

Enhancing Collaboration Between CASA and the Alberta Water Council

Prepared by the
Enhanced Collaboration
with the Water Council Committee
for the
Clean Air Strategic Alliance Board of Directors

Final Report

November 6, 2009

Acknowledgements

The Committee to Enhance Collaboration with the Water Council gratefully acknowledges the contributions of both organizations – CASA and the AWC – in supporting the committee’s work. Stakeholders also supported the committee by hosting meetings and contributing valuable staff resources behind the scenes.

The committee members were very committed to completing their task and the volunteer time and energy is very much appreciated.

About the Alberta Water Council

The Alberta Water Council (AWC) is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 24 members from governments, industry and non-government organizations. Operating by consensus, the AWC serves as a unique example of the concept of shared governance. The Council advises the Alberta Government, stakeholders and the public on effective water management practices and solutions to water issues, as well as on priorities for water research. It also regularly reviews implementation of the *Water for Life* strategy and champions achievement of the strategy’s three goals. The Council’s vision is that all Albertans are water stewards, working together to ensure safe, healthy and abundant water for a high quality of life for future generations.

Alberta Water Council
9915 108 Street NW Flr 14
Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8
Ph (780) 644-7380
Fax (780) 644-7382
Email: info@awchome.ca
Web: www.awchome.ca

About CASA

The Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) is a non-profit association composed of stakeholders from three sectors – government, industry and non-government organizations such as health and environmental groups. All CASA groups and teams, including the board of directors, make decisions and recommendations by consensus. These recommendations are likely to be more innovative and longer lasting than those reached through traditional negotiation processes. CASA’s vision is that the air will have no adverse odour, taste, or visual impact and have no measurable short- or long-term adverse effects on people, animals or the environment.

Clean Air Strategic Alliance
10035 108 St NW Flr 10
Edmonton AB T5J 3E1
Ph (780) 427-9793
Fax (780) 422-3127
E-mail: casa@casahome.org
Web: <http://www.casahome.org>

ISBN 978-1-896250-66-3
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1. Background

After the Alberta Water Council (AWC) was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 2007, the CASA board expressed interest in the potential for collaborating with the Council on matters of mutual interest. The two organizations have a number of similarities, and stakeholders wondered if efficiencies could be gained by combining activities of the secretariat and, at the strategic level, if any new consensus recommendations could be integrated. In March 2007, the CASA board established a committee to explore opportunities for collaboration with the AWC.¹

The committee did some initial work in 2007 and 2008 to better understand the activities of CASA and the AWC, then took a one-year hiatus from mid-2008 to mid-2009 due to other project priorities. In September 2009 the committee came together again to make final recommendations under each of the three goals described in its terms of reference. The committee has consensus on these recommendations and felt that presentations to the Boards of both CASA and the AWC would help members better understand and interact with each other, and would increase awareness of how air and water issues could lead to opportunities for more integrated solutions.

1.1. Project Goals

The terms of reference suggest that collaboration opportunities between CASA and the AWC could be enhanced by:

1. Identifying opportunities for leveraging resources, increasing efficiency, avoiding duplicate efforts, and building on each others' successes;
2. Educating and raising awareness regarding the activities and processes of both the Water Council and CASA; and
3. Demonstrating a commitment to, and help build on, the important linkages between air, land and water at the strategic level.

This short report contains eight recommendations designed to achieve each of the three goals.

¹ Committee members are listed in Appendix A, while Appendix B contains the committee's terms of reference.

2. Goal One: Collaboration Opportunities

The first step in identifying potential opportunities for leveraging resources, increasing efficiency, avoiding duplicate efforts, and building on each others' successes was to develop a list of projects for both organizations. Completed and current projects for CASA and the AWC are listed in Appendices C and D respectively. The committee reviewed the list of projects and concluded that there is no obvious overlap in these teams. Both organizations feel they occupy unique niches.

One obvious and important opportunity for collaboration is between CASA and AWC staff, both of which have similar organizational hierarchies and functions. This is already happening and is expected to continue as the two groups mature and evolve.

