



NEWS RELEASE

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Strong science the basis for managing non-point source pollution

Edmonton ...Continued population growth and economic development in Alberta will increase the extent and risk of non-point source pollution, according to a new report from the Alberta Water Council, which also recommends ways for the Province to manage this pollution in a cost-effective and timely manner.

Non-point source pollution is contamination that enters a water body from many dispersed points of discharge and has no single point of origin. It contrasts with point source emissions, which are licensed and controlled releases.

Council Executive Director, Gord Edwards, says there is urgency around this issue as problems are emerging more frequently and we need to be more proactive in our management approach. “To effectively manage the health of our watersheds, we need a good understanding of the contributions of all sources of pollution, and the policies and tools that can be used to minimize their impacts. The challenge is that Alberta, like most other jurisdictions, lacks the solid scientific knowledge to manage non-point source pollution at its core.”

The report, *Recommendations to Improve Non-Point Source Pollution Management in Alberta*, makes five specific recommendations that reflect the need for knowledge and tools to determine:

- How much non-point source pollution there is (quantification)
- Where it is coming from (research)
- If it is a problem (evaluation)
- What we can do about it (mitigation).

This report is the first of its kind to use a multi-stakeholder, watershed-based approach to develop provincial policy recommendations for addressing non-point source pollution. Edwards also notes that the report is very timely as Alberta works to integrate its land use and watershed management systems through the Land Use Framework and the *Water for Life* strategy.

The report and more information on the Alberta Water Council can be found at www.albertawatercouncil.ca.

Established in 2004, the Alberta Water Council is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 24 members from governments, industry, and non-government organizations. Its primary task is to monitor and steward implementation of Alberta’s Water for Life strategy and to champion the achievement of the strategy’s three outcomes of a safe, secure drinking water supply, healthy aquatic ecosystems, and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

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