

Lake Watershed Management (July 2017)

Rec #	Recommendation	Implementer(s)	Implementation Target	Latest Status Update (Year provided)	2022 Update	Comments from Latest Update (Please include any new comments in track changes)
						<p>Lake watershed management has become a part of the ongoing work and priorities of the Government of Alberta, rather than as a separate policy as intended by the recommendations. The current approach is being implemented through an alternative system that aligns with the establishment of land use plans, development of environmental management frameworks and the Ministry’s more robust approach to monitoring and science. Collaboration with Water for Life partners, including WPACs and watershed stewardship groups will continue, which further aligns with the current lake watershed management approach of the government.</p> <p>Alberta Environment and Parks remains committed to updating the AWC members on progress related to lake watershed management and will do so through board meeting presentations or through the Government of Alberta Update standing agenda item, when appropriate.</p>
1	<p>The Government of Alberta, in setting strategic directions and developing a provincial lake policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adopt an aspirational vision for sustainable lake watershed management; identify goals and objectives to improve the provincial, federal and local coordination of lake watershed management; adopt a comprehensive watershed approach that supports all three goals of <i>Water for Life</i>; define clear roles and responsibilities of all major groups (e.g., the Government of Alberta, municipalities, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils, Watershed Stewardship Groups and other groups) involved in lake watershed management; and define provincial processes for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> setting provincial lake watershed monitoring and research priorities prioritizing lake watershed management needs and resources integrating lake watershed management planning into regional, sub-regional and municipal planning and decision-making. <p>Substantial progress on this provincial policy should be made by 2018 and the policy should be completed by 2020.</p>	Government of Alberta	Substantial progress by 2018 and completion by 2020	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2020)	Previously Implemented or Closed	<p>In the Government of Alberta’s “Our Water, Our Future: A Plan for Action”, the strategic area of Healthy Lakes has three short-term actions;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance lake governance systems to clarify roles and responsibilities, Fill information gaps to improve lake monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, and Enhance public awareness about lake management to further support Albertans in keeping lakes clean and healthy. <p>These short-term actions respond to immediate priorities identified by Albertans and support the long-term action identified for Healthy Lakes – advancing a provincial lake policy that supports an integrated approach to healthy lakes in support of economic, environmental, and social interests.</p> <p>Water Policy Branch has initiated managing work relative to the recommended policy.</p>
2	In collaboration with partners, the Government of Alberta coordinate the development of a GIS-based, publicly available data layer of lakes in Alberta and their watersheds by 2019.	Government of Alberta	2019	Pending – To be completed (2020)	Partially Implemented	<p>A GIS data layer has been developed for lakes in the North Saskatchewan, Red Deer and Peace regions based on the original intent of the project. It is not yet suitable for public release due to resource constraints that precluded data validation.</p> <p>In 2021 Alberta Environment and Parks made available the Alberta Flow Estimation for Ungauged Watersheds tool on its website (https://afetuw.alberta.ca/). The tool provides the ability for the public to identify and delineate the contributing watershed area to a specific location, including to a lake. The tool does not allow for the calculation of a water balance for a lake.</p>
3	In collaboration with partners, the Alberta Lake Management Society continue developing a comprehensive knowledge portal that provides one-window access to information and products available for each lake in	Alberta Lake Management Society	Ongoing	Implemented – as written (2019)	Previously Implemented or Closed	ALMS has made this data available online.

