



NEWS RELEASE

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Advancing Lake Watershed Management in Alberta

Edmonton... Increasing recreational demand, urbanization of lakeshores and changing land uses are putting stress on many of Alberta's lakes, affecting lake health as well as recreational experiences. A new report from the Alberta Water Council (AWC) recommends 12 ways in which the Province can improve the way lakes and their watershed are managed.

“Scientific data and anecdotal evidence have raised awareness about fluctuating water levels, changes in water quality, harmful algal blooms and fish kills, invasive species and climate change,” says Stephanie Neufeld, President of the Alberta Lake Management Society, which has been involved in monitoring lake health for years. The AWC recommendations support work by non-government organizations, governments and others as they manage lake watersheds through initiatives such as the *Water for Life* strategy and *Our Water, Our Future; a Plan for Action*.

The AWC project also found that coordinating the many planning and decision-making processes that influence the ecological health of a lake watershed is often a challenge, given the number of players, differing mandates and the various pieces of relevant policy and legislation. The report emphasizes the need for a more holistic approach to planning and management that is backed by sound science and research. “As lake watershed health issues become more prominent, enhanced coordination is needed to ensure that planning and management decisions are implemented,” says Richard Casey, Senior Limnologist with Alberta Environment and Parks.

Recommendations to Improve Lake Watershed Management in Alberta outlines 12 specific ways to improve management in several key areas including science and knowledge, regulatory and voluntary tools for managing the uplands, and improving access to tools and education. These recommendations will support the Government of Alberta's development of a provincial lake policy, foster greater provincial coordination of stakeholders and ultimately lead to improved lake watershed management in Alberta.

Visit <http://awchome.ca/Projects/LakeManagement/tabid/204/Default.aspx> to access the report. Follow us on twitter [@ABWaterCouncil](https://twitter.com/ABWaterCouncil) and like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ABWaterCouncil)!

The Alberta Water Council is a multi-stakeholder partnership that stewards the implementation of Alberta's Water for Life strategy and provides advice on water management issues to its members, which include the Government of Alberta and provincial authorities, industries, municipalities and NGOs.

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