



**Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council  
(WPAC) Development Process**

**Stakeholder and Aboriginal Community  
Focus Groups Summary**

**December 2008 Draft**



## Executive Summary

Alberta Environment held a series of Focus Groups with Stakeholder sectors and Aboriginal communities within the Athabasca watershed between September and November of 2008. The ten Focus Groups were held as part of the process to establish a Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) within the Athabasca watershed by 2010. Participants were invited to share their thoughts and opinions on the benefits of participating in a WPAC, what resources participants' organizations might provide to the WPAC, changes or suggestions to the draft Initiators Group Terms of Reference, and preferences for a draft Communications Strategy. Participants were also asked to name one or two volunteers from their sector/aboriginal community to participate on a WPAC Initiators Group and facilitate communication between their group and the Initiators Group. The Initiators Group will prepare the documentation needed to set up the WPAC, such as a Terms of Reference, Society by-laws, initial strategic plan, and so on. Discussion during these meetings resulted in an overview of participant perspectives that can be used to guide the next steps in the Athabasca WPAC development process. Stakeholder sectors and Aboriginal communities may wish to consider ideas in this summary for their own purposes, such as refining their Communications Strategy. More specifically, the Initiators Group (IG) can use the information within this document to guide their discussions and work on the draft governance and foundational documents of the future WPAC.

Collectively, participants offered many and varied benefits for their respective organizations of participating in a WPAC. Although some of the groups identified the same benefits, the majority of benefits identified were unique to particular groups.

Participants also discussed what resources/support their organizations could provide to a WPAC that would mutually benefit their organization's needs and those of a WPAC. All together, suggestions for resources/support commonly fell along several themes: advice, communications, data/information, education/awareness, experience, expertise, financial, knowledge, linkages, meetings, process, people, and voice.

Additionally, participants recommended changes and suggestions on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for the WPAC Initiator's Group (IG). Terms of Reference comments from all Focus Groups are provided for review under each appropriate section of the draft TOR within this Summary.

When asked how they would like to communicate with each other within their own sector/community to ensure their perspectives are brought to the Initiators Group table, Focus Group participants provided thoughtful yet definite preferences for their particular draft communication strategies.

Participants in the different Focus Groups expressed many of the same considerations for selecting one or two volunteers for their sector/community to participate on the WPAC Initiators Group and facilitate communication between their group and the Initiators Group.

Participants offered valuable input at their Focus Group, however; this may not necessarily reflect final decisions by their organizations. Additionally, comments from those who participated do not necessarily represent the views of other aboriginal communities and stakeholders who did not attend.

Following are the key ideas identified overall from the Focus Groups. As an additional First Nations Focus Group is scheduled for January 2009, results from their Focus Group are not included in this overall summary. A revised summary will be produced in February to incorporate input from this last session. Meeting notes from the individual Focus Groups can be found in Appendix A at the end of the summary. Appendices B and C contain responses to the Focus Group questions submitted later from sector members who were not at the Focus Group session.



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# Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development Process – Stakeholder and Aboriginal Community Focus Groups Summary

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## Introduction

### Water for Life

*Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability* has been the Government of Alberta's approach for managing Alberta's water resources since 2003.

Recently renewed, the intent is to keep the strategy relevant and effective to meet an increasing population, economic growth, and changing water needs.

The strategy reaffirms a commitment for having a healthy and sustainable water supply for the environment, our communities, and our economic well-being now and in the future. It is themed around safeguarding our water sources and accelerating our actions and is based on the same three goals as in the original: safe, secure drinking water supply; healthy aquatic ecosystems; and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy. These goals will be achieved through knowledge and research, partnerships, and water conservation. A key focus is shared responsibility by Albertans for water management through a network of partnerships, the use of outcome-based approaches, and collaboration in delivery of services.

### Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs)

One of the elements of the renewed *Water for Life Strategy* is the establishment of Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs) in each of the provinces' major watersheds. WPACs are multi-stakeholder, non-profit partnership organizations that bring sectors and communities in a watershed together to assess the condition of their watershed and develop plans and coordinate activities that address watershed issues. Watersheds are areas of land that catch snow and rain and drain into a larger water body of water such as a marsh, lake or river. A river basin is an area of land drained by a river and its associated streams or tributaries – it is essentially a large watershed.

Becoming a member of a WPAC allows all perspectives to be heard on important issues of water resource management in a watershed and in determining how these issues should be addressed. Building on the efforts already underway in a watershed, the work of a WPAC helps to ensure a high level of protection of the aquatic ecosystem, achieve more efficient water use, and aid in developing cooperative management options that are both realistic and effective.

WPACs produce State of the Watershed reports, undertake watershed planning, collaborate with land managers, develop best management practices, and make recommendations to decision makers that affect the health of the watershed in a watershed management plan. Watershed planning considers both ground and surface water resources, and the interaction between land, water, plants, animals, and people. WPACs also foster stewardship activities within the watershed, provide advice and support for Watershed Stewardship Groups; educate users of the water resource, and present watershed issues to the Alberta Water Council and the Government of Alberta.

## **Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development Process**

The Water for Life Strategy identifies the formation of a Watershed Planning and Advisory Council for the Athabasca watershed by 2010. Alberta Environment is currently facilitating the development process for this WPAC by providing stakeholders and Aboriginal communities within the watershed opportunities to learn more about WPACs and contribute toward the roles, governance, and deliverables of an Athabasca WPAC.

Key developments to date include: Stakeholder/Community Surveys and survey results, a WPAC Workshop and Workshop Report, and Stakeholder Sector and Aboriginal Focus Groups.

The next steps in the process include an additional First Nations Focus Group to be held in January/09, Initiators Group work to develop the foundational policy documents and governance structure of the future WPAC, the First General Meeting of the future Athabasca WPAC membership, and WPAC designation.

## **Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development Process Focus Groups**

In order to share expectations and build trust in the WPAC development process, Alberta Environment hosted ten Focus Groups from September through November 2008.

The Focus groups were held throughout the Athabasca watershed with Stakeholder sectors and Aboriginal communities. The Groups included:

- Agriculture
- Conservation-NGO
- Education-Research
- Energy
- First Nations
- Forestry
- Government
- Métis
- Municipal
- Water-Watershed Groups

They were conducted by a neutral facilitator and an assistant who recorded comments. Notes were also taken by Alberta Environment staff facilitating the WPAC development process to capture supporting details. Questions were asked about the benefits of participating in a WPAC, what resources participants' organizations might provide to the WPAC, changes or suggestions to the draft Initiators Group Terms of Reference, and preferences for a sector/community Communications Strategy. Participants were also asked to name one or two volunteers from their sector/aboriginal community to participate on a WPAC Initiators Group and facilitate communication between their group and the Initiators Group.



## Overall Focus Group Summary of Results

### Organization Benefits of Participation in a WPAC

All participants were asked how they see a WPAC benefiting their organization. They were also asked how it will help achieve their organization's goals and what operational or strategic need an Athabasca WPAC could provide their organization. The benefits identified were many and varied. However; two broad categories emerged from these discussions-benefits identified by 2 or more Focus Groups and benefits identified by one Focus Group only. All are listed below by topic area along with the group(s) that offered them:

#### **WPAC benefits identified by 2 or more Focus Groups:**

- Awareness/education (Agriculture, Energy, Forestry, Municipal, Water-Watershed)
- Challenge (Education-Research, Conservation-NGO)
- Collaboration (Municipal, Agriculture)
- Credibility and capacity (Energy, Water-Watershed)
- Engagement (Agriculture, Métis)
- Information (Métis, Municipal, Water-Watershed)
- Integration (Energy, Forestry)
- Issues (Métis, Water-Watershed)
- Opportunity (Forestry, Government, Métis)
- Outcomes (Government, Forestry)
- Planning and plans (Energy, Forestry)
- Representation (Energy, Métis)
- Research (Education-Research, Forestry)
- Resources (Forestry, Water-Watershed)
- Stakeholder forum (Energy, Water-Watershed)
- Trust (Energy, Métis)
- Water for Life (Conservation-NGO, Government)
- Water quality (Métis, Municipal)
- Water supply (Government, Municipal)

#### **WPAC benefits identified by 1 Focus Group only:**

- Alignment (Energy)
- Assist in addressing barriers (Agriculture)
- Aquatic environment (Municipal)
- Autonomy (Municipal)
- Basin residents (Government)
- Benefits (Municipal)
- Bibliography development (Education-Research)
- Common ground/understanding (Government)
- Competing interests (Government)
- Confidence (Conservation-NGO)
- Connections (Education-Research)
- Cost sharing (Municipal)
- Decisions and recommendations (Energy)
- Decision making (Conservation-NGO)
- Discussion (Municipal)
- Efficiency (Energy)

- Expectations (Energy)
- Funding (Métis)
- GOA goals and objectives (Government)
- Goals (Conservation-NGO)
- Government commitment (Conservation-NGO)
- Growth and development (Municipal)
- Guidance and influence (Municipal)
- Healthy environment (Métis)
- Holistic approach (Métis)
- Land Use Framework (Forestry)
- Management (Water-Watershed)
- Management/limitations (Government)
- Mapping (Government)
- Partnering (Education-Research)
- Policies (Métis)
- Process(Municipal)
- Programs and plans (Government)
- Public Advisory Groups (Forestry)
- Public confidence issue (Government)
- Regulatory” inquiry (Government)
- Recommendations (Government)
- Recreation (Municipal)
- Relationships (Education-Research)
- Research needs/gaps (Forestry)
- Roadblocks (Energy)
- Roles and responsibilities (Municipal)
- Self determination (Municipal)
- Social License (Energy)
- Stakeholders (Education-Research)
- Stakeholder input (Conservation-NGO)
- Stakeholder understanding (Government)
- Support (Conservation-NGO)
- Sustainability (Municipal)
- Synergies (Education-Research)
- Technical assistance (Government)
- Trade off analysis mechanism (Energy)
- Voice (Water-Watershed)
- Waste water (Government)
- Water access (Government)
- Water allocation (Municipal)
- Water management clarity (Government)
- Water quality and quantity (Municipal)
- Watershed approach (Education-Research)

## **Organization Resources/Support to the Initiators Group and WPAC**

Participants discussed what resources (in-kind and/or financial)/support their organization may be interested in providing to the Initiators Group and WPAC in order to achieve both organizational and WPAC needs. Comments on resources/support commonly fell along several themes. These are identified below by topic area and the group(s) that suggested them:

### **Advice**

- Advice and linkages (Government)
- By-law (Government)

### **Communications**

- Advertising (Energy)
- Communication (Municipal)
- Messaging (Agriculture)
- Sector (Water-Watershed)

### **Data/Information**

- AUMA and AAMDC are key stakeholders who can provide support/information (Government)
- Bibliographies/potential database, abstracts and links (Education-Research)
- Data/Information (Forestry, Government, Energy)
- Data/information coordination (Forestry)
- Databases (Education-Research)
- Document and information repository (Education-Research)
- Image repository and depository (Education-Research)
- Information (Agriculture, Municipal)
- Mapping (Government, Conservation-NGO)
- Research (Government)

### **Education/awareness**

- Education/awareness (Municipal)

### **Experience**

- Analysis (Energy)

### **Expertise**

- Expertise (Government)
- Members a resource (Municipal)
- Planners are hard to come by; may have to involve consultants (= \$) (Government)
- Specialist/technical staff (Government)

### **Financial**

- Athabasca University (Athabasca River Basin Research Institute) could potentially fund research based on WPAC priorities (Education-Research)
- Funding – sponsor some/various costs (Government)
- Potential for resource support of the process (\$, in-kind, rooms, facilitation etc.) (Energy)
- Potential to fund WPAC to support process or specific initiatives within WPAC (Energy)
- WPACs receive annual grant support for operations (Government)
  - Partnership support is sought to further initiatives

- Partnerships can leverage department support

### **Knowledge**

- Best practices (Municipal, Water-Watershed)
- Education (Education-Research)
- Intellectual capacity (Conservation-NGO)
- Learnings (Water-Watershed)
- Local knowledge (Agriculture, Conservation-NGO)
- Traditional knowledge (Métis)

### **Linkages**

- Forest Management Agreement renewal (Forestry)
- Funding other initiatives (data/research) that would provide input to WPAC (Energy)
- Have discussed funding a science society (Energy)
- Industry has contributed to CEMA. Energy probably could bring to this process (Energy)
- Land Management Practices (Forestry)
- Stewardship activities (Water-Watershed)
- Watershed Stewardship Groups (WSGs) (Municipal)

### **Meetings**

- As municipality, RMWB could offer office space (Municipal)
- Athabasca University could offer a variety of meeting facilities (Education-Research)
- Facilities for meetings (Government)
- In kind resources (Municipal)
- Meeting Athabasca University is a prime location for appropriate teleconferencing (Education-Research)
- Municipalities may provide resources for the WPAC (e.g. office space) (Municipal)
- Potential for resource support of the process (\$, in-kind, rooms, facilitation etc.) (Energy)

### **Process**

- Athabasca University is more neutral party than industry or government (Education-Research)
- Evaluation (Conservation-NGO)
- Focus (Water-Watershed)
- Implementation (Agriculture)
- In kind resources (Municipal)
- Mediation (Government)
- Member time a resource by contributing to other initiatives that contribute to WPAC (Municipal)
- Outcomes (Energy)
- Passion(Conservation-NGO)
- Perspective (Municipal, Water-Watershed)
- Potential for resource support of the process (\$, in-kind, rooms, facilitation etc.) (Energy)
- Provincial government (Municipal)
- Watch-dog role (Conservation-NGO)

### **People**

- Being able to better bring the Aboriginal community into the process through the Athabasca University Indigenous expertise, knowledge and background (Education-Research)

- Engagement (Agriculture)
- Existing relationships (Forestry)
- Members (Municipal)
- Relationships (Energy, Forestry)

**Voice**

- Benefits (Municipal)
- Credibility (Water-Watershed)
- Representation (Agriculture)
- Research representation (Education-Research)
- Voice (Water-Watershed)
- Water for Life strategy (Government, Water-Watershed)

## **Changes and Suggestions on the Draft Initiators Group Terms of Reference**

Participants also recommended various changes and suggestions to improve the draft Initiators Group Terms of Reference. Changes or suggestions receiving attention by more than one Focus Group centered on nine topic areas. These areas are identified below along with the Focus Groups that commented on them:

- Aboriginal involvement (Education-Research, Energy, Government, Forestry)
- Accountability (Government, Municipal)
- Decision making (Education-Research, Energy, Government, Water-Watershed, Municipal)
- Deliverables (Energy, Government, Métis, Water-Watershed)
- Funding support (Agriculture, Municipal, Water-Watershed)
- Meetings (Agriculture, Energy, Government, Métis, Municipal)
- NGOs (Agriculture, Forestry)
- Representation/membership (Agriculture, Education-Research, Energy, Government, Municipal, Water-Watershed)
- Secretariat (Government, Municipal)

A summary of overall comments from the Focus Groups on the draft terms of reference is provided on the following pages. The comments are organized by topic area under each section of the Terms of Reference and identify the group(s) that provided them. This will assist Initiators Group members to revise the draft TOR as needed.

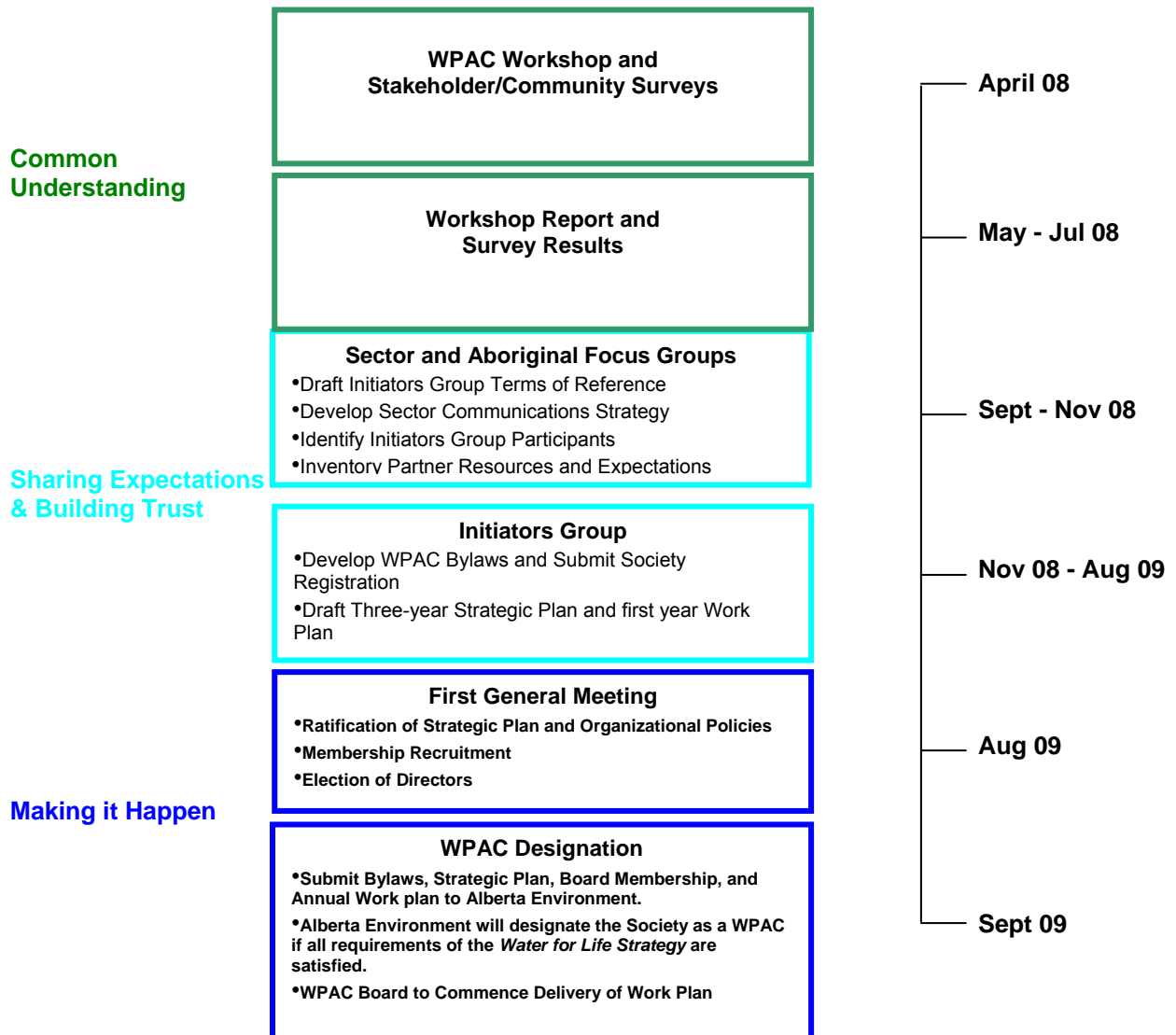
# Athabasca Initiators Group DRAFT Terms of Reference

## Background:

*Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability* identifies the formation of an Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) by 2010. The Athabasca WPAC will be a multi-stakeholder organization that will report on the state of its watershed, lead in watershed planning and stewardship, and make recommendations to decision makers within the basin that affect the health of the Athabasca River Watershed.

