



Board of Directors Meeting

AGENDA

November 22, 2022; 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

AEP Boardroom, 250 Diamond Avenue, Spruce Grove, AB

Meeting Objectives:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend a day together in person! (with lots of time to visit and catch up with one another) • Hear updates / celebrate achievements • Continue work to fine-tune our governance documents (vision, mission, TOR, etc.) • Hear presentations and discuss the AWC's role in topical issues 		
9:30	1. Coffee's on! Come early and catch up with everyone!	All
10:00	2. Welcome a. Call to Order; Health and Safety; Quorum b. Treaty Land Acknowledgement c. Round Table Introductions	Chair Dan Moore
10:20	3. Administration a. Review Meeting Objectives and approve Meeting Agenda b. Review Action Items and Approve Sept. 15-22 Minutes	Chair
10:30	4. Reports and Updates a. Quarterly Reports Timing Proposal b. Staff Q2 Report on Activities c. ED Q2 Financial Update and associated motions: - review Honorariums and Expenses Policy	Staff
11:15	5. Governance a. Director updates b. Approve final vision, mission and values c. Review and update board terms of reference	Petra/All
12:00-1:00 p.m.	Lunch Break	
1:00-1:45	6. Board Learning and Discussion about AWC's Role: a. Engagement on the Upper Athabasca Surface Water Quality Management Framework: What we heard (presentation & Q and A). For more info, see: https://www.alberta.ca/upper-athabasca-region-surface-water-quality-management-engagement.aspx	<i>Tentative</i> Sarah Depoe & Alex Oiffer, AEPA
1:45 – 2:30	b. Developing AWC Input to the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan 10 year review (discussion and facilitated exercise) For more info, see https://www.alberta.ca/lower-athabasca-regional-plan-review-engagement.aspx	Petra/All
2:30 – 3:00	c. Pending coal, pulp and paper and oil sands tailing emissions regulations: what is the role of AWC in communicating these and other policy, legislation and regulations relevant to the Athabasca watershed? (facilitated discussion to provide staff direction)	Petra / All
3:00-3:15	Health Break	

3:15-3:45	7. Future Planning: Approve the current Strategic Plan AWC Continuous Improvement (facilitated exercise) Group photo!	Chair Petra / All
3:45 – 4:00	8. Next Steps / Meetings: a. Feb. 9 board meeting b. 2023-24 proposed meeting dates / meeting topics	Chair
4:00 p.m.	9. Adjournment	

DRAFT



Board of Directors Meeting September 15, 2022 Draft Meeting Minutes

Meeting Summary:

The Athabasca Watershed Council (AWC) Board of Directors held its second hybrid virtual / in-person meeting on September 15, 2022. Several board members and staff met in the Train Station upstairs Board Room in Athabasca and remaining directors joined virtually via zoom. New IT equipment made the meeting audio and video quality much better than previous meetings.

After a round circle of introductions, the board approved by consensus the meeting agenda, the previous (June, 2022) meeting minutes, and the Executive Directors activity and financial report. They also approved a new Mandate and Roles Document (a 4-year agreement with Alberta Environment and Parks); began a discussion to refresh the AWC's vision, mission and board terms of reference; and had an *in camera* session to discuss staff salaries before breaking for lunch. After a quick walk along the Athabasca River, the meeting re-convened, with a presentation from Healthy Waters Lac La Biche, and a round table of sharing and announcements before the meeting adjourned shortly after 2:00 pm. The next board meeting will be held November 22, 2022.



New Actions:

Action:	To be completed by:
Ashley to post the approved June 23 2022 board meeting minutes to the website.	Next meeting
Petra to circulate the revised strategic plan for review before the next meeting.	November board meeting
Petra to provide an opportunity for the board to workshop the vision and mission and review the board terms of reference in person.	November board meeting

Meeting Attendees:

SEAT	DIRECTOR	ALTERNATE	Quorum
AEP Representative	Abdi Siad-Omar		√
Provincial/Federal Government	Vacant		
Municipal (Upper Basin)	Brigette Lemieux (v)		√
Municipal (Middle Basin)		Rob Minns (ip)	√
Municipal (Lower Basin)	Lorin Tkachuk (v)		√
Forestry	Dan Moore (ip)	Jennifer Knievel (ip)	√
Oil & Gas	Janice Linehan (v)		√
Small Agricultural Producer	Vacant		
Agriculture	Kennedy Deregt (v)		√
Mining/Utilities	Vacant		
Indigenous			
Indigenous			
Indigenous	Vacant		
Health or Environment	Julie Hink (v)		√
Health or Environment	Brian Deheer		√
Stewardship	Kendra Gilbert (v)		√
Stewardship	Paula Evans (v)		√
Research and Academia			
Member-at-Large	Vacant		
Member-at-Large	Laura Pekkola (v)		√
Past President	vacant		
Quorum = >50% filled seats (15) = 8			12
Staff present: Petra Rowell, AWC Executive Director Sarah MacDonald, Watershed Science Coordinator Ashley Johnson, Science and Outreach Coordinator			

Call to Order, Welcome, and Acknowledgements

AWC President and Chair Dan Moore opened the meeting with a treaty land acknowledgement and noted that the office will be closed on September 30th as staff recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation:

The Athabasca Watershed Council acknowledges that our watershed is located on Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 territories. We respect the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant watershed. We make this acknowledgment as an act of Truth and Reconciliation, recognizing those who came before us.

1. Administration

a. Introductions, health and safety, quorum

With board members joining in person or online, quorum was confirmed, followed by a round of introductions, with a highlight of everyone's best summer adventure as an icebreaker.

b. Approval of Agenda

- a. The agenda was approved by consensus as presented (previously circulated).

c. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

- a. Petra went through the June 23, 2022 meeting's action log, after which the minutes were approved by consensus as presented.

Action: Post the June 23 2022 meeting minutes to the website.

Actions from June 23, 2022 board meeting:	Status:
Petra to post the approved Feb. 9, 2022 meeting minutes to the website.	Completed.
Petra to send out a new board contact sheet and other revisions agreed to in the review of Tabs 1 and 2 of the Board Member's Information Binder and continue to work with the Board to review remaining binder Tabs at future meetings.	Ongoing
Staff to continue to investigate and upgrade IT meeting equipment: Staff purchased a new laptop, TV screen and Meeting Owl (audio and camera tool) and so far, have been happy with the improvement for hybrid meetings.	Sept. 15

2. Reports

a. ED's Q2 Activity and Financial Report

Petra presented her Q2 (July – Sept) report, which will be added to the board meeting minutes. This report, including a financial update, was approved by consensus.

b. Re-activating the Finance Committee

Petra proposed we resurrect the finance committee, and suggested it have five to six members to update our spending policies and processes and come up with a fundraising strategy to bring in more funds to the Council. Petra will recruit members later in the fall.

3. Ongoing Business

a. AEP Mandate and Roles Document & Strategic Plan Update

We are negotiating with AEP for our next 4-year grant agreement. Petra asked the board to approve the AEP Mandate and Roles Document (MRD), although it would be difficult to propose any changes at this stage. The document was approved by consensus. However, in the discussion it was noted that we need to be clear about our relationship and support of watershed stewardship groups (not a hierarchical relationship). This is a goal of our Integrated Watershed Management Plan. It was also noted that AEP provides in-kind and financial support to stewardship groups.

Petra let the board know that we are moving forward with a strategic plan update earlier than normal because we are working on the AEP grant renewal process. Petra reviewed the updated strategic plan, going through the document and our goals. The plan is to approve the strategic plan at the November board meeting.

Action: Circulate the revised strategic plan to the board prior to the Nov. 22 meeting.

b. Director's Information Binder Review

Petra is working on ensuring that we have comprehensive information binders to facilitate staff transition and board members joining. Last meeting, we reviewed introductory material in Tab 1. There are parts of our vision and mission that don't really reflect who we are and what we do. Staff proposed some slight changes however the board would like to have an opportunity to discuss potential changes in more detail (and preferable in person) at the next board meeting.

Proposed Changes:

Our Vision

~~The AWC strives to keep the Athabasca River watershed~~ **The Athabasca River watershed is ecologically healthy, supporting socially responsible well-being (or resilient communities), and economically sustainable.**

Rationale: Ecologically healthy watersheds are the heart of our society. They provide our drinking water, which is essential to our physical health, but also provide opportunities for recreation and work. Communities with healthy watersheds are resilient to floods, droughts and other natural disasters. They have natural areas that benefit the mental and physical health of people across the watershed. Ecological goods and services are facilitated by healthy watersheds; these goods and services are entwined with our economy through our various industries.

Our Mission

To demonstrate leadership and facilitate informed decision-making in the Athabasca River watershed by bringing stakeholders and Indigenous peoples together to promote, foster respect, and plan for an ecologically healthy watershed that supports social responsibility and economic sustainability achieve our shared vision.

Values (summarized)

Integrity, trust, and transparency. Being purpose driven. Consensus decision-making. A high standard of achievement and conduct. Timely responses to the issues. Creativity, innovation, and organizational risk taking. Ecological health as foundational to all life. Water as a blessing and a gift, essential for the environment, economy, society and the spirit. Inclusivity. Respect for all points of view. The communities, cultures and knowledge of Indigenous peoples. Being responsible and accountable to all.

Continuing through the Board members information binder, Petra noted that the AWC has several documents that outline *how* it will work (bylaws, Board Terms of Reference, various policies, etc.) as well as several documents that describe what we will work on (strategic plan, IWMP, workplans, etc.). In particular, she noted:

Tab 3 – bylaws: These were updated in 2020 so won’t be opened again for a couple of years. But if any one has any questions about, they should talk to Petra or bring it up in the next board meeting.

Tab 4 - Board of directors’ terms of reference: Describes the purpose of the board as well as its sector makeup. Petra noted that the sector model was rooted in the early days of the Water for Life strategy and commits the WFL partners to including four broad sectors - provincial government; industry; non-government organizations (NGOs); and other governments. The AWC also strives to include all sectors that regulate, use, affect or are affected by the water resource as well as all authorities required for implementation of our integrated watershed management plan. Looking at the current structure of the board, Petra proposed some changes to several currently vacant seats. Board members asked to defer this to the next meeting in November.