	Alberta, and an ongoing process to populate it.				
4	The Government of Alberta, in collaboration with partners: a) identify provincial criteria and indicators of lake watershed health by 2018, to be informed by existing work;	Government of Alberta	2018	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	As part of Environmental Monitoring and Science Division's draft 5 year Science Plan, the lake monitoring program is under review for fiscal year 2017/2018. As part of implementing Alberta Environment and Parks Science Strategy (2019-2024), a renewed effort is underway to modernize Alberta's lake monitoring program that includes the application of novel analytical and monitoring approaches to inform lake watershed research and to identify monitoring gaps. A five-year monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan is currently in development and feedback will be sought from internal and external partners.
	b) use these criteria to conduct a preliminary assessment of lake watershed health and information gaps by 2019; and		2019		
	c) identify provincial lake watershed research and monitoring gaps and needs to inform lake watershed management actions at provincial and local scales, based on the identified criteria and subsequent assessment. Substantial progress should be made by 2020.		2020		
5	The Government of Alberta identify a process by 2020 for all levels of government to engage in and support multi-stakeholder lake watershed planning initiatives where appropriate, and to incorporate lake watershed management plans and/or objectives into land use planning and decision-making. This process should be reflective of the scale and urgency of issues facing the lake and outline how existing lake watershed management plans and/or objectives are to be considered in statutory planning and decision-making.	Government of Alberta	2020	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	The opportunity for implementation currently lies in regional and sub-regional planning priorities identified through plan development and implementation for all levels of government.
6	The Government of Alberta work with partners to develop an iterative process, using environmental, social and economic criteria, to prioritize lake watershed planning, management and implementation actions, by 2020.	Government of Alberta	2020	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	Resources provided to WPACs and WSGs supports regional and sub-regional watershed planning, inclusive of high priority lake systems within broader watersheds in the short term. The process to prioritize lake watershed health will be a long-term priority moving forward.
7	By 2020, the Government of Alberta develop a process to designate a local lead to facilitate the collaborative development and implementation of lake watershed management plans and/or objectives where identified as a priority management action. The designated local lead could be a single entity or a group, and must be approved by municipalities in the lake watershed.	Government of Alberta	2020	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	Currently not priority work for the GOA. Existing planning processes sufficiently enable local lake watershed management planning (e.g., WPAC Integrated Watershed Management Plans and/or sub-regional planning initiated by AEP)
8	The Government of Alberta, through its periodic review of key legislation relevant to lake watershed management: a) seek alignment with the goals and outcomes of <i>Water for Life</i> and the new provincial lake policy, when completed; and	Government of Alberta	Ongoing	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	Any efforts by AEP to initiate the development of a related lakes policy will align with Water for Life and include a review of existing tools and practices to support such a policy's implementation.
	b) strengthen legislative tools to enable consistent land-use practices to maintain or improve lake watershed health.		Ongoing		
9	Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties and Association of Summer Villages of Alberta support greater collaboration and consistency in municipal planning around lakes by: a) working with the Government of Alberta and other relevant partners to identify existing gaps in tools and information and to assist in developing resources to fill these gaps; and	AUMA & RMA	Substantial progress by 2019	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	The AUMA and RMA continue to prioritize collaboration with the Alberta Summer Villages Associations, the Government of Alberta and other key stakeholders, where appropriate, to address needed improvements to support lake watershed management. Land-use planning is an important function for municipalities, and the recently amended Municipal Government Act (MGA) identifies new requirements for regional collaboration and land-use planning. Further, summer villages who share a common water body can now amalgamate into a single municipality to improve governance and effective use of resources. This will have an impact on lake management within municipal boundaries. Additional time is required to understand what gaps exist and what resources are needed.

	b) continuing to promote information, tools and guidance documents related to lake watershed management planning. Substantial progress should be made by 2019.		Substantial progress by 2019			<p>AUMA: AUMA shares information on lake management through our Water Management Hub. The Hub will need to be updated to reflect changes to the Municipal Government Act that affect land use planning and watershed management. As these are very complex issues, municipalities will need further support as they transition to implementing new MGA requirements.</p> <p>RMA: The MGA now identifies that a municipal purpose is to foster the well-being of the environment. Through the MGA review and implementation process, the RMA has communicated to members regarding the complexity of land-use planning, which includes watershed management. Ongoing effort is needed to support municipalities as they transition to implementing the new MGA requirements, which will also support watershed management planning.</p> <p>The AUMA and RMA continue to advocate to and seek clarification from the Government of Alberta regarding the need for regional plans to be developed under the Land-use Framework to encourage consistent planning across Alberta's watersheds.</p>
10	By 2019, the Government of Alberta work with all levels of government to identify regulatory or operational gaps relative to land development and other activities on and surrounding lakes, and develop and implement strategies to address such gaps.	Government of Alberta	2019	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)		<p>The opportunity for implementation currently best lies in regional and sub-regional planning priorities identified through plan development and implementation. Strongly linked to this is AEP's current work on outdoor recreation management and impacts to lands that affect watershed and waterbody health.</p>
11	The Government of Alberta work with municipalities and partners to align and enhance beneficial management practices incentive programs in lake watersheds where non-point source priority management actions have been identified for lake watersheds. An ongoing process to achieve this should be initiated by 2019.	Government of Alberta	2019	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)		
12	The Government of Alberta continue to work with partners to coordinate lake education and outreach through the Respect our Lakes program. This includes identifying target audiences, developing consistent messaging and ensuring access to educational information, tools and resources for lake watershed management by 2018.	Government of Alberta	2018	Implemented: As written (2019)		<p>The Community Engagement Branch of AEP is actively leading the Respect our Lakes Program, including the Alberta Recreational Lakes Forum, which is serves to fulfill this recommendation's intent. Some program highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the ALMS conference in Chestermere on September 18 & 19th by helping to organize the conference, a presentation on the Respect our Lakes program and a booth with opportunity for conference attendees to provide feedback on the drafts of the updated brochure series and new infographs. The Respect our Lakes is the department's ongoing education efforts around lake stewardship. AEP remains committed to ongoing work and will present to AWC as requested for annual updates on the program and resources that are available as they will continually be updated and added to. <p>In addition to Respect Our Lakes, the department funds both operations and lake monitoring projects undertaken by the Alberta Lake Management Society to further lake education and outreach.</p>