

# Alberta Water Council Update

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November 17, 2009

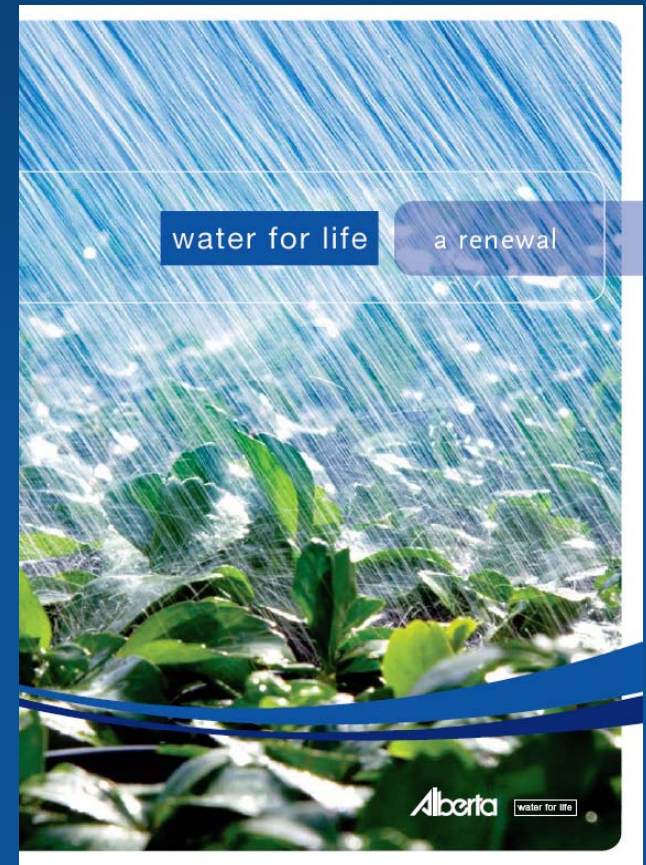
Alberta Chamber of Resources

# Who are we?

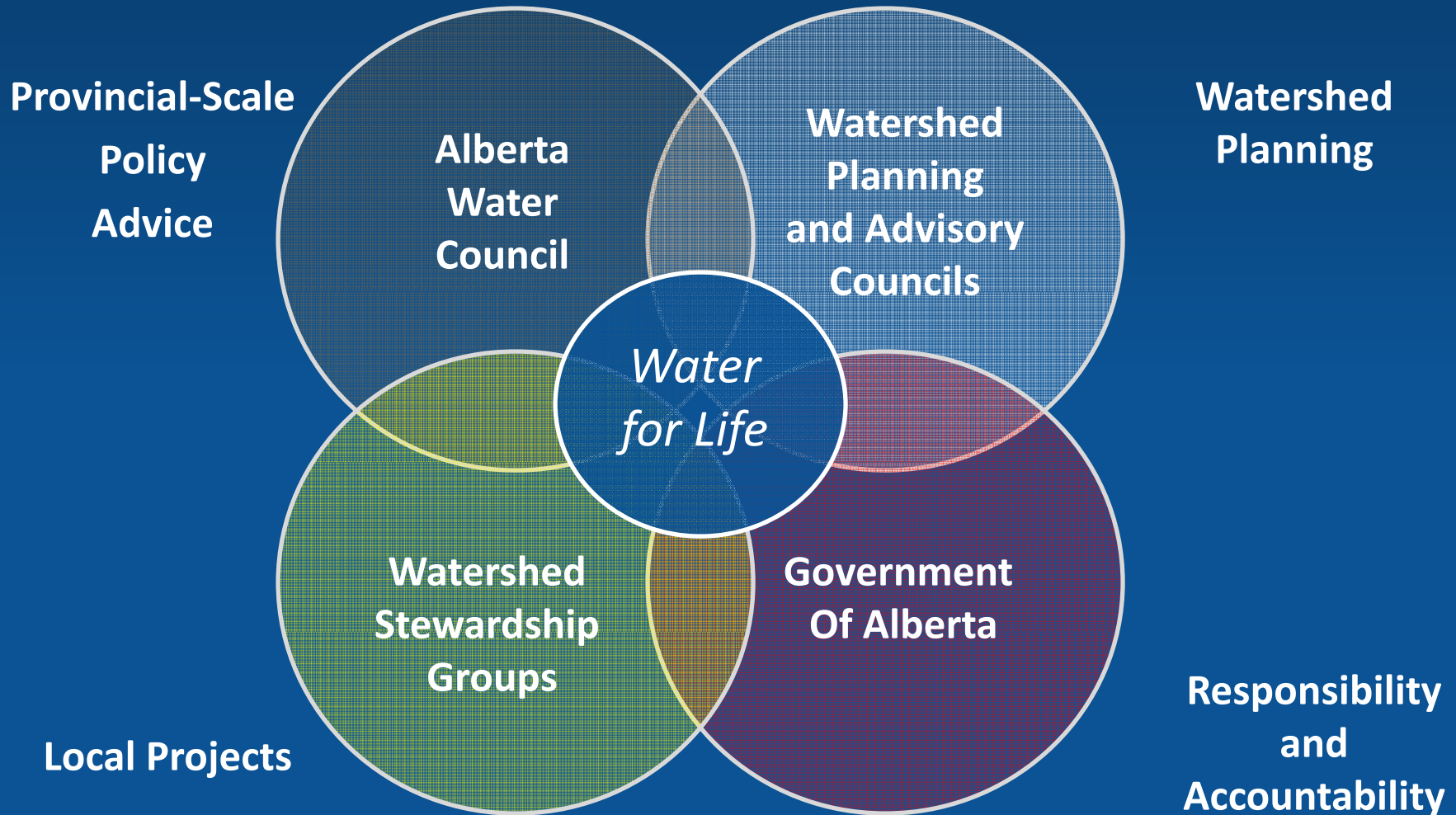
- A consensus-based, multi-stakeholder partnership with members from government, industry, and non-governmental organizations
- In 2007, the Council transitioned to become a not-for-profit society