Examples of staff collaboration to date include:

- Informal information gathering between executive directors, project managers, and administrative staff;
- Encouraging the other organization to review and comment on core documents such as process guidelines and business plans;
- Sharing operational documents such as human resource policies, insurance policies, financial management templates, and membership recruitment and management strategies;
- Sharing mechanisms to disseminate information;
- Sharing contact information when searching for consulting support for project teams; and
- Joint training sessions and observing each other's board meetings.

Recommendation 1: Staff collaboration

Building on the successful staff collaboration experience to date, the Committee recommends that:

CASA and AWC staff continue to look for collaborative opportunities to achieve efficiencies in their respective business functions and aspects of day-to-day operations.

Recommendation 2: Website links

Both CASA and the AWC have attractive websites with a great deal of information about the organizations, their activities and the issues they are addressing. By linking to each other's websites, stakeholders and other visitors will have the opportunity to become familiar with both groups. Thus the Committee recommends that:

By December 31, 2009, staff establish links to one another's websites.

Recommendation 3: Joint events

Joint sponsorship of events offers many benefits for both organizations as well as for a large number of stakeholders. Not only do such events provide excellent opportunities to network and share information, they can also stimulate new ways of thinking about issues of mutual interest, leading to more creative solutions. The consensus workshop honouring the legacy of Dr. Martha Kostuch is an excellent example of an event that benefits the two organizations and beyond. To enhance the collaboration process, stimulate more integrated outcomes, and share valuable experiences the Committee recommends that:

AWC and CASA staff, in consultation with their respective boards as appropriate, develop and organize joint events such as symposiums, workshops and staff meetings. These events should strive to find new strategic linkages between air and water, identify cumulative effects, and seek other areas of collaboration.

3. Goal Two: Education and Awareness

Multi-stakeholder organizations that make decisions by consensus are still relatively rare in Alberta and Canada so both CASA and the AWC can be regarded as trailblazers when it comes to matters of process. CASA has a little more experience, but the AWC has made great strides and is building its own body of knowledge. Both organizations have finalized new process guidelines that reflect their practices and their anticipated challenges and, as a result, are well-positioned to share their experiences with others.

Both past and current board and team members from the two organizations have referred positively to their terms of service and to the impact that consensus processes have had on them. In addition, both CASA and AWC have been invited to make presentations to other groups, indicating that external stakeholders recognize the similarities as well as the value of the process.

However, despite the organizational and process similarities, including the fact that a number of agencies and departments are members of both CASA and the AWC, the approaches for dealing with air and water issues have traditionally been a little different. This presents a potential opportunity to adapt existing processes and expand their application to other areas in ways that may not have been thought of by a single group. The committee believes there are several things that can be done to raise awareness within CASA and the AWC, and externally, about the activities and processes of the two organizations, and thus makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation 4: Proximate meetings

To help board members develop good working relationships with each other and to raise awareness of what the other organization is doing, the Committee recommends that:

CASA and the AWC attempt to schedule one board meeting per year close to one another in time and location to encourage informal interaction of boards and staff (e.g., at a joint lunch or evening event).

Recommendation 5: Annual updates

The Committee is of the view that an annual update to each board on the other organization's activities and on work that has been done collaboratively would be valuable. If the agenda permits, a formal presentation with an opportunity for discussion would be most advantageous. If that is not possible, at least a written status report should be provided. Thus, the Committee recommends that:

The CASA and AWC boards of directors receive an annual update on both collaboration activities and substantive work of the other organization.

Recommendation 6: CASA Coordination Workshop

CASA holds a coordination workshop every three years to help the board and project teams better understand specific projects and potential areas of interaction and overlap. These workshops have been well-received and are enthusiastically attended.

The Committee believes the CASA coordination workshops provide another opportunity to network and share experiences and recommends that:

CASA invite AWC staff along with board and project team members to participate in the coordination workshops.

4. Goal Three: Strategic Linkages between Air, Land and Water

The interconnectedness of air, land and water is recognized, and efforts to respect these linkages continue to be strengthened. CASA and AWC recommendations reflect the need to protect ecosystem integrity and not solve one problem by creating another one somewhere else. Stakeholders too recognize the need to break down the “silos” and think more broadly about solutions to environmental, social and economic challenges.