Alberta Environment is currently facilitating the WPAC development process by providing stakeholders and Aboriginal communities several opportunities to contribute toward the roles, governance, and deliverables of an Athabasca WPAC. Key milestones, products and timelines in the WPAC development process are highlighted in Figure 1:

**Figure 1: Athabasca WPAC Development Process**



## **Purpose:**

The Initiators Group (IG) is an advisory committee to the future membership of the WPAC and will play a critical role in developing the foundational policy documents and governance structure of the WPAC society.

The Minister of Environment is the lead Minister for *Water for Life* implementation and Alberta Environment is the lead Department. The Regional Directors of Central and Northern Regions are accountable for ensuring an Athabasca WPAC is developed by 2010, and that the WPAC structure and function meet policy requirements identified within the government of Alberta's *Water for Life* Strategy. The IG provides communities and stakeholders within the watershed an opportunity to collaboratively develop the foundational documents of an Athabasca WPAC and present these to the Minister of Alberta Environment with a recommendation for WPAC designation.

These Terms of Reference are to ensure the work and decision making structure of the IG meets the expectations of the various sectors represented within the Athabasca watershed.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Accountability**

- *An Alberta Environment led initiative* (Government)
- *Who is the Initiators Group accountable to?* (Government)
- *Accountability of goals should be for WPAC not Initiators Group* (Municipal)

### **Alberta Environment**

- *AENV communication of what W4L is and isn't* (Energy)

### **Alignment**

- *GOA informs WPAC with any alignment expectations i.e. water for life, etc.* (Energy)
  - *Educate, inform, assess alignment keys*

### **Concern**

- *The Athabasca WPAC may be less cohesive than others and Terms of Reference may be difficult to develop* (*Education-Research*)

### **Detail**

- *Good starting point but more detail needs to be decided by Initiators Group; premature to comment on this copy* (Energy)

### **Expectations**

- *Need to manage expectations because Initiators Group members might think that they are at WPAC. So need AENV to guide.* (Energy)

### **GOA**

- *AB – interest/ability to buy-in* (Energy)

### **Purpose**

- *Purpose: How will stakeholders have input into the strategic plan?* (Municipal)

### **Roles**



- *Need real clarity around Initiators Group vs. WPAC roles (Energy)*
- *Define how Initiators Group relates to future membership (Energy)*

### **TORs**

- *Confused between Initiators Group and WPAC terms of reference (Energy)*

### **Vision**

- *Vision statement needed (Energy)*
- *Vision needed: Initiator group will benefit from a clearer, more defined focus surfacing in a 'vision'; this is a clear first step i.e. a 1 or 2 paragraph statement (Energy)*
- *What is AENV's vision? (Energy)*

### **Membership:**

The IG will be made up of 1 or 2 representatives self selected from each of the following sector/community groups:

- Provincial/Federal Government
- Municipal Government
- Watershed Groups
- Non Government Organizations
- Education/Research Organizations
- Agriculture
- Forest Industry
- Energy Industry
- First Nations
- Métis

The nomination and selection of sector representatives will be determined within the respective focus group session for each sector/community.

### **COMMENTS**

#### **Aboriginal**

- *Aboriginal involvement – available chair – open all the time (Government)*
- *Need to describe what “participation” means regarding Aboriginal communities (Education-Research)*
- *Alberta Environment does have and is developing government-to-government Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) which may enhance (or hold up) meaningful Aboriginal participation (Education-Research)*
- *Membership issue may be difficult – especially around Aboriginal buy-in i.e. ‘nation to nation’ wording (Education-Research)*
- *Aboriginal: Non status vs. status aboriginal representation (Forestry)*
- *How to engage non-status aboriginals? Let Initiators Group/WPAC know if non-status will not be included (Forestry)*
- *Who will consult with non status aboriginals? (Forestry)*
- *Ensure Aboriginal participation complete (Forestry)*
  - *i.e. non-status (if they surface in First Nation session then its OK – if not then advise forestry)*
  - *SRD full list status/non-status by region*
  - *Métis – on/off Settlement*
- *I don't see commonality of TOR and aboriginal process (Energy)*

## **Agriculture**

- *Agriculture: make sure that you get ground well producers (Municipal)*
- *Agriculture was poorly represented at Sherwood Park Workshop – skeptical (Municipal)*
  - *Municipalities can speak to some agricultural issues*

## **Alternates**

- *Members need to have designated alternates for when they can't attend (Water-Watershed)*

## **County**

- *County input in addition to municipal input (Forestry)*

## **Energy**

- *Also Energy (oil/gas) sector (coal), etc. (Forestry)*
- *Concern re: energy being so diverse in terms of their views - are 2 representatives enough? (Agriculture)*

## **First Nations**

- *Need to recognize First Nations as something other than 'stakeholders' (Education-Research)*

## **Government**

- *Need more clear definition of representatives and their department and support i.e. Municipal Affairs is provincial but views itself as a key link to local authorities (Government)*
- *Could include Federal representation from Jasper National Park (Education-Research)*

## **Initiator's Group**

- *Questions around the role of the Initiator's Group in the WPAC's Strategic Plan (Municipal)*

## **Inuit**

- *Add 'Inuit' to the list (Municipal)*

## **Health Regions**

- *Health Regions (similar) included in this - don't see obvious inclusion in the ToR (Government)*
- *Health: local / regional or provincial (Municipal)*

## **Membership**

- *Does membership on Initiators Group translate into membership on WPAC? Initiators Group will make decision around membership continuation (Government)*
- *Initiators' Group needs to have members who are residents of the basin (Education-Research)*
- *Open membership to other interested parties (Energy)*
- *Incorporate post Initiators Group members wishes re: WPAC board membership? (Energy)*

## **Métis**

- *Membership – one settlement (land based) and one at large (Métis Nation of Alberta)*

## **Municipal**

- *User interests and political interests not recognized by calling municipalities a sector (Municipal)*
- *Base municipal representation on geography? E.g. Lower, middle, upper? (Municipal)*

## **NGOs**

- *Expand/develop definitions of NGOs to ensure all of sector represented equally (Forestry)*
- *NGO: Define (Agriculture)*

## **Representation**

- *TOR needs to recognize the need to strongly involve as wide as possible representation i.e. Aboriginal participation, oil sands, etc. (Education-Research)*
  - *However, lack of direct Aboriginal participation should not preclude development of the WPAC*
- *Need to consider geographic representation (Reside within the basin and possess basin-focused interests) (Water-Watershed)*
- *Membership needs to operate on a level playing field and not be dominated by industry and economic development needs (Water-Watershed)*
  - *Priority to the watershed. Water for Life is not strong enough on ecosystem protection. IG has potential to be dominated by non-ecological interests.*
  - *Ensure enough 'protect the river' representation on the Initiators Group*
- *Concern – some stakeholder reps represent a few (e.g. Inuit); other stakeholder reps cover a large group e.g. municipalities (Municipal)*
- *Concern that industry will be dominate: oil and gas, coal mining, oil sands (Forestry)*
- *Public at large? (Forestry)*
- *Local representation needs to be reconciled with sector representation due to large geographic area; efficiency requirements (Energy)*

## **Research**

- *Broaden the definition of 'research organization' to better capture non-education institution research (Education-Research)*

## **Sand and gravel**

- *Sand and gravel industry in this area may need to be included in a sector (e.g. Lafarge) (Agriculture)*

## **Sectors**

- *Will some sectors be left out of Initiators Group? (Forestry)*
- *Combined sectors will have very different interests from each other (e.g. energy) (Forestry)*
- *The I.G. may explore other models of how the sectors are described and refine it (Agriculture)*

## **Trappers**

- *Are trappers included? – large numbers exist (Municipal)*

## **Watershed Groups**

- *Some watershed groups are transient (Municipal)*

## **Deliverables:**

The IG will produce the following policy documents governing the operations and work of a future Athabasca WPAC:

- Organizational Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation

- Registration of the Society
- Sector Governance Strategy\* describing process for nomination, representation, communication and decision making among WPAC members within each sector.
- Draft Membership Terms of Reference\*
- Draft Board of Directors Terms of Reference\*
- Draft Three Year Strategic Plan\*
- One year Work Plan and Operational Budget\*
- Members Meeting Notice and Agenda

\*Drafted policy documents to be formally ratified by the membership of the WPAC at its first General Meeting.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Best Practices**

- *Best practices available from existing WPACs?* (Community Futures West Yellowhead) (Municipal)

### **Budget**

- *Where could funding come from?* (Agriculture)

### **Concern**

- *Potential for industry at risk (forestry, tourism)* (Forestry)
- *Don't want potential for job opportunities to be lost* (Oil, gas, mining in upper watershed) (Forestry)

### **Deliverables**

- *Simple, short, clear deliverable – with timeline* (Government)
- *AENV to include deliverables* (Energy)
- *Starting at grassroots level puts stress on this schedule* (Energy)

### **Informed**

- *Informed more by the fabric of the WPAC* (Energy)

### **Initiators Group (IG)**

- *IG will be critical in setting up how the WPAC will work in a timely manner (“the rules”)* (Forestry)

### **Land Use Framework (LUF)**

- *How will Initiators Group interface with LUF?* (Municipal)
- *Potential for LUF and WPAC to be at cross threads* (Forestry)

### **Plans**

- *Should drafting a three-year strategic plan be a role of the Initiators Group or for the WPAC? Concerned that the WPAC will be constrained by the strategic plan – even if it is presented as a draft document.* (Water-Watershed)
- *A strategic plan is needed to get grant from government. WPAC ratifies the plan and can modify it* (Municipal)
- *Struggling with purpose and deliverables: 3 year strategic plan might not be up to the Initiators Group.* (Municipal)

- *Criteria for strategic plan? Keep loose and refine after receive funding or tight up front?* (Energy)
- *Other people (not in Initiators Group) might want to be at table for Strategic Plan* (Energy)
- *Can the strategic plan and the operating plan realistically be developed at the Initiators Group level?* (Energy)

### **Timeframe**

- *If you want to speed process; present models to people, ask them to select what is best, and ask them to make adjustments as appropriate.* (Energy)
- *A lot of deliverables to produce in a short period of time. Might need to pare down and have some parallel work done by 'different group' to complete the Strategic and Operating Plans. Defer?* (Energy)
- *Strategic plan, 1 year working plan and budget Initiators Group deliverables? Could do this after Initiators Group has established rules; more manageable tasks within timeframe* (Energy)
- *Government will have to keep Initiators Group and WPAC on track* (Energy)
- *Would like to see addition of draft package circulated out prior to the AGM to prepare for good discussion at the General Meeting (2-3 weeks prior would work)* (Métis)

### **Vision**

- *1<sup>st</sup> deliverable will be a visioning session* (Energy)

### **Meetings:**

IG meetings will be held monthly at a mutually agreed upon time and location. Ad hoc working group meetings may be called in addition to regularly scheduled meetings for a purpose and frequency determined by the IG.

Decisions of the IG will be made using a consensus model defined by the IG Initiators Group members. Such decisions are advisory to the future membership of the Athabasca WPAC, and are not binding upon any participating party. The IG is free to coordinate opportunities for additional sector/community input to inform its decisions.

IG meetings are open to sector representatives, the IG secretariat, and required resource personnel. Sector representatives may send alternates if such individuals have been identified by the respective sector.

The draft agenda will be distributed one week in advance of each meeting. Draft meeting notes will be circulated one week following each meeting.

### **COMMENTS**

#### **Alternates**

- *Can Alternates attend the Initiators Group meetings?* (Municipal)

#### **Decision making**

- *What happens in the absence of consensus?* (Government)
- *Some mediation? – not enough time* (Government)
- *Research situation with existing WPACs* (Government)
- *Stick with process – don't dip into content* (Government)
- *Consensus discussion – define it more clearly* (Government)

- *Consensus decision-making model – perhaps should be majority rules – not consensus* (Education-Research)
- *Suggest one vote for each sector identified in Terms of Reference.* (Water-Watershed)
- *Definition of consensus?* (Municipal)
- *Prefer to say decision making model rather than consensus model; up to Initiators Group to determine.* (Municipal)
- *Consensus model needs to be laid out in the Terms of Reference* (Municipal)
  - *Everyone agrees*
  - *Five levels of agreement*
  - *Another scale?*
  - *Don't limit model to consensus . . . ensure presence of a decision-making model*
- *Need to define consensus up front.* (Energy)
- *What happens in the event of non-consensus?* (Energy)

### **Governance**

- *The Water for Life shared governance principle need to manifest in the development of the Initiators' Group and the WPAC* (Education-Research)

### **Issues**

- *Need to identify to Initiators' Group what the issues will be* (Education-Research)

### **Meetings**

- *Teleconference and video-conference* (Government)
- *Need to consider flexibility regarding how often meetings are held* (Municipal)
- *Examine models to adopt/adapt (getting the work done)* (Energy)
- *Location of meetings will be a challenge. Local representation vs. efficiency.* (Energy)
- *Where will the meetings be?* (Agriculture)
- *Suggestion to move Initiators Group meetings throughout the basin* (Métis)

### **Observers**

- *Can observers attend the Initiators Group meetings?* (Municipal)

### **Commitments:**

Sector representatives are expected to be prepared for and attend monthly meetings, and constructively contribute toward the development of IG deliverables. The IG will commence in November of 2008 and continue until stated deliverables have been produced on or before the August 2009 Members Meeting.

### **COMMENTS**

None

### **Communications:**

The IG is an advisory committee to the future membership of the WPAC, and will formally report on its deliverables at the first General Meeting. The IG Secretariat will coordinate any communications to the broader public on behalf of the IG. Sector representatives are free to communicate their personal perspectives on the IG to the public and/or membership of their sector, providing they fulfill all obligations of their respective "Sector Communications Strategy\*".

\*Note: A “Sector Communications Strategy” will be produced with input from participants at each of the focus group sessions to provide guidance to their representative(s) on the IG on how they wish to be informed and involved in the development of IG deliverables.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Communication**

- *How to communicate to constituents how big this initiative (WPAC) is? (Municipal)*

### **Wording change**

- *Sector reps can express their personal perspectives, yet municipal reps must represent their municipality – replace word “personal” with “I.G” (Municipal)*
- *Sector representatives can communicate their ‘personal’ perspectives. (Municipal)*

### **Process**

- *Process to ensure all members are equally informed on/ agree with workplan and budget (Energy)*

## **Resources and Support:**

The IG will be provided secretariat support by AENV staff. Discussions/decisions will be professionally facilitated by an external moderator. Meeting materials, venue and hosting costs will be provided by Alberta Environment.

IG members are encouraged to contribute resources and support to further enhance the group’s capacity.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Facilitator**

- *Resources – independent facilitator who is neutral will be included to support IG (Métis)*

### **Resources**

- *Identify types of resources (Municipal)*

### **Secretariat**

- *Secretariat has WPAC experience (Government)*
- *Provides support to IG (Government)*
- *What is the role of the Secretariat? (Government)*
  - *Provide guidance to ensure all bases covered*
  - *Research and knowledge to inform decisions*
  - *Meeting and resources support*
- *Will AENV or secretariat send out all the information? (Municipal)*
- *Would feel better if AENV would send out the information to ensure that you would get all the information. (Municipal)*

## **Reimbursement of expenses:**

Out of pocket travel expenses and limited meeting preparation costs will be reimbursed as per Alberta Environment’s *Subsistence and Travel Allowance Regulations*. IG members wishing to make a claim for out of pocket expenses must complete an expense claim form and remit any required receipts for reimbursement.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Honoraria**

- *Lack of per diem honoraria may reduce the potential diversity in membership*
  - *Recommend adding a per diem honorarium (Water-Watershed)*
- *Create a fair situation to participate – put in some kind of honorarium as needed into the TOR (\$ based on capacity) (Métis)*

### **Funding support**

- *Some municipalities can pay their Reps expenses. Is there funding to support NGOs? (Municipal)*
- *Is there funding to reimburse those who can't afford to participate? (Municipal)*
- *Travel funding for people on IG? (Agriculture)*
- *What is reimbursement based on? (Agriculture)*
- *Add out of pocket expenses are covered and financial barriers shall not limit participation – every sector has its own capacity and can explore and decide what you can contribute (Métis)*
- *Could learn from other groups i.e. Water Councils have a structure to remuneration for lost wages, meeting rates, preparation and follow-up time (Métis)*



## **Stakeholder Sector and Aboriginal Community Internal Communication Strategies**

When asked how they would like to communicate with each other within their own sector/community to ensure their perspectives are brought to the Initiators Group table, Focus Group participants provided thoughtful yet definite preferences for their particular draft communication strategies.

### **Importance of communicating as a sector/community**

Reasons for communicating as a sector/community ranged from alignment of sector/community needs and goals as the WPAC mandate moves forward to the importance of not making assumptions about issues or knowledge that others may or may not have. Other reasons included the need to remain informed with an opportunity to provide input into decisions and the value in maintaining a consistent message for public perception of the WPAC's ability to discuss, share, and make decisions. Additionally, communicating as a sector/community involves teamwork and fair and efficient representation of interests of different levels of various organizations (e.g. grass roots) would create accountability and trust in the WPAC process. Access to support and backing of their sector/community is another reason to communicate as a sector/community. Finally, an open and supporting forum can help lessen the potential of negative surprises such as impacts of decisions.

### **The distribution list**

A variety of suggestions were provided in all Focus Groups for whom within their sector/community their Initiators Group volunteers should communicate with. Key organizations and people within the various sectors and community were identified. The need to communicate with grassroots (locals) at the community level was also mentioned in some instances. Ensuring that the "right" people are identified and approached will help ensure that the communication system reflects the voices of the varied organizations and communities. However; caution was advised to not be too selective and maintain transparency through-out. While it was suggested that Alternatives be kept updated and informed (if there are Alternates), it was also noted that individuals of the sector/community have a responsibility to inform and be kept informed. Community contacts such as local people and schools were also mentioned as a possibility for the distribution list as was the general public through media press releases and articles in magazine. However, there were differing ideas on how this could be achieved. One idea was to use the current WPAC Focus Group distribution list per sector. It was suggested that the Volunteers don't need the whole industry to provide feedback. Another approach was to build on and expand the current WPAC Focus Group distribution list. It was also suggested that an entirely new distribution list could be built.

