



**April 16, 2010**

**Meeting Report:** Land-use Framework Advisory Team  
Water Issues

**Background:**

The Land-use Framework (LUF) Advisory Team is part of the Agri-Environmental Partnership of Alberta (AEPA) and has been meeting for a number of months to gather information on issues specific to the LUF and advise AEPA on their findings. At our April 9 meeting, guest speakers from Alberta Environment Andrew Schoepf and Sharon Willianen made presentations on the Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPAC's) and their linkages to the LUF, to the Water for Life Strategy and to the Alberta Water Council.

**Key Messages:**

- Water for Life partnerships include the Alberta Water Council (AWC), WPAC's, and Watershed Stewardship Groups (WSG's).
- The AWC monitors and stewards the implementation of the Water for Life Strategy, providing advice and recommendations to the government, stakeholders and the public on improving water management practices.
- Watershed Stewardship Groups take on local community watershed activities as needed.
- The WPAC's are independent societies with no regulatory authority, which serve as advisory bodies to Alberta Environment and to their member organizations. There is one WPAC in each basin and they provide advisory documents like State of the Basin Reports, Integrated Watershed Management Plans and Water Management Plans. WPAC's vary in structure and membership across the province. They generally consult with their communities to gather input into water management plans and work closely with Alberta Environment.
- Some of the WPAC watershed plans include water allocation and licensing; in the case of the Bow River Basin Council, the Oldman Watershed Council and the South East Alberta Watershed Alliance, allocation issues are out of scope because these have been dealt with in Alberta Environment's South Saskatchewan River Basin Water Allocation Plan

- Alberta Environment has guidance documents for what should be included in State of the Watershed documents and watershed management plans and work closely with the WPAC's.
- Alberta Environment can choose to use the WPAC watershed management plans as the best available advice on the watershed if the WPAC's have done their work thoroughly and with lots of consultation with stakeholders. They can also do their own plans if needed.

## **Actions**

- The agriculture sector has opportunities to be involved in water issues through the AWC – and the CSWG will be seeking a seat on the Council; through the WPAC's by membership in the societies and through local water stewardship groups.
- The LUF Advisory Team is exploring further ways for AEPA to get more involved in water issues in the province. A workshop on water issues that could include the Water For Life initiative, water allocation, water quality, on and off-stream storage, groundwater and other topics will be planned for the fall after harvest.
- The Alberta Water Council has created two working groups on the Water for Life Partnership Strategy, and Non-point Source Pollution. Edzo Kok has volunteered for the Water for Life working group and I will be the CSWG rep for the non-point pollution working group since these will both run in the next two months while producers are in the field.
- See [www.waterforlife.alberta.ca](http://www.waterforlife.alberta.ca) for more information on the Water for Life initiative – there are further links to useful documents at this site.