



# ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

## E-NEWSLETTER

May 2016 | ISSUE 15

*Water is the driving force of all nature - Leonardo da Vinci*

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## Drips and Drops

### Water Literacy report approved!

After two years of hard work by the Water Literacy Project Team, the AWC board approved the team's report and five recommendations to support

## THE WATERFALL

### Profile of Jim Hackett, Director, Power Generation Sector

Jim Hackett joined the AWC board in 2006 as the alternate representative for the Power Generation sector. In addition to his work on the board, he has been involved in the Healthy Aquatic Ecosystem Working Group, the Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Project Team and the *Water for Implementation Review Committee*.

As a third generation Albertan (his family homesteaded here in 1892), Jim studied Chemical Engineering at the University of Alberta and has worked in the power generation sector for almost 30 years in roles that entail environment responsibilities. In his personal life, he feels there is nothing better than spending quality time with family and friends and being outside on a motorcycle or snowboard.

Jim believes the *Water for Life* strategy is an excellent framework, providing guidance and promoting improvement in water management. The strategy has stood the test of time. From his perspective, it is important that the Power Generation Sector understand where it can contribute to meeting *Water for Life* goals. It is also important for others to understand the unique aspects and needs of his sector, and the AWC allows for this discussion and exchange of information. Jim believes that the consensus decision-making process works very well to break down barriers, allow sectors to understand other



improving water literacy in Alberta. More details below.

### **CEP Project Team gets the ball rolling**

Work on water conservation, efficiency and productivity kicked off earlier this year. More details below.

### **AWC released 2015 annual report**

The AWC released its 11th annual report this year, summarizing activities for the calendar year 2015.

### **Next AWC Board Meeting**

The next AWC board meeting will be held Thursday 3 November, 2016 in Edmonton.

### **AWC Presentation Opportunity**

Would you like to raise awareness in your group or sector about the AWC? Staff would be happy work with you to determine how we can meet your needs. If you are interested in such a presentation, please contact staff or email [info@awchome.ca](mailto:info@awchome.ca)

### **AWC Newsletter**

The AWC's newsletter will arrive at your inbox after each board meeting, providing a quick update for stakeholders.

perspectives and work towards a common solution.

Participating on AWC teams is a very rewarding experience for him, providing opportunities to meet and work with committed and knowledgeable people, learn new things and work collaboratively to develop innovative solutions. Being a steward and champion for *Water for Life* has enabled the AWC to achieve great things, but the real accomplishment in Jim's mind is bringing folks together to talk about water and move things forward.

Looking ahead 20 years, Jim sees the biggest opportunity for a positive change in water management to be through education and awareness. If a group or sector understands issues and opportunities for improvement, then we should see more effective implementation of best practices. Jim thinks that the AWC's work on accessibility of information, knowledge transfer, water literacy, communication and collaboration can support this improved understanding and lead to sustainable solutions.

More information about ATCO Power can be found [here](#).

## ***THE CONFLUENCE***

### **Water Literacy Project Team report approved!**

The AWC established the AWC established the Water Literacy Project Team in March 2014 to recommend ways to improve water literacy in Alberta. This team surveyed water literacy practitioners to develop an inventory of programs, products, assessments and research in Alberta. Using the results, the team compiled a list of program best practices. A consultant was retained to design a valid assessment tool, assess a sample of Albertans and provide advice on future assessment activities. The team presented its final report in April for AWC board approval, with recommendations in five main areas:

Comments and suggestions are welcome, so please tell us what you think. Email your feedback to [info@awchome.ca](mailto:info@awchome.ca). We look forward to hearing from you!

**Photo credits: ATCO Power, Dave Rushford, Lori Wagner, Marie-Claire St-Jacques and Anuja Ramgoolam.**

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Contact Us: 780.644.7380



- Enhance collaboration among water literacy practitioners
- Provide tools and knowledge to measure success and effectiveness
- Better align water topics, audiences, delivery areas and methods
- Strengthen capacity among water literacy practitioners
- Assess water literacy among Albertans

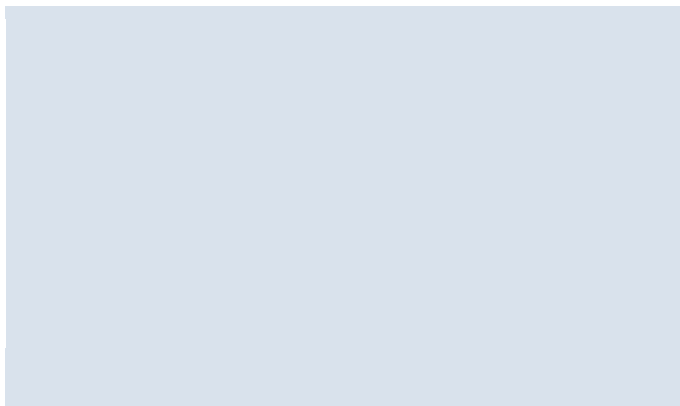
More information about the Water Literacy Project Team can be found [here](#).