Vacant Seat:	Proposed actions or changes.
Federal/provincial	Recruit a federal rep (PC, DFO, ECCC)
Indigenous (1 of 3)	Recruit a Treaty 6 or Metis rep
Small Ag producer	Remove (already have an Ag seat)
Mining/ Utility	Make 2 separate seats and recruit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mining (Coal, peat or aggregate) - Utility (a regional drinking water or wastewater operator)
Member at large	Retain but make it a requirement that this person must be affiliated with some aspect of recreation or tourism.

Action: Provide an opportunity to the board to discuss the Board terms of reference in person at the next meeting.

c. AWC Salary Review (in camera session)

Staff left the room, leaving the board and Executive Director to go *in camera* to discuss a staff pay scale and plan to make AWC salaries more attractive. Coming out of the session, Dan made a motion to approve the plan (with revisions discussed in camera). The motion was approved by consensus and will be implemented by the Executive Director, as funds and capacity allow.

Lunch Break and a lovely walk along the Athabasca River mainstem to the mouth of the Tawatinaw.

4. New Business

- a. Brian gave a presentation on what Healthy Waters Lac La Biche has been up to lately with their wetland and other projects.
- b. Ashley gave a quick presentation on the AWC social media accounts and encouraged board members with social media accounts to follow the AWC on at least one of the various social media platforms. She also invited board members to write blog posts for the website.
- c. Other initiatives and updates:
 - i. Dan shared that the 2023 voyageur canoe brigade will be in Fort Assiniboine for its bicentennial. The tentative plan is to begin in Whitecourt and go to the town of Athabasca. Dan requested that the AWC be involved with the brigade, including paddling, re-enactments, and other community events. The organizing committee will be meeting on September 27th.
 - ii. Abdi provided an update on the 10-year review of the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan. The information is available online, and there will be in-person and online engagement opportunities.
 - iii. Kendra gave an update about BAILS, and Laura mentioned a field trip coming up with Inside Education.
 - iv. The Alberta Water Council is reviewing the Water for Life Action Plan, so Dan gave a brief update, as forestry and WPACs are some of the sectors involved in the process.
 - v. Petra noted that a group for the North Saskatchewan has applied for Heritage River status, something we might revisit for the Athabasca at a later date.

5. Next Steps

Petra mentioned some upcoming important dates:

- Friday Sept. 30 - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Friday Oct. 14 – Technical Committee Meeting
- Tuesday Nov. 8 – virtual Working Well Workshop
- Thursday Nov. 10 – Technical Committee Meeting
- Tuesday Nov. 22 – AWC Board Meeting
- Thursday Feb. 9 – AWC Board Meeting

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:09pm.



Executive Director's Q2 (Summer) Activity & Financial Report: July 1 – September 30, 2022

Overview:

- Not sure where the summer went! 😊 Staff were busy with a combination of office and field work, and fitting in annual vacation time.

Admin, HR, Office, etc.:

- We continue to hold staff meetings most Monday mornings (virtually or in-person). This quarter saw Ashley Johnson celebrate her one year anniversary with the AWC on July 4th.
- Our summer student, Aneilia Ayotte, completed her 16 weeks with the AWC and returned to school the end of August. Check out some of her summer blogs [here](#).
- Sarah continues to participate in the [Roberta Bondar STEM Career Development](#) program.
- We are excited to be advertising for an 8-month Intern funded through the University of Alberta Sustainability Council's Adaptation and Resiliency Training program. This position will continue work started on the AWC [Community Resilience and Drinking Water](#) program started by SAIT Capstone student Laura Nethery.

Board/Governance:

- After the June 23 hybrid board meeting was held at the office in the Athabasca, we invested in a new Meeting Owl (audio-visual tool), TV screen and laptop which should improve our virtual meeting experience in the future.
- The June 23, 2022 board meeting included an overview of the new Board Members Information Binder, in particular reviewing the first section of introductory material, as well as the AWC vision, mission and values. Staff will bring proposed changes to the board at its Sept. 15 meeting and will continue binder review, looking at Tab 3 (bylaws) and Tab 4 (Board Terms of Reference).

Committee Updates:

Executive Committee, Chair Dan Moore

- The AWC Executive Committee took a break from meetings over the summer but continued to work by emails and phone calls when needed.
- With the guidance of the Executive Committee, Petra is working on creating an AWC Pay Scale, as well as firming up job descriptions, qualifications, staff benefits, etc. to make the AWC more competitive in recruiting and retaining staff.

Finance Committee, Chair vacant

- This committee has been dormant for a while and is currently lacking a chair. Petra will be asking for volunteers to reinvigorate this important committee in the fall.
- A lot of time has been put into the new AEP grant application process (for the 4 year period starting 2023-24). AEP has worked with all 11 WPACs to develop a Mandate and Roles Document that both parties will sign and which includes a list of projects/activities that both the AWC and AEP commit to. This new process also requires us to update the AWC Strategic Plan somewhat (retaining our original 5 goals but fleshing out the next 4 years of activities a bit more).

Communications, Education and Community Engagement (CECE) Committee, Chair Paula Evans

- The CECE Committee met July 5 to discuss key messages and CECE performance indicators. They also continue to work by emails to provide oversight on the activities of the Education and Outreach Coordinator and projects related to achieving Goals 1 and 2 of the Strategic Plan.

Education and Outreach Projects

- Ashley continues to organize the monthly e-newsletter, social media posts, blog and website updates. She is also working on the next Athabasca Dispatch which will focus on point source discharges.
- Throughout the summer, staff participated in several outreach events including the Canada Day / River Rat Days in Athabasca, an Inside Education Teacher Training Day in Lac La Biche (where Ashley joined board members Laura Pekkola and Brian Deheer), Jasper Park Day in Jasper (Ashley), the AGM of the SV of Nakamun Park (Petra), the Baptiste and Island Lakes Stewardship Society (BAILs) August 27 virtual AGM, and a couple of pond leveler installations with Westlock County.

Technical Committee, Chair Dan Moore

- The Technical Committee will hold a virtual meeting October 14 and will review a Terms of Reference for the next iteration of an Athabasca state of the watershed assessment report. The committee is also working with Athabasca University to repair and update the SOW Interactive Atlas.
- The Committee also continues to work by emails to provide oversight on the activities of the Watershed Science Coordinator and projects related to achieving Goals 3 and 4 of the Strategic Plan.

Science projects:

- Ashley has completed her CABIN benthic invertebrate sampling technician training and Sarah has taken a refresher course. Staff did a preliminary trip to the McLeod River headwaters in late August to confirm the location and suitability of several sampling sites. Sampling will be completed in a second trip in September.

- Sarah continues to facilitate the Pembina Technical Working Group (representing 12 different organizations) who are developing a Pembina state of the watershed report and initiating a two-year water quality monitoring project funded by a generous (\$80k) donation from Pembina Pipelines.
- Sarah is a member of the ALUS Partnership Advisory Council for Athabasca County, County of Barrhead, Westlock County, and Thorhild County, which just approved 12 riparian and wetland conservation and restoration projects in these counties. The AWC also continues to partner with Highway2Conservation on a planting project at French Creek, a small tributary of the Pembina River. We are also partnering with West Central Forage Association to add educational signage to a riparian area best practices demonstration site on the Pembina River at Sangudo.
- To improve AWC knowledge about riparian restoration, Ashley attended a riparian health assessment workshop in Grande Prairie hosted by Cows and Fish.
- The Berland-Wildhay Watershed Connectivity [Planning initiative](#), a stakeholder group looking at waterbody crossing mitigation in this East Slopes watershed, took a break from meetings over the summer field season but will be convening again this fall to complete the plan.
- Staff are in discussion with AEP's Lisa Schaubel regarding an East Slopes Stream Temperature project.
- Staff are in discussion with Alberta WaterSmart about the Athabasca River Basin Phase II project.
- Petra met with the Office of the Chief Scientist to discuss common initiatives.

Other Partnerships / Sector and Community Engagement:

- We continue to provide input to Steve Meadows, the WPAC rep on the Alberta Water Council Project Team developing advice on a new Water for Life 10 Year Action Plan to be completed by the fall of 2022.
- AWC Director Laura Pekkola continues to support a WPAC project team developing a watershed 101 series of videos.
- Director Dan Moore went on the Peace Canoe Brigade in July (see [video](#)) and is looking forward to participating in the 2023 brigade on the Athabasca.
- Petra meets and/or corresponds with the other WPAC managers regularly and represents all 11 WPACs on the Alberta Energy Regulators Multi-stakeholder Engagement Advisory Committee which meets Sept. 27-28.
- A contingent of board and staff are attending the Alberta Lake Management Society conference on Sept 28-29.

Things to Look Forward to Next Quarter (Oct – Dec):

- AEP WPAC Forum Oct. 6-7
- AB WPACs Technical Workshop Oct. 25
- AWC Tech Comm Oct. 14
- Fall Board of Directors Meeting Nov. 22
- Don't Forget Giving Tuesday Nov. 29!

