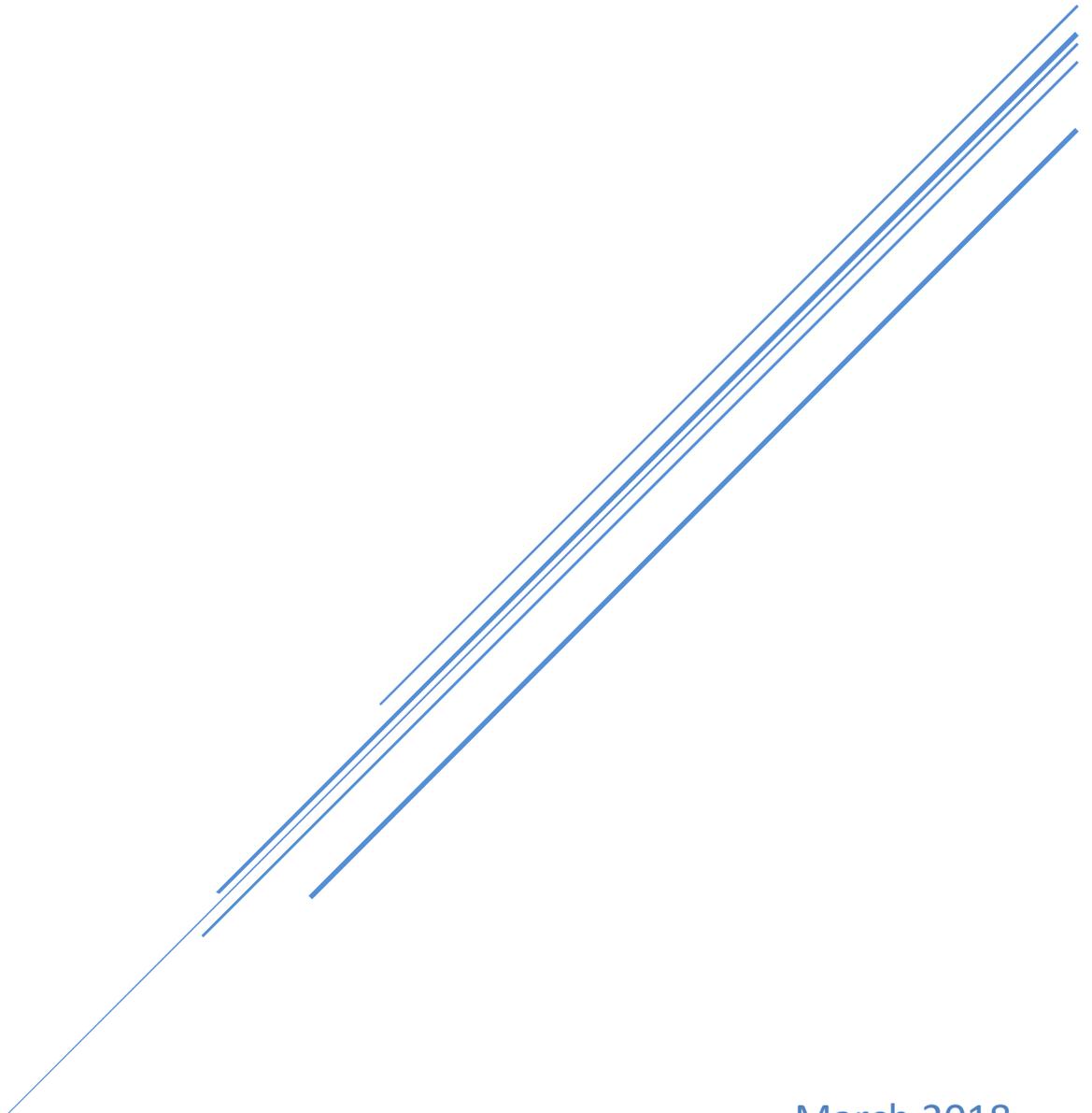




TRACKING IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS OF AWC RECOMMENDATIONS

Update Report



March 2018
Volume 7

1.0 Introduction

AWC has been tracking the implementation status of its recommendations since 2012. As part of the tracking system, AWC staff prepare two reports: a Detailed Report and an Update Report. The Detailed Report lists all recommendations and their implementation status (provided by the identified implementer), by individual recommendation, theme or full suite of recommendations. The Detailed Report is in table format and is posted on the Council's website. The Update Report provides a general overview of implementation progress; it is presented at March board meetings. As part of this presentation, the board has an opportunity to discuss implementation progress and may offer advice to implementers concerning any challenges that are identified.