## *Water for Life* Implementation Review Committee presents findings and draft recommendation themes

An important task for the AWC is to regularly assess the implementation progress of the *Water for Life* strategy. Reviews are undertaken by a multi-stakeholder committee at a strategic level, focusing on water issues in Alberta and the effectiveness of the *Water for Life* strategy in addressing them. Each review is conducted in a spirit of adaptive management where an evaluation of progress highlights strengths and weaknesses, and recommends areas where additional focus would enable *Water for Life* to advance more effectively. The committee presented themes for draft recommendation to the AWC board in April, emphasizing a need to:

- Improve drinking water and wastewater systems in indigenous, small and/or rural communities
- Define and inventory source waters in Alberta, and assess impacts (e.g., climate change and pollution) on them
- Apply aquatic ecosystem health criteria, map significant areas and incorporate this information into regional planning
- Protect instream flows using existing mechanisms
- Develop a water reuse policy direction
- Ensure that science and research inform policy and decision makers
- Engage stakeholders and the public in research, monitoring and education
- Improve the accessibility and user-friendliness of the *Water for Life* website
- Clarify commitments to *Water for Life* partnerships and confirm how partner policy advice and



watershed plans become integrated into policy, decision making and other processes

- Continue water CEP work via the AWC and partners
- Develop, implement, track and communicate implementation progress through the use of performance metrics

More information about the *Water for Life* Implementation Review Committee can be found [here](#).





## Lake Management Project Team presents findings and draft recommendation themes

In February 2015, the AWC established a Lake Management Project Team to document and assess the

state of lake management planning and governance in Alberta; identify gaps, redundancies and opportunities for improvements; and develop recommendations to support effective lake management in Alberta.

In the fall of 2015, the team hosted a stakeholder workshop in collaboration with the **Alberta Lake Management Society**. The workshop brought together participants from the Government of Alberta, municipalities, **Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils, Watershed Stewardship Groups**, environmental non-government organizations and research and monitoring interests. The team received valuable input that generally aligned with its discussions and confirmed that work was on the right path to developing recommendations. The team presented draft recommendation themes to the AWC board in April, emphasizing a need to:

- Set strategic directions for a provincial lake watershed management policy
- Consolidate science and knowledge on Alberta lakes and their watersheds
- Prioritize lake watershed management needs
- Support the development and implementation of lake watershed management plans
- Strengthen regulatory and voluntary tools to improve lake watershed management
- Improve access to tools and education

More information about the Lake Management Project Team can be found [here](#).





## Evaluating Water CEP Project Team gets the ball rolling

Building on the work of three previous water CEP project teams, the Evaluating Water CEP Project Team will report on the contributions of the seven major water-using sectors to achieving the three *Water for Life* goals, the 30% target for improvements in efficiency and productivity and the CEP desired outcomes. The team will also determine to what extent the CEP process was successful and if recommendations are needed to improve future CEP planning, implementation and reporting.

At the April board meeting, the team provided an update on:

- Collective contributions to *Water for Life* goals, the 30% target and the CEP desired outcomes
- The challenge of reporting on water conservation in the CEP approach
- Path forward to refine the team's report on collective contributions and evaluate the success of CEP

More information about previous CEP work, including CEP plans developed by the seven major water-using sectors, can be found [here](#).

## **WATER PIPES**

### **AWC releases 2015 Annual Report**

The year 2015 marked the AWC's 11th year of providing advice on water management solutions. A highlight of this year was hearing about the progress of major water-using sectors in implementing their voluntary water CEP plans.

The AWC continues to be involved in a variety of projects. The year 2015 saw the conclusion of the Aquatic Invasive Species project. In concert with the policy and program work being done by the Government of Alberta, the team's seven recommendations aim to preserve this province's leadership position on the AIS issue.

The annual report summarizes the AWC's contributions in other areas too, describing the work of project teams and committees for the last year. Operationally, the AWC reviewed and updated its Process Guidelines to reflect refinements that are part of our internal continuous improvement cycle. Staff receive many invitations to present the AWC's work to organizations that want to learn more about the

benefits of collaborative stakeholder engagement on complex issues.

The 2015 Annual Report can be downloaded [here](#).



## Alberta Agriculture and Forestry supporting food safety goals through research

**Alberta Agriculture and Forestry** (AAF) undertake a number of research projects to ensure the quality and safety of land, air and water for food producers. Although long-term monitoring shows the overall quality of Alberta's irrigation water is good or excellent, a study is underway to use deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) fingerprinting techniques to determine sources of contamination of irrigation water.

While there are no immediate concerns, this is an opportunity to improve water quality for the future. The Water Quality Section of AAF is working with the **Taber Irrigation District** on a pilot study to understand the sources of *Escherichia coli* in irrigation water. **Growing Forward 2 Program** (a federal-provincial-territorial initiative) funds the study. The Taber Irrigation District has made water quality a key part of its mandate to ensure farmers are growing the best quality crops.

This is the final year of a three-year study and a summary report will be shared with producers on AAF's website in the fall of 2017.

For more information on the pilot, please contact:

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