council. Designated staff members can sign cheques up to and including \$25,000, with two signatures being required on all cheques.

2 Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Plan Project Team

Mike Kelly and Danielle Droitsch presented the work of the team, reviewing the draft framework for CEP sector planning and the team's deliverables and 23 recommendations. In alignment with *Water for Life*, the intent is that the seven priority sectors will complete their CEP plans by 2010. Sectors can choose whether they want to submit their CEP report to Alberta Environment or to the Water Council and they will also decide how often they want to report on implementation progress. The team feels that its approach provides sufficient flexibility that mandatory plans will not be required. This report addresses new licences and renewals. The WATSUP team will be looking at how CEP measures could be addressed in transfers and amendments.

The board commended the team for its excellent product and for its ability to reach consensus on all its recommendations. Recommendation 23 proposes the formation of a new project team, and board members were asked to advise Terry Sly of their sector's interest in participating on this team.

Action 21.1 Staff will follow up with directors to establish a working group to prepare terms of reference for a project team to continue the work recommended in the CEP team's final report. The terms of reference will likely come forward at the December board meeting.

Decision 21.5: The board:

- 1. Approved the Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Planning final report and recommendations (August 2008), and*
- 2. Disbanded the Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Planning Project Team.*

3 Wetland Policy and Implementation Plan

The Chair noted that a story had appeared in the media today in response to a news release by six environmental non-government organizations about the non-consensus letters associated with the draft wetland package. Carolyn Campbell provided some context on this matter. An embargoed press release was distributed on Monday September 15th on behalf of:

- Alberta Wilderness Association
- Pembina Institute
- Sierra Club of Canada (Prairie Chapter)
- Southern Alberta Group for the Environment
- South Peace Environment Association
- Water Matters

There was a misunderstanding in the release date; it was intended to be released the day of the board meeting, September 16th. The six organizations involved share responsibility for this oversight. Carolyn noted that she had coordinated the release and that although Danielle

Droitsch was quoted in the newspaper article, she was not listed as a contact. Carolyn apologized to the board for this situation and for any inconvenience and difficulties it had caused.

Board members accepted the apology and will take it back to their organizations. Members made the following comments:

- The Council needs a media policy to ensure that protocols are understood and followed by all directors, alternates and their organizations. Additionally, media training for directors and alternates might be useful.
- The draft policy and implementation plan is a very significant event in wetlands conservation, and the board should focus on this positive outcome and moving the package forward. It might be useful for the team or the executive to brief the minister to convey the significance of the package. The public needs to be made aware of how innovative the package is, so it might be useful to revise the AWC news release to focus more on content.

The Chair briefly reviewed the background on the wetland policy and implementation plan, including a letter to the reader from the executive director. AENV advised that the wetland policy is a high priority for the government, but the timing of a response to the package is not yet known.

Action 21.2: Jim Ellis will provide a short update on timing of the government's response to the draft wetland package at the December board meeting.

Decision 21.6: The board approved the wetland package to go forward to the Minister of Environment, with the following items included:

- Letter of transmittal from the executive to the Minister,
- The June 3rd (now dated September 16th) drafts of the recommended wetland policy and implementation plan,
- Letter from the Executive Director explaining the Council's process
- The non-consensus letters from ACR and CAPP, and
- The response letter from the NGO broad category.

A small group worked with Shaun Peters to revise the news release in light of today's events, and shared this with the board. A backgrounder will also be prepared for distribution. Gord Edwards and Shaun Peters will be the main contacts, but if individual board members are contacted by the media, they should use the key messages in their comments.

Decision 21.7: The board approved the communication strategy for the wetland package, with amendments to the news release and a release date of September 16th and documents to be posted to the Council's website by September 17th.

Decision 21.8: The board delegated the tasks related to transmittal of the wetland package to the executive.

The Chair thanked the team and Council staff for completing this significant milestone for the organization.

4 Shared Governance and Watershed Planning Framework Project Team

Bob Cameron and Phyllis Kobasiuk presented the team's *Shared Governance Framework for Water for Life Collaborative Partnerships*, focusing on the team's recommendations and roles of the various partners. Shaun Peters presented a brief communication plan for release of the report. There will be a news release and key messages, and the report will be posted to the Council's website in the next few weeks, as well as being sent to key stakeholders. The team also hopes that board members will be able to promote the report in their sectors. The team expects to get into more detail on roles at the local and regional level in their next report in December, on watershed planning. WPACs are already working to identify key and measurable indicators of success, and over time, they will monitor and report on these indicators.

The board discussed its ability to make revisions to the report, and agreed that following acceptance of the team's report by the board, it is the board's prerogative to make changes, since the document will be a consensus report from the Council to the Minister.