One of the biggest benefits that CASA and the AWC provide to the Government of Alberta is the richness of perspective, knowledge and expertise that results from their multi-stakeholder nature. The Committee believes there is potential for multi-stakeholder processes to benefit other initiatives beyond those that focus on air and water. For example, the AWC is working to identify criteria that are significant to the maintenance of aquatic ecosystem health. However, these criteria will be very useful to those involved in implementing the Land-use Framework as well as other environmental initiatives.

Recommendation 7: Value to Alberta of multi-stakeholder organizations

Recognizing the many advantages of using a multi-stakeholder approach to address difficult issues and the value that could be added to discussion of issues beyond air and water, the Committee recommends that:

CASA and the AWC develop a description of their benefits as multi-stakeholder organizations and how they add value to Alberta.

Recommendation 8: Roles in implementing the Land-use Framework

The new Land-use Framework is a very significant piece of policy and has the ability to substantially influence resource use and management in Alberta for years to come. Multi-stakeholder Regional Advisory Councils in each of the seven designated land-use regions are preparing their best advice to the Government of Alberta on regional plans for their area. Given the experience of CASA and the AWC with a wide range of environmental issues and with multi-stakeholder processes, the Committee recommends that:

CASA and the AWC, in consultation with the Land-use Secretariat, hold discussions on a role for each organization in the implementation of the Land-use Framework, including regional planning and cumulative effects management.

Appendix A: Committee Members

Name	Stakeholder Group
Dave Belyea	Alberta Environment
Tom Burton	Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
Bob Cameron	South Peace Environmental Association
Kerra Chomlak	CASA
Rejeanne Cool	MEGlobal Canada representing Canadian Chemical Producers' Association
Gord Edwards	Alberta Water Council
Gustavo Hernandez	CASA
Robyn Jacobsen	CASA

Appendix B: Terms of Reference

Approved by the CASA Board on 24 June 2008

Background:

At the March 29, 2007 meeting, the CASA board reviewed opportunities for an Enhanced Collaboration between CASA and the Alberta Water Council. After discussing the issue, the board decided to establish a CASA committee to “explore opportunities for collaboration with the Alberta Water Council.”

Goal of the Committee:

Enhance collaboration between CASA and the Alberta Water Council by:

- Identifying opportunities for leveraging resources, increasing efficiency, avoiding duplicate efforts, and building on each others’ successes
- Educating and raising awareness regarding the activities and processes of both the Water Council and CASA
- Demonstrating a commitment to, and help build on, the important linkages between air, land and water at the strategic level

Key Tasks for the Committee:

1. Develop a description of the existing mechanisms for collaboration, including a list of current activities that potentially overlap (addressing the roles of the CASA board, teams, secretariat, and stakeholders from government, NGOs and industry)
2. Evaluate other collaboration options.
3. Identify gaps in CASA’s current collaboration with the Water Council, if any.
4. Prepare draft recommendations for discussion by the CASA board and a parallel report on opportunities for the Alberta Water Council.
5. Address the need for public and stakeholder consultation on the recommendations, if any.
6. Address implementation and monitoring of any recommendations developed.

Key Deliverables/Timelines:

The committee will work towards the following milestones:

- June 2008 –Present Terms of Reference
- November 2008 – Report to CASA Board and provide recommendations to the Board, if any
- November 2008 – Provide opportunities report to AWC

Budget:

No external funds are required for the work at this time. The CASA secretariat will provide project support.

Membership:

Bob Cameron (NGO)
Rejeanne Cool (Industry)
Kerra Chomlak (CASA Secretariat)
Carolyn Kolebaba, replaced by Tom Burton (Government)
Dave Belyea (GOA)
Gord Edwards (AWC Secretariat)

Appendix C: CASA Projects

Completed or Archived Projects

Airshed Zones Project Team: The goals of the Airshed Zones Project Team were to achieve consensus on a) revised CASA guidelines for airshed zones that are consistent with the CASA goals and principles, and b) the role of CASA in working with Alberta Environment to implement the Airshed Alliance item of their business plan.