Communications Report:

Measure	March 31, 2021	March 31, 2022	June 30, 2022	Sept 30, 2022	Dec 30, 2022	Mar 30, 2022
Membership:						
# individuals	120	173	187	188		
# organizations	34	40	40	40		
Monthly Newsletter:						
# of subscribers	368	455	340	376		
Website:						
website users	468	711		525		
# of Page Views	1116	15350	4686	1770		
Sessions / length	4742 / 2 m0s	7755 / 1m35s	2557 / 1m28s	943 / 1m 18s		
Bounce Rate	54.43	61.68	58.39	70.2		
Facebook:						
Facebook Followers	468	608	623	632		
Facebook Likes	406	502	513	518		
Twitter:						
Twitter followers	404	479	497	499		
Instagram:						
Instagram Followers	405	573	596	603		
Publications:						
- E-Newsletters			3			
- Reports			-			
- Media articles			-			
- other						

Q2 Engagement (Key Meetings and Events) Report:

Date	Event	AWC Staff	Total # of non-staff attendees		Length (hrs)	Location
			We hosted	Other hosted		
2022-23			We hosted	Other hosted		
July 1	Open House – River Rat Canada Day	Petra, Ashley	12		6	Athabasca
July 2	Display Table – River Rat Days	Ashley and mom!	20		6	Athabasca
July 5	CECE Committee virtual meeting	Ashley	6		2	Virtual
July 5	Mtg. with Janice Linehan re: wastewater article for newsletter	Petra, Ashley	1		1.0	virtual
July 6	Mtg with AB WaterSmart	Petra		4	1	Virtual
July 6	Inside Education Teacher Training	Ashley		12	3	LLB
July 8	AEP and WPAC managers	Petra		12	1	virtual
July 13	HWLLB Wetlands project	Petra		10	2	virtual
July 13-14	Cows and Fish riparian workshop	Ashley		12	14	Grande Prairie
July 15	WPAC managers and Doug Thrussell	Petra		6	1	virtual
July 16	Jasper Park Day – display table	Ashley		50	6	Jasper
July 20	Mtg with Zoey Wang, AEP	Petra	1		1	virtual
July 20-21	CABIN benthic monitoring training	Ashley		12	14	Pincher Creek
July 23	SV of Nakamun Park AGM	Petra		50	1.5	L. Nakamun
July 27	Mtg with Kara, Trans Mountain	Petra, Sarah	1		0.5	virtual
Aug. 9	Pond Leveler installation	Sarah, Ash, Aneilia		6	6	Westlock Co.
Aug. 11	WPAC managers meeting	Petra		10	2.0	virtual
Aug. 12	Athabasca Library youth event	Petra, Sarah		4	2.0	Athabasca
Aug. 25-26	Upper McLeod Benthic site selection	Petra, Sarah, Ashley			16	Yellowhead Co.
Aug. 27	BAILS AGM	Pet, Sarah, Ash		12	2.0	virtual
Sep. 6	Sangudo WCFA site visit	Sarah		2	6	Sangudo
Sep. 8	WPAC mgrs. Mtg with Doug T.	Petra		12	1.0	virtual
Sep. 12	Mtg with Office of the Chief Scientist	Petra		2	1.0	Edmonton
Sep. 15	AWC board meeting	all	12		3.0	Athabasca
Sep. 21-23	Benthic sampling	all	1			Yellowhead
Sep. 27-28	MSEAC mtg	Petra		15	14	Calgary
Sep. 28-29	ALMS conference	Sarah, Ashley		100	12	St. Albert
Sep. 30	Tech Comm	all		10	2	virtual

Financial Report: AWC Revenues and Expenditures to July 31, 2022

	Budget - Core Operations	Actuals - Core Operation	Riparian	Benthic	Berland	Canada Summer Jobs	TOTAL Ops + Projects
Grants carried forward			\$ 94,967.67	\$ 181.78			
REVENUE:							
Donations - website	\$ 500.00	\$ 28.41					\$ 28.41
Donations - Other	\$ 2,000.00						
Grants (amts rec'd this year)				\$ 4,000.00	\$ 23,540.00	\$ -	\$ 27,540.00
AEP Grant	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00					\$ 200,000.00
Misc. Revenue		\$ 1,322.19					\$ 1,322.19
Interest Revenue	\$ 200.00	\$ 139.28					\$ 139.28
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 202,700.00	\$ 201,489.88	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 23,540.00	\$ -	\$ 229,029.88
Admin Expense:							
Rent/Utilities / internet	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 1,500.00					\$ 1,500.00
Telephone / Video-conference	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 242.02			\$ 267.60		\$ 509.62
Website (domain, hosting)	\$ 250.00						
Computers & Software	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 614.85			\$ 722.40		\$ 1,337.25
Bank Fees	\$ 150.00	\$ 50.50					\$ 50.50
Insurance	\$ 2,700.00						
Printing		\$ 35.45					\$ 35.45
Courier & Postage	\$ 250.00	\$ 329.74					\$ 329.74
Office Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ 329.50					\$ 329.50
Advertising & Promotions	\$ 500.00	\$ 170.61					\$ 170.61
Gifts of Appreciation	\$ 250.00						
Accounting Expense (Audit)	\$ 5,000.00						
memberships, fees	\$ 100.00						
GST Expense (not reclaimable)	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 94.76					\$ 94.76
Meeting Expenses:							
Honorariums	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 100.00					\$ 100.00
Travel - Mileage	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,464.97	\$ 1,054.95	\$ 349.46			\$ 2,869.38

Travel - Accommodation	\$ 500.00	\$ 175.44	\$ 97.13				\$ 272.57
Travel - Meal Allowance	\$ 500.00	\$ 145.45	\$ 150.25				\$ 295.70
hosting	\$ 2,000.00						
Staffing Expenses:							
Staff dev, training, etc.	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 186.68	\$ 300.00	\$ 567.14			\$ 1,053.82
Executive Director	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 23,333.32					\$ 23,333.32
Watershed Science	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 20,333.32					\$ 20,333.32
Education & Outreach	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 13,823.32					\$ 13,823.32
Summer Student	\$ 6,500.00			\$ 4,641.60		\$ 4,200.00	\$ 8,841.60
EI Expense	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,467.41					\$ 1,467.41
CPP Expense	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 3,531.86					\$ 3,531.86
CRA over-under		\$ 143.69					\$ 143.69
Staff Benefits Program	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 800.00					\$ 800.00
WCB Expense	\$ 400.00						
Projects:							
Professional (Consulting) Fees							
Field and general supplies		\$ 52.03	\$ 286.11				\$ 338.14
riparian site project grants							
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 202,500.00	\$ 68,924.92	\$ 1,888.44	\$ 5,558.20	\$ 990.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 81,561.56
NET INCOME		\$ 132,564.96	-\$ 1,888.44	-\$ 1,558.20	\$ 22,550.00	-\$ 4,200.00	\$ 147,468.32

Cash on Hand July 31, 2022:

Core Operations Acct	\$ 242,254.40
T-Bill (interest bearing) Acct	\$ 71,314.04
GIC	\$ 10,000.00
sub-total	\$ 323,568.44
less \$ rec'd and committed	\$ 246,704.31
Unallocated	\$ 76,864.13



Executive Director's Q2 (Summer) Activity & Financial Report: July 1 – September 30, 2022

Overview:

- Not sure where the summer went! 😊 Staff were busy with a combination of office and field work, and fitting in annual vacation time. Really appreciated the lovely fall weather!

Admin, HR, Office, etc.:

- We continue to hold staff meetings most Monday mornings (virtually or in-person). This quarter saw Ashley Johnson celebrate her one year anniversary with the AWC on July 4th.
- Our summer student, Aneilia Ayotte, completed her 16 weeks with the AWC and returned to school the end of August. Check out some of her summer blogs [here](#).
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Board/Governance:

- After the June 23 hybrid board meeting was held at the office in the Athabasca, we invested in a new Meeting Owl (audio-visual tool), TV screen and laptop which was tested out at our September 15 board meeting. Seemed to improve our hybrid-virtual meeting experience.
- The September 15, 2022 board meeting was a hybrid meeting using the Athabasca Train Station board room and Zoom. While we are still getting used to our new technology, the meeting went fairly well and those attending in person enjoyed networking and going for a walk along the river over lunch.

Committee Updates:

Executive Committee, Chair Dan Moore

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- With the guidance of the Executive Committee, Petra is working on creating an AWC Pay Scale, as well as firming up job descriptions, qualifications, staff benefits, etc. to make the AWC more competitive in recruiting and retaining staff.

Finance Committee, Chair vacant

- This committee has been dormant for a while and is currently lacking a chair. Petra will be asking for volunteers to reinvigorate this important committee in the fall.
- A lot of time has been put into the new AEP grant application process (for the 4 year period starting 2023-24). AEP has worked with all 11 WPACs to develop a Mandate and Roles Document which both parties have signed and which includes a list of projects/activities that both the AWC and AEP commit to. This new process also requires us to update the AWC Strategic Plan somewhat (retaining our original 5 goals but fleshing out the next 4 years of activities a bit more).

Communications, Education and Community Engagement (CECE) Committee, Chair Paula Evans

- The CECE Committee met July 5 to discuss key messages and CECE performance indicators. They also continue to work by emails to provide oversight on the activities of the Education and Outreach Coordinator and projects related to achieving Goals 1 and 2 of the Strategic Plan.

Education and Outreach Projects

- Ashley continues to organize the monthly e-newsletter, social media posts, blog and website updates. She is also working on the next Athabasca Dispatch which will focus on point source discharges.
- Throughout the summer, staff participated in several outreach events including the Canada Day / River Rat Days in Athabasca, an Inside Education Teacher Training Day in Lac La Biche (where Ashley joined board members Laura Pekkola and Brian Deheer), Jasper Park Day in Jasper (Ashley), the AGM of the SV of Nakamun Park (Petra), the Baptiste and Island Lakes Stewardship Society (BAILS) August 27 virtual AGM, and a couple of pond leveler installations with Westlock County.

Technical Committee, Chair Dan Moore

- The Technical Committee will hold a virtual meeting October 14 and will review a Terms of Reference for the next iteration of an Athabasca state of the watershed assessment report. The committee is also working with Athabasca University to repair and update the SOW Interactive Atlas.
- The Committee also continues to work by emails to provide oversight on the activities of the Watershed Science Coordinator and projects related to achieving Goals 3 and 4 of the Strategic Plan.

Science projects:

- Ashley has completed her CABIN benthic invertebrate sampling technician training and Sarah has taken a refresher course. Staff did a preliminary trip to the McLeod River headwaters in late August to confirm the location and suitability of several sampling sites. Sampling will be completed in a second trip in early October.