### **What will be communicated**

The Focus Groups generally had some common ideas of what will be communicated. These included meeting materials such as agendas, meeting notes, and progress updates. Distribution of draft documents was also mentioned along with requests for input on decisions, documents, and required timelines to respond. Beyond this, thoughts varied. Some suggested it would be important to communicate actual Initiators Group participation to document commitment and accountability. Communication of the value of WPAC Initiators Group and the WPAC itself was also recommended. Others emphasized ensuring that sector corporate interests are addressed. Workload expectations were also mentioned as were potential impacts - not only of decisions but of results, outcomes, and events. Also discussed were implications for livelihood and lifestyle. One Focus Group thought information such as different perspectives on issues, possible resolutions, respective "hot button" issues, and priorities and options should be

communicated. Another Focus Group identified different messages and involvement for Governance work vs. workplan: work. Another communication item brought up was the need to advertise to the general public that the WPAC process has begun and also the focus /value/relevance of the WPAC. Finally, resource needs such as staffing the WPAC and funding concerns were also identified as something to be communicated.

### **How members will communicate internally within their sector/community**

Email and a SharePoint site were brought up in many Focus Groups as a possible means to communicate internally. However; they weren't the only options discussed. Other possibilities included preferences for use of existing communication processes and structures, face to face meetings, conference calls, focus groups, use of media, newsletters, presentations, or websites. All have their benefits and drawbacks. While email could be used as the main source of communicating, it was mentioned in a few Focus Groups that not everyone is computer literate or even has a computer. Another concern expressed was that email has the potential of things being taken out of context and open to interpretation. Regarding SharePoint, it has apparently worked well for some organizations in the past and it was suggested that it could work for some sectors in their Initiators Group work. One Focus Group mentioned that SharePoint needs to be better utilized and understood. Another indicated that it requires technical resources to maintain it and that they would need to send email reminders to sector members that there is information on the site. Still another Focus Group pointed out that SharePoint is too hard if one only has dial-up access for their computer. Focus Groups also discussed whether it would be worthwhile to pursue existing communication processes and structures to play a role in coordinating effective information flow to associations that could be impacted by information. As it turns out, no current network exists that could reach all of the members of any Focus Group sector/community, though some could be used to cover most. Broader forums would be required, existing communication processes would need to expand, or requests made to umbrella groups to coordinate communications if they have adequate support through funding. Other ways to communicate internally within their sector/community included taking the opportunity at gatherings to get input and putting Initiators Group issues on other meeting agendas. Face to face meetings were identified by some Focus Groups as the preferred means of sector internal communication, particularly in the early stages of the Initiators Group work and also necessary for important meetings and decisions. However, due to distance and cost this might not work for frequent communication. One Group discussed the possibility of building funding for face to face meetings into the Initiators' Group development process. Another Focus Group concluded that while face to face meetings was their first preference, remote communication processes such as conference calls would be a second preference. Emails could be used for updates and FYI information. A third Focus Group indicated their preference would be to communicate by phone calls or letters over e-mails Later they would use SharePoint, e-mail, etc. In one Focus Group they suggested that it might be worthwhile to have Focus Groups themselves to capture input by locals. Media was also mentioned as a means to communicate and engage additional watershed sector stakeholders. Advertisements in newspapers and on radio were suggested and so were articles in magazines. Additionally, the use of newsletters to communicate was brought up in a few Focus Groups. Presentations were identified as another means of internal sector communication. The possibility of inviting WPAC representatives to offer presentations to interested groups was brought up. The use of websites was discussed in a few Focus Groups. Creating a blog, interactive websites that could carry on from the Initiators Group to WPAC, web-site links, and websites that could send information out only were all discussed.

### **Frequency of communication**

Generally, the Focus Groups were in agreement that internal sector/community communication should be timely and occur regularly in the form of meetings and/or sharing of information, providing updates, encouraging people to pass on this information through their contacts and networks and allowing for input or direction. The preference by most was to communicate monthly although twice a month was also mentioned.

### **Internal communication challenges**

Overall, the major internal communication challenges identified by the Focus Groups included a lack of Volunteer commitment, timely communication, and for some, the use of email as many are on dial up. Other challenges were that of engagement, aggressively seeking input if necessary, and people coming back after the fact and questioning documents they're impacted by. Representation was also mentioned as a big responsibility and a tough organizational challenge. Care needs to be taken to ensure all sector interests are equally represented, including as close to grassroots as possible in some instances. It was noted that one cannot subsume interests among groups similar in nature. Resources of time, money, and expertise were also expressed as potential internal communication challenges.

### **Evaluating internal communication effectiveness**

The Focus Groups had a number of ideas on how to evaluate the effectiveness of their internal communications. One suggestion was that internal communications would be effective if no complaints were received. Another view was that a follow-up process or feedback loop should be established to ensure communications/messages are understood. The meeting of goals and timelines was also mentioned. Monitoring communication efforts and keeping ears open was also discussed by some. Additionally, response rates were considered as another way to evaluate the effectiveness of internal communications. The problem with broad email-outs is whether people take them seriously. One way to address this and have a comfort level with the response rate would be to confirm non-responses from those on the distribution list. Another way would be to state "the rules" upfront of no response equals acceptance of a decision, etc.

## **Initiators Group Volunteers**

The Focus Group participants came up with several different considerations for selecting one or two volunteers for their sector/community to participate on the WPAC Initiators Group and facilitate communication between their group and the Initiators Group.

### **Considerations**

Among the considerations, were a commitment, passion, and enthusiasm for creating a WPAC, the watershed as a whole and not just one issue, and the community. A variety of communication skills were mentioned as being important and so were connections with those in the sector. It was acknowledged that bringing credibility to the Volunteer position should also be a consideration. Email capability was important for some and so was knowledge of specific sector areas and local understanding within the watershed. Willingness to learn and get started was also stressed as an important consideration. The ability to be tactful, articulate, and have patience was identified as important personal qualities that that would be helpful. It was pointed out in a few Focus Groups that process and partnership skills and expertise – not technical –are what is needed for the Initiators Group work. Experience with multi-stakeholder processes and governance are also needed. Another important consideration is that any Volunteer needs to either live or have a business interest in the watershed. Also emphasized, was the ability to commit to the Initiators Group workload and timelines. Additionally, Volunteers need to be able to see and understand the “big picture,” have an unbiased balanced view, understand broad concerns of their group, and have the ability to transcend corporate interests.

### **Volunteers names confirmed at the Focus Groups**

#### **Agriculture Sector**

Sarah McLean – Yellowhead County  
Jennifer Stoby – NWACI

#### **Conservation/Non-government Organizations Sector**

- No volunteers confirmed, sector will seek volunteers

#### **Education/Research Sector**

- David Locky (Athabasca River Basin Research Institute) was nominated (to be confirmed)

#### **Energy Sector**

- Oil Sands Developers Group agreed to seek one volunteer from its group

#### **First Nations**

- No volunteers confirmed

#### **Forestry Sector**

- Keith Murray (Alberta Forest Products Association) agreed to seek volunteers

#### **Government Sector**

- Brian Makowecki (Fisheries and Oceans Canada) agreed to confirm a volunteer
- Victoria Brown (Alberta Municipal Affairs) agreed to seek confirmation of a volunteer

#### **Métis**

- No volunteers confirmed, sector will seek volunteers.

#### **Municipal Sector**

- Yellowhead County, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and the Town of Edson (as an alternate) were nominated and will confirm volunteers

**Water/Watershed Group Sector**

- A subcommittee was struck who agreed to propose a mechanism for this sector's input into the Initiators Group to Alberta Environment

**Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council  
(WPAC) Development Process**

**Stakeholder and Aboriginal Community  
Focus Groups Summary**

**Appendices**

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A1 Agriculture

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Agriculture Sector Focus Group Meeting

Tuesday, October 28, 2008  
Provincial Building, Barrhead  
Draft Summary Notes

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#### **FACILITATORS**

Duna Bayley, Karen Doyle - Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

#### **RECORDERS**

Duna Bayley, Karen Doyle - Alberta Culture and Community Spirit  
Amanda Spyce - Alberta Environment

#### ***PARTICIPANTS***

For this Focus Group session, there were 8 participants from the following organizations:

Agricultural Service Board, Barrhead County  
Agricultural Service Board, Yellowhead County  
Alberta Milk  
North West Alliance Conservation Initiative  
Potato Growers of Alberta  
The Alberta Environmental Farm Plan  
West Central Conservation Group, West Central Forage

#### **INVITEES**

##### Agricultural Service Boards

Athabasca (County 12) - ASB  
Big Lakes (MD) - ASB  
Brazeau (County) - ASB  
Greenview (MD 16) - ASB  
Lac La Biche County - ASB  
Lac Ste. Anne (County) - ASB  
Lesser Slave River (MD 124) - ASB  
Northern Sunrise (County) - ASB  
Thorhild (County 7) - ASB  
Westlock (County) - ASB  
Woodlands (County) - ASB

##### Commodity Associations -PROV

Alberta Barley Commission  
Alberta Beef Producers  
Alberta Beekeepers  
Bison Producers of Alberta  
Alberta Canola Producers Commission  
Alberta Chicken Producers  
Alberta Egg Producers Board  
Alberta Elk Commission

Alberta Peace Region Forage Seed Growers  
Alberta Hatching Egg Marketing Board  
Alberta Milk  
Alberta Pork  
Potato Growers of Alberta  
Alberta Pulse Growers Commission  
Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission  
Alberta Soft Wheat Producers Commission  
Alberta Sugar Beet Growers  
Alberta Turkey Producers  
Alberta Vegetable Growers (Processing)  
Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission

#### Grazing Reserves

Northeast Region Grazing Reserves  
Northwest Region Grazing Reserves  
Southwest Region Grazing Reserves

#### Business

Agricore United  
Barrhead Custom Meats (1990) Ltd

#### Confined Feeding Operations

Athabasca Hutterian Brethren Inc  
Jaydel Farms Ltd  
Jubilee Feedlot

#### NGO/education & awareness

Cows & Fish

#### AESA

Extension Resources Staff  
Regional Conservation Coordinator  
Rural Extension Resource Staff-

- Counties of Athabasca, Thorhild, Westlock, M.D. of Lesser Slave River
- Counties of Barrhead, Brazeau, Lac Ste. Anne, Yellowhead, Woodlands
- Lakeland County
- County of Northern Sunrise, M.D.'s of Big Lakes and Greenview

#### **ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –**

#### **ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf  
Environmental Management Northern Region - Sharon Willianen  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.



## Focus Question #1

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**How do you see a WPAC benefiting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic need could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

### Assist in addressing barriers

- Time
- Financial resources
- Being the first person to adopt something new, others are slow to follow - WPAC is another entity that could increase momentum
- Farmers need to feel more of a moral obligation rather than being told what to do, they have to be engaged in a buy-in and be asked: how can you help with this?"
- Convention can be a barrier – this could conventionalize “new” management practices and make them the norm
- Need to get down to grassroots and not just make it another government organization – ensure it is accessible, easy to understand and to the point – not simplistic but focus on how it can help everybody
- Another barrier is the perception that the WPAC is coming from the urban population and is telling us what to do – cross representation will help this
- Need to create a win/win where everyone's interests are covered
- Needs to make economic sense

### Collaboration

- Could help with collaboration

### Concerns

- Benefit of so large a WPAC?
- Anything that big has advantages and disadvantages
- The sheer size (of the Athabasca) can create a barrier as people care about what they can hit with a rock

### Education/awareness

- Help us educate people that the wetlands are vital to sustaining water and that wells are sustained by recharge
- It provides another source of information and reinforces what we are telling farmers – could improve education and awareness
- Reinforces water conservation message from a new fresh organization looking at it and promoting it helps it become more acceptable to NOT drain wetlands
- Will help encourage a shift in thinking
- We host “working well” workshops and any landowner information is helpful
- Most landowners know what to do but lack the money to do it

### Engagement

- Assist us in getting more engagement to sell message and help protect water
- Help to put it in practice-promote them

### Sustainability

- Help us sustain and improve our industry
- If it helps develop policy for water sustainability and conservation – it helps my objective

- Perhaps it will help keep land that is good for agriculture being used for agriculture and not always developed into urban or industrial – help keep the balance

#### Water quality and quantity

- It could help decrease our worry about a guaranteed, continuous supply of water
- Helps us improve water quality and usability without jeopardizing the water source
- Want to see guaranteed good quality water-concerned it'll disappear.
- From an agricultural perspective, individuals want wells that they can depend on
- Wells for farms: we're dependent on wells
- Wetlands are important
- Wells are sustained by wetlands (recharge)

### **Focus Question #2**

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**What commitment, support, resources might your organization be interested in providing to the WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

#### Engagement

- Can help to mend fences as we can show that others are doing something and this is an opportunity
- We can help answer "why should I do this?"

#### Information

- We can provide local knowledge
- Get input to bring back to the WPAC – gathering and distributing information
- We can provide data and information on other rivers (Heritage) and help point the WPAC in the right direction

#### Messaging

- We can talk about the WPAC and watershed in our workshops and add it to our messages
- We can promote to the agricultural sector all the things that support the watershed
- We talk to producers and can get the message out

#### Implementation

- We can get people together and help with implementing the WPAC vision

#### Representation

- We can provide a voice for the landowners – inform the WPAC
- We can show producers that they have an equal voice and say to other sectors through the WPAC and that it's not about blaming or getting on each other's backs – if they feel represented they are more likely to contribute

### **Focus Question #3**

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**What changes or suggestions do you have on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR):**

#### Budget

Where could funding come from?

#### Funding

- Travel funding for people on Initiators Group?

- What is reimbursement based on?

#### Meetings

- Where will the meetings be?

#### NGO

- Define

#### Representation/membership

- Sand and gravel industry in this area may need to be included in a sector (e.g. Lafarge)
- Concern re: energy being so diverse in terms of their views - are 2 representatives enough?
- The I.G. may explore other models of how the sectors are described and refine it

### **Focus Question #4**

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**How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the IG table?**

#### **Why do we need to communicate as a sector?**

- With 1-2 people speaking for the whole sector, everyone will need input into the decisions and feedback on what decisions are made

#### **Who will we communicate with?**

- For the I.G. the two representatives don't need the whole industry to provide feedback, they could use the current contact list
- Once the WPAC is in place – it could expand and it should be communicated with everyone in the sector
- Initially an email could be sent to everyone on the list to see if they are interested and want to be involved – it may narrow down the scope of who we have to communicate with
- Ag Societies need to be part of this

#### **What will be communicated?**

- Highlights of the meetings and minutes
- Decisions to be made and when input is needed
- Updates
- Requests for input

#### **How will we communicate?**

- Email is probably the best
- Within the Initiators Group they probably have email. How do we communicate with 100 plus farmers?

#### **How often do we need to communicate?**

- Monthly reports and requests for input by email

#### **What challenges might we have for sector communication and how could we deal with them?**

- Low engagement – we need to ensure we get the information out there and let them know what's going on

- We need a communication plan once WPAC is in place to ensure we get information out to our sector beyond the list – they will need to know what this is about
- We need to send regular updates and promote our representatives – encourage people to pass on this information through their contacts and networks
- Use newsletters – “Agrinews” Alberta Agriculture and the commodity groups have a newsletter
- Ag Societies could help promote this and economic development as they are in contact with agriculture
- Reps could do one on one discussion and screen to screen
- Use email as the main source of communicating
- Another challenge is the use of email – many are on dial up so we need to take an ad out in newspapers with information on what this is and for more information contact the reps with their contact info
- Use newspapers in the region to promote this and share highlights
- Develop a common ad
- Challenge is conflicting views on what the sector wants – may require a gathering of key people to help flush out a decision that the reps may not feel they can make

#### **How do we want to evaluate the effectiveness of our communication?**

- No complaints
- Keep ears open

#### **Focus Question #5:**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group, what might we need to consider?**

#### **Sector representative selection**

- Top three
  - Time
  - Communication abilities
  - Knowledge of agriculture
- Email capability
- Can work with other people
- Geographic representation where agriculture happens (middle of the watershed)
- Ability to compile, synthesize and make decisions
- Legal and society, governance knowledge, budget experience
- Not all are needed in one person or sector as the collective group may have these skills,

#### **Who will the representative/s be?**

Sarah McLean – Yellowhead County

**Jennifer Stoby – NWACI**

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A2 Conservation-NGO

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Conservation-NGO Sector Focus Group Meeting

Thursday, October 2, 2008  
New Western Athabasca Inn, Athabasca  
Results

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#### FACILITATORS

Karen Doyle, Rick Moise - Culture and Community Spirit

#### RECORDERS

Karen Doyle, Rick Moise -Culture and Community Spirit  
Amanda Spyce – Alberta Environment

#### PARTICIPANTS

For this Focus Group session, there were 3 participants from the following organizations:  
Alberta Fish & Game Association - Athabasca Fish & Game  
Ducks Unlimited Canada  
World Wildlife Fund

#### INVITEES

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Alberta Ecotrust                                       | Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development            |
| Alberta Emerald Foundation                             | Regional Environmental Action Committee                  |
| Alberta Environmental Network                          | Sierra Club, Prairie Chapter                             |
| Athabasca Peace Initiative/ Athabasca Heritage Society | Toxics Watch Society of Alberta                          |
| Alberta Lake Management Society                        | Trout Unlimited Canada                                   |
| Alberta Stewardship Network                            | Walleye Unlimited of Alberta                             |
| Alberta Trappers Association                           | Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation                        |
| Alberta Water Council                                  | Water Matters  |
| Alberta Wilderness Association                         | Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association                  |
| Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society                  | Alberta Parks and Recreation Association                 |
| Canadian Water Network                                 | Alberta Recreational Canoe Association                   |
| Canadian Water Resources Association                   | Alberta Snowmobile Association                           |
| Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources          | Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation |
| Clearwater Christina Heritage Rivers Group             | Alberta Trail net Society                                |
| Cows & Fish  | Athabasca Country Tourism                                |
| Federation of Alberta Naturalists                      | Big Lake Country Tourism                                 |
| Fort McMurray Field Naturalists Society                | Fort McMurray Tourism Association                        |
| Friends of Jasper National Park                        | Jasper Tourism and Commerce                              |
| Greenpeace   | Magnificent River Rats Society                           |
| Land Stewardship Centre of Canada                      | Wild side Wilderness Connection                          |

#### ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –

#### ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf  
Environmental Management Northern Region - Sharon Willianen  
Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

### **Focus Question #1**

---

**How do you see a WPAC benefiting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic needs could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

#### Challenges

- Will the WPAC bring strength to its membership?
- Will the WPAC bring all the wisdom of the people who've lived on the land to the issues?
- Will the WPAC represent action – at last – in the right direction?
- Will the WPAC heed the wisdom of all stakeholders?
- Will the WPAC plans have the teeth/strength to make a difference?