Animal Health Project Team: Prevent short and long-term adverse impacts of air contaminants on animal health.

Breathe Easy: Reduce vehicle emissions by removing older, high-emitting vehicles from the road by offering cleaner transportation incentives to drivers who surrendered their vehicles to the Breathe Easy Program. Educate the public on how older or poorly maintained vehicles contribute to air emissions and greenhouse gas emissions to a greater degree than newer vehicles and public transport. Assess public acceptance/response to a permanent and expanded vehicle scrappage project.

Clean Air Strategy: The Government of Alberta asked CASA to develop recommendations for a renewed Clean Air Strategy for Alberta. Recommendations were presented to the government in July 2009.

CleanBus.ca: The diesel particulate filter test project investigated the reduction of emissions from heavy-duty diesel-powered vehicles. Diesel particulate filters were installed on two Edmonton Transit buses and the reports outline the results from two testing periods, one in January 2003 and the other in January 2004.

Climate Change Project Team: Contribute to greenhouse gas reductions by developing, assessing, prioritizing, explaining and recommending actions and measures to government and stakeholders that will broaden the scope of early action and help decide on subsequent action.

Climate Wise: The program was developed by the CASA Climate Change Project Team as a community-based public outreach pilot program. It was designed to assess what barriers inhibit Albertans from taking simple actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The website contains all the materials associated with the ClimateWise program and its six information sessions.

Confined Feeding Operations: Developed a strategic plan to a) improve the management of air emissions from existing and future confined feeding operations in Alberta, and b) improve relationships between stakeholders.

Data Issues Group: Developed an implementation plan to lead to progress in resolving outstanding data issues.

Electrical Efficiency and Conservation: The project was created to implement the electricity efficiency and conservation recommendations (#s 65 – 68) found in the November 2003

report of the Electricity Project Team, with the aim of increasing electricity efficiency and expanding conservation efforts in the province.

Electricity: Recommended a new management framework for air emissions from Alberta's electricity sector. This multi-pollutant framework will result in significant reductions in five key substances. The approach incorporates elements from the current system and proposes new mechanisms that balance environmental and economic interests in the province.

Human Health Protect Team: Developed recommendations for a system within which the effects of air contaminants on human health can be monitored and addressed.

Pollution Prevention/Continuous Improvement (P2/CI): The P2/CI approach has potential to produce desirable environmental outcomes beyond what can be achieved through regulation. Documents compiled by the team are available in CASA's online library.

Renewable and Alternative Energy: Recommended that the Government of Alberta develop and implement a policy framework to increase the supply of and demand for renewable and alternative electrical energy in Alberta, and that the elements and policy options contained in its report be considered in developing the framework.

Vehicle Emissions: Piloted, monitored and evaluated CASA approved projects related to vehicle emissions reduction.

Current Projects

Air Quality Education and Outreach Clearinghouse: The links in this online clearinghouse provide information about air quality education, as well as outreach programs and materials in Alberta.

Ambient Monitoring Strategic Planning: Develop a dynamic, effective and efficient framework as a foundation for a world-class ambient air quality monitoring system.

Ambient Operations Steering Committee: Track progress in achieving the ambient monitoring strategic plan, set the annual budget for the Data Warehouse, approve the annual workplan, establish policies and procedures, revise the strategic plan as required, and review and evaluate the system.

Electricity Framework Review: Conduct an initial scoping of the 2003 Electricity Framework to determine if any areas warrant a detailed review, and either recommend that no further work is necessary or undertake a detailed review of those areas and make recommendations.

Enhanced Collaboration with the Water Council: Many of the goals, processes, resources for CASA and the Alberta Water Council are similar. This project looks for ways to enhance opportunities for the two organizations to work together.

Flaring and Venting: Assess the performance and make recommendations regarding the Alberta solution gas flaring management framework. Develop recommendations to address a broader range of flaring and gas venting issues in Alberta.