# What do we do?

- Champion the achievement of three *Water for Life* goals
- Monitor and report on implementation progress of the *Water for Life* strategy
- Develop water policy recommendations



# The *Water for Life* partnerships:



# Sectors

## Industry

- Chemical and Petrochemical
- Forestry
- Irrigation
- Livestock
- Mining
- Oil & Gas
- Power Generation

## NGO

- Environmental (3 seats)
- Fishery Habitat Conservation
- Lake Environment Conservation
- Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils
- Wetland Conservation

# Sectors

## GoA & Provincial Authorities

- Agriculture & Rural Development
- Energy
- Environment
- Sustainable Resource Development
- Health & Wellness
- Alberta Water Research Institute

## Government

- Rural
- Small Urban
- Large Urban
- Métis Settlements

# AWC Structure

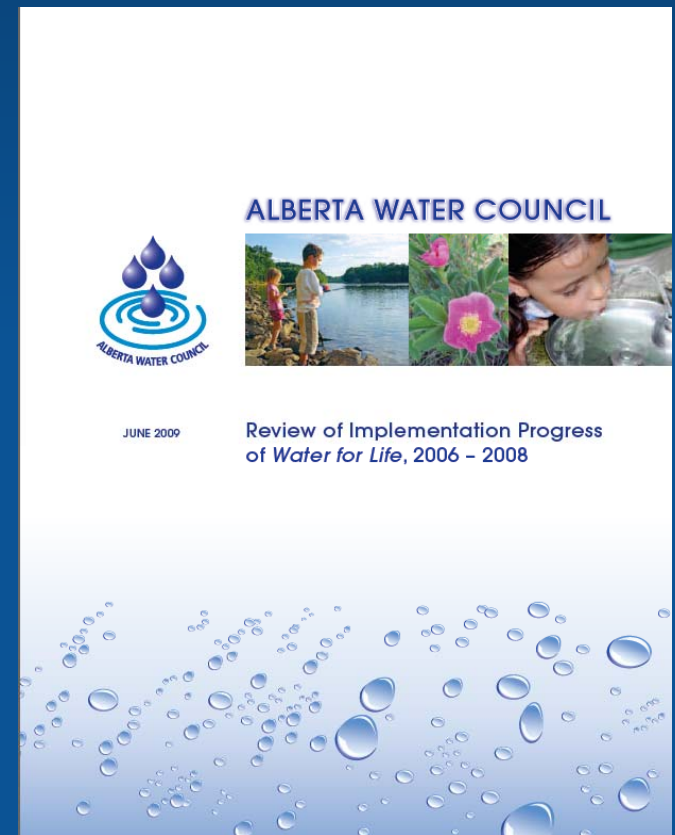


# Project List:

- Wetland Policy (Sept 2008)
- Water CEP Sector Planning - Framework (Sept 2008)
- Shared Governance Framework (Sept 2008)
- Watershed Management Planning Framework (Dec 2008)
- Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems (Mar 2009)
- *Water for Life* Implementation Review (June 2009)
- Water Allocation Transfer System Upgrade (Aug 2009)
- Sector Planning for CEP – Implementation on-going
- Provincial Ecological Aquatic Criteria for Health on-going

# W4L Implementation Review

- Strategic feedback to the Province and other stakeholders helps re-focus and advance the achievement of the *WFL* strategy's three goals:
  - Safe, secure drinking water supply
  - Healthy aquatic ecosystems, and
  - Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy



# W4L Implementation Review

- Key areas from 2006 – 2008 review:
  - Better integrating land, air and water management
  - Developing leaders and champions of *Water for Life*
  - Providing adequate, sustainable resourcing
  - Improving water education
  - Addressing source water protection
  - Managing non-point source pollution
- Also includes specific recommendations for each goal and key direction of the *Water for Life* strategy

# Water Licence Transfers

- Was identified as an urgent issue at a 2008 Council workshop
- Potential to address social and economic demands for water in a closed basin
- Potential to improve aquatic ecosystem health
- Potential to improve water conservation, efficiency and productivity



# Water Licence Transfers

- The team examined options and possibilities for a water licence market system in Alberta
- They hosted a two-day symposium to learn from other jurisdictions about how to better manage water supplies in times of scarcity.
- The team's report forms part of larger package that will go to the Minister of Environment