#### Confidence

- Help bring confidence to the NGO sector

#### Decision making

- The WPAC needs to be a strong, results-focused organization to influence decision-making

#### Goals

- Good fit with conservation activities; WPAC can help collaboration to achieve common goals
- Connects well with existing goals

#### Government commitment

- Need a clear Government commitment regarding plan implementation

#### Stakeholder input

- World Wildlife Fund values stakeholder input process, although Wetland Policy process has not worked out well.

#### Support

- Potential to support broader international watershed efforts (e.g. North American Waterfowl Management Plan)

#### Water for Life

- Strong supporter of Water for Life policy goals, especially healthy aquatic ecosystems

### **Focus Question #2**

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**What commitment, support, resources might your organization be interested in providing to the WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

#### Evaluation

- Continual evaluation to ensure agreed-upon direction and results. This will produce the important changes and outcomes

#### intellectual capacity

- Our organizations can contribute intellectual capacity  
Knowledge

- Bring local knowledge to the table.

#### Mapping

- Geographic mapping products to help understand the scope of the undertaking

#### Passion

- Passion – to strengthen the process

#### Watch-dog role

- Watch-dog role. Making sure that a difference is demonstrated
- Ensure information used in decision-making is valid and up-to-date
- Stakeholders want to have confidence in all information used to make decisions
- Ensure environmental interests are considered within this watershed and further downstream

### **Focus Question #3**

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#### **What suggestions do you have to improve the Terms of Reference?**

- Looks okay from our perspective

### **Focus Question #4**

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#### **How would you as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the table/incorporated?**

##### **Who will we communicate with?**

- Alberta Environmental Network has a listserv – Water Caucus
- Articles in magazines, e.g. “Outdoor Edge” (AB Fish and Game Assoc.)
  - quarterly magazine
  - Could include in ‘coming events’
- Elicit interest levels from all – allow them to self-identify
  - General interest – direct them to the web-site
  - Keen interest – e-mail list for regular updates
- Don’t be too selective – maintain transparency through-out

##### **What will be communicated?**

- Distribution and review of meeting Minutes
- Initiator Group representative should communicate with sector in a timely fashion to allow for input

##### **How will we communicate?**

- E-mail between groups
- Alberta Environmental Network has a listserv – Water Caucus
- Athabasca WPAC SharePoint site
- Articles in magazines, e.g. “Outdoor Edge” (AB Fish and Game Assoc.)
  - quarterly magazine
  - Could include in ‘coming events’
- Identify a stakeholder group and structure a communication process with them

- Invite WPAC representatives to offer presentations to interested groups
- Use newspapers, radio and other public Media

#### **How often do we need to communicate?**

- Initiator Group representative should communicate with sector in a timely fashion to allow for input

#### **General comment**

- Good money management should be demonstrated

#### **Focus Question #5**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators' Group, what might we need to consider?**

#### **Sector representative selection**

- Committed and passionate
- Have an interest in creating a WPAC
- Basin resident
- Governance experience
- Knowledge of the sector/area
- Support to the representative to ensure he/she able to convey interests/concerns adequately

#### **Who will the sector representative/s be?**

Should connect with Alberta Environment Law Society – legal 'know-how' – Mat will follow-up with this contact

Alberta Fish & Game Association represents outdoor enthusiasts. Sharon will take request to the upcoming Zone meeting and bring some names forward

Land Stewardship Centre of Canada may be another appropriate group.

#### **Next Steps**

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- Our groups are doing the same things. We should give talks to each others' organizations.
- We have limited resources, but want to support this process.



## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A3 Education-Research

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Education-Research Sector Focus Group Meeting

Wednesday, October 1, 2008  
New Western Athabasca Inn, Athabasca  
Draft Summary Notes

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#### **FACILITATORS**

Karen Doyle, Rick Moise - Culture and Community Spirit

#### **RECORDERS**

Karen Doyle, Rick Moise - Culture and Community Spirit  
Amanda Spyce – Alberta Environment

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

For this Focus Group session, there were 5 participants from departments within Athabasca University:

Athabasca University Current Staff - Athabasca River Basin Research Institute, Environmental Studies, Philosophy

Athabasca University - Earth Science, (Associate Professor, retired), Science Outreach - Athabasca (Professor Emeritus)

#### **INVITEES**

Alberta Chamber of Resources  
Alberta Ingenuity Centre for Water Research  
Alberta Water Research Institute  
Inside Education  
SEEDS (Society, Environment and Energy Development Studies)  
The King's University College  
University of Alberta  
University of Saskatchewan

#### **ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –**

#### **ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf  
Environmental Management Northern Region - Sharon Willianen  
Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

#### **Focus Question #1**

---

**How do you see a WPAC benefitting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic need could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

#### Organizations represented at today's Focus Group:

- Athabasca University
- Science Outreach – Athabasca
- Community member
- Athabasca River Basin Research Institute

#### Bibliography development

- Science Outreach Athabasca and its promotion of science can be assisted by WPAC through ongoing bibliography development
  - WPAC can be a supporter

#### Challenge

- Real integration can be a big issue – we need to re-look at what integration means and how it can work
- This WPAC can be more complex and the integrative process therefore more problematic
- Support one WPAC for the entire basin, not splitting the upper from the lower reaches. WPAC process may assist in real integration i.e. discussion between oil sands and pulp industries

#### Connections

- Develop connections

#### Partnering

- Science Outreach Athabasca and its promotion of science can be assisted by WPAC through partnering
  - WPAC can be a supporter

#### Relationships

- Helps Athabasca University to increase profile and develop community relationships

#### Research

- Facilitate research opportunities
- Further develop Athabasca University's profile as a research player and develop research priorities and opportunities
- Emphasize the Athabasca River Basin Research Institute research

#### Stakeholders

- The Athabasca River Basin Research Institute will be inter-disciplinary; approaching stakeholders (working with the community); this process will be enhanced through development of the WPAC. Many of the same stakeholders.

#### Synergies

- Increase synergies with Athabasca University, Athabasca River Basin Research Institute, and increase capacity building

#### Watershed approach

- People are finally looking at water basins as a 'whole' - not piece-meal
- Hope that Lesser Slave WPAC will merge with Athabasca WPAC
- Should help existing groups to consider better collaboration/consolidation
- As a watershed (basin) this should help to include Saskatchewan issues

## **Focus Question #2**

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**What commitment, support, resources might your organization be interested in providing to the WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

Bibliographies/potential database, abstracts and links

- The Science Outreach-Athabasca bibliography can assist WPAC work
- Athabasca University is currently developing Athabasca River Basin-based bibliographies on science and social science components that may ultimately be merged into one online searchable database
- Intent of the Athabasca River Basin bibliographies is to include abstracts and on-line links, so that the whole text is available – valuable to WPAC

Databases

- WPACs want to be able to keep effective databases – Athabasca University may be able to develop and deliver these

Document and information repository

- The Athabasca University library could be a central repository of documents and information generated from the WPAC process

Education

- Athabasca University has the ability to provide related education

General comment

- Athabasca has a variety of hotel accommodations

Image repository and depository

- Athabasca University could establish an image repository and depository

Research representation

- There may be a demand for a representation voice in research development which Athabasca University can fill, especially in social science research

Resource Support

- Athabasca University is a prime location for appropriate teleconferencing
- Athabasca University could offer a variety of meeting facilities
- Athabasca University (Athabasca River Basin Research Institute) could potentially fund research based on WPAC priorities
- Athabasca University is more neutral party than industry or government
- Being able to better bring the Aboriginal community into the process through the Athabasca University Indigenous expertise, knowledge and background

## **Focus Question #3**

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**What changes or suggestions do you have on the draft Terms of Reference?**

Aboriginal

- Need to describe what “participation” means regarding Aboriginal communities
- AB Environment does have and is developing government to government MOUs which may enhance (or hold up) meaningful Aboriginal participation

### Concerns

- The Athabasca WPAC may be less cohesive than others and Terms of Reference may be difficult to develop

### Decision making

- Consensus decision-making model – perhaps should be majority rules – not consensus

### First Nations

- Need to recognize First Nations as something other than ‘stakeholders’

### Governance

- The Water for Life shared governance principle need to manifest in the development of the Initiators’ Group and the WPAC

### Issues

- Need to identify to Initiators’ Group what the issues will be

### Representation/membership

- Membership issue may be difficult – especially around Aboriginal buy-in i.e. ‘nation to nation’ wording
- TOR needs to recognize the need to strongly involve as wide as possible representation i.e. Aboriginal participation, oil sands, etc.
  - However, lack of direct Aboriginal participation should not preclude development of the WPAC
- Broaden the definition of ‘research organization’ to better capture non-education institution research
- Initiators’ Group needs to have members who are residents of the basin
- Could include Federal representation from Jasper National Park

### **Focus Question #4**

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**How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the IG table?**

#### **How will we communicate?**

- Make good use of share-point site
- Share-point site needs to be better utilized and understood
- Extensive use of e-mail, but important meetings and decisions need to be face-to-face
- Face-to-face meetings are the primary (first) method of interaction(early stages)
- Later: use share-point, teleconference, e-mail, etc.
- Face-to-face costs \$ - build this into Initiators’ Group development

#### **General comments**

- WPAC TOR suggestion
  - Explore sub-committees to deal with particular issues or sectors i.e. Agriculture, Oil Sands
  - WPAC with sub-committees
  - Sub-committee chairs are on WPAC
    - Each sub-committee develops their own communications plan

## **Focus Question #5**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators' Group, what might we need to consider?**

### **Sector representative selection**

- Representatives need organizational support
- Representatives need a wide understanding of the issues involved
- Need to be good listeners and communicators
- Need commitment

### **Who will the representative/s be?**

Nominated David Locky (Athabasca River Basin Research Institute) (to be confirmed) – THIS IS NOW CONFIRMED

Potentially – another non-Athabasca Univ. institution

AB Environment will contact the non-attending list to solicit other members

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A4 Energy

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Energy Sector Focus Group Meeting

Thursday, October 16, 2008  
Provincial Building, Fort McMurray  
Draft Summary Notes

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#### **FACILITATOR**

Duna Bayley

#### **RECORDERS**

Karen Doyle - Alberta Culture and Community Spirit  
Amanda Spyce, Lori Adams - Alberta Environment

#### ***PARTICIPANTS***

For this Focus Group session, there were 4 participants from the following organizations:

EnCana Corporation  
Husky Energy Inc.  
OPTI Canada Inc / Nexen Inc.  
Syncrude Canada Inc / Oil Sands Developers Group (OSDG)

#### **INVITEES**

##### Oil Sands

Albian Sands Energy Inc  
Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.  
ConocoPhillips Canada  
Deer Creek Energy Ltd.  
Devon Canada  
ExxonMobil Canada Ltd.  
Imperial Oil Resources  
Japan Canada Oilsands Ltd.  
Petro-Canada  
Shell Canada Ltd  
Suncor Energy Inc.  
Synenco Energy Inc.  
Total E&P Canada Ltd.  
UTS Energy Corporation

##### Power Industry

ATCO Power  
Enbridge Pipelines Inc.  
TransAlta Corporation

##### Minerals

Elk Valley Coal - Cardinal River Operations  
Luscar Ltd. (Coal Valley Mine)  
Birch Mountain Resources

### Industry Associations

Alberta Chambers of Commerce  
Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association  
Alberta Water Well Drilling Association  
Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers  
Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada  
Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada  
The Coal Association of Canada

### **ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION – ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf  
Environmental Management Northern Region - Lori Adams, Sharon Willianen  
Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

### **Background Presentation – Participant Comments & Questions**

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#### Advice

- What happens if the WPAC provides advice to the LU council and the LUC doesn't agree? What do you do? Ultimately the politicians will decide?

#### Consensus

- GOA should think about what you mean by consensus
- Need to define consensus up front.
- What happens in the event of non-consensus?
- Need to think/decide about how to deal with non-consensus
- Each planning process has their own method to deal with decision making/consensus
- CASA model works quite well
- A good example is the wetland policy - non consensus was sent to the government

#### Funding

- What is the funding mechanism for the WPAC?

#### Land Use Framework (LUF)

- What will be the WPAC relationship to LUF?

#### Water Council

- Will the WPAC make recommendations to the Alberta Water Council?
- Will the Water Council be the recipient of any watershed management plans?

### **Focus Question #1**

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**How do you see a WPAC benefiting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic need could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

#### Alignment

- This is opportunity to better align LUF and WPAC
- Can WPAC ease the ‘fatigue factor’ experienced in the sector today? (overlap) (What falls through the gaps?)

#### Concerns and general comments

- We are struggling to see alignment - a lot of initiatives overlap and people rotate between multi stakeholder groups. We are overloaded with LUF, RAC, WPAC, and CEMA - this makes incremental value smaller. Results in tired people.
- Potential fatigue factor of participants: There’s a limited pool of people for LUF, WPAC, CEMA. You are stretching folks thin. We will benefit from disseminating knowledge. It is a challenge to keep-up by diluting the people that can effectively participate
- What would constitute a hijacking of this process and mitigative measures? Refusal to participate in science process? Refusal to participate and hold your vote as a veto? Withholding a consensus vote? Abandonment of WPAC? How does GOA plan to deal with this?
- Need clarity between AENV as an initiator, a member, and a regulator. Could present some conflict problems
- How can the WPAC process and outcomes be protected? (from within or outside? i.e. GOA)
- There are strongly held and well-defined values that cannot co-exist – there will be some trouble ahead in trying to gain consensus
- Application of science to social issue is new. People operate on gut. Rely on political reaction. This one is a geographic distribution expansion-how useful we will see
- The facilitation of GOA will need a lot of support because this is the biggest WPAC and with diverse players
- In absence of trust what is your probability of success?
- You folks are going to have to drive the process: what is realistic or not. “Achieve goals by frustrating process” or “achieve goals by facilitate”
- Non-consensus may be needed. Not probable that you’ll please everyone all the time.

#### Communication

- Ensure proper information is communicated to public regarding water use
- WPAC communicate with communities

#### Credibility

- Brings credibility to the sector through involvement in the WPAC (licensing)

#### Decisions and recommendations

- Water and land are inter-related. Land use decisions in the watershed need to be based on good science-informed by stakeholders/partners {education and discussion}
- Recommendations and decisions that are based on science. E.g. decisions about water withdrawals that everyone has been involved in

#### Education/awareness

- A way for industry to educate people in watershed regarding the river and industry’s needs, goals, desires, and dependency on river
- Opportunity for industry to correct misconceptions throughout the watershed.
- Opportunity to educate and discuss industry’s water use e.g. water withdrawals
- Share what CEMA has done with rest of river: characterization demonstrate to other about misconception of water use and it’s impact



#### Efficiency

- Efficiency theme - we are the same people in multiples initiatives. WPAC a larger area; efficiency
- We all participate in CEMA-similar goals

#### Expectations

- Provide clear direction of society's expectations of industry planning i.e. broader forum to get people engaged to determine acceptability of development in the area.

#### Integration

- Integration of water/land concerns using good science as the foundation

#### Planning process

- Enable/smooth out planning process overall (land use framework, etc.)
- Coordinate management plan for lower

#### Representation

- Need to be represented whether we want to or not-not in our or other sector's interest NOT to be there

#### Roadblocks

- CEMA running into dead end. Can WPAC help Cumulative Environmental Management Association (CEMA) resolve roadblocks?

#### Social License

- Our license to operate is influenced by our work with society

#### Stakeholder forum

- Multi stakeholder forums are good because they expose us to all stakeholder issues, positions, and interests
- Opportunity to secure better alignment between all stakeholders – groups, sector, etc.
- The capacity to ensure the continuance of stakeholder values

#### Trust

- Opportunity to build trust to other sectors
- There is a lot of work to be done to build/bridge trust: Challenge and an opportunity. This one is a geographic distribution expansion - how useful we will see. Design of WPAC could help to develop trust.
- "Science" knowledge assume a more trusted role in the process

#### Trade off analysis mechanism

- Trade off analysis mechanism critical to this process

#### **Focus Question #2**

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**What commitment, support, resources might your organization be interested in providing to the WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

#### Advertising

- Good-will advertising for all involved

- Want to direct where it will be advertised

#### Analysis

- Cost/tradeoff for everything: societal benefits/environmental degradation; resource development vs. industrial product; benefits vs. risks.
- Struggled in past is to get people to talk about this
- Potential for Risk Management Development process: Strong skill sets exist in the industry sector that uses the watershed
  - (struggle: all party engagement)
  - quantitative analysis
  - cost/societal benefit analysis
  - resource development and consumption
  - benefit/risk analysis
  - Short, medium, long-term risks/benefits
  - Trade off analysis mechanism critical to this process

#### Concerns

- A lot of contribution is there-need better alignment to what is already invested
- We fund RAMP, WBEA, CEMA-evaluation plan models. If those groups function to their capability then there won't be big benefit
- Your schedule is too aggressive to get deliverables

#### Data/information

- Data/research exists to enable more timely decision-making at WPAC table (grassroots const. may require lengthening of timelines)
- Data for lower reaches within our piece of the watershed-studies, reports, etc. that could be applied throughout the watershed
- CEMA resources exist and can be used to inform stakeholders throughout the watershed
- Enhance public confidence regarding capacity of river via provision of studies/reports that could be applied throughout the watershed
- Might be able to share scientific method to upper reaches

#### Resource support

- Potential for resource support of the process (\$, in-kind, rooms, facilitation etc.)
- Potential to fund WPAC to support process or specific initiatives within WPAC
- Funding other initiatives (data/research) that would provide input to WPAC
- Have discussed funding a science society
- Industry has contributed to CEMA. Energy probably could bring to this process

#### Learnings

- Bring our existing learning/information to the process
- Provide learnings from CEMA: What has worked, not worked, what to watch for; how to adjust, etc. (E.g.: consensus)

#### Outcomes

- Support the outcome focus developed by the WPAC group as opposed to legislative regulatory focus in any environmental decisions
  - More beneficial for multi-stakeholders
  - A better way for industry to manage environmental issues

#### Relationships

- Enhance public confidence regulating the capacity of the river

### **Focus Question #3**

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#### **What changes or suggestions do you have on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR):**

##### Aboriginal

- I don't see commonality of TOR and aboriginal process

##### AENV

- AENV communication of what W4L is and isn't

##### Alignment

- GOA informs WPAC with any alignment expectations i.e. water for life, etc.
  - Educate, inform, assess alignment keys

##### Deliverables

- AENV to include deliverables
- 1<sup>st</sup> deliverable will be a visioning session
- Starting at grassroots level puts stress on this schedule
- If you want to speed process; present models to people, ask them to select what is best, and ask them to make adjustments as appropriate.

