



April 2011 | ISSUE 2

Working together to ensure and sustain  
 > a safe water supply,  
 > a healthy environment  
 > and a prosperous economy



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Your link to Council business

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### Next AWC Board Meeting

The next AWC Board Meeting will be held Thursday June 16th in Nisku.





### Spotlight on Board Members

Check out our board member profile in *The Waterfall* section. This is a regular feature about a Council director or alternate, along with interesting water news from their sector.

### Water for Life Implementation Review Committee

The Council will soon begin its fourth review of implementation progress of the *Water for Life* strategy. This month, the Council will ask Directors and Alternates to identify participants for the *WFL* Implementation Review Committee, which will begin work in June.

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## THE WATERFALL

### A Director Profile of Al Kennedy - Chemical and Petrochemical Sector

Al Kennedy is one of the few remaining original members of the Alberta Water Council and can reflect back on the days when it was a three-year ministerial committee. He says "it's been a lot of fun" working with the Council over the years.

Al is a civil engineer whose entire career has been in the environmental field, almost exclusively in the

## Welcome to the Council's Newsletter

The Council's newsletter will arrive at your inbox three times per year, shortly after each board meeting, providing a quick update for board members and other interested stakeholders. 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!

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### Photo Credits:

Susan Sly (Nature Pictures), Cenovus Energy (Pumpjack)

Al is a civil engineer whose entire career has been in the environmental field, almost exclusively in the water and wastewater business. He spent over 20 years with Alberta Environment before moving to NOVA Chemicals at Joffre, where he is now a Senior Environmental Engineer with the Environment and Regulatory Team.

He is a strong believer in the Council's multi-stakeholder, consensus-based process to provide advice to the Provincial Government on water issues. The water management system in Alberta has served us well for many years, he says, and "it has been really effective for a long time but it isn't going to sustain us going forward." He suggests that the province has arrived at a point where the system probably needs to evolve in order to meet current and future needs of the province. Al believes that by working together, there is an opportunity to improve the system to meet the challenges of a less-than-abundant supply, and to find ways to better integrate water quality considerations with water quantity challenges.



Al now sits on the Council's Executive Committee, but as a long-time member of the Council, he has participated in many different areas over the years, including the *Water for Life* Implementation Review Committee, Intra-basin Water Movement Project Team, and the Business Planning Committee. He says that Council's consensus-based process "is a really interesting way to attack an issue, but it's not quick, and it takes time... it's as good a way I know to come up with decent recommendations because of the diversity of the groups that are involved and the consensus

model that we follow."

As a significant player in the Alberta economy, Al noted that his sector needs to be engaged in any initiatives that could affect the health of their industry, and water is fundamental to the sector's success. Council is the vehicle through which his sector and others have the opportunity to influence the future direction of water management in Alberta.

In Al's view, the Council can point to three major accomplishments. The first is "learning how to function as a consensus decision making organization." He explained that in the beginning, the Council's members had little experience with this type of model. Although a few had been involved with the Clean Air Strategic Alliance, most people were new to this process. It is a great success to be able to structure the organization to work effectively under that model.

A second area of success is the Wetlands Project and the Water Allocation Transfer System Upgrade Project. Although we haven't seen the final output yet, these two projects were the best fit for the Council in terms of the question to be answered. Al believes that the Council provided the regulators with good information that can and will be used to guide future policy development.

Third, Al's sector is now developing a Water Conservation, Efficiency, and Productivity plan, which will assist the sector in understanding how they both use and view water. He noted that developing this plan is an important activity which has been a significant challenge for the sector due to the diversity of its membership.

He adds, "I would hope that in 20 years, water quality and quantity are fully integrated in the regulatory environment; to me, that is the ultimate success." He also envisions that we will have a much better understanding of the health of our aquatic ecosystems and will have programs to maintain and enhance them. In addition, Al hopes that the programs, policies and systems in place for water will be based on a full and complete understanding of how much water is used, by whom, for what purposes, what are the impacts, and what is the value to society. "Water is a renewable, but limited resource; ultimately we need to manage it in ways that provide the greatest benefit to all Albertans."

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## THE CONFLUENCE

Taking the *Water For Life* partnerships to the next level

The three *Water for Life (WFL)* partnerships -- Alberta Water Council, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils, and Watershed Stewardship Groups -- have been working diligently to improve communication and coordination between and among these groups to better align all partners for successful implementation of *WFL*.

To help with this task, the Moving from Words to Action Project Team has developed draft recommendations that are now being tested with key stakeholders. The team will use this stakeholder input to finalize its recommendations, and expects to present its work to the Council at the June board meeting. The final report will identify opportunities to more effectively address shared strategic priorities between the *WFL* partnerships. Watch for the report release details in our next issue!



## Understanding the science behind non-point source pollution

The Non-Point Source (NPS) Pollution Project Team is taking an innovative, holistic approach to assess opportunities for management of non-point source pollution.

In March, the project team requested proposals for a consultant to begin phase one of the project. Phase one includes an assessment of non-point source pollution data, knowledge, and tools in order to understand the current state of knowledge for NPS pollution. The consultant's report will focus on Alberta but will include other parts of Canada and other relevant jurisdictions to ensure a wide perspective. Phase two will examine the policy, practices and regulatory tools for managing NPS pollution. The project team members are eager to begin working with the consultant to see what phase one will uncover.



## Alberta's third major water using sector completes its Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity plan

The seven major water-using sectors in Alberta are committed to developing, implementing, monitoring and reporting on a water conservation, efficiency and productivity (CEP) plan through their various sector associations, thereby contributing to several of the *Water for Life* strategy's goals.

The Oil & Gas and Oil Sands Mining sectors have joined the list of completed CEP plans. These sectors jointly developed a water CEP plan, guided by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) and the Oil Sands Developers Group (OSDG). The plan was internally reviewed by CAPP and OSDG members and externally reviewed by Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs) across the province. The selected performance measure for the target identified in the Oil & Gas and Oil Sands Mining CEP plan focuses on non-saline water use productivity. Their plan was presented to Council at the March 2011 board meeting. Visit the Council's website to view this sector's CEP plan along with the other completed plans! The CEP team is pleased to report that the remaining four sectors continue to make progress on their plans.



## A holistic approach to riparian land management

A coordinated approach is essential to conserving and managing riparian lands at the various geographic scales and for the different water body types. At the October 2010 Board meeting, members acknowledged that riparian land management was a priority area needing investigation. A working group was formed to examine the issues and determine whether the Council should undertake a project on this topic.

Over the last several months the working group has met a number of times as it further scopes the potential project and develops terms of reference for a project team; they will report back to the Board at the June 2011 meeting. Stay tuned!



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## WATER PIPES

## Bringing a project forward - the Ins and Outs of Statements of Opportunity

The Council receives a number of requests each year to consider a potential piece of work. To help it assess these requests, the Council established a formal process for stakeholder to bring forward concerns and issues, in addition to its regular strategic planning activities. The process involves submitting a *Statement of Opportunity* that asks the Council to examine an issue and develop recommendations for how it might be addressed.

A Statement of Opportunity can be submitted to the Council's Executive Director at any time and should outline why the issue is a priority and how the Council can help address it. Any individual or organization considering preparing a Statement of Opportunity should review the two short documents *Bringing New Issues to the Alberta Water Council* and *Submitting a Statement of Opportunity - Additional Guidance*, both of which are on the Council's website [www.awchome.ca](http://www.awchome.ca).



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