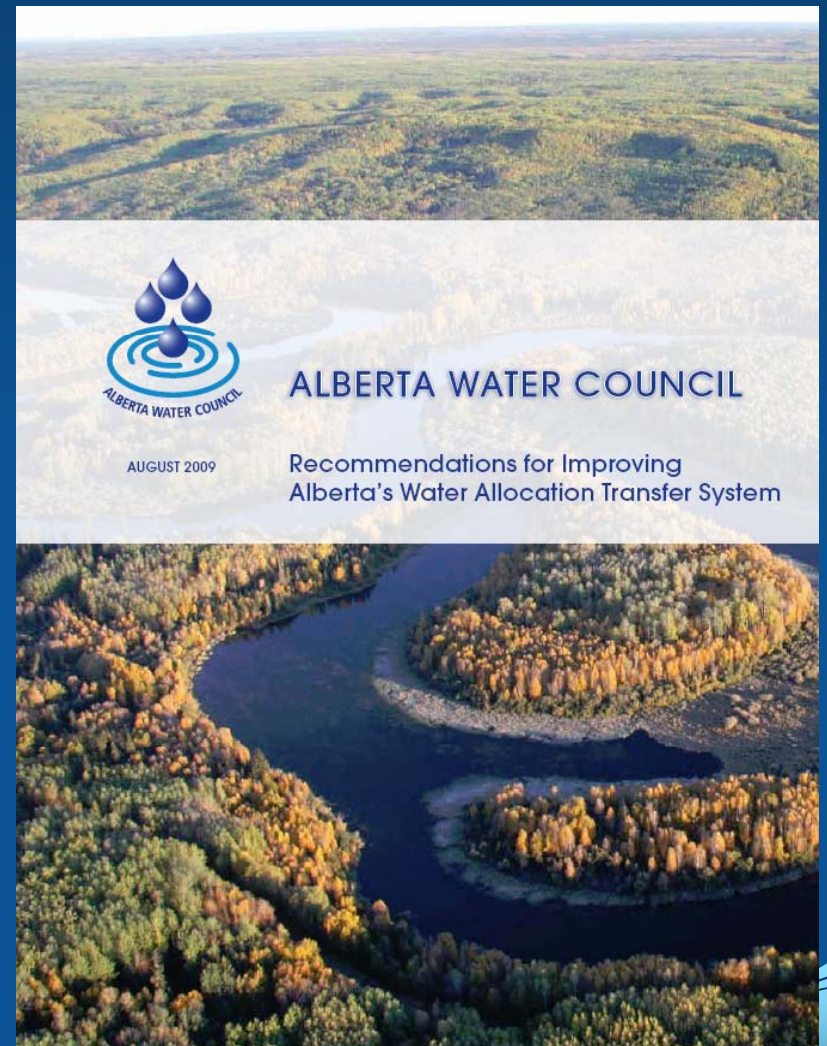


# Water Licence Transfers

- Report did not have consensus on two recommendations, and disagreement on degree in another two areas
- Recommendations in 6 key areas:
  1. Setting a level of Protected Water as a pre-requisite to a water market
  2. Establishing the objectives and principles of a water market
  3. Getting “unused water” into the market and providing guidance on acceptable reasons for having “unused water”

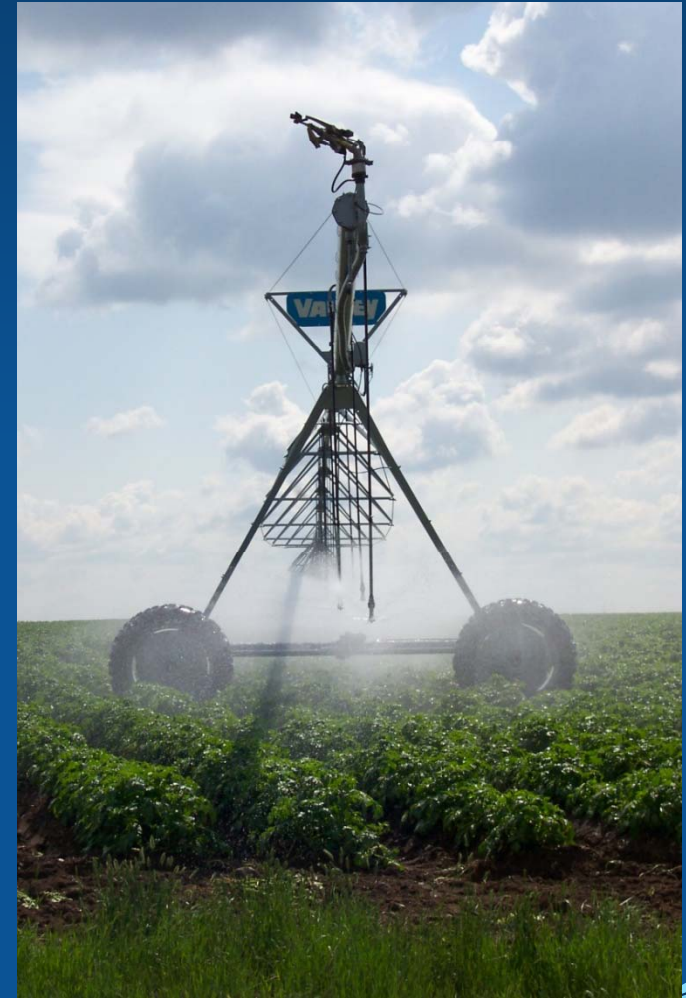
# Water Licence Transfers

4. Encouraging water conservation, efficiency and productivity
5. Improving the transfer process – balancing the level of risk with the level of scrutiny
6. Improving data and information availability



