



Managing Water - Watershed Approach

Battle River Watershed Forum

Killam, Alberta

March 19, 2005



Presentation Objective

- To provide you with information on the history and the future vision of watershed management and planning in Alberta
- So that you are able to discuss your role in watershed management and planning for the Battle Watershed



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“You

**includes Alberta Environment
and other government departments**

this is a partnership”



History

1890 to 1980 - “allocate water”

- Federal and provincial governments promoted people moving to Alberta
- Primarily agriculture based economy that required secure water supply
- First-in-Time principle to ensure orderly priority of water use during low flows
- Focused on water allocation & use



History

1980 to 2000 - “the great evolution”

- Started addressing ecosystem needs
- Started addressing water quality needs
- Planning still focused on water allocation but considered ecosystem and water quality
- The idea of integrated plans emerged



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“Planning provides

Advice & Recommendations

to accountable decision makers”



History

1980 to 2000 - “the great evolution”

- **Planning controlled by Alberta Environment**
- **Some consultation but limited involvement**
- **Planning focused on providing advice to water allocation decision makers, Water Act administrators**



History

1980 to 2000 - “the great evolution”

- **Water Act developed in 1990s**
- **Framework for Water Management Planning**
 - **Others can undertake planning**
 - **Integrated quantity & quality**
 - **Stakeholders must be involved**
- **Strategy for Protection of the Aquatic Environment**



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“Alberta Announces

Water for Life – Strategy

**Albertans demand involvement in
water management**

water partnerships the answer”



Water Partnerships

Alberta Water Council

- **Provincial – policy & water strategy**

Watershed Planning & Advisory Councils

- **Major Watersheds – lead planning**

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- **Local – education & on-the-ground**



Watershed Planning & Advisory Councils

- **Stand alone groups that are registered societies with by-laws, board of directors & business plans**
- **Government departments are members (partners) & choose to be involved and level of involvement based on common goals**



Roles of WPACs

- **Provide a forum for Stakeholders**
- **Identify issues & priorities**
- **State of the Watershed reporting**
- **Watershed Management Plans**
- **Conservation and wetland plans**
- **Work with other authorities to adopt and implement watershed plans**
- **Promote Best Management Practices**
- **Education and awareness**



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**“Watershed Management Planning
includes many components**

**Battle River water management
planning focusing on water allocation”**



Battle River WMP

“Start with the End in Mind”

Primary Recommendations

- Amount of water needed for a healthy aquatic ecosystem (WCO)
- Amount of water available for consumptive use (Allocation)

Accountable Decision Maker

- Alberta Environment



Battle River WMP

“Start with the End in Mind”

Secondary Recommendations

- **Water Conservation Targets**
- **Required Water Quality Improvement**

Accountable Decision Maker

- **Water Users – municipalities, industries, individuals**
- **Water polluters - municipalities, industries, individuals**
- **Point Source Regulator - AENV**



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“You

**are accountable for your
recommendations**

**to each other, your neighbours, the
public and future generations”**



Battle River WMP

“Start with the End in Mind”

Vision for the Battle River Watershed

- **What are your individual visions for the Battle River Watershed?**
- **What is your collective vision for the Battle River Watershed?**
- **What is the community vision?**



Battle River WMP

Information & understanding Required

- **Natural Flows & Variability**
 - How much water is there?
- **Water Allocation & Use**
 - How much water has been given away and how is it use (consumed, returned)
- **Instream Needs**
 - How much water, of what quality, is required for a healthy aquatic ecosystem



Battle River WMP

Information & understanding Required

- **Water Demand for Human Use**
 - How much water is required in the future
 - Under current use practices
 - Under improved conservation practices
- **Water Quality Condition**
 - What is the water quality during the year
 - How does quantity relate to quality
 - Can water quality improve at the source



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“Understand the Battle River Watershed

**before making recommendations on
solutions”**



Battle River WMP

■ Battle River Watershed Forums

- Fantastic idea for gaining understanding
- Bite-sized pieces
- Work towards a common understanding

- Resist jumping to solutions
- There is no silver bullet
- Every option has its own impacts

Battle River

Watershed Planning

Move towards a Watershed Plan

- **Water Conservation – water users**
- **Riparian Condition – adjacent land owners**
- **Improved Water Quality**
 - Point source – municipal, industrial
 - Non-point source – development, agriculture
- **Improved Wetlands**
 - Municipal, development, agriculture
- **Floodplain Management**
 - Municipal, development, agriculture



Battle River Watershed Planning

- **Move towards a Battle WPAC**
 - **What are the most important issues facing the Battle River Watershed?**
 - **What is the current condition of the Battle River Watershed & where is it going?**
 - **What is the Battle WPAC tackling first?**
 - **Are the “Accountable Decision Makers” at the table and involved?**



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**“Battle River Watershed Group
off to a great start**

Good Luck!!!!!!”