In October 2017, the board approved a revised process with the objective of facilitating more meaningful updates on the status of the recommendations and incorporating a process that would allow us to stop tracking them once they had achieved particular criteria. New options for reporting should facilitate more meaningful updates and allow the AWC to identify recommendations that will require no further updates. This is intended to streamline the recommendation tracking process and focus future updates on recommendations for which the work is ongoing.

This is the first Update Report based on the revised tracking system. It highlights key changes to the status of recommendations and describes implementation progress by project since the last report (April 2016). The date shown after each project name is when the recommendations were originally presented to the board.

2.0 Overview

This report synthesizes updates received on 276 recommendations from 19 AWC projects. The charts on the following page provide an overview of how the distribution of recommendation status has evolved since the last updates were provided in 2016. Highlights from recommendation tracking this year include:

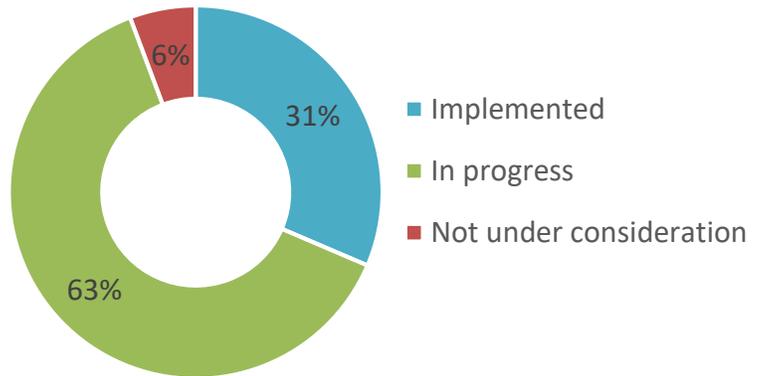
- Close to half of the recommendations were categorized as implemented or closed. The AWC will not be requesting further updates on these recommendations for future reports.
- This report shows relatively fewer recommendations as “in progress” than previous reports. In addition to many of these being implemented as written, many previously “in progress” recommendations were assigned to new categories such as: implemented through an alternative approach, partially implemented, and closed, either because not a priority or not appropriate.

To date recommendations from three projects have **all** been reported as implemented:

- Sector Planning for Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (March 2013)
- Shared Governance (September 2008)
- Provincial Ecological Aquatic Criteria for Health (November 2009).

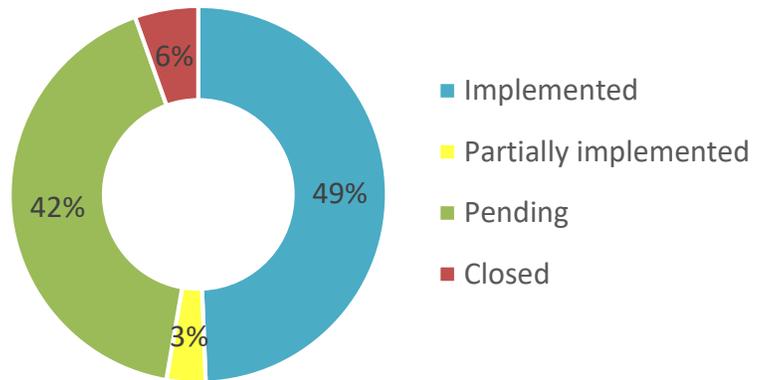
The first chart shows the distribution of recommendation status at the last update in 2016.

Implementation status of recommendations in 2016



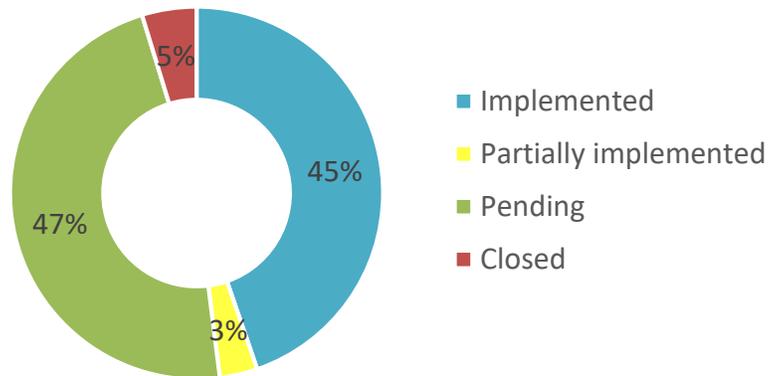
The second chart shows how the distribution has changed since 2016, without taking into consideration recommendations from projects that have been completed since then.