Human and Animal Health Implementation Team: Provide a plan for implementing the recommendations from the Human Health Project Team and the recommendations from the Animal Health Project Team.

Indoor Air Quality Project Team: Facilitate the development of comprehensive and coordinated approaches to addressing indoor air quality concerns in Alberta.

Martha Kostuch Legacy Workshop: Entitled “Bridging Interests, Building Agreement,” this workshop honours the consensus-building contributions of the late Martha Kostuch, long-time CASA board member.

Particulate Matter and Ozone Implementation: Support and when required, facilitate the timely implementation of the 2003 Alberta Particulate Matter and Ozone Management Framework.

Performance Measures Committee: Evaluate the status of air quality in Alberta based on five performance measures: 1) air quality; 2) effects on humans and the ecosystem; 3) recommendations implemented; 4) stakeholder satisfaction; and 5) media recognition.

Priority Setting Workshop Organizing Committee: Oversee the 2009 Priority Setting Workshop, report back on process issues and make recommendations to the CASA board, Alberta Environment and workshop participants.

Vehicle Emissions: Identify, evaluate and recommend areas of further action to reduce vehicle emissions, implement initiatives approved by the CASA board, influence/advocate for implementation of policies and programs that reduce transportation emissions, serve as a resource and provide expertise to CASA teams and other organizations, identify and recommend communication and public education on vehicle emissions, and identify gaps and make recommendations to fill gaps.

Appendix D: AWC Projects

Completed Projects

Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems: This work focused on defining the term “healthy aquatic ecosystems,” providing context for the use of this term, and exploring opportunities to advance the Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems goal of the *Water for Life* strategy.

Intra-Basin Water Movement: Minister Renner asked the AWC to determine if the current approach on moving water from one sub-basin for use in another sub-basin is still valid and what, if any, changes should be made to the policy and under what conditions. The team reviewed concerns and other materials that had been filed with the Government of Alberta, solicited input and undertook analysis which resulted in recommendations to the Minister.

New Alberta Wetland Policy: Development of the draft Wetland Policy and its companion Implementation Plan was supported by extensive policy review and analysis along with a number of stakeholder consultations. The AWC recommendations to government focused on protecting Alberta’s wetlands by managing impacts, setting objectives, encouraging stewardship and building knowledge and capacity.

Shared Governance Framework: The shared governance framework describes roles, responsibilities, relationships and accountabilities for the three main *Water for Life* partnerships: the Water Council, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils and Watershed Stewardship Groups.

Watershed Planning Framework: This document recommends several improvements to the current approach to creating watershed management plans, including the development of a framework that will integrate shared governance and a watershed approach into existing policy and legislation.

Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Definitions: The team created a foundation on which sectors and Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils could build. It identified desired outcomes of improvements in water conservation, efficiency and productivity; recommended eight principles to guide these improvements; and developed definitions for water conservation, efficiency and productivity.

Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Planning: Participation of water-using sectors is essential to achieving *Water for Life* goals. This project resulted in a detailed document that will guide sectors in developing their conservation, efficiency and productivity plans.

Water for Life Implementation Review: Reviewing implementation progress of the *Water for Life* strategy is a fundamental part of the AWC’s mandate. These review reports provide feedback and recommendations to the Government of Alberta and other stakeholders in achieving the strategy’s goals. The AWC has completed three reviews to date, with review reports published in 2005, 2007 and 2009.

Water Policy Issues and Gaps: One of the key challenges in implementing the *Water for Life* strategy is aligning policy, legislation, and resources. This project identified and prioritized water policy issues and gaps relating to Alberta's water management system.

Water Research Strategy: The Water Research Strategy was developed by the Alberta Science and Research Authority (ASRA) in collaboration with the Alberta Water Council to provide a comprehensive, coherent and integrated strategy and action plan to guide work in the area of knowledge.

Water Strategy Renewal: This project was undertaken at the request of the Minister, to build on the experience gained to date and to highlight strategic areas of focus for the next phase of the *Water for Life* strategy's implementation. The AWC advised that the three goals and three key directions remain valid, but it is imperative that progress be made on all goals.

