

Wetland Policy Implementation Review Terms of Reference

Approved by the Alberta Water Council (AWC) on:

CONTEXT

The Alberta Water Council (AWC) approved formation of an *ad hoc* discussion group to explore a potential high priority body of work relating to a review of implementation of the Alberta Wetland Policy. The *ad hoc* group transitioned to a standard AWC working group and proposed this Terms of Reference for AWC consideration.

The project team will operate in a manner that is consistent with the rules, policies and procedures adopted by the Alberta Water Council, including the use of consensus to make decisions in a multi-stakeholder process.

STRATEGIC INTENT (GOAL)

The purpose of the **Wetland Policy Implementation Review (Wetland Review)** is to:

1. Identify potential performance measures¹ for the goal, outcomes, and strategic directions² of the Alberta Wetland Policy
2. Describe the challenges, opportunities, or unintended consequences experienced by sectors in the implementation of the Alberta Wetland Policy

Alberta Wetland Policy (2013)

Policy Goal:

Conserve, restore, protect, and manage Alberta's wetlands to sustain the benefits they provide to the environment, society, and the economy.

Outcomes:

1. *Wetlands of the highest value are protected for the long-term benefit of Albertans*
2. *Wetlands and their benefits are conserved and restored in areas where losses have been high*
3. *Wetlands are managed by avoiding, minimizing and if necessary, replacing lost wetland value*
4. *Wetland Management considers regional context*

Strategic Directions

- A. *Enable flexible wetland management*
- B. *Build effective tools, knowledge, and capacity*
- C. *Encourage conservation of wetlands and voluntary stewardship*

The Wetland Review project is intended to support continuous improvement and public reporting on the efficiency and effectiveness of Alberta Wetland Policy implementation.

OBJECTIVES

The Wetland Review project has three objectives:

1. **Preliminary Review:** Determine the potential performance measures, challenges, opportunities, and unintended consequences for the policy goal, outcomes, and directions.

¹ The working group noted that performance measures would reflect the most relevant spatial scale for effective assessment of policy performance (e.g., white and green zones, regions or subregions, watersheds or sub-watersheds, etc.).

² The project is intentionally focused on the policy goal, outcome, and strategic direction statements, because the working group directed that the implementation review remains at a strategic level.

2. **Cross-Sector Input:** Seek cross-sector perspectives on the proposed performance measures and on implementation challenges, opportunities, and unintended consequences to supplement project team perspectives
3. **Finalize Review and Report:** Describe a select few performance measures for the policy goal, outcomes, and directions, and prioritize across sector perspectives to identify potential priority

KEY TASKS

1. Preliminary Review

- Develop a common understanding of policy terms and characterize successful policy implementation
- Understand current performance measures being used by the Government of Alberta
- Describe potential performance measures by goal, outcome, and direction
- Describe top challenges, opportunities, and unintended consequences experienced through implementation to date
- Create draft perspectives report for cross-sector input

2. Cross-Sector Input

- Design engagement for effective and timely input and review by sectors
- Engage with sectors and gather perspectives on top challenges, opportunities, and unintended consequences experienced through implementation to date

3. Finalize Review and Report

- Identify a select few performance measures with rationale
- Identify a select few high-impact challenges, opportunities, and unintended consequences experienced across sectors with rationale
- Draft the final perspectives report for AWC approval and submission to the Government of Alberta

TIMELINES and DELIVERABLES

The project team will provide the following deliverables to the AWC:

- ***Approval of the Wetland Review Project terms of reference.....Nov 2020***
- ***Preliminary Review.....Nov 2020 – Dec 2020***
- ***Cross-Sector Input.....Jan 2021 – Feb 2021***
- ***Finalize Review and Report.....Feb 2021 – Mar 2021***
- ***Submit Final Report.....Mar 2021***

MEMBERSHIP

The Project Team is likely to encompass membership from the Industry, Non-Government Organizations, Government, and Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities sector groups. It is recommended that the Working Group membership, which includes representation

from all sector groups on the AWC, transition to project team membership, allowing for additional members to join if interested.

BUDGET

The working group anticipates that the Wetland Review project can be completed using an estimated \$18,000 of Alberta Water Council core funds identified to support project teamwork. No additional project-specific funding is required at this time.

Type	Amount
Stakeholder support	\$ 8,000
Hosting (i.e., meetings and workshop support)	\$ 2,000
Communications (design, layout, printing)	\$ 8,000
Total	\$ 18,000