Decision 21.9: The board accepted the Shared Governance Framework for Water for Life Collaborative Partnerships from the team.

Decision 21.10: In response to comments from board members, the board agreed to make the following changes to the report:

- *Recommendation 10: The phrase "as soon as reasonably possible" will be added to the end of recommendation 10. In the letter of transmittal from the Council to the Minister, there will be a request for Alberta Environment to report back to a future board meeting on timelines and a plan for implementing this recommendation.*
- *Recommendation 11: This recommendation will be revised to read "The Alberta Water Council should continue to review the success of the shared governance system through its annual reporting process and take action to improve and support the system."*
- *The sentence immediately preceding the box with recommendation 11 on page 17 will be deleted ("The Alberta Water Council....to be necessary.").*
- *It was unclear whether the following sentence in the last full paragraph on page 17, between the boxes for recommendations 10 and 11 had the consensus of the team: "The Project Team believes...shared governance approach." Therefore, this sentence will be deleted.*

5 Water for Life Renewal Update

Cam Lane provided a short update on the *Water for Life* renewal. Alberta Environment is organizing a news conference for the morning of November 19 in Edmonton where the Minister will formally release the response to the Council's recommendations. A full briefing of the board is also proposed, to be done in Calgary that afternoon. An event is planned in Calgary that evening to celebrate the five-year anniversary of Water for Life; all WFL partners and key sectors will be invited.

6 Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems

Danielle Cobbaert and Scott Millar summarized the work to date by the Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems Project Team. The team is proposing the following working definition: A healthy aquatic ecosystem is an aquatic environment that sustains its ecological structure, processes,

functions, and resilience within its range of natural variability. They reviewed the key components of the working definition and described how the definition would be applied. The team will be bringing additional products forward to the board in December.

Several board members expressed concerns about the term “resilience” and how it would be quantified. The team acknowledged that resilience and the concept of response to disturbance are challenging areas; all systems have some resilience but some have more than others. It was noted that some information obtained from the Foothills Management Team could be of use to the team.

Decision 21.11: The board approved in principle the Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems team’s working definition of “healthy aquatic ecosystem” but asked the team to fine-tune wording related to resilience.

7 Business Planning

Gord Edwards presented an overview of the proposed business planning process and directed the board to material in the briefing book. He reviewed the components of the process, the timelines and the decisions being requested. He clarified that the request to defer work on performance measures is to address issues related to the challenges in measuring against the current goals. With the development of a new business plan, it is hoped that the board can develop more measurable goals; at that point, work on performance measures will resume.

Decision 21.12: The board agreed to:

- 1. Approve the proposed business planning cycle and the preparation of annual operational plans.*
- 2. Authorize the Executive Committee to lead business planning for the Council.*
- 3. Approve deferral of further work on performance measures until the development of the Council’s next business plan.*
- 4. Engage professional services to assist the Council in developing its next strategic business plan.*

8 Status Reports

Members were directed to the status reports in the briefing book for information on other Council projects.

- Ken Ambrock noted that there is clear commitment from the Government of Alberta to look for opportunities for integration among the various environmentally-related policy pieces in place and being developed. A more detailed presentation will be made to the board in December.
- Terry Sly advised that a contact person is needed from each sector to response to the *Water for Life* Implementation Review questionnaire. He will be in touch with each sector to identify their contact.
- Mike Kelly noted that the WATSUP team will be holding a symposium in spring 2009 to look at the experiences of other jurisdictions with water licence transfers and allocations. The event is being planned for about 250 people, and will include the general public. The Alberta Water Resources Institute, CAPP and the power generation sector have committed to sponsorship, but additional sponsors are needed. More details will be provided as they are available.
- Gord Edwards noted that the CASA-AWC Committee is intended to facilitate the sharing of information as opportunities arise.

9 New or Other Business

A member noted the need for the board to have a way to bring new items forward and ensure they can be accommodated within the business plan. The board will need to develop a process and mechanism for reviewing new ideas for projects.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 pm.

Attachment 1: Meeting #21 Attendees

Council Directors and Alternates:

Peter Aku, NGO (Fishery Habitat Conservation)	Charlotte Moran, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Energy)
Ken Ambrock, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development)	Keith Murray, Industry (Forestry)
Bob Cameron, NGO (Environmental)	Celeste Nicholson, NGO (WPACs)
Carolyn Campbell, NGO (Environmental)	Larry Nolan, Industry (Livestock)
Danielle Cobbaert, NGO (Lake Environment Conservation)	Ron Pearson, NGO (Fishery Habitat Conservation)
Jerry Cunningham, Government (Métis Settlements General Council)	Richard Quail, Government (Small Urban)
Danielle Droitsch, NGO (Environmental)	Doug Sawyer, Industry (Agriculture)
Colin Jeffares, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development)	John Skowronski, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)
David Kay, NGO (Wetland Habitat Conservation)	Judy Smith, Industry (Mining)
Mike Kelly, Industry (Power Generation)	Kevin Stashin, Industry (Oil and Gas)
Alex MacKenzie, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Health and Wellness)	Jonathan Thompson, NGO (Wetland Habitat Conservation)
Dug Major, NGO (WPACs)	Jason Unger, NGO (Environmental)
Ron McMullin, Industry (Irrigation)	Jay White, NGO (Lake Environment Conservation)
	Jamie Wuite, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture and Food)
	Gord Edwards, AWC Executive Director

