

## **Alberta Water Council invites input on renewal of *Water for Life* strategy**

*Edmonton, June 28 / CNW / ...* Albertans are invited to share ideas and input on *Water for Life* as part of a process to review and renew the provincial water strategy to ensure it is effectively managing and sustaining Alberta's water supply.

The Alberta Water Council -- the multi-stakeholder partnership group responsible for overseeing the implementation of *Water for Life* -- has developed a workbook questionnaire to seek input from key stakeholders and sectors involved and affected by water management in the province.

The workbook focuses on the outcomes and actions in the three-year old water strategy to assess whether the strategy is working, whether it is still relevant, and where the priorities are for the future. Members of the public are also invited to complete the workbook on-line up to August 24, 2007.

The Council is leading the renewal at the request of Alberta Environment Minister Rob Renner. The renewal is part of Premier Ed Stelmach's Mandate Letter to Minister Renner, and a priority for Government.

Renner said the renewal is an important step to ensuring the provincial water strategy remains relevant and effective.

"This renewal is about making a good strategy better, and ensuring its goals are relevant as the province and our economy grows," said Renner. "I'm pleased the Alberta Water Council has agreed to lead the *Water for Life* renewal and I look forward to receiving the Council's recommendations so we can ensure the province's priorities for water management are on the right track."

On May 1, the Council released its second report on progress on implementation of the strategy, which includes a full evaluation and some specific recommendations on priorities and areas needing more attention and focus as the government moves ahead.

"Based on our recent review and other evaluations, there is consensus that work on the *Water for Life* is well underway and much has been accomplished in the past three years. However, in our report, we also identified some gaps and some opportunities based on changing circumstances that need to be addressed," said Bill Berzins, Chair of the Bow River Basin Council and a member of the Alberta Water Council. "So while we believe we have an understanding of what needs to be done, we also feel it is important to validate our recommendations, and at the same time seek any new ideas on renewing -- but not re-doing -- *Water for Life*."

Kirk Popik, who represent the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) on the project team for the *Water for Life* renewal, said it is important that Albertans, and specifically sectoral stakeholders, have a voice in the process.

“Because water management is everyone’s responsibility, as we define specific recommendations on renewal, Albertans need to have an opportunity to provide educated, informed input on the water strategy,” said Popik. “We believe seeking additional input and ideas will help ensure they are indeed best and most effective recommendations we can make to the Minister and the Government.”

The Council will be conducting the renewal process over the next six months, and providing recommendations to the Minister in early 2008.

The renewal workbook questionnaire, along with more information on the Council and *Water for Life*, can be found at [www.waterforlife.gov.ab.ca/awc](http://www.waterforlife.gov.ab.ca/awc)

*Established in 2004, the Alberta Water Council is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 25 members from governments, industry, and non-government organizations. Its primary task is to monitor and steward implementation of the Water for Life strategy and to champion achievement of the strategy’s three outcomes of a safe, secure drinking water supply, healthy aquatic ecosystems, and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.*

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# The Alberta Water Council

The Alberta Water Council is a partnership between governments and stakeholders with a vested interest in water issues. Membership consists of representatives of four broad categories including: industry, non-government organizations, government, and Government of Alberta and provincial authorities.

## Industry

- Irrigation - David Hill, Executive Director, Alberta Irrigation Projects Association
- Power Generation - Mike Kelly, Director, Environmental, Health, and Safety Services, TransAlta Utilities
- Chemical and Petrochemical - Al Kennedy, Senior Environmental Engineer – Water & Wastewater, NOVA Chemicals
- Forestry - Keith Murray, Director, Environmental Affairs, Alberta Forests Products Association
- Livestock - Larry Nolan, Director, Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association
- Mining - Judy Smith, Manager of Environment for Athabasca Oil Sands Project, Shell Canada Ltd.
- Oil and Gas - Kevin Stashin, Vice President, Operations, Devon Canada Corporation

## Non-Government Organizations

- Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils - Bill Berzins, Chair, Bow River Basin Council
- Environmental - Danielle Droitsch, Member, Bow Riverkeeper
- Fish Habitat Conservation - Ron Pearson, Trout Unlimited Canada - Alberta Chapter
- Wetlands Conservation - Dr. Jonathan Thompson, Senior Research Biologist, Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Lake Environment Conservation - Jay White, Member, Alberta Lake Management Society

## Government

- Large Urban – Rob Pritchard, General Manager, Utilities and Environmental Protection, City of Calgary
- Small Urban - Richard Quail, Municipal Manager, Town of Okotoks
- Rural - Brian Hammond, Reeve, Municipal District of Pincher Creek

- Metis Settlements General Council - Gerald Cunningham, Vice President, Metis Settlements General Council
- Federal - Tim Goos, Regional Director General, Environment Canada Prairie and Northern

#### **Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities**

- Alberta Environment - Peter Watson, Deputy Minister
- Alberta Health and Wellness – Alex MacKenzie, Executive Director, Public Health Surveillance and Environmental Health
- Alberta Agriculture and Food - John Donner, Assistant Deputy Minister, Sustainable Agriculture Sector
- Alberta Energy - Joe Miller, Executive Director, Policy, Planning and External Relations
- Alberta Sustainable Resource Development - Brad Pickering, Deputy Minister
- Alberta Economic Development Authority - Kim Sturgess, Board Member
- Alberta Science and Research Authority - Linda Van Gastel, Board Member

More information on the Alberta Water Council is available on-line at [www.waterforlife.gov.ab.ca/awc](http://www.waterforlife.gov.ab.ca/awc)

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