##### Detail

- Good starting point but more detail needs to be decided by Initiators Group; premature to comment on this copy

##### Expectations

- Need to manage expectations because Initiators Group members might think that they are at WPAC. So need AENV to guide.

##### Informed

- Informed more by the fabric of the WPAC

##### GOA

- AB – interest/ability to buy-in

##### Meetings

- Examine models to adopt/adapt (getting the work done)
- Location of meetings will be a challenge. Local representation vs. efficiency.

##### Plans

- Criteria for strategic plan? Keep loose and refine after receive funding or tight up front? (
- Other people (not in Initiators Group) might want to be at table for Strategic Plan

##### Process

- Process to ensure all members are equally informed on/ agree with workplan and budget (

##### Representation/membership

- Local representation needs to be reconciled with sector representation due to large geographic area; efficiency requirements
- Open membership to other interested parties
- Incorporate post Initiators Group members wishes re: WPAC board membership?

#### Roles

- Need real clarity around Initiators Group vs. WPAC roles
- Define how Initiators Group relates to future membership

#### Timeframe

- Can the strategic plan and the operating plan realistically be developed at the Initiators Group level?
- A lot of deliverables to produce in a short period of time. Might need to pare down and have some parallel work done by 'different group' to complete the Strategic and Operating Plans. Defer?
- Strategic plan, 1 year working plan and budget Initiators Group deliverables? Could do this after Initiators Group has established rules; more manageable tasks within timeframe
- Government will have to keep Initiators Group and WPAC on track

#### TORS

- Confused between Initiators Group and WPAC terms of reference

#### Vision

- Vision statement needed
- Vision needed: Initiator group will benefit from a clearer, more defined focus surfacing in a 'vision'; this is a clear first step i.e. a 1 or 2 paragraph statement
- What is AENV's vision?

#### **Focus Question #4**

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**How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the IG table?**

#### **Why do we need to communicate as a sector?**

- Analyze/ advocate/ensure alignment of sector needs as WPAC takes over/moves forward
- IG rep needs to feel comfortable representing varied industry interests
  - Sheer volume of sector
  - Based on number of different companies, electing 1 to 2 for oilsands and conventional puts a lot of weight on them. They need a subgroup to feed issues to them to ensure their corporate interests are brought to table.
- Ensure Initiators Group reps have and can access support from the sector
  - Big responsibility for one or two people. They need to feel they have backing of industry
- Fairly and efficiently represent all sector interests of effected parties in IG products
- Trust in the WPAC process
- Issue at stake may not be an issue for another company

#### **Who will we communicate with?**

- We are trying to lump oilsands sector and energy sector
- Need WPAC specific communication network to ensure all views conveyed and understood

- Is conventional oil/gas represented/included?
- Oilsands sector
- OSDG would like a place at the table
- Conventional oil and gas sector
- Mines and in-situ
- Other Energy sector e.g. Coal companies, Birch Mountain, TransAlta, and ATCO

### **What will be communicated?**

- Summaries, notes, timelines for response, etc.
  - Meeting summaries to all involved with opportunity and time to provide feedback/input (electronic)
- You'd have to ensure meeting summarizes go to companies and give time to respond to ensure have opportunity to bring concerns.
- 1 or 2 people will speak for all of energy sector to ensure corporate interest will be addressed
- Governance vs. workplan: different messages and involvement from
- Communication must be clear and fully informed to enable input by Initiators Group

### **How will we communicate?**

- Communication preferences: 1) face to face is best, 2) then tele-conferencing, 3) and then email but it has problem of things being taken out of context and open to interpretation
- Edmonton, Calgary, and Fort McMurray are centers for energy.
- So remote communication process probably best: phone, email (updates and FYI) etc.
- OSDG can represent oil sands needs but no other umbrella group exists to incorporate power, coal, oil sands, gas, etc.
- Could build an industry forum of all energy contacts on list to discuss
- Build on (Focus Group) email distribution list
- Build electronic forum
- Set up a mailing list/contact list – re: one-way information distribution exists – would need adaptation
- Subgroup of the sector to amass and communicate necessary information to representatives
- There are broader forums to distribute info:
  - CAPP-water task group
  - SEPAC
  - Cross pollination: some oilsands sit on CAPP and CEMA
- Alberta Chamber of Resources may be able to play a role in ensuring effective communication among all parties
- CAPP – existing communication process can be used to cover most of the sector, large geographical terrain
  - AE can inform lists for communication
- OSDG communication process exists. Can OSDG play a larger communication role and expand existing communication process? Need to determine how other players will communicate
- Put Initiators Group issues on joint meeting agendas (OSDG, CAPP, etc.)
- Is there a natural dividing point – however all have stake in oil sands inputs and outcome

### **How often do we need to communicate?**

- Communicate monthly (updates, discuss, provide direction)

### **What challenges might we have for sector communication and how could we deal with them?**

- People come back after the fact and question documents they're impacted by
- Need to include "rules" for response with any mailout
- Big responsibility: energy message needs backing from energy sector
- Comfortable being a voice for sub-sections within energy sector?
- Tough organizational challenge: oilsands, minerals, power, associations
- Care to not subsume interests among groups similar in nature

### **How do we want to evaluate the effectiveness of our communication?**

- Problem with broad email-outs is whether people take them seriously. Take evaluation of cross-sector comfort with decisions made (acceptance)
  - No response = accepted
  - Larger impact could occur at WPAC as opposed to Initiators Group stage
- Need feed back loop in order to ensure that they are aware of things that to impact their operations

### **IG representative support (Suggestions)**

- Could have 1 oilsands sector rep and 1 energy sector rep
- Oilsands sector
  - Oilsands can lump under Oil Sands Developers Group (OSDG)
  - OSDG needs to be one representative
  - Need to ensure mines and in-situ needs are represented.
  - OSDG: We could pick 2 reps (mining/in-situ) but then you need to figure out rest of energy rep
- Energy sector
  - Coal companies and Birch Mountain need to be represented. TransAlta, ATCO and EPCOR need to make sure they are included
- Could have 1 conventional oil and gas sector rep and 1 oilsands rep with a division at Grand Rapids
  - Chemistry issues upstream rapids and quantity issues downstream.
  - May be the dividing point but all companies have stake in Fort McMurray
- Conventional oil and gas sector
  - CAPP-pulls in conventional energy

### **Focus Question #5:**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group, what might we need to consider?**

#### **Sector representative selection**

- Understand broad concerns of the sector
- SAGD-surface mining difference of concerns so they need to have understanding of differences
- Experience with multi-stakeholder process and governance
- Alignment of schedules with CEMA to avoid parallel meetings, have adequate representation , and avoid overlap
- Future meetings: Contact CEMA SWWG and SEWIG program managers prior to scheduling Initiators Group/WPAC meetings to avoid overlap

- Align staff/sector support to alleviate workloads, etc.
- Should WPAC have rep from LUF, RAC and CEMA?
- Communications/network access
  - Organized re: all members/stakeholders included
  - Firmer process to communicate with CEMA
  - For plan processes perhaps involvement from Land Use Framework group
    - Someone able to identify and make necessary connections i.e. network

**Who will the representative/s be?**

OSDG meeting next week: Fred Payne to 1) ask OSDG to provide 2 names (a primary and an alternate) for the WPAC Initiators Group and 2) forward to AENV Working Group by the end of the month.

Ask Brad Anderson (AB Chamber of Resources) to contact non-oilsands energy parties and determine potential representatives

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A5 First Nations

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### First Nations Focus Group Meeting

Thursday, October 30, 2008  
Provincial Building, Fort McMurray  
Draft Summary Notes

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#### **FACILITATOR**

Karen Doyle - Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

#### **RECORDERS**

Heather Nickel - Alberta Culture and Community Spirit  
Karina Andrus, Amanda Spyce - Alberta Environment

#### ***PARTICIPANTS***

For this Focus Group session, there were 3 participants from the following organizations:

Athabasca Tribal Council  
Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation  
Mikisew Cree First Nation

#### **INVITEES**

Aseniwuche Winewak Nation of Canada  
Athabasca Tribal Council  
Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations  
First Nations (Alberta) Technical Services Advisory Group  
Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council (LSLIRC)  
Treaty Eight First Nations of Alberta  
Alexander First Nation  
Alexis Nakota Sioux First Nation  
Beaver Lake Cree Nation  
Heart Lake First Nation  
Whitefish Lake First Nation #128 (Goodfish)  
Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation  
Athabasca Native Friendship Center Society  
Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation  
Driftpile First Nation  
Kapawe'no First Nation  
Fort McKay First Nation  
Fort McMurray First Nation  
Mikisew Cree First Nation  
Sawridge Band  
Sucker Creek First Nation  
Swan River First Nation  
Saddle Lake Cree Nation  
Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation  
Bigstone Cree Nation  
Paul First Nation



## **ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION – ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf  
Environmental Management Northern Region - Sharon Willianen  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce  
Environmental Relations - Bill Calder, Karina Andrus

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

### **Background Presentation – Participant Comments & Questions**

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- All three First Nations participants clarified that they were attending as observers. This session does not constitute consultation.
- None of the participants had attended the April, 2008 workshop.
- Question about the Regional Advisory Committees under the Land Use Framework. These will disband, but the Athabasca WPAC will continue into the future.
- Question about groundwater. Groundwater is connected to surface waters. If we want to have a holistic picture, we must include groundwater.
- Concerned about SAGD and in situ oil extraction and how it affects groundwater.
- AENV should not wait for stakeholders to raise concerns about groundwater before taking action. AENV tends to be reactionary, not proactive.
- (Provided participants with AENV groundwater expert Margaret Klebek's business card)
- Some question about AENV's ability "to deliver".
- The high value First Nations put on water must be considered.

### **Focus Question #1**

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#### **How do you see a WPAC benefiting your organization?**

- Any opportunity to organize and distribute information is valuable
- Water quality is a big issue on reserves, especially drinking water.
- There are no regulations controlling the discharge of naphthenic acids, PAHs or other chemicals into water.
- Current guidelines do not include 'whole' testing requirements – perhaps the WPAC can help First Nations address their concerns around water quality by:
  - Beefing up the guidelines
  - Updating existing regulations (make them more stringent)
  - Helping to address the up-grading of sub-standard treatment plants on reserves
- Many sources of water especially important to First Nations
- WPAC may be able to help educate people about the uses and health of water
- Perhaps the WPAC can help to provide answers to individual questions such as: "Can we drink the water?"
- Bring attention to the closeness of containment structures like tailings ponds to surface water – Adjust set-back distances to protect the surface water
- Contamination of ground water linked to surface contaminants
- Perhaps the WPAC will be able to take a more pro-active role in water protection than Alberta Environment, whose role is seen as reactionary.
- Multi-stakeholder processes tend to water down the First Nations' value of water.

- In the WPAC, everyone has equal rights, except First Nations have treaty rights and these come first.
- WPAC can be helpful if managed properly, but could also hinder. First Nations could be giving up things to the WPAC.
- WPAC may offer a voice for the protection of Treaty Rights.
- To First Nations – water IS life; perhaps the WPAC help reinforce First Nations issues/values in order to gain greater public (and stakeholder) understanding.
- WPAC can encourage water recycling programs
  - i.e. recycle grey water (opportunity to reduce water costs – use grey water instead of treated water where grey water will suffice)
  - promote rainwater collection, etc.
- WPAC may provide a holistic view to manage a very large area.
- *Challenge – stakeholders and these watershed issues are subject to political influence. If the WPAC can make decisions affecting the whole water basin – that would equate to increased control.*

### **Focus Question #2**

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#### **What can First Nations offer to the Athabasca WPAC?**

##### Knowledge

- Inform WPAC about their traditional lifestyle. However, they bring more to the table than traditional knowledge.
- Information around current, daily-life issues, water use, water quality and historical information
- Information on the current state of the water situation and the speed of the decline over the past ten years.
- Inform the WPAC with the holistic view of water held by First Nations and how it is connected to life and spirit. Consider the ecological value as opposed to economic value.
- In British Columbia, salmon is highly valued and this leads to the protection of ecological integrity. In Alberta, there are no salmon. The First Nations can explain the value of water.
- Educate WPAC around impacts that have occurred on traditional lands/territory
- Bring knowledge of the impacts on streams leading to the Athabasca River
- Offer perspectives from youth and elders – two very different messages
- Recommend the formation of a First Nation sub-committee. They can discuss issues and then share results with main WPAC. Will need to resource this sub-committee.

### **Focus Question #3**

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#### **What changes or suggestions do you have on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR):**

- Funding must be adequate for meaningful participation. Need technical advice about implications for treaty rights.
- Travel costs – group would prefer to fly rather than drive – especially during winter. But need more than just travel assistance. Time is valuable.
- Incorporate meetings at different sites so group may have an opportunity to tour the delta at Fort Chip, for example
- This is an Aboriginal learning method – touch it – see it. You can't learn through the window of a pick-up truck.

### **Focus Question #4**

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## **Communications – How can everyone stay informed and ensure your input is brought forward?**

- Quarterly newsletter (or other regularly scheduled productions) in some First Nation communities. Perhaps could piggy-back on existing newsletters.
- Community consultations are a standard method of operation in First Nation communities – if it is a broad community concern the people expect to be consulted.
- Is there a centralized web-site available? Couldn't find one on Google. (Staff described our SharePoint site.)
- Add link to our SharePoint site to ACFN and IRC sites, and to each First Nation community web-site.
- Add to umbrella sites like 'Treaty 8' and/or existing Treaty 8 communications
- Post signs on bulletin boards in Band Offices – a well-used method of communication
- Promote through radio stations i.e. CBC North and CFWE Radio
- For major issues, will need community meetings.
- First Nation Sub-committee?
  - Each first Nation community has an Environmental Coordinator
    - Use this person to gather information and send it to the Initiator Group
- Web-site based information best way to get information from the WPAC to First Nations
  - The First Nations community would then call a town-hall meeting and information generated would be provided to the Initiator's Group
  - The First Nations community would inform its environmental coordinators and these individuals would convey information to the Initiator's Group
- Talk to Chief and Council(s) to appoint member/individual to attend I.G.
- Piggy-back on monthly ATC (Athabasca Tribal Council) meetings/briefings to inform of issues and ask for feedback.
- IRCs get together once per month – IDG group.

### **Focus Question #5:**

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#### **When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group, what might we need to consider?**

- Will be difficult to represent all First Nations. There are 23 communities within the watershed. Each community is unique and possess their own needs
- Is this where a First Nation sub-committee can be structured to gather and pass along information to the I.G?
- Discussed several possibilities; one rep from each FN, one rep from each Treaty (8 and 6), one or two reps per Tribal Council. There are six Councils in the watershed.
- Challenge – First Nations communities pulling out of multi-stakeholder partnerships (e.g. CEMA) as past practices have shown First Nations issues have not been addressed as expected.
- In order for First Nations involvement over the long-term, their issues must be measured, weighed, considered and applied.
- Need to clarify whether this is a form of *consultation* affecting Treaty Rights.
- "Keepers of the Athabasca" is a non-profit group working on similar issues as WPAC – group already exists – What could be the potential relationship?
- An existing model of involvement could be applied to the WPAC - First Nations participation in Phase 2 Water Management Framework.

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A6 Forestry

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Forestry Sector Focus Group Meeting

Monday, October 6, 2008  
Hinton Training Center, Hinton, Athabasca  
Draft Summary Notes

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#### **FACILITATORS**

Duna Bayley, Karen Doyle

#### **RECORDERS**

Amanda Spyce, Lori Adams - Alberta Environment  
Karen Doyle - Culture and Community Spirit

#### ***PARTICIPANTS***

For this Focus Group session, there were 8 participants from the following organizations:

Alberta Forest Products Association  
Alberta Newsprint Co  
Foothills Research Institute  
Former MLA  
Millar Western Forest Products Ltd.  
MLA (West Yellowhead Constituency)  
West Fraser  
West Fraser (Hinton Pulp)

#### **INVITEES**

Alberta – Pacific Forest Industries Inc. (AIPAC) - Boyle  
Alberta Plywood Ltd. (West Fraser) – Slave Lake  
Blue Ridge Lumber Inc. (West Fraser) - Whitecourt  
Buchanan Lumber – High Prairie  
Hinton Wood Products (West Fraser) - Hinton  
Northland Forest Products Ltd. – Fort McMurray  
Phoenix Forest Products – High Prairie  
Ranger Board (West Fraser) - Whitecourt  
Shadow Creek Forest Products Ltd. – High Prairie  
Slave Lake Pulp (West Fraser) – Slave Lake  
Sundance Forest Industries Ltd. – Edson  
Tolko Industries Ltd. – High Prairie  
Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd. – Slave Lake  
Weyerhaeuser Company Limited-Grande Prairie  
Weyerhaeuser Company Limited - Edmonton  
Woodlands (West Fraser) - Hinton  
Woodlot Association of Alberta

#### **ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –**

#### **ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf

Environmental Management Northern Region - Lori Adams, Sharon Willianen  
Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

## **Background Presentation – Participant Comments & Questions**

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### **Draft deliverables**

- Why focus on oilsands work? Implications for WPAC?
- Feel that list of deliverables is biased to the oil sands industry - concerned that industry (oil sands) will push for offset with upper Athabasca.

### **Focus Groups**

- Which other sectors have you not met with?

### **LUF**

- Relationship of WPAC to LUF?
- How will the Athabasca WPAC affect regional plan in the Northeast?

### **WPAC**

- No decision regarding 1 or 2 WPACS at April workshop. Has decision been made? More and stronger participation if there are 2 WPACs
- Sector representation will be skewed towards oilsands area perspective if you have 1 WPAC
- Forestry sector won't want to participate if WPAC dominated by energy interests in Fort McMurray
- Opportunity to influence 1 or 2 WPAC decision?
- See need for 1 WPAC with upper and lower branches or 2 WPACs
- 1 WPAC? Understand there are regional Differences
- Continuity with LUF boundaries

### **Focus Question #1**

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**How do you see a WPAC benefiting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic need could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

#### Communication

- Up-dated forestry message more effectively communicated (i.e. adaptations, etc.)
- Would be able to feature the good things that forestry does and "get the message out"

#### Education/Awareness

- Let people know what we do and how long we've been doing it (e.g. water management plan a part of every FMA)
- Part of a forest management plan is to manage water. Have been managing water for 15 years.
- Educate around forest and all related partners and impacts
- Stewardship practices of forestry needs to be stressed (education/awareness component) (
- Emphasize environmental stewardship practices demonstrated by the forestry industry

- WPAC brings a higher level of understanding of forestry practices (e.g. educate/inform other sectors regarding current updated practices and how forest industry has adapted to change)
- Explain harvesting processes and increase understanding
- Understand Forestry sector is balanced; use and rehabilitation (e.g. Public and other sector awareness)
- Clear understanding of balance of disturbance/replant
- Understand forestry concepts
- Understand impact/relationship between a healthy forest and a healthy watershed: A healthy forest contributes to a healthy watershed
- There are regional differences - understand what we do. We grow trees, regenerate, and replant; an ongoing process. Trees are crops, not like oil sands
- Soil and watershed dynamics

#### Integration

- Critical we integrate land and water management
- WPAC could help integrate land and water management

#### Land Use Framework

- Split watershed into two entities – co-boundary with Land Use Framework – look at processes being used in the LUF

#### Opportunity

- Opportunity to influence ways that approvals are handled? (e.g. Less bureaucracy around water related processes/access i.e. licensing, etc.?)
- Politicians put money where their mouths are for a healthy watershed
- A total WPAC group would be more able to ensure big picture focus
- Bring all our concerns to the table and ask for/expect timely decisions to facilitate progress
- Coordinate WPAC with LUF – coordinate with SRD; don't reinvent

#### Outcomes

- WPAC needs to be focused on meaningful outcomes
- Monitor based on outcomes, not monitor for monitoring.