Presenters:

Gord Edwards, Executive Director; *Executive Director's Report; Business Planning* (Items 1.6 and 7)
Danielle Droitsch and Mike Kelly; *Water CEP Sector Plan Project Team* (Item 2)
Phyllis Kobasiuk and Bob Cameron; *Shared Governance* (Item 4)
Cam Lane; *Water for Life Renewal Update* (Item 5)
Scott Millar and Danielle Cobbaert; *Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems* (Item 6)

Guests:

Lauren Baldwin, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association	Scott Millar, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Giselle Beaudry, Alberta Environment	George Murphy, Alberta Environment
Jennifer Beepat, soon-to-be-office manager for AWC	Kelly Ness, Alberta Environment
Roland Davies, Alberta Lake Management Association	Petra Rowell, Alberta Environment
Brian Free, Alberta Environment	Jeff Shipton, Millar Western
Sid Lodewyk, City of Edmonton	Nancy Stalker, City of Calgary
Bill Macdonald, Alberta Environment	

AWC Staff and Contractor Support

Terry Sly, Lorie Wagner, Shaun Peters, Christine Macken, Kim Sanderson

Absent with Regrets:

Jim Ellis, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Environment)

David Hill, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Water Research Institute)
Al Kennedy, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)
Eric McGhan, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development)
Dwight Oliver, Government (Rural)
Rob Pritchard, Government (Large Urban)
Peter Watson, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Energy)
Allan Wells, Government (Métis Settlements General Council)

Attachment 2: Meeting #21 Action Item Log

Action	Who	By when
Action 21.1 Staff will follow up with directors to establish a working group that will prepare terms of reference for a project team to continue the work recommended in the CEP team's final report. The terms of reference will likely come forward at the December board meeting.	Staff	Dec. 2
Action 21.2: Jim Ellis will provide a short update on timing of the government's response to the draft wetland package at the December board meeting.	Jim Ellis	Dec. 2

Attachment 3: Decision Log

Members Meeting:

Members agreed by consensus to accept resignations from the Alberta Economic Development Authority and Bow RiverKeeper, and to approve Water Matters as a new Member of the Alberta Water Council Association.

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ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL
AGENDA, MEETING #21
September 16, 2008
Holiday Inn Express Downtown, Edmonton

MEMBERS MEETING

9:10 1.0 Administration 10 min

- 1.1 Welcome, introduction and approve agenda
- 1.2 Accept resignations and approve new member

GENERAL BUSINESS OF COUNCIL

9:20 1.0 Administration – Chair 25 min

- 1.1 Welcome and approve agenda
- 1.2 Appointment of Executive Officer – NGO broad category
- 1.3 Approve Summary Report from June 17, 2008 meeting
- 1.4 Review of actions from last meeting
- 1.5 Approve Auditor
- 1.6 Executive Director's report
- 1.7 Signing Authority

9:45 2.0 Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity SECTOR PLAN Project Team 30 min

Approve final report and recommendations for addressing sector participation and accountability

10:15 3.0 Wetland Policy Project Team 30 min

Approve the wetland package going forward to the Minister of Environment and the accompanying communication strategy. Delegate the responsibility for transmitting the wetland package to the executive.

10:45 Break 15 min

11:00 4.0 Shared Governance and Watershed Planning Framework Project Team 45 min

Approve final report and recommendations on a shared governance framework.

11:45 5.0 Water for Life Renewal Update 15 min

Update on the Government of Alberta's response to the Council's report: Water for Life Recommendations for Renewal.

12:00 Lunch (provided in the room) 60 min

1:00 6.0 Healthy Aquatic Ecosystem Project Team 30 min

Approve in principle a draft healthy aquatic ecosystems definition report.

1:30 7.0 Business Planning 30 min

Approve the proposed business planning process and the plan for developing the Council's 2010 – 12 Business Plan.

2:00 8.0 Status Reports 15 min

Refer members to status reports in the board package with brief opportunity for questions or clarification.

2:15 9.0 New or Other Business 15 min

New items of business or other items of information for Council

2:30 Adjournment