- Sarah continues to facilitate the Pembina Technical Working Group (representing 12 different organizations) who are developing a Pembina state of the watershed report and initiating a two-year water quality monitoring project funded by a generous (\$80k) donation from Pembina Pipelines.
- Sarah is a member of the ALUS Partnership Advisory Council for Athabasca County, County of Barrhead, Westlock County, and Thorhild County, which just approved 12 riparian and wetland conservation and restoration projects in these counties. The AWC also continues to partner with Highway2Conservation on a planting project at French Creek, a small tributary of the Pembina River. We are also partnering with West Central Forage Association to add educational signage to a riparian area best practices demonstration site on the Pembina River at Sangudo.
- To improve AWC knowledge about riparian restoration, Ashley attended a riparian health assessment workshop in Grande Prairie hosted by Cows and Fish.
- The Berland-Wildhay Watershed Connectivity [Planning initiative](#), a stakeholder group looking at waterbody crossing mitigation in this East Slopes watershed, took a break from meetings over the summer field season but will be convening again this fall.
- Staff are in discussion with AEP's Lisa Schaubel regarding an East Slopes Stream Temperature project.
- Staff are in discussion with Alberta WaterSmart about the Athabasca River Basin Phase II project.
- Petra met with the Office of the Chief Scientist to discuss common initiatives.

Other Partnerships / Sector and Community Engagement:

- We continue to provide input to Steve Meadows, the WPAC rep on the Alberta Water Council Project Team developing advice on a new Water for Life 10 Year Action Plan to be completed by the fall of 2022.
- AWC Director Laura Pekkola continues to support a WPAC project team developing a watershed 101 series of videos.
- Director Dan Moore went on the Peace Canoe Brigade in July (see [video](#)) and is looking forward to participating in the 2023 brigade on the Athabasca.
- Petra meets and/or corresponds with the other WPAC managers regularly and represents all 11 WPACs on the Alberta Energy Regulators Multi-stakeholder Engagement Advisory Committee which met in Calgary Sept. 27-28.
- A contingent of board and staff attended the Alberta Lake Management Society conference in St. Albert on Sept 28-29.

Things to Look Forward to Next Quarter (Oct – Dec):

- AEP WPAC Forum Oct. 6-7
- AWC Tech Comm Oct. 14
- AB WPACs Technical Workshop Oct. 25
- Fall Board of Directors Meeting Nov. 22
- Don't Forget Giving Tuesday Nov. 29!

Communications Report:

Measure	March 31, 2021	March 31, 2022	June 30, 2022	Sept 30, 2022	Dec 30, 2022	Mar 30, 2022
Membership:						
# individuals	120	173	187	188		
# organizations	34	40	40	40		
Monthly Newsletter:						
# of subscribers	368	455	340	376		
Website:						
website users	468	711		525		
# of Page Views	1116	15350	4686	1770		
Sessions / length	4742 / 2 m0s	7755 / 1m35s	2557 / 1m28s	943 / 1m 18s		
Bounce Rate	54.43	61.68	58.39	70.2		
Facebook:						
Facebook Followers	468	608	623	632		
Facebook Likes	406	502	513	518		
Twitter:						
Twitter followers	404	479	497	499		
Instagram:						
Instagram Followers	405	573	596	603		
Publications:						
- E-Newsletters			3			
- Reports			-			
- Media articles			-			
- other						

Q2 Engagement (Key Meetings and Events) Report:

Date	Event	AWC Staff	Total # of non-staff attendees		Length (hrs)	Location
			We hosted	Other hosted		
2022-23			We hosted	Other hosted		
July 1	Open House – River Rat Canada Day	Petra, Ashley	12		6	Athabasca
July 2	Display Table – River Rat Days	Ashley and mom!	20		6	Athabasca
July 5	CECE Committee virtual meeting	Ashley	6		2	Virtual
July 5	Mtg. with Janice Linehan re: wastewater article for newsletter	Petra, Ashley	1		1.0	virtual
July 6	Mtg with AB WaterSmart	Petra		4	1	Virtual
July 6	Inside Education Teacher Training	Ashley		12	3	LLB
July 8	AEP and WPAC managers	Petra		12	1	virtual
July 13	HWLLB Wetlands project	Petra		10	2	virtual
July 13-14	Cows and Fish riparian workshop	Ashley		12	14	Grande Prairie
July 15	WPAC managers and Doug Thrussell	Petra		6	1	virtual
July 16	Jasper Park Day – display table	Ashley		50	6	Jasper
July 20	Mtg with Zoey Wang, AEP	Petra	1		1	virtual
July 20-21	CABIN benthic monitoring training	Ashley		12	14	Pincher Creek
July 23	SV of Nakamun Park AGM	Petra		50	1.5	L. Nakamun
July 27	Mtg with Kara, Trans Mountain	Petra, Sarah	1		0.5	virtual
Aug. 9	Pond Leveler installation	Sarah, Ash, Aneilia		6	6	Westlock Co.
Aug. 11	WPAC managers meeting	Petra		10	2.0	virtual
Aug. 12	Athabasca Library youth event	Petra, Sarah		4	2.0	Athabasca
Aug. 25-26	Upper McLeod Benthic site selection	Petra, Sarah, Ashley			16	Yellowhead Co.
Aug. 27	BAILS AGM	Pet, Sarah, Ash		12	2.0	virtual
Sep. 6	Sangudo WCFA site visit	Sarah		2	6	Sangudo
Sep. 8	WPAC mgrs. Mtg with Doug T.	Petra		12	1.0	virtual
Sep. 9	ACT Intern interviews	Petra, Sarah	5			virtual
Sep. 12	Mtg with Office of the Chief Scientist	Petra		2	1.0	Edmonton
Sep. 15	AWC board meeting	all	12		3.0	Athabasca
Sep. 26	Mtg. with Barrhead County LUB planners	Petra, Sarah	3			
Sep. 27-28	MSEAC mtg	Petra		15	14	Calgary
Sep. 28-29	ALMS conference	Sarah, Ashley		100	12	St. Albert
Sep. 30	Truth and Reconciliation Day observed					

Financial Report to Sept. 30, 2022 (Q2):

	Budget - Core Operations	Actuals -Core Operations	Actuals - Projects				TOTAL Ops + Projects
			Pembina	Benthic	Berland	Summer Student (CSJ)	
Carry forward previous year			\$ 94,967.67	\$ 181.78			
REVENUE:							
Donations - website	\$ 500.00	\$ 28.41					\$ 28.41
Donations - Other	\$ 2,000.00						
Grants (amts rec'd this year)			\$ 40,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$23,540.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 75,740.00
Grants (from previous year)							\$ -
AEP Grant	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00					\$ 200,000.00
Misc. Rev.		\$ 1,322.19					\$ 1,322.19
Interest Revenue	\$ 200.00	\$ 381.25					\$ 381.25
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 202,700.00	\$ 201,731.85	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$23,540.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 277,471.85
Admin Expense:							
Rent/Utilities / internet	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 2,500.00					\$ 2,500.00
Telephone / Videoconference	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 993.35					\$ 993.35
Website (domain, hosting)	\$ 250.00						
Computers & Software	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,337.25					\$ 1,337.25
Hosting	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 153.95					\$ 153.95
Bank Fees	\$ 150.00	\$ 59.50					\$ 59.50
Insurance	\$ 2,700.00						
Advertising & Promotions		\$ 170.61					\$ 170.61
Printing	\$ 500.00	\$ 35.45					\$ 35.45
Courier & Postage	\$ 250.00	\$ 329.74					\$ 329.74
Office Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ 329.50					\$ 329.50
Gifts of Appreciation	\$ 250.00						
Accounting Expense (Audit)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00					\$ 5,000.00
memberships, fees	\$ 100.00						

GST Expense (not reclaimable)	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 238.70					\$ 238.70
Meeting Expenses:							
Honorariums	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 250.00					\$ 250.00
Travel - Mileage	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 803.46	\$ 1,973.41	\$ 1,867.80			\$ 4,644.67
Travel - Accommodation	\$ 500.00	\$ 175.44	\$ 97.13	\$ 50.00			\$ 322.57
Travel - Meal Allowance	\$ 500.00	\$ 127.05	\$ 180.25	\$ 186.95			\$ 494.25
Staffing Expenses:							
Staff dev, training, etc.	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 186.68	\$ 300.00	\$ 686.99			\$ 1,173.67
Executive Director	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 35,291.65					\$ 35,291.65
Watershed Science	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 30,754.15					\$ 30,754.15
Education & Outreach	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 21,011.48					\$ 21,011.48
Summer Student	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 1,818.40		\$ 5,600.00		\$ 4,200.00	\$ 11,618.40
EI Expense	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,182.87					\$ 2,182.87
CPP Expense	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 5,259.11					\$ 5,259.11
Staff Benefits Program	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 1,200.00					\$ 1,200.00
WCB Expense	\$ 400.00						
Projects:							
Field and general supplies			\$ 338.14				\$ 338.14
riparian site project grants							
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 202,500.00	\$ 110,208.34	\$ 2,888.93	\$ 8,391.74	\$ -	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 125,689.01
NET INCOME		\$ 91,523.51	\$ 37,111.07	-\$ 391.74	\$23,540.00	\$ -	\$ 151,782.84

Cash on Hand Sept. 30, 2022:

Core Operations Acct	\$ 244,507.26
T-Bill (interest bearing) Acct	\$ 73,036.72
GIC	<u>\$ 10,000.00</u>
sub-total	\$ 327,543.98
less \$ rec'd and committed	<u>\$ 247,907.59</u>
Unallocated	\$ 79,636.39

Grant \$ received & committed but not spent:

WRRP	\$ 67,467.67	
Pembina other	\$ 67,500.00	
Benthic	-\$ 391.74	final \$4k pending
Berland	\$ 23,540.00	
GOA core	<u>\$ 89,791.66</u>	
	\$247,907.59	

FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

AWC Board Honorarium and Expense Policy Update

Reviewed by the AWC Board November 22, 2022

1. November 16, 2018 Fiscal Controls and Spending Policy approved by the board:

- See details in Appendix 1 which set out Director honorariums and expenses

2. Sept. 17, 2020 Board Meeting minutes (approved Dec. 17, 2020):

MOTION: Morris Nesdole moved that Board member honorariums be dropped and that only direct expenses be reimbursed. Robert Holmberg Seconded. The motion was discussed with Morris Nesdole withdrawing his motion for further consideration and recommendation for the Finance and Fundraising Committee to provide recommendation.