#### Planning and Plans

- Clarity on how forest management plans will be utilized in WPAC
- Clear articulation how forest management plans will be integrated and used
- Enter forest management planning as basis of watershed planning (creeks, swamps, vegetation): we hold the information , inventories
- Entrench forest management planning as critical to watershed management
- There are management plans developed by independent groups – information exists – draw it together

#### Public Advisory Groups

- WPACs will help us utilize our Public Advisory groups (legislated groups of stakeholders we currently have in place). Our commitment is to them - not willing to put these aside
- Better serve partners “interests groups,” etc.

#### Research needs/gaps

- Opportunity to understand research needs/gaps and opportunities to build partnerships and relationships with other sectors

#### Resources

- Utilize people we already have on the ground
- Share current/available data

#### **Focus Question #2**

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**What commitment, support, resources might your organization be interested in providing to the WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

#### Concerns

- Productivity of us being at WPAC table
- Resourcing LUF, WPACs, etc problematic. Who has time and which company is willing to take staff away from other projects to participate in WPAC?
- Feedback from this sector is incomplete: AIPAC not here today
- Logistically WPAC will strain our ability to provide meaningful input to WPAC
- Providing support is a resource issue (i.e. who has time to devote)
- Concerned about productivity of this process; not just meetings

#### Data/information

- Have been managing watersheds for 15 plus years: we have knowledge and information
- Very detailed information exists to inform decision-making
- Don't need to do a base inventory; we have existing information
- Provision of existing data
- Land use information
- Realization of volume of data available
- Need to understand what data is available; could save millions of dollars
- Need to know what information is out there and what's available
- No need to reinvent the wheel; just disseminate existing information (e.g. Coal Branch IRP) and update new initiatives
- Eliminate duplication by compiling, gathering and cataloguing all available data (data warehouse)
- Ask for study/data before undertaking anything new (e.g. Wetlands Inventory exists)

#### Data/information coordination

- WPAC could serve as a coordination vehicle or data warehouse of existing information
- Coordinate information regarding what research exists, who's doing it, where, when, and how
- Information coordination a huge role
- WPAC intake/output necessary data/information for all parties – coordination
- Pull together research, research sources, catalogue process underway, etc.

#### Existing relationships

- Bring current strong relationships/partnerships to the table that we can build on
  - Expertise
  - Trust
  - Continued participation

- Learnings
- Can't dismiss existing public advisory committees; need to reflect their value and role and integrate into TOR and WPAC
- Ensure inclusion of PA groups who've been working on this for in excess of twenty years
- Recruit water management public advisory groups to be active with WPAC (e.g. Some are legislated groups)
- Public involvement through existing Public Advisory groups
- Existing relationship with AENV already regarding water quality issues
  - knowledge sharing (more than data) relationship
  - expertise and level of trust

#### Forest Management Agreement renewal

- Complement renewal of Forest Management Agreement

#### Land Management Practices

- Land Management Practices in the basin are 3<sup>rd</sup> party certified
  - FC (Forest Care)
  - FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)
  - CSA (Canadian Standards Association)
  - (SFI) Sustainable Forest Initiative

#### Relationships

- We can build partnerships for the WPAC
- Help to ensure 'big' players are at the table
- Ensure as much/many of the forestry sector industries/partners are able to have input to the Initiators Group/WPAC

### **Focus Question #3**

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#### **What changes or suggestions do you have on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR):**

##### Aboriginal

- Aboriginal: Non status vs. status aboriginal representation
- How to engage non-status aboriginals? Let Initiators Group/WPAC know if non-status will not be included
- Who will consult with non status aboriginals?
- Ensure Aboriginal participation complete
  - i.e. non-status (if they surface in First Nation session then its OK – if not then advise forestry)
  - SRD full list status/non-status by region
  - Métis – on/off Settlement

##### County

- County input in addition to municipal input

##### Energy

- Also Energy (oil/gas) sector (coal), etc.

##### IG (Initiators Group)

- IG will be critical in setting up how the WPAC will work in a timely manner ("the rules")



## Industry

- Concern that industry will be dominate: oil and gas, coal mining, oil sands

## NGOs

- Expand/develop definitions of NGOs to ensure all of sector represented equally

## Potential

- Potential for LUF and WPAC to be at cross threads
- Potential for industry at risk (forestry, tourism)
- Don't want potential for job opportunities to be lost (Oil, gas, mining in upper watershed)

## Sector participation

- Will some sectors be left out of Initiators Group?
- Combined sectors will have very different interests from each other (e.g. energy)
- Public at large?

## Focus Question #4

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**How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the IG table?**

### Why do we need to communicate as a sector?

- Need to be part of the decision making process
- Understand ripple effect – impact of all decisions
- Cause/effect preparation/anticipation
- Ensure input to decisions
- Ensure input prior to ripple effect
- Avoid potential political backlash.
- FMAs, large quota holders, small quota holders. (3 tiers):
  - Need to know what is happening at Initiators Group
  - Informed at all levels
  - Input to all decisions possible
- Create relevance – people need to know lifestyle and livelihood impacts and implications
- Convey/understand water use impacts inter-regionally
- I.G. tell its 'story' (i.e. reason for being, responsibilities, etc. to achieve public buy-in/support)
- Keep general public information and supportive
- Communication needs to be direct
  - Allay suspicions
  - Everyone get the message

### Who will we communicate with?

- 3 tiers: FMAs, large quota holders, small quota holders.
- Need to get the general public to buy into this group

### What will be communicated?

- Everything; especially decisions.
- People need opportunity to discuss potential implications to other sectors.
- Cause and effect: Forestry in the upper watersheds could potentially be impacted by lower watershed energy companies in Fort McMurray.
- Any implications for livelihood and lifestyle.

- Need to communicate message relevance to general public. General public needs to understand what this group's focus /value/relevance is. General public needs to buy in to WPAC.
- Impacts – not only decisions but results, outcomes, events, etc.

### **How will we communicate?**

- Need common access point for information
- Alberta Forest Products Association network exists
- Alberta Forest Products Association can assist in getting info out to some of the Forest sector. However; Sundance, AIPAC, Tolko not on AFPA list. Small quota holders also not on AFPA list.
- Possibility of linking forestry sector Initiators Group website with AFPA (Alberta Forest Products Association)
  - Add on: Sundance Forest Products, AI-Pac, TOLKO, Small quota holders
- SharePoint site for LUF is terrific and has worked beautifully.
- Web-site links?
- Internet?
- Share-point site
- Each sector will need a secretariat
  - Some already exist
  - Others have expressed interest
- AFPA and/or Foothills Research Institute could provide secretariat support

### **Challenge for sector communication?**

- Time resources, money needed
- IG may seem a small part of the process; but you need a brochure for this part of the process. Extra support needed for Initiators Group.
- Need to be direct on communications, free flowing information so rumors don't get started.

### **Focus Question #5:**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group, what might we need to consider?**

#### **Sector representative selection**

- People need to be aware of time commitment needed for Initiators Group (i.e. Time availability)
- Rep would have to have an interest in the basin (i.e. do business /live in the watershed)
- Physical abilities and corporate support to do volunteer position limits number of people
- Ability to transcend corporate interest
- Unbiased – able to transcend specific agendas
- Understands the 'big' picture
- 2 roles for Forestry sector volunteers
  - Help draft Initiators Group products
  - Communicate with forestry sector contacts on distribution list regarding Initiators Group progress, process, documents, decisions, input, information provision
- 2 volunteers optimum for Initiators Group participation:
  - 1 Land/water (forester) ( Forestry Land and Water ;Management)
  - 1 Water/technical (mill) (Industry Water Use – Water Treatment Mgr).

**Who will the representative/s be?**

Alberta Forest Products Association (Keith Murray) to provide 2 names for Initiators Group to AENV Working Group by Nov 1/08

**Alberta Forest Products Association (Keith Murray) will contact ALPAC to see if they would like to be on the IG**

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A7 Government

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Government Sector Focus Group Meeting

Tuesday, September 9, 2008

Results

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#### FACILITATOR

Duna Bayley, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

#### RECORDER

Karen Doyle, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

#### PARTICIPANTS

For this Focus Group session, there were 12 participants from the following organizations:

Agriculture Canada – Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration

Alberta Environment

Alberta Energy

Alberta Finance and Enterprise (Edson)

Alberta Health Services Board (Northern Lights Health Region)

Alberta Municipal Affairs

Alberta Treasury Board (Oil Sands Sustainable Development Secretariat and Corporate Policy)

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

#### INVITEES

Alberta Agriculture and Food

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Energy Resources Conservation Board

Parks Canada – Wood Buffalo National Park

#### ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –

#### ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf, Cecilia Ferreyra

Environmental Management Northern Region - Lori Adams, Sharon Willianen

Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free

Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

#### Focus Question #1

---

**How do you see a WPAC benefitting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic need could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

Basin residents

- Basin residents 'on board'

Common ground/understanding

- Help bring variant groups back to a common ground/understanding
  - Strengthen bridges

#### Competing interests

- Mapping 'seemingly' competing interests
  - Who's in the game
  - Who's involved
  - Align with overall objectives
  - Avoiding duplication
  - Ensure 'do' – ability

#### GOA goals and objectives

- Help to implement GOA goals and objectives over next 20 years

#### Management/limitations

- Management/limitations might be placed in the area
- Developments can happen that will affect the water supply
- Work with the municipal infrastructure is necessary
- If a 'regional service commitment' emerges how we apply limitations and/or secure permissions

#### Mapping

- Mapping groundwater

#### Opportunity

- Opportunity to be pro-actively involved to manage issues around cumulative effects

#### Outcomes

- Broaden outcomes e.g. Stakeholder confidence in water management

#### Programs and plans

- An obvious fit exists E.g. Environmental programs and farm plans

#### Public confidence issue

- Misinformation
- Government of Alberta to public
- Multi-stakeholder provide credible information to counter current public perceptions

#### Question

- What is the WPAC boundary?

#### “Regulatory” inquiry

- WPAC support policy framework development
- WPAC help establish water quality/quantity thresholds
- Aboriginal partnership in monitoring
- WPAC – multi-focus; broader focus; socio-economic/environmental balance of all interests

#### Recommendations

- Recommendations at overall policy level

#### Stakeholder understanding

- Increased stakeholder understanding – needs confidence in what is happening

#### Technical assistance

- Technical assistance to Watershed Stewardship groups

#### Water access

- Accessing water for municipal district needs
  - Drinking
  - Recreation
  - Industry, etc.

#### Water for Life

- WPAC is means to achieve stated outcomes
- Looks at 'whole' basin; use a 'whole' watershed approach
- WPAC will help to meet transboundary commitments
- Mackenzie River Basin Board "state of aquatic ecosystem" report developed but not as widely shared/understood and supported as it could be

#### Water management clarity

- Increased clarity around water management

#### Water supply

- Healthy sustainable water supply
- Increased security of water supply for required economy

#### Waste water

- Think about waste-water specifically
  - Valued source
  - Limited disposal space
  - South versus north - issues differ

#### **Focus Question #2**

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**What resources (in-kind and/or financial) support is your organization interested in providing to the Initiators Group and WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

#### Advice and linkages

- Partnering strategic advice; linkages

#### By-law

- By-law development support

#### Concerns/general comments

- Regional plan is a competing priority (Land Use Framework 2010)
  - Adjust around priorities
  - Use any overlap that may occur
- For Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) and Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) the Land Use Framework is a municipal priority
- Land Use Framework coinciding with WPAC mandate

- Build on existing WPAC groups
- Concerned groups working at odds with one another derail efforts. Need to create common understanding at several levels
- Water management framework proceeding; need to ensure mandates coincide NOT collide with local/regional groups
- Common understanding to help make decisions and move everyone forward together
- Get the right stakeholders around the table
- How does WPAC interface with regional outcomes already established at provincial and federal levels (find out from existing WPACS)
- WPAC Business plan will better give us an idea of how we can contribute
- WPAC – ongoing evaluation and monitoring to ensure success
- Will require significant resources
- WPAC can offer support outside its mandate

#### Data/Information

- Data
- Local knowledge
- Research
- More knowledge and Geographical Survey
- Information exists around stakeholder buy-in and confidence – gather this information from identified source and pay attention to it

#### Mapping

- Geographic Information Systems mapping

#### Mediation

- Mediation dispute services – member agencies will need financial help if this occurs

#### Resource Support

- Expertise
- Facilities for meetings
- Funding – sponsor some/various costs
- Specialist/technical staff
- Research
- Planners are hard to come by; may have to involve consultants (= \$)
- AUMA and AAMDC are key stakeholders who can provide support/information
  - Caution – big players will be stretched
- Meeting space at this point in time
- WPACs receive Annual grant support from department for administration, projects, etc.
  - Partnership support is sought to further initiatives
  - Partnerships can leverage department support

#### Water for Life strategy

- Renewed Water for Life strategy November 2008 requires better/improved collaboration between water and land. WPAC a potential solution

#### **Focus Question #3**

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**What suggestions do you have to improve the Terms of Reference?**

#### Aboriginal involvement

- Aboriginal involvement – available chair – open all the time

#### Accountability

- An Alberta Environment led initiative
- Who is the Initiators Group accountable to?
  - Minister of Environment and Directors/Managers are responsible and accountable for the establishment of the WPAC – the Initiators Group will play a key role in the designation of the WPAC
  - Responsible to each other and own sectors
  - Responsible to each other – sector and community stakeholders

#### Decision making

- What happens in the absence of consensus?
- Some mediation? – not enough time
- Research situation with existing WPACs
- Stick with process – don't dip into content
- Consensus discussion – define it more clearly

#### Deliverables

- Simple, short, clear deliverable – with timeline

#### Meetings

- Teleconference and video-conference

#### Secretariat

- Secretariat has WPAC experience
- Provides support to Initiators Group
- What is the role of the Secretariat?
  - Provide guidance to ensure all bases covered
  - Research and knowledge to inform decisions
  - Meeting and resources support

#### Representation/membership

- Need more clear definition of representatives and their department and support i.e. Municipal Affairs is provincial but views itself as a key link to local authorities
- Health Regions (similar) included in this - don't see obvious inclusion in the Tory
- Does membership on Initiators Group translate into membership on WPAC? Initiators Group will make decision around membership continuation

#### **Focus Question #4**

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**How would you as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the table?**

#### **Why do we need to communicate as a sector?**

- Avoid negative surprises
- Teamwork
- Give opportunity to share, create
- Goal alignment



- All government levels
- Public perception in WPAC ability to discuss, share and make decisions
- Adopt WPAC mandate and align with individual departments
- Learn more about one another's mandates
- Energy Strategy, Oil Sands Strategy, Land Use Framework and regional plans
  - Cannot assume knowledge
  - Heightened understanding to ensure clear role for WPAC
- Without communication (buy-in) implementation is at risk
  - Unable to achieve outcomes
  - Identify positive and negative forces
- A consistent message when responding to questions

#### **Who will we communicate with?**

- Ensure key people are approached/identified
- Alternate representatives kept informed
  - Establish point of contact
- Need to keep representative informed through individual communication
- Individual responsibility to inform and be kept informed
- All focus group members want continued communication
- E-mail to select audiences
  - Create distribution lists?
- ERCB involvement in Initiator Group effort
- We need a "Champion" - once government sector representative (s) known ongoing contact can be initiated

#### **What will be communicated?**

- Once Initiators Group is established perhaps more formal communication around upcoming decisions, directions, etc.
- Workloads – use the 'push' approach
  - Direct with timed expectations

#### **How will we communicate?**

- SharePoint
  - Common document structure; requires technical resource to maintain
- Web-site
- Face-to-face
- Project Steering Committee with a Terms of Reference – signed
- Use structure similar to Alberta Water Council
  - Standing cross-ministry steering committee charged with assigning (finding) representation to initiatives (comes with team support) supporting Water for Life
  - Regular monthly meetings
  - Deal with operational issues to ensure success
- Can both levels of government speak with one voice around WPAC issues?
  - Get both levels of government around the table
  - Clarify representative mandate and authority (example: Non-government organization? Government? Etc.)
  - Government of Alberta and Provincial Authority Caucus
  - Define seats clearly
    - What will the areas be?

- What will they be called?
- How will they be identified?
- Understand (define) necessary levels of authority at the table
- Interests: clarify them – from different government perspectives
- Who normally sits on an Initiators Group?
  - What level from Government of Alberta? Senior level planners?
  - Varying, fluctuating membership as issues ebb and flow – change – arise
  - Identify all necessary skills first, then vet against skill set
  - Federal/provincial/municipal/First Nations
    - Is it possible for one individual to provide input from all four levels (no)
- Communication – form will follow function
- Look into existing inter-governmental communication processes
- Take advantage of scheduled meetings – i.e. Zone, etc.

#### **How often do we need to communicate?**

- Regular monthly meetings?

#### **What challenges might we have for sector communication and how could we deal with them?**

- How to ensure all department interests are equally represented?

