



Working together to ensure and sustain

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



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### Next AWC Board Meeting

The next AWC board meeting will be held Thursday March 21, 2013 in Calgary.

### New AWC Website!

Check out our new and improved website at [www.awchome.ca](http://www.awchome.ca).

### New work for the Council

The Council has selected two new initiatives for the upcoming year:

- Symposium on "Exploring Alternatives to Potable Water for Household, Municipal and Industrial Applications"
- Safeguarding Alberta's Water Supplies and Ecosystems from Aquatic Invasive Species



## THE WATERFALL

### Director Profile of Keith Murray, Forestry Sector

Keith Murray became involved with the Alberta Water Council at its inception, supporting the original Forestry Director. He took over the reins as Director within a year and has remained in that role ever since.



Keith has been with the Alberta Forest Products Association for eight years as a Director looking after both the environment and forestry files. Previously, during his years with the forest industry in BC, he spent time building and installing bridges and culverts around salmon spawning and

Watch for more information on this exciting work in the next issue!



commercial lake fisheries operations.

Beyond work, Keith spends as much time as possible backpacking, whitewater

### AWC Process Guidelines Updated

The process guidelines outline how the AWC conducts its business. The guidelines have been updated and posted to the Council website at [www.awchome.ca](http://www.awchome.ca)

kayaking and mountain biking. "As an avid outdoors person, my view of water is that you don't know a river until you've spent hours standing in it trying to tease a salmon to take a dry fly. You come to appreciate water after feeling the stream beneath your feet."

"Although the forest sector is not a major water user in Alberta it is critical to minimize our impact on water quality and quantity," Keith explains that "Rigorous forest planning processes and the environmental performance of the mills is a testament to our dedication to good water management."

### Emerald Awards Are Open For Nominations

Each year the Alberta Emerald Award Foundation's Board of Directors selects a topic of current importance to Alberta's environment. The topic provides many challenges and requires inspirational and environmental leadership.

During Keith's years with the Council, he has been involved with several teams including those working on wetland policy and water allocation. His experience with the consensus decision-making process has been a learning curve; "I'm generally pretty impatient and just want to make the decision and get on with the project, but do recognize that if we can get everyone moving forward together, we can accomplish a lot more than if we constantly rehash issues. Consensus decision making does work but we need to remember that ultimately a decision has to be made."

The 2013 Emerald Challenge Award will recognize excellence and leadership in activities related to **water**. Individuals, groups, businesses and governments are encouraged to nominate water-related projects that demonstrate a significant ongoing commitment to the environment and exceeds normal practices or statutory duties. For more information, visit

<http://emerald.foundation.ca/emerald-awards/nominations/2013-award-categories>

When Keith is recruiting industry representatives for Council teams, he considers their knowledge of the subject and ability to compromise and seek innovative solutions. "We always discuss the consensus process and the process of investigating alternate pathways to reach a reasonable solution." The sector experienced some challenging years in the early 1990s when it was involved in the Northern Rivers Basin Study but the industry has been exceptionally responsive to environmental issues. Keith adds that "It's a pleasure to work with a group of professionals who truly have a passion for the environment and consider their impacts on a daily basis."

Keith notes that bringing the various sectors together and maintaining the relationships over the years is one of the Council's most significant accomplishments. It takes a lot of work on everybody's part but Alberta is quite unique in its ability to support two great consensus-based organizations like the Alberta Water Council and the Clean Air Strategic Alliance; "I don't think it could happen anywhere else in Canada."

### AWC Presentation Opportunity

Would you like to raise awareness in your group or sector about the Council? Staff would be happy to present information about how the Council works, including an update on its projects, and to respond to questions. If you are interested in such a presentation, please contact Council Staff or email [info@awchome.ca](mailto:info@awchome.ca)

He adds that, "In 20 years I still want to go into the backcountry and drink the water out of the streams. I think we can improve our environmental performance and ensure Alberta's water resources are maintained to help build a vibrant economy and provide great recreational experiences."

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## THE CONFLUENCE

### 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.

## NPS Team Readies its Final Report



The project team has completed its Phase I assessment of the current "state of" non-point source pollution knowledge and the Phase II examination of the policy, practices and regulatory tools for dealing with NPS pollution. Both of these key pieces of work are assisting the team with its discussions to develop recommendations for the final report.

### 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](mailto:info@awchome.ca). We

The team continues to make progress on its final report and continue to discuss the complex nature of non-point source pollution management issues. They plan to engage stakeholders over the winter, when sectors will have about six weeks to gather input on

look forward to hearing from you!

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stakeholders over the winter, when sectors will have additional time to gather input on the draft. The team looks forward to hearing what sectors think about the draft report and recommendations.

## Water CEP Team Nearing Completion

The last two sector CEP plans were presented to Council in June. Since then the CEP team has been busy gathering feedback on its draft report from sectors and Member organizations. The team has reached consensus on two recommendations and is working to finalize its report.



Looking back on this team's work, the irrigation sector, working through the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association (AIPA), presented the first CEP plan to Council in 2010. This sector continues to make substantial progress related to CEP. Richard Phillips, Manager of the Bow River Irrigation District (BRID), will be speaking on "Irrigation's Conservation, Efficiency, Productivity Plan: How far have we

come?" at the AIPA 2012 conference in November. This will be an update, not the official report for all districts, but will demonstrate progress made in the BRID. More information on this presentation and the conference can be found on the AIPA website at <http://aipa.ser2.us/>.

## Riparian Team Continues Analyzing Consultant Research



The consultant engaged by this team completed work in June on the report *Current state of riparian lands in Alberta, and the management and stewardship "best practices" (policy, practices and procedures) in Alberta and other jurisdictions*. Team members circulated the final version to their sectors for input and then began discussions on the final report and recommendations. The consultant did a

very thorough job evaluating the state of knowledge on both the extent and health of riparian land in Alberta, which is informing the team's work.

The team continues to work on a definition for Riparian Lands for the final report. The team expects to distribute a package for sector engagement during the winter or early spring.

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## WATER PIPES

## Fourth WFL Implementation Review Wraps Up

One of the Council's most important tasks is to regularly review the *Water for Life* strategy's implementation progress. In undertaking this review, the WFL Implementation Review Committee followed AWC's approved "How-To" Guide. This included interviewing Government of Alberta (GOA) staff to determine the status of each WFL goal or key direction and the state of completion of each associated actions. The Committee also circulated a survey to AWC sector stakeholders and Alberta watershed stewardship groups via the Land Stewardship Centre of Canada to get their input. The Committee then compiled and analyzed the results, which formed the basis for its recommendations.



The review was done in a spirit of adaptive management, where the regular evaluation of progress serves to highlight strengths,



identify weaknesses and recommend areas where additional focus would allow the strategy to advance more effectively. The review is completed at a strategic level, focusing on emerging water issues and concerns in the province and the effectiveness of the *Water for Life* strategy in

meeting them. This assessment provides a snapshot of the strategy's status, effectiveness and progress as of December 31, 2011.

The team presented its work to Council at the October Board meeting and the report will be posted to the Council's website at [www.awchome.ca](http://www.awchome.ca) shortly. Way to go WFL Implementation Review Committee team members!

**Committee Members:**

Rachel Boccock, Mark Brostrom, Tom Davis, Lisa Maria Fox, Christine Lazaruk, Arin MacFarlane-Dyer, Ron McMullin, Louis Pawlowich, John Skowronski, Jason Unger

**Project Managers:**

Petra Rowell, Andre Asselin, Meredith Walker



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