

Water for Life Implementation Review 2009-2011 (October 2012)

Rec #	Recommendation	Implementer(s)	Implementation Target	Last Status Update (Year provided)	2021 Status	Comments from Latest Update (Please include any new comments in track changes)
1	The Government of Alberta continue to develop, adopt and promote a watershed, risk-based, source-to-tap drinking water management approach that includes source protection planning, effective monitoring and compliance of point and non-point source pollution, and efficient and effective water distribution systems.	GoA		Implemented – Alternative Approach (2019)	Previously Implemented or Closed	Since 2013, municipalities in Alberta are required to develop drinking water safety plans to assess risks to their drinking water systems. However, many municipalities lack the capacity to assess and address source water risks. Presently, several source water protection plans and initiatives have been developed or are underway to address risks to drinking water sources in Alberta. For example, source water protection plans have been developed for Edmonton, Camrose, Calgary, Town of Okotoks and Grande Cache. Other source water protection initiatives are currently underway for the Milk River – Whiskey Gap Aquifer and Sheep River sub-watershed. The Government of Alberta continues to provide technical support, monitoring, data and resources to support drinking water risks assessments and source protection initiatives as needed. This is now a part of ongoing work.
2	The Government of Alberta and stakeholders complete outstanding Healthy Aquatic Ecosystem actions including: finalize and implement a wetland policy (Action 2.1), protect critical aquatic ecosystems (Action 2.2) and set water conservation objectives for each basin (Action 2.5).	GoA and stakeholders		Implemented – Alternative Approach (2019)		<p>GoA: Wetland Policy is being implemented in the green and white areas.</p> <p>ASN (for WSGs): In 2015, the Watershed Stewardship Grant established new category of support through the “Wetland Grant” stream. Groups that received funding under this stream focused their projects on building awareness and stewardship capacity in order to conserve, restore and protect wetlands in Alberta, and in particular, wetlands of the highest value – directly in support of Alberta’s Wetland Policy. LSC granted 4 WSGs \$33,935 under the Wetland Stream of the WSG to support wetland conservation work. In 2018, the Wetland Stream will no longer be offered however, the WSG will continue to support groups who are performing wetland restoration work and wetland conservation and awareness efforts.</p> <p>WPACs: Battle River has an approved Water Management Plan that sets conservation objectives for the basin. Milk River Watershed Council is waiting for cabinet approval of an approved Water Management Plan. All of the WPACs are working on Watershed Management Plans that include water quantity, water quality, flows, and conservation recommendations in them. Other relevant work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 10-year review of the SSRB Water Management Plan is underway. • Multi-stakeholder project on the development of the Bow River Operations Model which looks at aquatic ecosystem health improvements. • There was also an aquatic ecosystem component to the Bow River Working Group (flood mitigation).
3	The Government of Alberta continue to work with its partners to: develop the best available science-based methods and tools to better define requirements for healthy aquatic ecosystems and performance measures; incorporate healthy aquatic ecosystem assessment and management into the province’s new integrated cumulative effects monitoring and management systems; and publicly report on progress towards the achievement of healthy aquatic ecosystem outcomes.	GoA and partners		Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)		<p>Environmental Monitoring and Science is accountable for assessing and monitoring (MER) healthy aquatic ecosystems. Future programs will be developed according to determined priorities.</p> <p>This is now a part of ongoing work, as a science based 5-year lotic monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan for the Province is complete and public release is imminent. This plan identifies key science questions related to watershed integrity and ecosystem health.</p>
4	The Government of Alberta complete the water allocation review via transparent, broad-based public consultation based on socio-economic and environmental objectives; ensure current and future water demand and supply are understood in each basin; and make this information and other water use data publicly available to inform regional, municipal and other land-use planning initiatives.	GoA		Implemented – Alternative Approach (2019)		While some specific deliverables originally conceived under <i>Water for Life</i> have not been fully addressed, the core philosophy and principles of Alberta’s water strategy have been fostered and embedded within the management, operations, and policy and planning functions within the department. The GoA recognizes the importance of water allocation issues and acknowledges there are unresolved stakeholder concerns and differences of opinion amongst Albertans about water. Research on management options and renewal of