#### **How do we want to evaluate the effectiveness of our communication?**

- Establish follow-up process to ensure communication/message understood
- Monitor communication efforts
  - No surprises

#### **General comments**

- Aboriginal involvement – they will determine their own involvement
- Alberta Environment Working Group here today will act as Secretariat to meet Initiator Group (IG) needs
  - Responsible for records management
  - Share when required
  - Ensure broad and consistent knowledge
  - Meeting/briefing distribution
  - Support Initiator Group efforts plus ongoing input reliably and dependably
  - Field key questions for public
- Media – communication from AE – then WPAC speaks for itself

#### **Focus Question #5**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group, what might we need to consider?**

#### **Sector representative selection**

- Strong planning and partnership skills
- Process expertise - not necessary to have water technical expertise
  - Strong 'process' person (not a water technical expert)
- Broad interest
- Ability to liaison for sector
- Time and resources to do this

- Need to confer and self-select? (not optimal)
- We need one provincial rep and one federal rep
- 'Local' understanding – within watershed
- Lend (bring) credibility
- Able to see 'big picture'

### **Who will be the sector representatives?**

Reiterated a provincial and federal rep would be ideal

DFO designate – (Brian M.) but no name – needed by November 1, 2008

AMA designate – (Victoria B. agreed to explore opportunity with colleagues) designate needed by November 1, 2008

### **Next Steps**

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- Raw data compiled and shared within two weeks
- SharePoint site exists now re WPAC – see Cecilia (Cecilia.Ferreyra@gov.ab.ca) for access
- All data will be posted on the SharePoint site by early November

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A8 Métis

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Métis Focus Group Meeting

Monday, November 3, 2008  
New Western Athabasca Inn, Athabasca  
Draft Summary Notes

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#### **FACILITATOR**

Karen Doyle- Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

#### **RECORDERS**

Duna Bayley - Alberta Culture and Community Spirit  
Amanda Spyce, Karina Andrus, Lori Adams - Alberta Environment

#### ***PARTICIPANTS***

For this Focus Group session, there were 10 participants with the following affiliations:

Athabasca Native Friendship Center Society

Métis

Métis

Métis, Athabasca Fish & Game

MNA

MNA Region 1

Métis Zone 4

Métis Region 5

Métis Settlement

Wood Buffalo Métis Corp.

#### **INVITEES**

Athabasca Métis Local #1999

Chard Métis Local #214

Conklin Métis Local 193

East Prairie Métis Settlement

Fort Chipewyan Métis Local 125

Fort McKay Métis Local #63

Fort McKay Métis Local 122

Fort McMurray Métis Local 1935

Fort McMurray Métis Local #2020

Gift Lake Métis Settlement

Lac La Biche Métis Local #777

Lac La Biche –Owl River Métis Local #1949

Peavine Métis Settlement

Willow Lake Métis Local 780

#### **ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –**

#### **ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf

Environmental Management Northern Region - Lori Adams, Sharon Willianen

Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free, Joseph Joben, Karina Andrus  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

### **Opening Remarks - Participant**

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- Provided observations on environmental changes in the watershed over the years (“our lifetime”)
- Athabasca River is our “lifeline”
- WPAC a good first step in assessing the state of the watershed before we move ahead
- Hope you engage the Métis in the WPAC development process and the WPAC
- Métis have adapted to change but hopefully we can retain our culture in the future
- Would like to see studies that are well rounded and unbiased
- Questions
  - Will there be Aboriginal engagement on all strategies?
  - How do we test the water to drink?
  - How do we test groundwater?
- What are the thresholds? How much damage?
  - Prime example with groundwater – lots of unknowns
  - Need to look at what impact
  - Once of prevention is pound of cure

### **Background Presentation – Participant Comments & Questions**

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Cumulative Environmental Management Association (CEMA)

- CEMA website: <http://www.cemaonline.ca/>

Groundwater

- SAGDs are drilling through aquifers. Increases risk of contamination to groundwater.

Integration of strategies

- Is aboriginal engagement occurring for integration of provincial and regional strategies?

Land Use Framework

- Where are the 6 regions?

Perceptions

- Water treatment plants get built in Edmonton and Calgary where the MLAs are
- Some companies are speeding up their work because they know cumulative effects management is coming soon

Trust

- With groundwater there are a lot of unknowns. Why aren't we putting more emphasis on preventative measures before we license new SAGD operations? Build trust this way
- We hear rumors tailings ponds are leaking. If true, what is being done? Trust broken: How can government know tailings ponds need reclamation but still approve projects?
- What guarantee do we have that government will implement policy guidelines we come up with?

## Volunteers

- Athabasca WPAC basin is huge. People won't volunteer if it will involve lots of travel.

## Water quality

- Is there a way someone who lives along the river could test their water to see if it is safe?
- Need continual education to communities: can't just drink out of the river.

## Focus Question #1

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**How do you see a WPAC benefiting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic need could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

## Concerns

- Don't see the WPAC benefitting the community at all if it stays this large – different areas have different concerns and the WPAC needs to be a manageable area and deal with certain problems in one area that may not be in another area. Perhaps it could be divided into north, central and south
- 1 person representing Jasper Park to Lake Athabasca won't work – different issues and one person won't have a lot of say
- Will the WPAC be seen as dealing fairly with the Métis or will our voice be overwhelmed? Our one voice won't have a lot of say especially if industry wants "progress" at any cost
- The delta has more concerns as it is the end of all that is going on in the river and the doctor was chased out by the government
- We see deformities and lesions on fish; not all are the result of oil and pulp. Also from effluent. We can't do without water-we need drinking water, it is our life. We need to know the government will enforce policy
- Government asks and we respond but do they hear us?
- What level of assurance will we get that government will truly listen and consider our recommendations?
- Our participation in this - sometimes we are invited and we don't come. One reason is because we lose pay if we take a day off to participate
- We need a funding pool to help us participate, there has to be more equitable support as all participants don't have same resources
- Traditional Environmental Knowledge vs. science: Guess who government will listen to?
- Fund people who have local and historical knowledge of the river
- We have trust issues – we are here to gather information to see if it fits in what we do – this is a small sliver of many areas we are involved in and we will take this back and the group will decide how it will impact us
- Words are cheap - we need to build a foundation of trust
- Trust is an issue, it's hard to trust anyone who is consulting – is our participation, input going to be used? A paper needs to be done on this
- Trust issue is huge. Not all stakeholders can co-exist peacefully as interests may be incompatible. Use precautionary principle and make sure this is understood ahead of time
- We need to act on precautionary principle. We have massive reports to put policy into action instead of talking about it.
- To build trust we need to know government will enforce policies
- Our definition of consultation is different from government's – they just say, "we consulted." There is a consultation policy for the First Nations but not for the Métis. This doesn't give us a high level of trust and we need a document like that.

- Consult Métis community on what affects them. The government must listen and not continue to pit community against community
- Consultation like this would have been better at Lac La Biche
- Measuring water quality

#### Engagement

- We need to get everyone at the table that is connected to the river

#### Funding

- We can see some benefit – capacity money to do our own investigations and studies might come to us – we need to have our own environmental studies done as we aren't sure if the other studies don't just say what the person who paid for it wants it to
- We need to do our own studies with our own technicians incorporating traditional knowledge of the areas – who will government listen to (we know this area)

#### Healthy environment

- We want to provide a healthy environment for our families so we can live a prosperous, healthy life, not just for our children but the wildlife and fish as well ( we are concerned over the deformities we see in wildlife)
- I'm concerned about protecting Mother Earth for future generations
- Farmers don't always follow good environmental practices

#### Holistic approach

- Holistic approach to impacts – social, economic, cultural

#### Information

- Would provide information on what does impact the Métis community
- WPAC would allow us to keep informed of health issues in region due to intensive livestock farming and industrial activity
- Water quality monitored
- WPAC will help keep us informed and enable us to do something

#### Issues

- Justice Issues for MN of Alberta
- Logging – water used to be sandy clear, now it is sandy brown. I want group to work on these issues.
- We are concerned about the government leasing land to ranchers – too many cows for the size of the land, grass doesn't grow long enough, wildlife can't find food in winter so they pass away -would like to see a policy created regarding the number of cows per acre

#### Opportunity

- Opportunity to provide our concerns and make recommendations to regulators and government
- There's always going to be some good of an initiative like this. The question is how much and how much will it be used for the goals and objectives that are set out to be achieved
- WPAC could have more action where problems lie with Métis communities – need to go there and see for themselves, not just talk
- Every area wants to do own thing, but we need to work together and our combined solutions can go a long way – we need to share outcomes with the next community

- The more we work together the more our communities will benefit

#### Policies

- Consistent policy across all regions would help understanding in the community
- We would like to get better policy regarding the longer period of time re: water
- I sit on the Alberta Water Council (AWC). We put the wetlands policy together. We are being involved to some extent but it has to be more

#### Representation

- WPAC can assist to get our voices and opinions heard – we need to develop a paper to capture all of that not a consultation
- Advantage is that we would have some input

#### Trust

- Could improve trust between communities and sectors

#### Water quality

- Better quality of water.
- Water color is changing – we would like a focus on this
- Effluent not being processed properly and this impacts our drinking water
- Would be good to know how water has changed over time

### **Focus Question #2**

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**What commitment, support, resources might your organization be interested in providing to the WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

#### Concerns/General comments

- There are key elements to our capacity to participate and contribute – requires time to review, prepare and compensation would be needed
- Funding assistance would be helpful to ensure participation
- How do we consult with our communities? If we have to travel to meet and get feedback – the way things are set up right now – there's no way
- Why not go out to communities – The I.G. could discuss this and get out to settlements (especially at the end of the river)
- Travel and time are challenges we need to call all communities together to consolidate
- We need to make sure a similar message is going out – start with the General Council

#### Knowledge

- We can bring knowledge of how things have changed on the river; lots of valuable information
- Can bring traditional knowledge to science

### **Focus Question #3**

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**What changes or suggestions do you have on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR):**

#### Deliverables

- Would like to see addition of draft package circulated out prior to the AGM to prepare for good discussion at the General Meeting (2-3 weeks prior would work)



## Expenses

- Create a fair situation to participate – put in some kind of honorarium as needed into the TOR (\$ based on capacity)
- Add out of pocket expenses are covered and financial barriers shall not limit participation – every sector has its own capacity and can explore and decide what you can contribute
- Could learn from other groups i.e. Water Councils have a structure to remuneration for lost wages, meeting rates, preparation and follow-up time

## Facilitator

- Resources – independent facilitator who is neutral will be included to support Initiators Group

## Meetings

- Suggestion to move Initiators Group meetings throughout the basin

## Representation/membership

- Membership – one settlement (land based) and one at large (Métis Nation of Alberta)

## **Focus Question #4**

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**How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the IG table?**

### **Why do we need to communicate as a sector?**

- Information has to go down to the grassroots level so they know the person on the committee is representing their interests
- Get information from people (grassroots) back to the Initiators Group liaison

### **Who will we communicate with?**

- Métis Settlements General Council
- Métis Nation of Alberta: Provincial and Regional councils
- Need to communicate with grassroots (locals) at community level

### **What will be communicated?**

- Information

### **How will we communicate?**

- Website could send information out (not in)
- Not everyone is computer literate or even has a computer
- 2 avenues of communication
  - Métis Settlements General Council
  - Métis Nation of Alberta: Provincial and Regional councils
- Newsletter from settlement offices and General Council
- Each settlement has public meetings (council chair)
- Elder's groups
- All these funnel into General Council
- Suggest all information goes to General Council first and then they decide the message and send it out to settlements
- For Métis Nation – all locals attend regional council meetings which have provincial council meetings and a newsletter

- Need both MNA and GC to communicate to Métis communities using their network
- Take the opportunity at gatherings to get input
- Have focus groups

**How often do we need to communicate?**

- Monthly?

**What challenges might we have for sector communication and how could we deal with them?**

- Won't be able to talk to everyone - regional is as close as you'll get to grass roots

**Focus Question #5:**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group, what might we need to consider?**

**Sector representative selection**

- Need time
- Policy type person
- Good communication skills in English and Cree
- Commitment to project , Water for Life and the Métis community
- Maybe already under the environment pillar
- May need to be a high level person
- Need expertise on drafting bylaws, rulemaking not a water technician
- Organizational skills
- Process skills (lawyer?)
- G.C. needs information from Alberta Environment to make a decision – may request AB Environment come to present at a special meeting that could be called
- MNA have a meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> and could put it on their agenda

**Who will the representative/s be?**

We will take this back to our organizations and decide by the end of November.

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A9 Municipal

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

##### Municipal Sector Focus Group Meeting

Monday, October 6, 2008  
Hinton Training Center, Hinton  
Draft Summary Notes

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#### FACILITATORS

Duna Bayley, Karen Doyle - Culture and Community Spirit

#### RECORDERS

Amanda Spyce, Brian Free, Lori Adams - Alberta Environment

#### PARTICIPANTS

For this Focus Group session, there were 19 participants from the following organizations:

| Government - Counties & MDs | Government – Municipal | Other, Economic Development                                   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Athabasca (County 12)       | Edson, Town of         | Alberta Association of Municipal Districts & Counties (AAMDC) |
| Brazeau (County)            | Hinton, Town of        | Summer Village of Ross Haven Lac Ste. Anne                    |
| Lac Ste. Anne (County)      | Swan Hills, Town of    | Community Futures West Yellowhead                             |
| Lesser Slave River (MD 124) | Whitecourt, Town of    |   |
| Northern Sunrise County     | Wood Buffalo (RM)      |   |
| Opportunity (MD 17)         |                        |   |
| Yellowhead (County)         |                        |   |

#### INVITEES

##### Government - Counties & MDs

Barrhead (County 11)  
Big Lakes (MD)  
Greenview (MD 16)  
Improvement Districts  
Lac La Biche County  
Thorhild (County 7)  
Westlock (County)  
Woodlands (County)

##### Government – Municipal

Athabasca, Town of  
Barrhead, Town of  
Jasper, Municipality of  
Slave Lake, Town of

Westlock, Town of

Other, Economic Development

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association  
Association of Summer Villages of Alberta (ASVA)  
Alberta Municipal Affairs  
Athabasca District Chamber of Commerce  
Boyle & District Chamber of Commerce  
Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce  
Grande Alberta Economic Region (GAER)  
Grizzly Regional Economic Alliance Society (Growth Alberta)  
High Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce  
Lac La Biche & District Chamber of Commerce  
Lesser Slave Lake Economic Alliance Society (LSLEA)  
Northeast Alberta Information HUB Ltd.  
Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC)  
Peace Region Economic Development Alliance (PREDA)  
Rural Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB)  
Slave Lake & District Chamber of Commerce  
Swan Hills Chamber of Commerce  
Whitecourt and District Chamber of Commerce

**ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –  
ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf  
Environmental Management Northern Region - Lori Adams, Sharon Willianen  
Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

**Disclaimer:** Participants offered their best input available at the time of the Focus Group; this may not always reflect final decisions by each organization.

**Background Presentation – Participant Comments & Questions**

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Approvals and processes

- How do processes underway now get grandfathered into the WPAC?
- Do WPACS provide Approvals of applications?

Funding

- Where will funding for WPAC Initiators Group and WPAC come from?
- Where would funding for studies come from?

Input

- How much say will WPAC provide for members? Seems like we just need to fill in slots that are pre-determined.

Land Use Framework

- How will the LUF impact the WPAC if the WPAC is not up and running already?
- LUF would follow the watershed N. Central district it doesn't follow watershed.

Number of WPACS?

- Has the decision been made regarding 1 or 2 WPACs?

#### Specific Projects

- What about studies in specific areas? Ex. Pembina Basin

#### Transboundary Agreements

- How do WPACs deal with existing water flow agreements between jurisdictional boundaries? Is an Athabasca Transboundary Agreement in place?

#### Watershed Stewardship Groups (WSGs)

- Are you looking for support from existing committees like Watershed Stewardship Groups? How will they be brought on board?

### **Focus Question #1**

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**How do you see a WPAC benefitting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic need could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

#### Aquatic environment

- Ensure WPAC reps reach consensus on aquatic environment

#### Autonomy

- Autonomy for municipality

#### Awareness/education

- WPAC will reduce the "blaming" that we now have

#### Benefits

- See huge benefits/solutions

#### Collaboration

- Regional collaboration; common focus for collaboration

#### Concerns and questions

- Don't want WPAC to dictate to the county
- Protect the downstream
- Concerned that some stakeholders will pursue their own agenda
- How will we get consensus over such a broad, complex watershed?
- Main use is for recreation; unclear how WPAC will help
- Concern about restrictions to our county
- Concern about distribution (oil sands restrictions to other areas)
- Concerned about people coming in with their own agenda to make the group paralyzed.
- Potential concern of NGO and industry locking horns
- Monitoring process so there isn't blame game
- How will you get consensus? I am very pessimistic that consensus won't be possible

#### Cost sharing

- Cost sharing for studies (facts, information): bring others to the table

#### Discussion

- Opportunity to bring various groups together to discuss efficiencies (e.g. water treatment plants)
- A forum to discuss issues and move forward to a management plan
- WPAC will bring a diverse group together to learn from one another
- Bring people around the table for opportunity for understanding.
- RMWB blame game: U of A has been studying the Athabasca and Clearwater Rivers for years; Athabasca is our drinking water also.

#### Growth and development

- What kinds of growth and industry are feasible
- Creates an environment for new business (e.g. tourism) to know “the rules” if considering coming into the region
- Help reduce residential sprawl
- Regional plans
- Best planning practices

#### Guidance and influence

- Provide guidance and influence
- WPAC should develop uniform guidelines for the entire watershed regarding municipal problems.

#### Information

- Accurate Water resources information to inform municipal development decisions
- Sharing of information
- Information to inform planning initiatives (e.g. subdivisions)
- Information for science based decisions
- Be able to provide answers to questions from individual constituents
- Learn the wants/desires of citizens and industry
- WPAC will make lots of information available to the public
  - Maintaining data
  - University of Alberta research material
- Hope the WPAC will make available information that isn't currently available. There is a lot of information; we just have to dig it out.

#### Process

- Consensus process is important – NGO's, industry, government, etc.
- Process should be “Bottom up to top down”

#### Recreation

- Recreation benefits
- We use (the watershed) for recreation and we have all water that we need. Will bring together a multitude of processes to educate them all.

#### Roles and responsibilities

- Resolve roles, responsibilities, and provide clarification

#### Self determination

- Self determination: industry, aboriginal communities, NGOs at the table

#### Water allocation

- Water allocation Guidelines upfront with WPAC
- Review of existing licenses (water allocations)
- Clarify water availability
- Help clarify water availability, rules for diversions, and rights to transfer.

#### Water quality

- More control over water quality
- Drinking water – source protection
- Ensure quality of aquatic environment

#### Water supply

- How many wells? Where will we get our water from? Sustainable?

### **Focus Question #2**

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**What commitment, support, resources might your organization be interested in providing to the WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

#### Benefits

- Will benefit region as a whole.
- Common understanding
- An effective sounding / voice for the whole area.
- People could come to this group with their concerns/issues.

#### Best practices

- Municipal best practices (e.g. water conservation, low flush toilets)
- Bring together to share/convey best practices

#### Communication

- Communication to the public
- Mechanism to communicate to own respective constituents
- Group can develop trust and agree to common messages
- We could build trust

#### Concerns and questions

- WPAC should be in a central location
- This WPAC hasn't been formed yet – unclear what it will do
- What role will AE have in the WPAC?
- WPAC hasn't been formed – hard to define the benefits.
- We rely on AENV to provide sound data on river flow, testing, etc. What will be AENV's role?

