



NEWS RELEASE

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Alberta Water Council finalizes recommendations for a New Wetlands Policy and Implementation Plan

Edmonton... The Alberta Water Council submitted one of Canada's most comprehensive wetland policy and implementation recommendations to the Government of Alberta today. These recommendations will help the Government of Alberta develop and finalize a provincial wetlands policy. The Council's recommendations focus on protecting Alberta's wetlands by managing impacts; setting objectives; encouraging stewardship; and building knowledge and capacity.

In 2005, the Alberta Water Council formed the Wetland Policy Project Team, composed of government, industry and environmental representatives. The team was tasked with developing a provincial wetland policy and implementation plan that the Council could recommend to the Government of Alberta. "It is critical to make certain that wetlands, like other natural resources, are sustained for future generations with initiatives that support the *Water for Life* strategy," says Gord Edwards, Executive Director of the Alberta Water Council.

Alberta Water Council Recommendations for a New Wetland Policy and Alberta Water Council Recommendations for a Wetland Policy Implementation Plan have been submitted to the Minister of Environment for his consideration. The Council expects it will take the Minister some time to complete a thorough review and respond.

"I look forward to reviewing the wetland policy and implementation recommendations provided by the Alberta Water Council. I am confident that the time invested by participating sectors has resulted in well-thought out, balanced options on managing wetlands," says Rob Renner, Minister of Environment. He added that while the group did not reach consensus on all of the recommendations, he was certain that the implementation phase would alleviate concerns from any particular sector.

David Pryce, Vice President, Operations, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers comments, “This policy recommendation reflects a significant collaborative effort to provide guidance on how wetlands should be valued and managed in concert with other Provincial policy objectives. There are many areas of agreement amongst the stakeholders and industry supports the establishment of definitive policy to guide planning and decision-making. We believe this policy should enable a flexible and balanced approach to decision-making by the government. Work remains on how that policy will strike an appropriate balance and on defining appropriate implementation tools.”

Dr. Jonathan Thompson of Ducks Unlimited Canada and chair of the project team adds, “The work undertaken by the Alberta Water Council Wetland Policy Project Team over the past three years has been substantial. The discussion and successful resolution of many complex issues related to wetlands policy and implementation was commendable, especially considering the numerous stakeholder perspectives and priorities. The Council’s recommendations provide the strategic direction and tools to enable the Government of Alberta and other land managers to make wise choices about our wetlands now and into the future.”

The policy and implementation plans and sector responses are available at wwwAWChome.ca

Established in 2004, the Alberta Water Council is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 24 members from governments, industry, and non-government organizations. Its primary task is to monitor and steward implementation of Alberta’s 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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