3. Finance and Fundraising Committee meetings:

This committee last met April 14, 2021, however with staff and committee member changes, the committee never reviewed the AWC honorariums and expenses and no recommendation was brought forward to the board. Also, between previous year's reduction/delays in receiving core grants, the past two years of Covid and resulting reduction in travel/change to online meetings, the annual budget has not included significant funds for these two line items the past few years.

4. Question about Honorariums and Charitable Status:

There was some question about whether a charity can issue any benefits to a board member. I have reviewed our bylaws, information on line and conferred with our Accountants (KRP). I do not have a definitive answer but below are a few points to help the board have a discussion about this topic:

- Reimbursing expenses is fairly straight forward:
 - *Bylaw 6.7.2 Reasonable expenses incurred while carrying out duties of the AWC may be reimbursed upon board approval.*
 - For this reason, the board has approved guidance for expense submissions (appendix 1).
 - The issue is the challenge to budget an appropriate amount each year, without knowing what attendance and requests will look like throughout the year, and being left with unused funds at the end of the year that could have been used elsewhere (core grant funds must be returned if not spent).
- Honorariums are not as straight forward:
 - *Bylaw 6.7.1 In general, no member, Director or Officer of the AWC receives payment for services as a member, Director or Officer. The Board of Directors can give special approval for payments to Members or Directors.*
- The CRA is generally silent on whether or not a registered charity can pay an honorarium to its volunteer board members except for offering this definition: *"An honorarium is a voluntary payment made to a person for services for which fees are not legally or traditionally required, typically used to help cover costs for volunteers or guest speakers."*
- The CRA does, however, have a number of rules around what constitutes an employee, when employee deductions must be made, and when income must be reported on a T4 or T4A.

FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

- Charities generally discuss the perceived and real moral/ethical, legal and financial implications before deciding to pay honorariums.
- In general, the AWC encourages each board member to seek support from the sector it represents. However, the AWC recognizes that not all sectors have a mechanism to support a representative on the board – hence those volunteers that bring a sector perspective to the board, but are not supported by a sector, attending meetings on their own time, might be paid a small honorarium to acknowledge their contribution of unpaid time.
- Since becoming a charity in 2019, the AWC has continued to issue honorariums, submitting our annual charity report and appropriate T4As (although we do not deduct taxes, CPP or UI from these amounts). We have not heard anything from CRA in regards to this being an issue. **However, this does not mean that an auditor might make a different determination.**
- In looking at other charities, additional guidance to help honorarium payments meet the requirement of ‘reasonable’ include:
 - Honorariums are not reflective of the value of the work done
 - They are made on a one-time or non-routine basis to an individual as a ‘thank you’
 - Must not be an agreed to amount between the individual and the AWC (i.e., a contract)
 - Not based on a unit of measures such as hours volunteered/ should be a flat nominal amount and not appear as compensation for work performed
 - Honorariums paid to non-employees are not subject to tax deductions; but the individual may have to pay taxes on the amount themselves. Hence the AWC issues a T4A (Other payments) to all honorarium recipients (if the amount is greater than \$500 annually) and requires the recipients social security number to complete this form.

5. Executive Director’s Recommendation

- a) That the AWC Board of Directors re-confirm that the existing policy (Appendix 1) in regards to Directors Honorariums and Expenses is still in effect;
- b) that staff estimate and likely increase budget amounts for these budget line items in 2023-24 and beyond (e.g., see estimated board honorariums table below).
 - a. Efforts to standardize the number of board and committee meetings, including whether these meetings are in person or virtual, will help us to better estimate realistic budgets for these items for 2023-24 and future years.
 - b. Putting in place a more formal process for board and committee members to request/estimate support, at the beginning of their term, will also help with budgeting in the future.

Scheduled Board Meetings:	Meeting Length	Individual Max	Potentially up to 9/21 seats
Feb	Half day virtual	\$50	
June	Full day in person	\$150	
Sept	Full day in person	\$150	
Nov	Full day hybrid	\$150	
Total		\$500	\$4500 (max if full attendance)

FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

Appendix 1. 2018 Approved Fiscal Policy

7. Honoraria Claims for Board Members and Committee Members

7.1. Honoraria may be claimed by any Board Member (or, in their absence, Alternate) attending, a designated Board of Directors meeting. Honoraria may not be claimed when attending other functions such as the Annual General Meeting, Special General Meetings, conferences and other meetings except when authorized by the Board of Directors.

7.2. Honoraria may be claimed by any Committee member attending, in person, a designated Committee meeting.

7.3. Honoraria are not claimed on travel time.

7.4. Honoraria claims are as follows:

- For each meeting of 0.5 up to 2 hours in duration, a claim of \$50.
- For each meeting of 2 to 4 hours in duration, a claim of \$75.
- For each meeting longer than 4 hours, a claim of \$150.

7.5. Honoraria claim for participation by teleconference or video, a claim of \$50.

8. Expense Claims for Board Members

8.1. Reasonable expenses include the following:

8.1.1. Meals

Meals may be claimed when traveling and when at meetings for any meals not provided, according to the following based on time either leaving or returning home:

- Departure time is earlier than 7:30 a.m. for breakfast,
- Departure time is earlier than 12:00 noon, or arrival time is later than 1:00 p.m. for lunch, and
- Arrival time after 6:30 for dinner.

Meals may be claimed as follows:

- Breakfast - \$9.20
- Lunch - \$11.60
- Dinner - \$20.75
- A Claimant must not claim a meal allowance if a meal is provided at no cost, unless the Claimant declines the meal because of a demonstrated Dietary restriction; or Business reason.

8.1.2. Travel Costs

Travel costs by private vehicle will be reimbursed based on the most direct and cost-effective route and will be paid at a rate of \$0.505 per km. Receipts are required for other reasonable transport costs such as air fare, parking, rentals and taxis.

FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

8.1.3. Accommodation Expenses

Reasonable accommodation expenses will be reimbursed on submission of paid receipt. Private accommodations without a receipt will be paid at \$20.15 per night.

8.1.4. Per Diem Costs

A Board or Committee member may claim a \$7.35 per diem rate for each 24 hour while they are on travel status.

8.2. Reasonable expenses may be claimed by any Board Member (or in their absence, Alternate) attending, in person, a designated Board of Directors meeting, Annual General Meeting, and any other meeting or conference where the Board member has been approved to attend by the Board of Directors.

8.3. Reasonable expenses may be claimed by any Committee member attending, in person, a designated committee meeting or any other meeting or conference where the Committee member has been approved to attend by the Board of Directors.

8.4. Reasonable expenses may be claimed by any Executive Committee member required to meet in person with funders or other agencies.

8.5. Board Members can request that certain reasonable expenses (e.g., hotel accommodations or fixed transportation costs, e.g., bus or plane tickets) be paid in advance of meetings by the AWC-WPAC. After approval from the two signatories that approve expense claims (typically the Executive Director and Treasurer), any authorized spending agent can pay for the board member's requested reasonable expenses in advance of the meeting.



Board Terms of Reference Reviewed: November 22, 2022

Purpose

The Board of Directors commits to pursue the Vision and Mission and embrace the Values of the Athabasca Watershed Council (AWC). The Board governs and manages the affairs of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Vision: The Athabasca watershed is ecologically healthy, **supporting resilient communities and a strong economy.**

Mission: The Athabasca Watershed AWC demonstrates leadership and facilitates informed decision-making in the Athabasca watershed by bringing stakeholders and Indigenous peoples together to ~~promote, foster respect, and plan for an ecologically healthy watershed that supports social responsibility and economic sustainability~~ achieve our shared vision.

Values:

Integrity, trust, and transparency.

Being purpose driven.

Consensus decision-making.

A high standard of achievement and conduct.

Timely responses to the issues.

Creativity, innovation, and organizational risk taking.

Ecological health as foundational to all life.

Water as a blessing and a gift, essential for the environment, economy, society and the spirit.

Inclusivity.

Respect for all points of view.

The communities, cultures and knowledge of Indigenous peoples.

Being responsible and accountable to all.

Membership

The Board of Directors shall have no fewer than eight (8) and no more than twenty-one (21) members, including the Past Chairperson. These members will be from the following sector groups with the following distribution of seats:

<p><u>Federal and Provincial Governments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) appointed seat for Alberta Environment and Parks • One (1) elected seat for Federal or Provincial Government 	
<p><u>Municipal Governments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three (3) elected seats for Municipal Government: Either elected officials or senior staff may be candidates to fill Municipal Government Board seats, so long as they are the designated representative of their municipality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Based on predominant economic activities, areas of agricultural production, and white area/ green area boundaries, these 3 seats are defined as follows:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Upper Basin - Jasper National Park, Yellowhead County, Woodlands County and M.D. Lesser Slave River</u> ○ <u>Middle Basin - Counties of Lac St. Anne, Barrhead, Westlock and Athabasca</u> ○ <u>Lower Basin - Lac La Biche County, M.D. Opportunity and R.M. of Wood Buffalo</u> <p><u>These also include the towns, villages, hamlets and summer villages, within each sub-region.</u></p>

<p>Indigenous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three (3) elected seats for First Nations (treaty or non-treaty) or Métis (settlement or non-settlement) 	<p><u>Intent is to find representation from the Upper, Middle and Lower basin and both First Nations and Metis communities.</u></p>
<p>Industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>One (1) elected seat for a small agricultural producer</u> • One (1) elected seat for any agricultural producer • One (1) elected seat for the oil and gas industry • One (1) elected seat for the forest industry • <u>One (1) elected seat for either the mining or utility industry</u> 	<p><u>Suggest we drop one or the other and just make an Ag seat. Alternative, make one cropping and one livestock.</u></p> <p><u>Should be affiliated with CAPP</u></p> <p><u>Should be affiliated with AFPA.</u></p> <p><u>If we free up an Ag seat, should make each of these sectors their own seat and pursue a coal mining rep and a water utility.</u></p>

<p>Non-Government Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) elected seat for research or academia • Two (2) elected seats for health or environment • Two (2) elected seats for stewardship 	<p><u>Should drop health and draw up MOUs with appropriate environmental organizations. For example, see the AB Water Council 7 agency agreement around Fisheries Habitat Seat, DUC for Wetlands seat, ELC for Environment, etc.</u></p>
<p>Member at Large</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two (2) elected seats for members at large 	<p><u>Members of the public affiliated with a sector such as environmental education, recreation, guiding and outfitting, trapping, etc.</u></p>

The Board may fill vacancies in sector groups on an interim basis by appointment. Such appointments will be up for election at the next AGM. Membership on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council is open to Alberta residents only.

