



# Alberta Water Futures Project: Exploring opportunities and challenges facing Alberta's water management system

*Submitted by the Alberta Water Council*

## STRATEGIC INTENT (GOAL)

The purpose of the **Alberta Water Futures Project** is to identify the top future risks that may affect Alberta's water management system<sup>1</sup> and then assess the readiness<sup>2</sup> of the system to respond to those emerging challenges and potential opportunities. The project will focus on water strategy and policy aspects of the water management system, and accompanying legislative, regulatory, governance, data, and regional/watershed delivery tools.

## OBJECTIVES

The Water Futures project would achieve the following three objectives:

- 1. Current state assessment:** Conduct a strategic-level assessment of strengths and shortcomings of the current water management system
- 2. Identify top risks<sup>3</sup>:** Describe a select few top social, environmental, and economic risks to Alberta's water management future in the short and long term (10-year horizon) that may prevent the water management system from responding appropriately
- 3. Cross-sector perspectives:** Characterize cross-sector perspectives on the readiness of the water management system to adapt or respond to the identified top risks

## KEY TASKS

- 1. Current state assessment**
  - Conduct a strategic-level SWOT analysis of the existing system and describe key findings with rationale
- 2. Identify select top risks**
  - Gather feedback and input from sectors and select experts, maximizing cross-sector collaboration where possible, to create a listing of potential social, environmental, and economic risks
  - Synthesize input and prioritize the list of risks to identify the top risks overall
  - Describe these top risks with their rationale for selection

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<sup>1</sup> The working group noted that the 'water management system' is comprised of many elements. The scope of this project was intentionally focused on water strategy and policy, and the specific supporting tools of legislation, regulation, governance, data, and regional/watershed delivery.

<sup>2</sup> Readiness is broadly described by the working group as the system's ability to be resilient, adaptable, inclusive, and collaborative.

<sup>3</sup> The identification of potential responses to top risks is out-of-scope for the Alberta Water Futures project.

### 3. Cross-sector perspectives

- Maximizing cross-sector collaboration where possible, collect input and feedback from sectors regarding the readiness of the water management system to adapt or respond to each top risk
- Characterize system readiness, identifying differences or similarities across sectors
- Describe, if possible, opportunities for collaboration to improve readiness across AWC sectors

### 4. Reporting

- Assemble the draft report progressively through the project and present to AWC for feedback
- Incorporate feedback and present the final multi-sector report to AWC.

## TIMELINES and DELIVERABLES

The project team will provide the following deliverables to the AWC:

- **Monthly written updates to AWC to ensure ongoing familiarity with the project**
- **Current State Assessment..... Nov 2020 – Dec 2020**
- **Identify Select Top Risks..... Nov 2020 – Jan 2021**
- **Cross-sector perspectives..... Jan 2021 – Mar 2021**
- **Update to Council..... Feb 2021**  
Project update and results to date presented at the AWC Board meeting
- **Final Report..... Mar 2021**  
Final report, incorporating comments or changes coming from an AWC Board discussion of the draft assessment report.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Project Team includes membership from 22 representatives from some Indigenous groups, Industry, Non-Government Organizations, other Governments, and the Government of Alberta and Provincial Authorities.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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