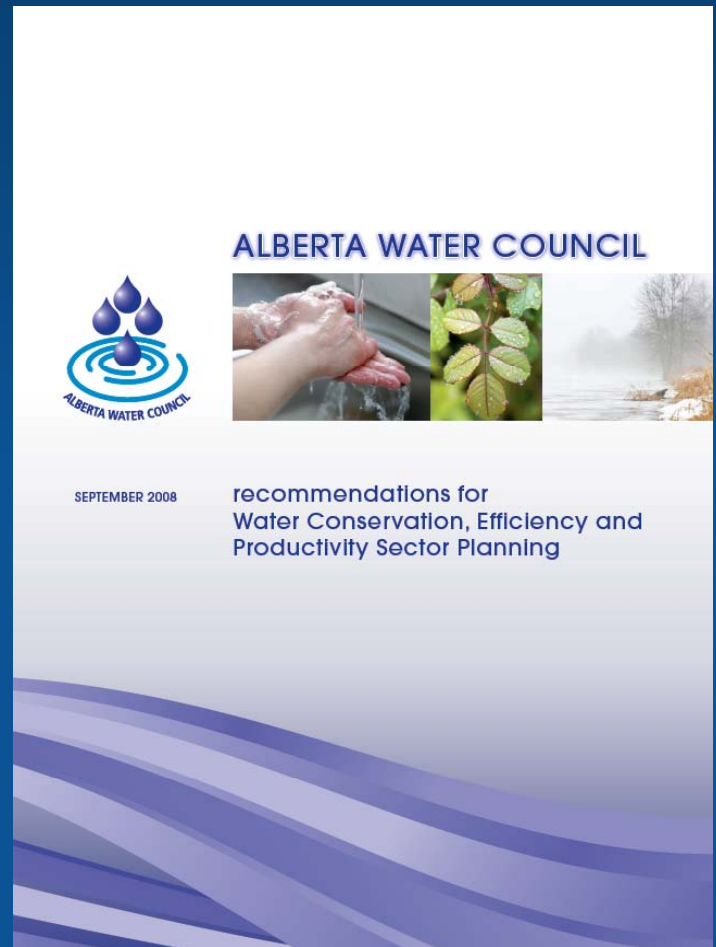
# CEP Planning

- Support the *WFL* strategy objective of improving overall efficiency and productivity of water use in Alberta by 30% from 2005 levels by 2015
- Recognition of shared responsibility for the wise use of a precious resource
- To help address current and future environmental, social, and economic challenges
- To provide a framework for taking action on CEP initiatives



# CEP Planning

- AWC started CEP work in 2006 by developing definitions & agreeing on purpose of CEP work
- A second CEP Team was asked to:
  - Complete a guide for major water-using sectors to follow when developing their CEP Plans
  - Identify the sectors that should participate
  - Outline and evaluate tools to address participation
  - Identify BMPs and benchmarks for water use



# CEP Planning

- Seven biggest water-using sectors have voluntarily committed to develop CEP Plans by December 2010 through their various sector associations.
- A third (current) CEP team is:
  - Providing a forum for sectors to share ideas, experiences, opportunities and challenges in developing and implementing CEP Plans.
  - Evaluating and determining the need for enhancements to the CEP Framework
  - Regularly reporting progress

# CEP Planning

- Current Situation:
  - Updated “What We’ve Learned” report on the Council’s website
  - Irrigation CEP Plan is nearly complete
  - Urban Municipal CEP Plan was recently approved by AUMA
  - Other 5 sectors are working on their plans
  - Rural Municipal Sector has joined us along the way...



# Provincial Ecological Aquatic Criteria for Health

- Purpose is to select, modify or develop criteria to identify areas within a watershed that are significant to the maintenance of aquatic ecosystem health
- Project is phase 2 of a 6-part, science-based process called Systematic Conservation Planning



Step 1:  
Objective Setting

→ Set objectives that are relevant to planning exercise

Step 2:  
Criteria Building

→ Develop *a priori* criteria to meet objectives  
**Alberta Water Council PEACH project**

Step 3:  
Data Acquisition

→ Acquire and build spatial datasets for use in the model

Step 4:  
Parameter Building

→ Develop “rules” for systematic application of criteria using available data

Step 5:  
Spatial Modeling

→ Run spatial model to acquire map outputs

Step 6:  
Decision Making

→ Set priorities for management using systematic and scientifically defensible information

# Why Identify Criteria?



- Potential to link with the Government of Alberta's *Environmentally Significant Areas* study - same methodology
- Supports both watershed planning and regional land use planning
- First step towards filling a critical information gap

Thank you  
Questions?

[www.awchome.ca](http://www.awchome.ca)