Election and Terms of Service

Candidates for the Board of Directors shall be solicited, or a letter of nomination may be submitted to the Athabasca Watershed Council in advance of the AGM. Nominations must be received at least 7 days prior to the AGM. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor.

Except for the appointed Alberta Environment and Parks representative, all Board members will be elected at the AGM. Elections shall be held through one ballot where the top candidate or candidates are accepted under each sector group. Each Board member may identify their Alternate. This Alternate will be from within the same sector group. Each Board member shall serve for a two-year term. He/she may continue to serve additional terms if re-elected.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Board will strive for consensus decision-making and develop a procedure for achieving consensus (see section 4.1 of the Policy and Process Guide).
- The Board will ensure the establishment and continued maintenance of an effective Communications Strategy and a Policy and Process Guide for the Athabasca Watershed Council.
- The Board will collaborate and/or partner with other stewards within the Athabasca River watershed in order to maximize efforts and gain efficiencies.
- The Board of Directors will meet at least four (4) times per year. It is recognized that meeting frequency could increase if required.
- A Board member may be removed by a vote of the Board of Directors if he/she misses three consecutive scheduled meetings without notification to the AWC.

- A Board member may be removed by a vote of the Board of Directors for any cause contravening the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors Terms of Reference and policies.
- Each Board member will be responsible for communications with their sector according to the Board approved communications plan.

Code of Conduct

- Board members must demonstrate ethical and professional conduct.
- Board members must remain supportive of the positions and decisions made by the Athabasca Watershed Council.
- Board members may speak to the media, the public, or other parties on behalf of the Athabasca Watershed Council, if they adhere to key media messages developed and approved by the Board of Directors.
- Board members must not express any judgement of staff performance, unless done so as part of an official performance assessment.
- The Board will establish ground rules for conducting meeting business and agree how decisions will be made and recorded. (See the AWC Policy and Process Guide).

Conflict of Interest

Board members must not use their position on the Board to obtain employment with the Athabasca Watershed Council nor for private benefit to themselves or family members. Exceptions may occur only when the Board determines there is openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to information.

Board members must advise the rest of the Board of any potential conflicts of interest. In the event of a conflict of interest, Board members must withdraw from associated deliberations, decision-making and access to information.

Amendment and Review

In a case where these Terms of Reference conflict with the Bylaws, the Society Bylaws will take precedence and supersede any Terms of Reference. Amendments to the Board of Directors Terms of Reference must be ratified by the Board of Directors. This TOR should be reviewed every three years or sooner if circumstances warrant.

TOR Created and Approved: September 24, 2009 (Initiator's Group)

Revised: September 16, 2021

Due for Review:



November 22, 2022

LUF Secretariat / Stewardship Minister

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Lower Athabasca Regional Plan 10 Year Review

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council (AWC), please consider this letter as input to the stakeholder engagement process for the ten year review of the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan (LARP).

Please know that the AWC is a multi-sector body with representatives from governments, industry, rural and Indigenous communities and non-government organizations with interests in the Athabasca watershed, an area that makes up more than 20% of Alberta's land base, stretching from Jasper to Fort Chipewyan. The AWC is also designated by Alberta Environment and Protected Areas as the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council for the Athabasca watershed. As such, our focus is on water and watershed management, and seeing the social, economic and environmental goals of the GOA's *Water for Life* strategy achieved in the Athabasca watershed. Note however that quality water supplies and healthy waterbodies are critical to achieving all seven LARP outcomes. Through that lens, we offer our consensus feedback below.

LARP Relevancy:

In regards to the question, "Is LARP still relevant today?", our response is ...

LARP Effectiveness:

In regards to the question of whether the plan has been effective in achieving its outcomes and strategic directions, our response is ...

Other Barriers or Challenges:

Again, looking through the lens of water and watershed management, we see a number of barriers and challenges in the Lower Athabasca, and in implementing LARP, such as ...

Opportunities:

We also see a number of opportunities ...

Any unintended consequences:

Any relative priority or urgency for strategies and actions:

Added Considerations or lessons learned

Thank you for providing this opportunity to provide our input to the LARP review process. If you have any questions about the comments above, please don't hesitate to contact our office to discuss.

On behalf of the AWC Board

Sincerely,

Petra Rowell

LARP GOA Documents:

LUF Lower Athabasca Region webpage (overview of plan engagement and development, related resources):

<https://landuse.alberta.ca/RegionalPlans/LowerAthabascaRegion/Pages/default.aspx>

LUF LARP 10 year Review webpage (link to survey, review background materials):

<https://landuse.alberta.ca/RegionalPlans/LowerAthabascaRegion/10YearReview/Pages/default.aspx>

Alberta.ca LARP Engagement webpage (same materials provided in GOA engagement website):

<https://www.alberta.ca/lower-athabasca-regional-plan-review-engagement.aspx>

LUF Implementation progress reports:

<https://landuse.alberta.ca/ResultsResources/ResultsReporting/Pages/default.aspx>

LUF Progress Reporting Regional Planning Indicators:

<https://lufereporting-esrd.hub.arcgis.com/>

Alberta.ca Lower Athabasca Regional Planning (management frameworks, annual progress reports, management response reports):

<https://www.alberta.ca/lower-athabasca-regional-planning.aspx>

Other Public Resources:

Surface Water Quality Primer Environmental Law Centre

<https://elc.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Surface-Water-Quality-Primer-May-2022.pdf>



Four-Year Strategic Plan

2023-24 through 2026-27

Approved _____

About the Athabasca Watershed Council

Established in 2009, the Athabasca Watershed Council (AWC) is a not-for-profit society and charitable organization guided by its vision, mission, and values. Additionally, the AWC is recognized by the Government of Alberta as a Watershed Planning and Advisory Council that convenes collaborative partnerships in order to achieve the goals of Alberta's *Water for Life* strategy, in the Athabasca watershed (Figure 1).

Water for Life Goals

- Safe, secure drinking water supplies
- Healthy aquatic ecosystems
- Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy

Vision

The Athabasca watershed is ecologically healthy, supporting social responsibility and economic sustainability.

Mission

The Athabasca Watershed Council demonstrates leadership and facilitates informed decision-making in the Athabasca watershed by bringing stakeholders and indigenous peoples together to achieve our shared vision.

Values

Integrity, trust, and transparency. Being purpose driven. Consensus decision-making. A high standard of achievement and conduct. Timely responses to the issues. Creativity, innovation, and organizational risk taking. Ecological health as foundational to all life. Water as a blessing and a gift, essential for the environment, economy, society and the spirit. Inclusivity. Respect for all points of view. The communities, cultures and knowledge of Indigenous peoples. Being responsible and accountable to all.

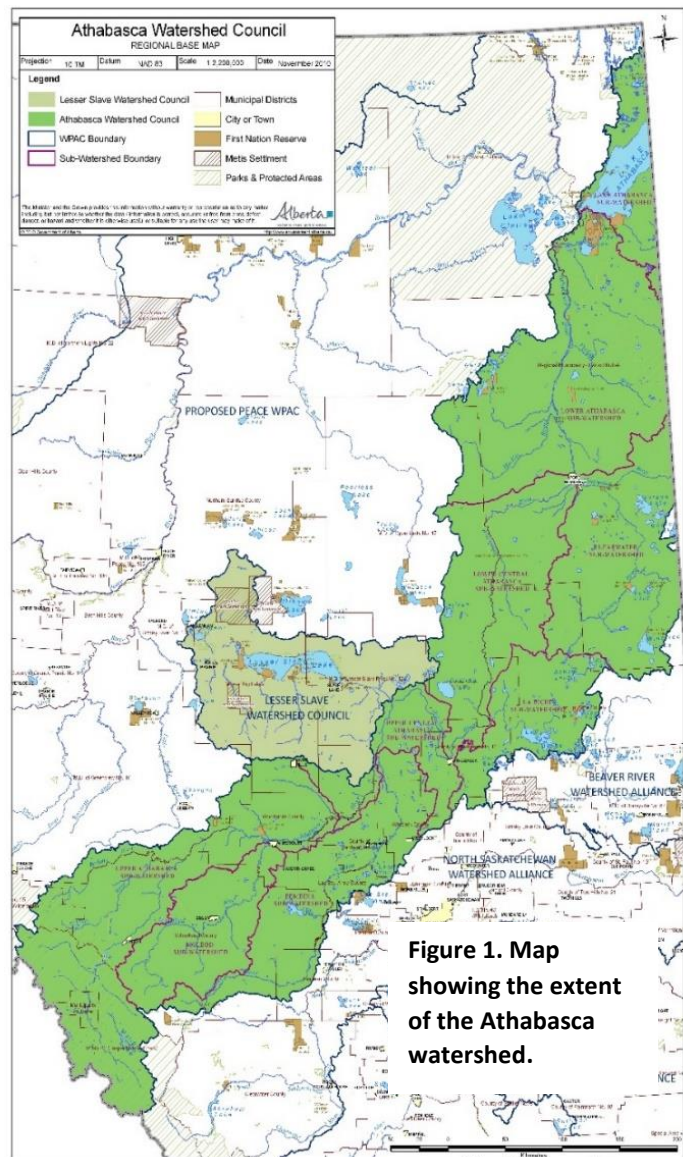


Figure 1. Map showing the extent of the Athabasca watershed.

The Athabasca River is the second largest river in Alberta, arising in the Rocky Mountains, and draining into Lake Athabasca, Alberta's largest lake. Combined, the lands within Alberta that drain into the river and lake makes up nearly a quarter of the province. This area includes all or part of forty-five urban, rural and Indigenous communities. Residents in this basin are employed by the numerous industries that operate here, including tourism and recreation, forestry, mining, agriculture and energy.