#### Cost sharing

- Cost sharing for some studies

#### Decision making

- I need to be confident = consensus

#### Education/awareness

- Expand on river basin in addition to lakeside (education/awareness)

- Cumulative understanding of what's happening in the basin; information for WPAC; aware of member needs and requirements; educate public/end users
- Municipalities can educate water users (e.g. conserve water)
- Take care now so can have lots of good water in the future.

#### Funding

- Province needs to pay fully for WPACs so some at the table aren't more "powerful"
- Oil Sands industry could contribute financially

#### Information

- Information on resources (e.g. potential grants, templates)
- Information sharing
- Credible information will be produced (e.g. What is industry doing?, What are municipalities doing?)
- Information from other sectors (e.g. pine beetle)
- AB Environment could provide data
- Can provide hard data
- Information sharing: local municipal area to bigger WPAC area
- Credible Information for better understanding of all parties
- Greater understanding of what municipality / industry are doing to reduce water use; bigger understanding of a greater picture"
- Mountain Pine Beetle: how will it affect watersheds what can we do to sustain the watershed.

#### In kind resources

- In kind resources
- Member time a resource by contributing to other initiatives that contribute to WPAC
- Members a resource
- Municipalities may provide resources for the WPAC (e.g. office space)
- As municipality, RMWB could offer office space

#### Members

- Representation: Encourage municipalities to have member continuity/knowledge
- Need new municipal reps also: provide awareness, perspectives
- WPAC needs to be strong; based on members at table and what recommendations they come up with
- Municipalities are an effective sounding board and voice for the region
- Municipalities could approach industry for help
- Municipalities could be a sounding board because we have a broader constituency and broader look. i.e. Greater public as opposed to share holders I think this is one of our strengths

#### Perspective

- Another perspective at the table (diversification and innovative thinking)

#### Provincial government

- Help provincial government to do what they need to do.
- Would like it to make life easy for provincial group until we represent the interests of us.



### Watershed Stewardship Groups (WSGs)

- Set up/encourage /fund WSGs : information out to the public and raise awareness, raise profile of water issues
- Encourage existing WSGs to participate in WPAC

### Focus Question #3

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#### What changes or suggestions do you have on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR)

##### Accountability

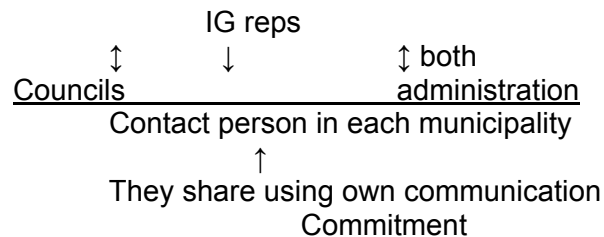
- Accountability of goals should be for WPAC not Initiators Group

##### Best practices

- Best practices available from existing WPACs? (Community Futures West Yellowhead)

##### Communication Example

Designated portfolio →



##### Communication

- How to communicate to constituents how big this initiative (WPAC) is?

##### Decision making

- Definition of consensus?
- Prefer to say decision making model rather than consensus model; up to Initiators Group to determine.
- Consensus model needs to be laid out in the terms of reference
  - Everyone agrees
  - Five levels of agreement
  - Another scale?
  - Don't limit model to consensus . . . ensure presence of a decision-making model

##### Funding support

- Some municipalities can pay their reps expenses. Is there funding to support NGOs?
- Is there is funding to reimburse those who can't afford to participate?

##### Land Use Framework (LUF)

- How will Initiators Group interface with LUF?

##### Meetings

- Need to consider flexibility regarding how often meetings are held
- Can observers attend the Initiators Group meetings? Alternates?

##### Membership

- Add 'Inuit' to the list

- Concern – some stakeholder reps represent a few (e.g. Inuit); other stakeholder reps cover a large group e.g. municipalities
- Are trappers included? – large numbers exist
- Agriculture: make sure that you get ground well producers
- Agriculture was poorly represented at Sherwood Park Workshop – skeptical
  - Municipalities can speak to some agricultural issues
- Questions around the role of the Initiator's Group in the Strategic Plan
- Some water shed groups are transient
- Health: local / regional or provincial

#### Municipal sector

- User interests and political interests not recognized by calling municipalities a sector

#### Purpose

- Purpose: How will stakeholders have input into the strategic plan?

#### Representation

- Base municipal representation on geography? E.g. Lower, middle, upper?

#### Resources

- Identify types of resources

#### Secretariat support

- Will AENV or secretariat send out all the information?
- Would feel better if AENV would send out the information to ensure that you would get all the information.

#### Strategic plan

- A strategic plan is needed to get grant from government. WPAC ratifies the plan and can modify it
- Struggling with purpose and deliverables: 3 year strategic plan might not be up to the Initiators Group.

#### Wording change

- Sector reps can express their personal perspectives, yet municipal reps must represent their municipality – replace word “personal” with “I.G”
- Sector representatives can communicate their ‘personal’ perspectives.

#### **Focus Question #4**

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**How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the IG table?**

#### **Why do we need to communicate as a sector?**

- Accountability
- Councilors representatives of the public
- Crucial to our future
- Open forum for communication
- Provide awareness
- Solicit input

- Need to share information – no surprises

### Who will we communicate with?

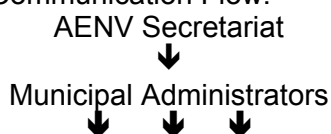
- Within municipalities
- Our municipality has set up Athabasca WPAC subcommittee
- Administration
- Council
- Invite rep to council to deal with larger issues
- Community contacts (dedicated for Initiators Group)
- Local people
- Between municipalities

### What will be communicated?

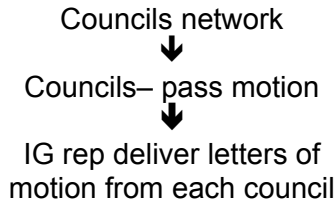
- Value of WPAC Initiators Group and the WPAC
- IG commitment accountability (e.g. participation)
- Resource needs (e.g. staffing WPAC, Funding concerns)
- Agendas (Send ahead of meetings)
- Meeting notes
- Draft documents
- Progress
- Input/ideas
- Different perspectives on issues
- Implications
- Respective “hot button” issues
- Priorities and options
- Possible resolutions

### How will we communicate?

- County newsletter (internal)
- Email
- Not emails
- Conference calls
- Phone backed up by letters or motions by municipality
- Use letters or phone calls – preferred over e-mails
- Consider a share-point site for the municipal sector
- SharePoint: Would need to send email to remind that there is information on site
- Interactive websites? (carry on from Initiators Group to WPAC)
- No current networks exist for all Initiators Group groups and larger group of municipal sector
- Fan out through associations that exist/could be impacted by information
- New distribution list (reps need to help build this)
- Example
  - Have AENV Secretariat send information out to all municipalities. Don't have the I.G. rep send it out
  - Municipalities then contact the rep with their views
  - Communication Flow:



IG rep can present the information for 'big' issues



**Challenge for sector communication?**

- Time
- Cost for resources
- Expertise
- Surveys: issues/concerns from the public
- What section: recreation, priorities, issues; surveys?
- Fan out of information
- Lack of commitment
- Concern that rep wouldn't disperse information
- Resources: obtain information/time urgency
- Frequency of communication: monthly (2 times a month?), urgency of issues, regular basis

**Evaluation of communication**

- Response rate (%)
- Goals met
- Timeframe
- IG Representative needs to ensure responses or confirm non-response from those on the distribution list

**IG representative support**

- Grant: who would apply?
- Contact Alberta Environment: Could they contact those not responding?
- AADMC, Summer Village association: Could stress need for timely participation

**Focus Question #5:**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group, what might we need to consider?**

**Sector representative selection**

- IG member represents all municipalities
- IG members: WPAC members?
- Learning curve to get started?
- "Your business or residence needs to be in the watershed" i.e. not Calgary
- IG members should be prepared to carry over into the WPAC Board be WPAC rep (consistency, be prepared for 3 year commitment)
- Geography of 2 Initiators Group reps (down and upstream reps?): trust level, area representation
- Can take the existing information and adapt it as needed
- Has connections – Golfs?
- Passionate about the watershed as a whole – not just one issue
- Balanced view

- Need both urban and rural perspectives
- Need both upper and lower regions
- Educated about the watershed
- Good Communicator
- Researcher: combine info / connected
- Love of the land

### **Who will the representatives be?**

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Cheryl Bissell (Yellowhead (County) put her name forward to sit on the Initiators Group, pending approval of Council. Final decision to be communicated back to AENV Working Group.

Phil Meagher (RM Wood Buffalo) will consult with and provide a name from his Council to sit on the Initiators Group, pending approval of Council. Final decision to be communicated back to AENV Working Group.

Brian Boyce (Edson) put his municipality forward as an alternate to sit on the Initiators Group in the event that the Wood Buffalo (RM) is unable to provide someone from their council to sit on the Initiators Group, and pending approval of his Council.

## Appendix A: Individual Focus Group Summaries

### A10 Water-Watershed

#### Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) Development

#### Water-Watershed Sector Focus Group Meeting

Wednesday, October 1, 2008  
New Western Athabasca Inn, Athabasca  
Results

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#### FACILITATORS

Karen Doyle, Rick Moise - Culture and Community Spirit

#### RECORDERS

Karen Doyle, Rick Moise - Culture and Community Spirit  
Amanda Spyce – Alberta Environment

#### PARTICIPANTS

For this Focus Group session, there were 11 participants from the following organizations:

Athabasca Bioregional Society  
Baptist, Island, and Skeleton Lakes Watershed Management and Lake Stewardship Council (BISL)  
Crooked Creek Conservancy Society of Athabasca (CCCSA)  
Fort Assiniboine and Area Multi-stakeholder Alliance  
Healthy Lake Project (Lac La Biche) (Aspen Health Region)  
Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society (LWSS) (Alberta Stewardship Network)  
Lesser Slave Watershed Council

#### INVITEES

Baptist Lake Watershed Stewardship Group  
Cumulative Environmental Management Association (CEMA)  
Jasper Environmental Association  
Keepers of the Athabasca Watershed Society (same contacts as West Athabasca Watershed Bioregional Society and Crooked Creek)  
Lac La Biche Fisheries Enhancement Group  
Lac La Biche Watershed Steering Committee  
Lac La Nonne Enhancement and Protection Association (LEPA)  
Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory  
North West Alliance Conservation Initiative  
Regional Aquatics Monitoring Program (RAMP)  
Safe Drinking Water Foundation  
Waters Edge Resource Group (WERG)  
West Central Conservation Group (WCCG)  
Wood Buffalo Environmental Association (WBEA)  
Beaver River Watershed Alliance

#### ATHABASCA WPAC FACILITATION –

#### ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Environmental Management Central Region - Andrew Schoepf  
Environmental Management Northern Region - Sharon Willianen  
Environmental Stewardship - Brian Free  
Oil Sands Environmental Management - Amanda Spyce

## **Focus Question #1**

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**How do you see a WPAC benefitting your organization? How will it help achieve your organization's goals? (What operational or strategic needs could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization?)**

### Awareness/education

- Raise awareness about water quality and quantity
- Support education to produce a more-informed community

### Credibility and capacity

- WPAC will increase credibility and capacity for local groups which may lead to more participation
- WPAC credibility can bring elected officials on board
- Region features resource-based communities. WPAC may offer us more credibility with resource companies

### Information

- Aspen regional Health could benefit with more and better information about water quality

### Issues

- Better focus on issues, such as cumulative impacts
- Helps local groups to better focus on key issues
- Issues gain profile and validity, especially with GOA at the table
  - i.e. inter-basin transfers, reservoirs, dams.

### Management

- Lesser Slave Watershed Council – We could do better management if coordinating with an Athabasca WPAC

### Resources

- Sharing of resources – grants, etc.
  - i.e. incorporate regional planning into broader watershed

### Stakeholder forum

- Will provide a better forum for public discussion

### Voice

- Common and stronger voice for the region

## **Focus Question #2**

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**What resources (in-kind and/or financial) support is your organization interested in providing to the Initiators Group and WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?**

### Challenge

- Participants will have to put substantial time and effort into the WPAC. This takes time away from their own volunteer organization

### Credibility

- Watershed groups give WPAC grassroots credibility



#### Focus

- Interest groups will become less “one-tracked”

#### Knowledge

- Our knowledge of Best Practices can be shared with WPAC

#### Learnings

- Our group has done a State of the Watershed report, so we can help fast-track progress on similar WPAC projects (Make the road less bumpy)
- Lesser Slave Watershed Council can share its experiences in establishing a WPAC

#### Perspective

- Our sector can offer a “river first” perspective (Needs of the river come first)
- Groups can bring a regional perspective

#### Sector

- We can coordinate and share information with our sector

#### Stewardship activities

- AB Stewardship network can promote and coordinate stewardship activities

#### Voice

- We have to provide a voice for the river (ecosystem, clean water)
- Our participation can give WPAC a balanced voice. Otherwise industry will dominate.

#### Water for Life

- Organizations can contribute to ecosystem health and clean water goals of Water for Life

### **Focus Question #3**

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#### **What suggestions do you have to improve the Terms of Reference (TOR):**

##### Decision making

- Suggest one vote for each sector identified in Terms of Reference.

##### Deliverables

- Should drafting a three-year strategic plan be a role of the Initiators Group or for the WPAC? Concerned that the WPAC will be constrained by the strategic plan – even if it is presented as a draft document.

##### Honoraria

- Lack of per diem honoraria may reduce the potential diversity in membership
  - Recommend adding a per diem honorarium

##### Representation/membership

- Membership needs to operate on a level playing field and not be dominated by industry and economic development needs
  - Priority to the watershed. Water for Life is not strong enough on ecosystem protection. Initiators Group has potential to be dominated by non-ecological interests.
  - Ensure enough ‘protect the river’ representation on the Initiators Group
- Members need to have designated alternates for when they can’t attend

- Need to consider geographic representation (Reside within the basin and possess basin-focused interests)

#### **Focus Question #4**

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**How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the table/incorporated?**

##### **Why do we need to communicate as a sector?**

- I.G. needs to represent the various watershed organizations – may need funding to undertake this

##### **Who will we communicate with?**

- Need to up-date and expand our contact list for e-mail networks
- We want this communication system to reflect the voices of the varied organizations
- Need regular Media contact through press releases, etc.
- Work with schools

##### **What will be communicated?**

- Need to advertise that the WPAC process has begun (People have been waiting for some activity since the April workshop)
- Communicate I.G. progress and disseminate information.

##### **How will we communicate?**

- Utilize consultant from stewardship community to coordinate information flow and communication
- Umbrella groups like Alberta Stewardship Network or Alberta Environmental Network may be able to coordinate communications, if they have adequate support through funding
- Could create a blog
- SharePoint is too hard if one only has dial-up access for their computer.

##### **How often do we need to communicate?**

- Information should be shared in a timely manner, i.e. at least monthly

**What challenges might we have for sector communication and how could we deal with them?**

- Feedback from organizations may need to be aggressively sought

#### **Focus Question #5**

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**When selecting one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators' Group, what might we need to consider?**

##### **Sector representative selection**

- Enthusiasm, patience
- Tactful
- Articulate
- Good communicator
- Available time
- Passion and compassion
- Willing to learn

- Should have an interest in watershed
- Be able to distill information – be clear, concise and honest

**Who will the sector representative/s be?**

Paid consultant as a representative? Committee should map out what a paid representative's job description might look like.

What kind of money will the Minister put towards the development of this WPAC?  
Communications and transportation costs are considerable.

Paula E. will coordinate solicitation for a potential representative or two

Harvey S. will work with Paula E. and Jeff M. to find two representatives for the I.G.

It would be beneficial to also have First Nations and Métis engaged to represent the environment.

**Next Steps**

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- Concerned that nothing further will happen for 5 or 6 months and then we'll get one month to complete the task.
- Alberta Environment will get back to Jeff M. with an idea of what resources will be available for assistance for a representative.
- Alberta Environment will provide a contact list

## **APPENDIX B: Focus Group Respondent: Parks Canada – Wood Buffalo National Park**

Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council

Government Sector Focus Group

September 9, 2008

Edmonton

Respondent: Parks Canada – Wood Buffalo National Park

### **Discussion 1 Focus Questions:**

1. What strategic/operational needs could an Athabasca WPAC provide for your organization? (take a moment and write down the 2-3 needs you/your work area have/has from an Athabasca WPAC).

- **Identify water quantity and water quality objectives required to protect the aquatic ecosystem integrity of the lower Athabasca River and Peace-Athabasca Delta.**
- **Manage water within the Athabasca system to meet the objectives identified above.**

2. What resources (in-kind and/or financial) support is your organization interested in providing to the Initiators Group and WPAC in order to achieve both your organization's needs and the WPAC's needs?

- **We could contribute to some of the strategic thinking and planning; we conduct related monitoring within the Peace-Athabasca Delta, we are currently involved in CEMA (Instream Flow Needs Technical Task Group) and participate on the Lower Athabasca Phase 2 Water Management Framework Group.**

3. How would you, as a sector, like to communicate with each other to ensure that your perspectives are brought to the table?

a. Do you have an already established network that would work?

- **LAR Phase 2 Framework Group will be making recommendations regarding water management on the Lower Athabasca River – it makes sense that these two groups should keep each other informed.**

b. Or is there another method you prefer (newsletter, SharePoint, email, etc)

- **Email**

### **Discussion 2 Focus Questions:**

I. How would you like to select one or two volunteers for your sector to participate in the Initiators Group?

- **We do not have the capacity at this time to participate on the Initiators Group.**

## **APPENDIX C: Focus Group Respondent: Regional Environmental Action Committee**

Athabasca Watershed Planning and Advisory Council  
Conservation-NGO Focus Group Sector Focus Group  
October 2, 2008

Athabasca

Respondent: Regional Environmental Action Committee

### **Below are some notes on the Focus Questions:**

#1. All good points, especially the four Challenges. One additional challenge could be phrased “will the WPAC decisions be recognized by the Government of Alberta?”

#2. All excellent points. We especially would like to bring knowledge of our recent water quality testing of the Lesser Slave Lake Watershed (which drains into the Athabasca watershed) to the table.

#3. I don't have the terms of Reference handy.

#4. Agreed that email is to be the main form of communication. Local radio and newspaper advertising of meetings could bring more interested members of the public.

#5. Eventually, the AWPAC may need to hire a program coordinator. If various members are available to perform a standardized presentation, they should be encouraged to do so, however, in our experience, peoples' time is very short these days. We cannot commit to performing presentations.