Current Projects

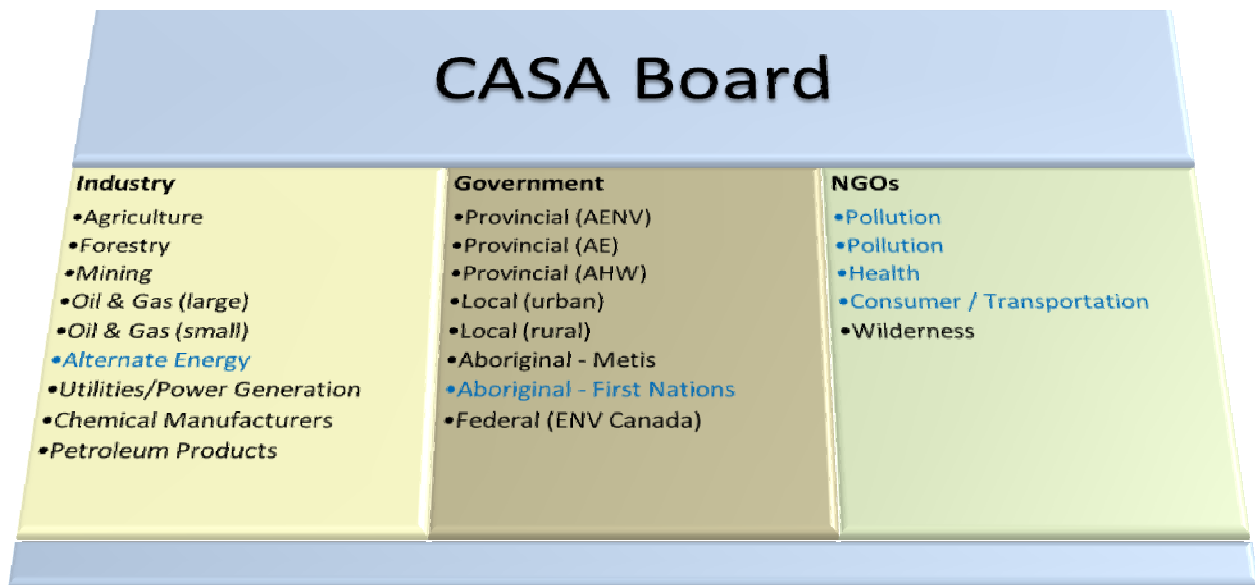
Provincial Ecological Aquatic Criteria for Health: Develop a suite of criteria that can be used to identify areas that are significant to maintaining aquatic ecosystem health. This project is being done to serve the needs of the Land-use Secretariat and other audiences.

Monitoring Development of Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Plans: Builds on previous activity by the AWC to assist and guide water-using sectors in developing conservation, efficiency and productivity plans.

Water Allocation Transfer System Upgrade Project Team: Recommend how Alberta's water allocation transfer system could be enhanced to better contribute to achieving *Water for Life* goals.

Water for Life Implementation Review: Undertake the next review of *Water for Life* implementation progress and develop recommendations.

Appendix E: Representation on the Boards



LEGEND

Black Seats common to CASA and AWC

Blue Seats unique to CASA or AWC

* Fisheries Habitat Conservation is a collective of: Alberta Conservation Association, The Alberta Fish and Game Association, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Angling Outfitters Association of Alberta, The Nature Conservancy of Canada (Alberta) and Trout Unlimited Canada

** AWC's Intensive Livestock Working Group is a collective of Alberta Pork, Alberta Egg Producers, Alberta Hatching Egg Producers, Alberta Milk, Alberta Beef Producers, Alberta Turkey Producers, Alberta Chicken Producers, and Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association

*** Canadian Chemical Producers Association (CPPA) and Canadian Petroleum Products Institute (CPPI) have applied for membership

Acronym

AARD Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

AE Alberta Energy

AENV Alberta Environment

AHW Alberta Health and Wellness

ASRD Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

AWRI Alberta Water Research Institute

ENV Canada Environment Canada