AWC Strategic Planning

To achieve its vision and mission and the *Water for Life* goals in the Athabasca watershed, the AWC maintains a rolling four-year strategic plan. This plan includes five goals as follows:

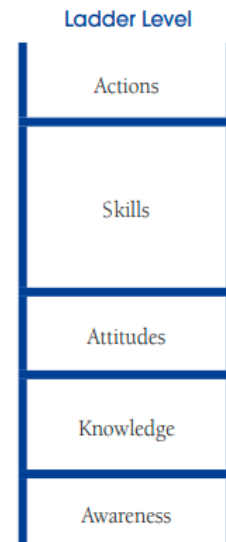
- **Goal #1:** The AWC provides easily accessible water-related information to stakeholders/sectors, the public and Indigenous peoples, leading to improved knowledge about the Athabasca watershed (Education & Literacy).
- **Goal #2:** The AWC is actively engaged and engages others in mobilizing resources and commitments to achieve shared outcomes (Convenor and Collaborator).
- **Goal #3:** The AWC is a credible, recognized authority on the condition of the Athabasca watershed; this information informs Athabasca River Integrated Watershed Management Plan implementation, whose goals are achieved via healthy and active relationships with Athabascans and others (Monitoring and Reporting).
- **Goal #4:** AWC promotes the alignment and integration of land and water statutory and non-statutory policies, plans and program across jurisdictions where needed to achieve 'Water for Life' goals and a healthy Athabasca River watershed (Policy and Planning).
- **Goal #5:** AWC has a reputation for organizational professionalism, balanced representation, sustainability and effective and efficient use of resources; is strategically wise; and makes evidence-based decisions.

The achievement of each goal is guided by a number of desired outcomes and key activities, as summarized below. The implementation of activities is dependent on AWC and partner capacity and resources. Some activities are currently being undertaken, some have been deferred until resources and capacity are available. Going forward, this plan includes what the AWC will focus on for the next four years, from 2023-24 through 2026-27. Additionally, to align with the GOA renewed 10-year *Water for Life* Action Plan (2023 -2033), this document provides a number of long term “stretch” goals, showing how we will strive to contribute to the WFL strategy over the same 10-year period.

This strategic plan has been developed, reviewed, and approved by the AWC’s Board of Directors. It is an open-ended, ‘rolling plan’ and will be reviewed and reported on annually. The plan is also meant to be adaptive, in that the occurrence and timing of initiatives may vary to suit the needs and situations encountered by the organization and as opportunities arise in the watershed. The plan also incorporates goals of the *AWC Communications, Education and Community Engagement Strategy* and the *Athabasca Integrated Watershed Management Plan*.

Goal #1: The AWC provides easily accessible water-related information to stakeholders/sectors, the public and Indigenous peoples, leading to improved knowledge about the Athabasca watershed (Education & Literacy).

Preamble: In the past, the AWC, through the work of its Communications, Education and Community Engagement (CECE) Committee and the Education and Outreach Coordinator (EOC), has successfully used a variety of communication tools (e.g., website, newsletter, social media) to raise awareness about the Athabasca watershed and to share its own and other organizations' water-related information with those with an interest in the basin. However, such efforts are limited by 1) our own network and understanding of what is going on around the basin (how well we are connected), and 2) the size of our membership and viewership, which is small, but growing (how well we are connecting with others). It is also challenging to gauge how aware or knowledgeable different audiences are about the Athabasca watershed, or what information/knowledge needs they have. To address these limitations, 1) the AWC needs an active CECE Committee working with the Education and Outreach Coordinator to implement an effective CECE strategy with key messages and performance measures; 2) we need to continue to use a variety of communication tools to reach a variety of audiences; and 3) we need to ensure we are translating credible, balanced data and information into educational and outreach tools that lead to improved awareness and knowledge and ultimately, stewardship action.



Desired Outcomes:

- Effective CECE Committee Strategic Planning and Oversight
- Compelling Communications
- The AWC is an Effective Information Sharing Hub
- Targeted Education & Outreach leading to Improved Water Literacy

Current Activities (2022-23):

- The CECE Committee meets quarterly; maintains an up-to-date TOR & CECE Strategy and provides guidance to the EOC on how to achieve Goals 1 and 2.
- The EOC promotes the AWC brand (via the logo, tagline, promo materials, etc.), produces the Annual Report, monthly e-Newsletters and blogs and weekly social media postings, and add resources to the web as time allows.
- A travelling Watershed Display is available to various libraries and other public venues.
- The quarterly Athabasca Dispatch has been resurrected to delve into more in-depth topics; factsheets and reports are produced as time allows.
- Events like school presentations and Pond Day and programs such as Caring for Our Watershed and X-Stream Science are attended/implemented as capacity allows.

Focus for the Next 4 Years (2023-4 – 2026-27):

- Grow CECE capacity by recruiting more committee members and/or collaborations; refine AWC key messages and CECE performance indicators.
- Continue to make communications more compelling, reaching a larger audience(s), via a variety of communication tools.
- Conduct a website ‘audit’; create and implement a plan to make the website more effective, including developing meaningful content appropriate to various audiences.
- Continue to leverage resources by collaborating with the AB WPACs Education and Outreach Committee, neighboring WPACs, other educational programs (Inside Education) and AEP Education staff.

In 10 years, we will have contributed to the WFL strategy by having:

- A well-functioning AWC CECE Committee that undertakes projects (book, story map, videos, highway signage, etc.) that improves understanding of the geography, history, hydrology/water cycle, water issues and water management in the Athabasca watershed.
- A larger membership and social media presence, reaching a greater proportion of the watershed’s population. (We are well connected and are connecting with others.)
- A website that is better utilized as an information sharing hub (more visitors stay longer).
- Improved water literacy and awareness of water issues and water management among those that live, work or play in the Athabasca watershed.

Goal #2: The AWC is actively engaged and engages others in mobilizing resources and commitments to achieve shared outcomes (Convenor and Collaborator).

Preamble: In the past, the AWC, through the work of its Board and committees, Executive Director, and other staff, has been engaged and has engaged a variety of individuals and different sectors of society (e.g., municipalities, stewardship groups, Indigenous communities, etc.), with varying results, depending on the efforts of the day. Going forward, we need to think more strategically about what ‘sectors’ of society we need to engage in order to be successful at achieving our goals in the Athabasca watershed. Additionally, to engage others, we must build our own credibility and relevance. The board has a strong role to play in building credibility, educating itself about water issues throughout the basin, and providing balanced input to federal, provincial, municipal and resource policy and planning engagement processes.

Desired Outcomes:

- A Strong and Diverse Membership
- A Knowledgeable Board
- Basin-wide Community, Indigenous and Sector Engagement
- The AWC is a Strong Contributor to other Water for Life Partnerships

Current Activities (2022-23):

- Membership is not actively recruited but occurs casually through the website.
- The board hears presentations at its meetings, is invited to technical webinars and policy and plan engagements, or receives relevant reports and other resources via email.
- Community, Indigenous and Sector outreach occurs on an ad hoc basis via invitations to make presentations or man an information booth at an event, as opportunities arise. A more focused effort is made to recruit Indigenous and sector representatives on working groups (e.g., Berland, Pembina) or particular events (WPAC Summit, World Water Day).
- The AWC participates in the AB WPAC collaborative, provides input into the Alberta Water Council and its projects, and supports watershed stewardship groups, as capacity allows.

Focus for the Next 4 Years (2023-4 – 2026-27):

- Update lists (build a contact management system) of sectors/ communities/ organizations/ etc. in the Athabasca watershed and develop a strategy to increase membership.
- Include learning in every board meeting via presentations, fieldtrips, etc. Between board meetings, keep board members up to date on relevant initiatives via emails. Work with board members to identify opportunities to engage their sectors.
- Where opportunities arise, connect with rural and Indigenous communities and sectors via presentations, organizing forums/caucuses, participating in other collaborations, etc.
- Continue to collaborate with GOA and other WFL partners. Lead initiation of an AB WPAC Technical Committee; continue to represent the AB WPACs on the AER MSEAC (Multi Stakeholder Engagement Advisory Committee); and grow more stewardship groups.

In 10 years, we will have contributed to the WFL strategy by having:

- At least 500 members representing all sectors of society in the Athabasca watershed.
- Knowledgeable board members actively working with the Executive Director to ensure their sectors are supporting and participating in the work of the AWC and are engaged in providing provincial policy advice via GOA and Alberta Water Council processes.
- All sectors and communities in the Athabasca watershed engaged in AWC activities.
- Actively supported the work of the AB WPAC collaborative, Alberta Water Council, and local watershed stewardship groups such that watershed management improves across Alberta.

Goal #3: The AWC is a credible, recognized authority on the condition of the Athabasca watershed; this information informs Athabasca River Integrated Watershed Management Plan implementation, whose goals are achieved via healthy and active relationships with Athabascans and others (Monitoring and Reporting).

Preamble: Over the past decade, the AWC, through the work of its Technical Committee (TC) and Watershed Science Coordinator (WSC), has built credibility as an authority on the Athabasca watershed by developing basin-wide ‘state of the watershed (SOW)’, an Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) and other technical reports via a multi-sector, consensus-based approach. This work continues today, but with a greater focus on supporting partnership initiatives at the sub-basin level such as the East Slopes (McLeod and Pembina) benthic sampling, Upper Athabasca connectivity planning, Pembina and Tawatinaw riparian projects, lake management initiatives, etc. Although ‘recognition’ is a hard measure to gauge, the AWC is recognized by the GOA as the WPAC for the Athabasca watershed. In 2021, the AWC was asked to provide a comment on the Minister’s release of the Upper Athabasca surface water quality management framework - a good example of being recognized as a credible authority. Being asked to participate in regional and national initiatives by the University of Alberta (NSERC Under Ice Water Quality Model), Living Lakes Canada (East Slopes Biomonitoring Project) and Canadian Wildlife Federation (Wildhay-Berland Connectivity Plan) are also good examples of being recognized as a valued authority operating in the Athabasca watershed. Going forward, the AWC needs to 1) increase efforts to be an unbiased source of credible information about the condition of the watershed, and the issues affecting it; 2) incorporate IWMP goals into workplans that get implemented; 3) and continue to seek collaborations that will help us achieve WFL, IWMP and other strategic goals.