						elements of the water management continue as a matter of normal ongoing regulatory practices; a broad-based systemic review of the water allocation, management and regulatory system is not being considered. This is now a part of ongoing work, and has been implanted to the extent possible.
5	The Government of Alberta and its <i>Water for Life</i> partners, working closely with research and academic institutions and other education and outreach providers, revisit the knowledge and research key direction and develop a plan to improve public and sector understanding of the value of water to better inform public policy and decision making.	GoA and WFL partners		Previously Implemented or Closed		<p>GoA: The Government of Alberta has released the Alberta Water Research Strategy (updated 2014), which provides guidance for water research priorities within the province. The strategy is co-led between Alberta Economic Development and Alberta Environment. Updates on the progress of the strategy are released annually and available through the Economic Development website.</p> <p>AWC: AWC focuses on improving sector and stakeholder understanding of water and its value. Board receives an annual update on the Alberta Innovates Water Innovation Program as well as other relevant topics throughout the year. Ten-year Water CEP project helped raise the profile of water within industries and municipalities. AWC hosted the Water Reuse Symposium in 2013 which brought academics and experts together to inform and highlight the need for better understanding of the use and reuse of water across all stakeholder groups. AWC contributes annually to the AWRIS annual report. Building on the outcomes of the 2013 Water Conversation, AWC work in the area of water literacy contributed to the GoA's environmental literacy framework.</p> <p>WPACs: WPACs conduct public education throughout the year. The Battle River WPAC is working with a collective of Academic Institutions across Canada on a five-year program to understand/observe environment and human health. The Battle River WPAC has also designed and shared the X-Stream Science program with any interested WPAC. The BRBC convenes an Annual Science Forum and works directly on projects engaging academic institutions.</p>
6	<i>Water for Life</i> partnerships clearly identify their capacity needs in relation to provincial and basin <i>Water for Life</i> priorities and seek collaborative approaches to long-term sustainable resourcing of these needs.	WFL Partnerships		Previously Implemented or Closed		<p>GoA: GoA has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate support to Water for Life partnerships through ongoing relationships and funding support.</p> <p>AWC: In 2017 the AWC received a commitment for consistent predictable funding for three years from AEP to support operations to achieve its mandate as laid out in the current business plan. Project specific funding is sought from sectors as needed.</p>
				Pending – to be completed (2020)	Pending – to be completed	<p>WPACs: Apply for an AEP grant every year for operational funds to support their work under <i>Water for Life</i>. Project-specific funding is sought from sectors as needed.</p>
				Pending – to be completed (2020)	Pending – to be completed	<p>ASN (for WSGs): LSC continues to offer funding, information and resources for WSGs. LSC distributes its e-newsletter, Grassroots News, bi-monthly to over 800 subscribers, engaging the stewardship community, sharing the good work of watershed stewardship groups and providing information to enable and inform the stewardship community. LSC also shares stewardship news, events and funding via our social media channels which have a combined following of over 2,200 people. In November 2019, LSC hosted a Stewards in Motion (SIM) event which engaged partner organizations such as the North Saskatchewan River Watershed Alliance and focused on providing expertise to stewardship groups in grant writing and fund development. Following this at capacity event and prompted by positive feedback from participants, LSC will look at hosting further SIM workshops in 2021 to provide continuing support to community stewardship groups. In addition, the Watershed Stewardship Grant was renewed by Alberta Environment and Parks in 2019-2020 for an additional three years (until 2023). This longstanding grant program is essential to support the community-based projects and local efforts of WSGs. (In 2019, LSC launched a new story-map which highlighted recipients and projects of the grant program since 2006. In 2021, LSC will continue to celebrate the important and impactful work of WSG recipients through all communication channels and the new, digital story-map).</p>