Implementation status of recommendations in 2018, excluding new projects



The third chart shows the overall distribution for 2018, including recommendations from new projects.

Implementation status of recommendations in 2018



3.0 Projects

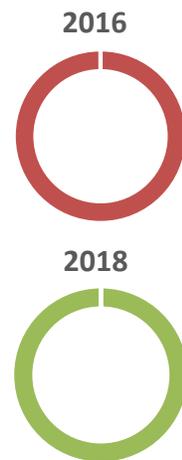
This section presents project-specific updates. For each project, the charts on the right are a quick way to assess how the status of recommendations has evolved from 2016 to 2018. **Please note that the charts below use the same legends as the charts on the previous page:**

2016: ■ Implemented ■ In progress ■ Not under consideration at this time

2018: ■ Implemented ■ Partially implemented ■ Pending ■ Closed

3.1 Intra-Basin Water Movement (June 2008)

All recommendations were updated to reflect that they have been considered in previous and ongoing water allocation system review and regulatory/policy development work undertaken by the department. Consequently, the implementation status of these recommendations has changed from “not under consideration at this time” to “pending (uncertain)”. While a comprehensive response to these recommendations is not being developed, recent work that is affecting policy development around intra-basin water movement include the 10-year review of the *Approved Water Management Plan for the South Saskatchewan River Basin* and consideration of new policies and protocols to address aquatic invasive species threats.



3.2 Wetland Policy and Implementation Plan (September 2008)

3.2.1 Wetland Policy

Recommendations 1, 5 and 6 have been updated from “in progress” to “implemented.” Recommendations 2 to 4 are “pending.” Implementation of the Alberta Wetland Policy has proven to be a complex, multi-year undertaking. AEP is currently exploring tools and avenues for wetland protection and prioritization of wetland restoration with AUMA, AAMDC, WPACs, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and regional planners. Once in place, these key pieces will round out the wetland management system in Alberta and enable achievement of objectives identified in the Alberta Wetland Policy.



3.2.2 Wetland Policy Implementation Plan

Recommendations form the basis for a multitude of operational tools and mechanisms that have been developed under the Alberta Wetland Policy. Since the last update in 2016, progress have been made on several recommendations:

- 33 recommendations were updated from “in progress” to “implemented”
- 5 recommendations were updated from “in progress” to “closed”
- 1 recommendation was updated from “not under consideration at this time” to “implemented”
- 1 recommendation was updated from “not under consideration at this time” to “closed”



3.3 Shared Governance (September 2008)

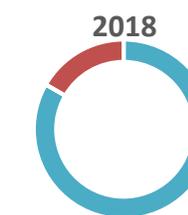
All recommendations are implemented. Updates were added by implementers to specify whether recommendations were implemented as written or through alternatives approaches. No further updates will be requested on recommendations from this project.



3.4 Watershed Management Planning (September 2008)

Recommendations 3 and 8 were updated:

- **Recommendation 3:** Status was changed from “implemented” to “closed” (not appropriate). Although the work of WSGs naturally aligns with *Water for Life* and communication between WSGs and WPACs is important, some WSG plans were completed before WPAC plans.
- **Recommendation 8:** Status was updated from “not under consideration at this time” to “closed” (not appropriate). Reviewing watershed management plans is not included in the scope of the AWC’s *Water For Life* Implementation Review.



3.5 Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Planning (September 2008)

Recommendations 9, 13, 15 and 18 were updated:

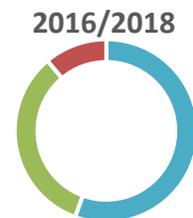
- **Recommendation 9:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented” to reflect that the fourth CEP report was released in 2017 and addresses this recommendation.
- **Recommendation 13:** Updated from “not under consideration at this time” to “closed.”
- **Recommendation 15:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented.” AWC nominated the CEP initiative for an Emerald Award in 2016.
- **Recommendation 18:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented.” Tools are being tested that would allow for public access to the Water Use Reporting data systems.