Desired Outcomes:

- Effective Technical Committee Planning and Oversight
- Credible State of the Watershed/ Condition Information
- An Approved IWMP Being Implemented through Collaborations

Current Activities (2022-23):

- The Technical Committee meets quarterly, maintains an up-to-date TOR, and guides the work of the Watershed Science Coordinator.
- YR 1 of IWMP implementation (approved Feb. 2022) included continuing to build on a number of existing projects and looking for suitable new projects and collaborations to support the achievement of plan goals.
- Implementing a schedule of IWMP and SOW activities and review (see chart below) .

ACTIVITY	2012	2017	2022	2027	2032	2037	2042	2047
SOW assessment (every 10 yrs)	Approved		Initiate 2 nd assessment		3 rd assessment		4 th assessment	
IWMP Review (at 5 yrs; then every 10)			Approved	1 st Review		2nd Review		3 rd review

Focus for the Next 4 Years (2023-4 – 2026-27):

- Ensuring the Technical Committee is actively engaged, guiding the Watershed Science Coordinator on the implementation of adaptive management in the Athabasca watershed.
- Undertaking projects to support the achievement of IWMP goals and reporting on activities annually via the AWC Annual Report:
 - Drinking Water: learn more about the state of drinking water in the Athabasca as a member of the Water North Coalition and via the Resilient Communities and Drinking Water project.
 - Water Quality: promote projects that reduce nutrient and other parameter loading, that monitor or model water quality (e.g., SWQMF, benthic sampling on the McLeod; UofA NSERC under ice water quality model), and that improves the state of water quality knowledge in the Athabasca.
 - Riparian and wetland health: continue to grow the riparian conservation and restoration project and working groups in the Pembina and Tawatinaw sub-basins. Support Healthy Waters Lac La Biche, Alberta Newsprint Company and other wetland initiatives.
 - Biodiversity: encourage citizen science and Species at Risk awareness. Collaborate with East Slopes native trout initiatives (benthic and stream temperature monitoring, watercourse crossing mitigation).
 - Water Quantity/Flow: Build awareness of tools like the Alberta Water Tool, Alberta Flow Estimation in Ungauged Streams and water quantity management frameworks. Explore a Northern Rivers issues forum and modeling project with AB WaterSmart (ARB Phase II).
 - Land Cover/ use: Participate in the review of LARP. Provide more best practices and information relevant to the sectors working in the Athabasca watershed. Provide policy tools to municipalities. Resurrect the Interactive Atlas and explore the cost to update land use layers.
 - Climate Change: Share tools and resources on climate change, community resilience.
 - Stewardship: Explore ways to support existing and form new lake groups (BAILS, LEPA, HWLLB, etc.) and sub-basin (McLeod, Mayerthorpe, Clearwater) groups.
- Develop a SOW project TOR for approval by the Tech Committee and AWC Board. Develop metrics, undertake an Athabasca state of the watershed assessment (whole basin and sub-basin) and develop an appropriate mechanism (dashboard) to communicate results.

In 10 years, we will have contributed to the WFL strategy by having:

- Implemented a cycle of iterative and adaptive watershed management including in 2027, undertaking an IWMP review, and in 2032, starting another state of the watershed assessment.

- A better understanding of the state of drinking water, source protection and drought planning needs of rural and Indigenous communities.
- Undertaken activities that measure aquatic ecosystem health, reduce nutrient and other contaminant loading, and where needed, restores aquatic ecosystems.
- A better understanding of current and future water supply and demand issues, and how they impact water quality and IFN, given growth and development, climate change, etc.
- Become a stronger hub of information on how land and water managers can reduce land use impacts to waterbodies.
- Provided sectors and communities with the knowledge they need to understand climate change and to be resilient to climatic events.
- More lake and sub-basin groups doing more things in each sub-basin.

Goal #4: AWC promotes the alignment and integration of land and water statutory and non-statutory policies, plans and program across jurisdictions where needed to achieve 'Water for Life' goals and a healthy Athabasca River watershed (Policy and Planning).

Preamble: WPACs, using a multi-sector, consensus lens, are uniquely situated to review federal, provincial, municipal, and resource land use policies and plans and provide input on how they may affect watershed health and the achievement of Water for Life goals. WPACs can also provide land managers with information and resources to lessen the impacts of land development on waterbodies and watersheds. To date, the AWC Executive Director as well as several AWC board members have provided such input to some municipal planning documents (e.g., county and summer village Intermunicipal Development Plans) and some provincial engagement processes (e.g., Upper and Lower Athabasca regional and sub-basin plans and water management frameworks). However, the AWC board itself rarely provides a consensus viewpoint to such engagement processes. Going forward, the AWC board needs to explore this area in more depth, to gain better understanding of when it may be beneficial to use its collective consensus voice, when to add its voice to other WFL partnerships and water voices, in order to better achieve its mandate and goals in the Athabasca watershed.

Desired Outcomes:

- Policies, Plans and Practices are aligned across Jurisdictions

Current Activities (2022-23):

- Respond to requests to review municipal and resource plans as received.
- Circulate notices of and participate in policy and plan engagements as they occur.

Focus for the Next 4 Years (2023-4 – 2026-27):

- Continue to provide input on federal, provincial, municipal and resource policy and planning initiatives, in particular the upcoming review of the Lower Athabasca Regional plan and its associated management frameworks.
- Continue to raise awareness of the AWC-IWMP and look for opportunities to embed water management goals and best practices into land and resource management policies and plans.

In 10 years, we will have contributed to the WFL strategy by having:

- Athabascans knowledgeable about land and water policies and plans that affect watershed health.
- Water and watershed management embedded in all land and resource policies, plans and practices.

Goal #5: AWC has a reputation for organizational professionalism, balanced representation, sustainability and effective and efficient use of resources; is strategically wise; and makes evidence-based decisions.

Preamble: Although the AWC is a small organization with limited capacity, it still must meet all the administrative, financial, human resource and governance requirements of a larger organization. In order to keep this portion of its business from consuming too much time (time better spent on science and outreach), we need to improve and streamline AWC policies, processes and practices, such that the AWC is an efficient, effective and transparent organization. This will help improve our reputation, which in turn will improve our sustainability as an organization worth investing in.

Desired Outcomes:

- Streamlined Administration
- Financial Capacity and Oversight
- Robust Human Resources
- Strategic and Effective Governance

Current Activities (2022-23):

- File all society, charity and funding reports on time to meet all legal requirements.
- Maintain an office, files and accounting records at the Athabasca Train Station.
- Solicit funds and in-kind support.
- Recruit, retain and grow staff capacity.
- Support board and committee activities.

Focus for the Next 4 Years (2023-4 – 2026-27) Years:

- Investigate other office options, invest in IT, and continue to document and streamline administrative and governance processes.
- Recruit members to the Finance and Fundraising Committee and ensure it meets regularly and implements a fundraising plan.
- Find the resources to retain existing staff and to create and fill 2 new positions to support science and outreach projects.
- Recruit knowledgeable board members willing to network, fundraise, etc. Ensure Board and Executive Committee meets regularly. Continue policy and process review until all documents are up to date.

In 10 years, we will have contributed to the WFL strategy by having:

- Maintained our mandate as the WPAC for the Athabasca watershed.
- A well-funded, well staffed organization with a board that is strategically focused on achieving the WFL goals in the Athabasca watershed.

Preliminary Performance Measures

Like any organization, the Athabasca Watershed Council has many ways to track and communicate its activities. For example, many of its activities are reported on monthly via newsletters and blogs, or annually via the Annual Report. However, tracking progress over time is more challenging. While a preliminary list of potential measures is included below, these measures will be refined and possibly added to over time.

Goal	Potential Measure	Target
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ‘Reach’ of AWC messages (measured by likes, followers and other social media metrics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• #'s increase year over year
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• # of individual and organization memberships• # of collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• increases year over year
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOW and IWMP are up to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• < 10 years old
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water is considered in land use and resource planning in the Athabasca watershed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• # of land and resource engagement processes the AWC participates in
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The AWC is well supported• Staff and volunteers are satisfied	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• % of funding and in-kind support from non-GOA sources

Baseline Budget

While a more detailed workplan and budget will be developed annually, when we think about our five strategic goals, and what is required to achieve them, we can start to identify a minimum budget required for each area. This amount would include enough funds for committee oversight, and at least one staff person to carry out additional fund-raising and project management.

Minimum Budget Needs to support the achievement of the 5 Goals in the Strategic Plan :					
Strategic Goals	Activities Supported by funds	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Goal 1 and 2	Funds to support meetings of the CECE committee, the salary and activities of the Education and Outreach Coordinator and some minor project expenses. Funds for larger projects will be applied for as needed.	\$80k	\$83.2k	\$86.5k	\$90k
Goal 3 and 4	Funds to support meetings of the Technical Committee, the salaries and activities of the Watershed Science Coordinator, two new positions (Sub-basin Projects Coordinator and Lake and Stewardship Project Coordinator) and some minor project expenses. Additional project funds will be applied for as identified under each program area.	\$240k	\$249.6k	\$259.6k	\$270k
Goal 5	Funds to support the salary and activities of the Executive Director, board, executive and finance committee meetings, and AWC operating costs (insurance, office space, etc.)	\$125k	\$130k	\$135.2k	\$140.2k
		\$445k*	\$462.8k	\$481.3	\$500.2

*2023-24 is considered a base year, with each successive year increased by 4% as a Cost of Living adjustment.

In Closing

This document describes the AWC's five strategic goals, its desired outcomes, and where it will focus its efforts in the next four years. Thinking further out, it also identifies what it can do in the next 10 years to support the implementation of the renewed Water For Life 10 Year Action Plan. Like any plan, it is meant to be a road map or guide only, and will be reviewed annually and adjusted if needed.