7	Water-using sectors with water conservation, efficiency and productivity (CEP) plans raise awareness of their plans by promoting them to their members, thus encouraging all members to develop individual CEP plans or strategies to contribute to CEP gains.	Water-Using sectors with CEP plans		Pending – to be completed (2020)	Pending – to be completed	<p>The sector organizations that developed CEP plans work very closely with their members and raise awareness of the plans. Updates to the AWC on the implementation status of sector CEP plans were provided in 2015.</p> <p>Individual sectors provided their own assessments of the status of this recommendation and some consider it implemented. The overall status on the left reflects that, for some sectors, this recommendation is still considered pending.</p> <p>Irrigation: Implemented (as written). The Alberta Irrigation Districts Association continues to raise awareness among its member irrigation districts of the importance of water CEP plans and provides support where required. Members continue to develop actions and strategies in support of the irrigation sector CEP plan.</p> <p>Forestry: Implemented.</p> <p>Downstream petroleum: The sector organizations that developed CEP plans work very closely with their members and raise awareness of the plans. Updates to the AWC on the implementation status of sector CEP plans were provided in 2015. Individual sectors provided their own assessments of the status of this recommendation and some consider it implemented. The overall status on the left reflects that, for some sectors, this recommendation is still considered pending. Many oil and natural gas companies are developing ESG reports that include commitments to water performance improvements, Together with the AER water use performance report, which includes company-level data and drives improvements due to comparisons to peer companies, implementing this recommendation would be duplicative.</p> <p>AUMA: Implemented (unclear but met). AUMA provided a report on Water CEP trends and progress to the Alberta Water Council in 2015. AUMA continues to monitor progress as data comes available from municipalities, the Government of Alberta and Statistics Canada. AUMA continues to share information with members related to water CEP through our Water Management Hub</p> <p>RMA: Implemented (unclear but met): As identified through the AWC’s project team process, the RMA continues to support the CEP Plan developed by AUMA as it is more applicable to urban municipalities as a major water using sector. As rural municipalities are not formally part of the AUMA’s CEP Plan, the RMA continues to share AUMA’s Water Hub as a resource for rural municipalities interested in exploring CEP plan development opportunities. Rural municipalities with water licenses continue to provide water use data through the Water Use Reporting System (WURs) as required to support tracking and transparency.</p> <p>Chemical: Pending (to be completed). Active participation in recently completed evaluation of water CEP released in 2017. Will continue to evaluate opportunities to enhance water use efficiency.</p> <p>Power Generation: All AWC power generation sector members actively contribute to the 5-year review by sharing their successes on CEP progress and improvements.</p> <p>Mining: The main water users in the Mining sector is oil sands mining. Through COSIA oil sands mining operators aspire to be world leaders in water management, producing Canadian energy with no adverse impact on water. A performance goal to reduce the net water use intensity from the Athabasca River and its tributaries from 2012 levels by 30% by 2022 was developed to support this aspiration. The mining aspects for CEP was developed in collaboration with CAPP. CEP strategies are available to other type of mining operations for consideration.</p>
8	The Government of Alberta investigate the use of additional economic	GoA		Implemented –	Previously	The Department routinely considers all forms of policy tools to address arising water

	instruments, applied in an equitable manner, to encourage water conservation, efficiency and productivity and determine how this approach will contribute to the achievement of all three <i>Water for Life</i> goals.			alternative approach (2018)	Implemented or Closed	management issues. Economic instruments are one form of policy tool. One key economic instrument implemented in the <i>Water Act</i> is water licence trading and temporary licence assignment. The Department develops and updates legislated water management basin plans to facilitate the use of this economic instrument. There are also specific use of works charges for water in the province.
9	<i>Water for Life</i> partnerships, in undertaking iterative and adaptive watershed assessment and planning, continue to work with the Government of Alberta and other sectors to integrate this work into the provincial cumulative effects management system and regional, municipal, resource and other land-use planning initiatives.	WFL partnerships and GoA		Implemented – unclear but met (2018)		GoA: Watershed assessment and planning products developed by partnerships are reviewed by GoA and used to inform and/or incorporate relevant elements into the GoA’s planning system. GoA has produced a Guide to Watershed Management Planning in Alberta, 2015 to provide clarity of how these plans relate to other water planning initiatives, and the processes to be used by WPACs and WSGs to ensure some consistency among plans. GoA has commenced a review of the WPAC partnership and the roles and functional responsibilities needed to enhance Alberta’s water management system. A recommendations report for role amendments is anticipated in March 2018. GoA has engaged WPACs directly in support of the development of key water related strategic directions and management frameworks as part of SSR and NSR planning.
				Closed – not appropriate (2018)		AWC: AWC does not undertake watershed assessment and planning.
				Implemented – unclear but met (2018)		WPACs: continue to work with watershed planning and other planning initiatives and support WSGs in their work in planning activities. RDRWA, plus other WPACs have worked with Nature Conservancy Canada on Hydrological Sensitive Area (HSA) mapping of our watershed.
10	The Government of Alberta develop quantitative performance criteria and clear metrics that assess the progress towards <i>Water for Life</i> goals and key directions before the next Alberta Water Council strategy review in 2015.	GoA	2015	Closed – not a priority (2018)	Alberta Environment reports quantifiable measures in its Annual Report.	