3.6 Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems (March 2009)

Recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 9 were updated. Overall status of recommendations remained the same:

- **Recommendations 2 to 4:** Updated from “in progress” to “pending” (uncertain).
- **Recommendation 9:** Updated from “not under consideration at this time” to “closed” to reflect that the AWC chose to work on higher priority work.



3.7 Water for Life Implementation Review 2006 – 2008 (June 2009)

Recommendations 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11 were updated:

- **Recommendations 2, 6 and 11:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented.”
- **Recommendations 3 and 5:** Updated from “in progress” to “pending.” An AWC working group began meeting to develop Terms of Reference for a project to develop a common approach for drinking source water protection in Alberta. Alberta Health is developing drinking water standards for small systems within their jurisdiction. Policies are being proposed to introduce drinking water safety plans and address source protection, treatment and monitoring in small systems.
- **Recommendations 7 and 8:** Updated from “in progress” to “partially implemented.” GoA continues to review the water allocation transfer



system but currently has no plans to make full scale changes as a specific project. The Water Conversation Action Plan commits the GoA to pursue a full range of supply enhancement options. Collaboration on a storage optimization pilot project in the Bow River basin continues.

3.8 Water Allocation Transfer System Upgrade Project (August 2009)

The status for all recommendations was updated from “in progress” to “pending (uncertain).” A comprehensive response to these recommendations is not being developed. However, the recommendations continue to be acknowledged and are considered throughout the ongoing regulatory/policy development work. Under the Water Conversation Action Plan, AEP will explore approaches for establishing protected water and taking a provincial-level policy approach to water and wastewater re-use in the short-term.



3.9 Provincial Ecological Aquatic Criteria for Health (November 2009)

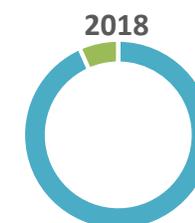
This recommendation was already marked as implemented. No further updates will be requested in 2019.



3.10 Moving from Words to Actions (June 2011)

Recommendations 4, 9 and 10 were updated:

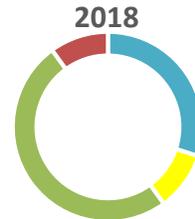
- **Recommendation 4:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented” (alternative approach).
- **Recommendation 9:** Updated from “in progress” to “pending” (to be completed). AEP is currently undergoing the process of reconfirming the approach to recommendation implementation. More details in the Detailed Report.
- **Recommendation 10:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented” (unclear but met) by WSGs and WPACs.



3.11 Water for Life Implementation Review 2009 – 2011 (October 2012)

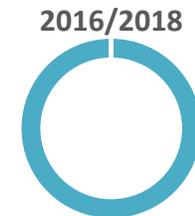
All recommendations were updated:

- **Recommendations 1, 3, 6 and 7:** Updated from “in progress” to “pending.”
- **Recommendations 2, 5 and 8:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented.”
- **Recommendation 4:** Research on management options continues as part of normal ongoing regulatory practices; a broad-based systemic review of the water allocation, management and regulatory system is not being considered. The status has been updated from “in progress” to “partially implemented.”
- **Recommendation 9:** With regards to the AWC, the status has been updated to “closed” to reflect that AWC does not undertake watershed assessment and planning.
- **Recommendation 10:** Updated from “in progress” to “closed” (not a priority).



3.12 Sector Planning for CEP (March 2013)

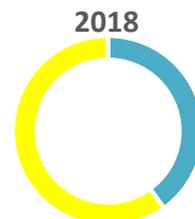
A minor update was made to reflect that the fourth CEP team completed its work in 2017. All recommendations are now implemented, and no further updates will be requested on this project.



3.13 Non-Point Source Pollution (March 2013)

Recommendations 2 to 5 were updated:

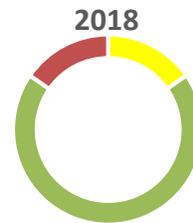
- **Recommendation 2:** Updated from “in progress” to “partially implemented.” AEP has developed a guide for source water protection in the South Saskatchewan River Basin that may help to address non-point source pollution.
- **Recommendations 3 and 5:** Updated from “in progress” “to partially implemented.”
- **Recommendation 4:** Updated from “in progress” to “implemented (alternative approach).”



3.14 Riparian Land Conservation and Management (March 2013)

The status for all recommendations was updated from “in progress” to the following:

- **Recommendations 1 and 13:** Both are now “closed” because they do not align with current business and priorities.
- **Recommendations 2 and 3:** Both are now “partially implemented.” AEP is advancing work on goals and objectives for riparian management on public lands.
- **Recommendations 4:** The status is now “pending (to be completed).” The draft North Saskatchewan Regional Plan and a draft amended Lower Athabasca Regional Plan include content on riparian areas and management. Engagement on regional plans will proceed according to the established processes.
- **Recommendations 5 to 12:** All are now “pending (uncertain).” Resources have not been allocated to most of these recommendations at this time, but some of this work has been advanced through regional planning.



3.15 Aquatic Invasive Species (October 2015)

All recommendations were updated to “pending”:

- **Recommendation 2:** An Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System is being developed and will be fully functional in early 2018. A long-term program is still under development.
- **Recommendation 3:** Media coverage has been extensive and more opportunities for communication exist.
- **Recommendation 4:** There is no specific AIS monitoring program at this time. Existing GoA programs are used to leverage invasive mussel and spiny waterflea monitoring.
- **Recommendation 5:** The *Fisheries (Alberta) Act* was amended in 2015 to provide for a more robust aquatic invasive species program. Mandatory watercraft inspections will continue in 2018.
- **Recommendation 6:** Ongoing. Training is given yearly to all watercraft inspectors and those appointed as Fishery Guardians.
- **Recommendation 7:** Specific penalties are a priority for the Aquatic Invasive Species Program for 2018.



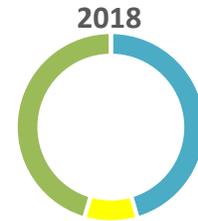
3.16 Water Literacy (April 2016)

This is the first recommendation tracking update on this report. All recommendations are pending (to be completed). Work is ongoing to develop an online interactive portal for water literacy practitioners, create new tools for water literacy programs, share current water literacy products through social media, and promote the use of the water literacy assessment tool.



3.17 Water for Life Implementation Review 2012-2015 (October 2016)

This is the first recommendation tracking update on this report. Nine recommendations are implemented, three are partially implemented and seven are pending. Updates include:



- **Recommendation 2:** The Government of Alberta continues to provide technical support, monitoring, data and resources to support drinking water risk assessments and source protection initiatives as needed.
- **Recommendation 4:** The GoA is working to complete consistent policy guidance for regulatory decision-makers for establishing required environmental flow needs and related aquatic environment considerations when making a water allocation decision.
- **Recommendation 7:** AEP participates in and provides funding for several educational programs throughout the province. AEP’s Strategic Plan continues to prioritize establishing and strengthening its community-based monitoring and citizen science initiatives.
- **Recommendations 9:** In 2016 a review of WPAC partnerships was commenced to explore roles and responsibilities. The review will conclude with a recommendations report in March 2018. When possible, multi-year funding will be used as the normal business practice in administering grants to *Water for Life* partnerships.

3.18 Lake Watershed Management (March 2017)

This is the first recommendation tracking update on this report. All recommendations are “pending (to be completed).” Implementation targets for recommendations range from 2018 to 2020. Ongoing work includes:



- **Recommendation 1:** The Water Policy Branch of AEP has initiated managing work relative to a provincial lake policy.
- **Recommendation 3:** ALMS continues to work with GIS volunteers to develop a portal for water quality and watershed information.
- **Recommendation 4:** The Environmental Monitoring and Science Division’s lake monitoring program is under review, which will inform a preliminary assessment of watershed health and information gaps.

- **Recommendation 9:** The AUMA and AAMDC support municipalities as they transition to implementing the new *Municipal Government Act* requirements, which will support watershed management planning. Both associations also continue to advocate and seek clarification from the GoA regarding the need for regional plans to be developed to encourage consistent planning across Alberta’s watersheds.
- **Recommendation 12:** The Respect our Lakes program has expanded the Alberta Recreational Lake Forum to include lakes across the province.

3.19 Evaluating Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (March 2017)

This is the first recommendation tracking update on this report. All recommendations are pending (to be completed):

- **Recommendation 1:** Next updates on CEP trends and progress are expected to be provided through the AWC in 2020.
- **Recommendations 2 and 3:** Major water-using sectors each provided their own assessment of recommendations 2 and 3, and although some consider these recommendations to be implemented, others consider them to be pending. As a result, the overall status for these two recommendations is pending.
- **Recommendation 4:** WURS database query and viewing capability for extracting information is being used internally. Providing external access requires decisions pending user feedback, management approval and allocation of IT resources.

