

Draft Land-use Framework

Multi-Stakeholder Working Groups Review Report

Prepared by Sierra Systems Group, Inc.

November, 2008



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1. WORKING GROUP PROCESS

In early 2007, the government of Alberta initiated a process of multi-stakeholder consultations to gather input to the development of a provincial Land-Use Framework. The work of these groups was intended to build upon and synthesize broader multi-stakeholder and public consultation processes that the government had launched in 2006. The working group members were identified through a government-sponsored “Call for Expression of Interest” issued in April 2007 aimed at attracting a broad range of stakeholders and public members with extensive experience in land-use issues and planning to participate in the process. In June 2007, four working groups (WGs) formed focusing on the following broad subject areas:

- Growth and Resource Management
- Planning and Decision-Making
- Conservation and Stewardship
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Each group was composed of a broad range of members drawn from the above stakeholder recruitment process as well as select Government of Alberta (GoA) staff. Each group was tasked with exploring a number of land-use issues pertaining to both public and private land and developing a set of goals, strategies and actions for their respective issue area and associated timelines for implementation.

In November 2007, the Working Groups issued their reports to the government (Land-Use Framework Multi-stakeholder Working groups Roll-up Report, Government of Alberta, November 2007). In May 2008, the Government of Alberta issued a Draft Land-Use Framework document and requested that the working groups reconvene to review the framework. Complementary processes were also launched to seek review and engagement of the public and aboriginal groups. Sierra Systems Consultants Inc. was retained through a competitive procurement process to assist the government and the working groups in this phase of the consultation process. A list of members of the four Draft Land-use Framework Working groups is presented in Appendix 1.

On May 26-28, 2008 the working groups reconvened in Red Deer, Alberta. They were asked to structure their review of the Draft Land-use Framework around a number of questions which solicited input both on their general impressions of the Draft Framework and its key components as well as more specific perspectives associated with their working group subject area. In addition, the working groups were asked to provide the government with advice on implementing the Land-use Framework once finalized by the government. In mid-June, 2008 the Working Groups filed their Interim reports to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, the Hon. Ted Morton. On June 25-26, 2008 the working groups reconvened in Red Deer to present their findings to, and engage in a dialogue with, the Minister and other senior government members and representatives. Based on these dialogue sessions, the working groups refined their interim reports and prepared final working group reports which are contained in this document.

2. COMMON THEMES AMONG WORKING GROUPS

The working group reports contain several common perspectives on some of the main issues regarding the Draft Land-use Framework (LUF) and its implementation. It is useful to summarize these common themes pertaining to the Draft Land-use Framework as a whole before focusing on the working group-specific subject area advice.

Overall, the WGs feel that the GoA is on the right track with the Draft LUF and stakeholders are supportive of the initiative. While the LUF cannot resolve all operational issues, it does adequately represent the big picture solution and the WGs feel that the Government should continue on this policy direction. There is now a need to translate the direction provided in the LUF to a practical level of application.

Prominent among the common themes and perspectives identified in the WG Interim Reports are as follows:

- **Legislative and Regulatory Framework-** WGs feel that the LUF should be supported by a strong legislative and regulatory backbone to ensure its delivery. In this respect, the Draft LUF should be clear about legislative intent and define what will happen to existing legislation. Doing so would help clarify the legislative/regulatory framework required or the extent in which existing legislation may have the capacity to do the job.
- **The LUF's "Triple Bottom-line"**- While WGs respect the "triple bottom line" approach upon which the LUF is built (environmental, economic, and social), an equitable balance in the representation of all three pillars is encouraged. The LUF should clarify how the GoA will strive to balance these bottom lines in practice. Some of the WGs promoted a fourth, "cultural" bottom-line which would be considered separate from the "social" pillar. However, recognizing the GoA's intent to use the triple bottom line approach, the WGs suggested a clear and strong definition of culture be included in the LUF.
- **Alignment with other Land Use Plans** – WGs feel that the LUF should provide the over-arching direction for land use in Alberta and that existing land-use plans and processes must be aligned or amended to meet the objectives of the LUF's regional planning areas. Moreover, while WGs support the high-level direction provided by the LUF to regional and municipal planning processes, they feel that more detail and direction is needed to integrate existing plans and processes into the LUF implementation in order to ensure clarity and broader support.
- **Regional Land Use Processes-** There is general support among WGs for the proposed areas for regional plans. However, the WGs recognize that the LUF will need to address the management of cross-regional issues (i.e. watersheds, airsheds, transportation corridors, pipelines, transmission lines, etc). Some WGs feel that the

**Common Themes
Among Working
Groups**

LUF needs to consider existing watershed planning processes to develop the regional planning areas.

- **Governance-** There is general support for the governance framework set out in the Draft LUF which includes a Cabinet Committee, Land-Use Secretariat and Regional Advisory Councils (RAC). The WGs suggested that the strength of the governance structure could be enhanced and that further details of the structure will need to be determined. Matters relating to mandates or terms of reference, formation, resourcing and interconnectedness within Alberta’s governance framework will require further clarification. There has been provincial commitment to identify local needs and concerns before implementing plans in the six regions. WGs feel that this is a positive stance from the province and should be further developed as an early order of business in the implementation of the LUF.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting-** There is WG consensus that as the LUF planning and implementation process moves forward, clear and measurable objectives, targets and progress indicators are critical. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be developed to ensure that accurate reporting on LUF progress can be founded on clear baselines and that the information required to support monitoring and evaluation can be sourced and maintained.
- **Conservation and stewardship-** WGs feel that the direction set in conservation and stewardship is a positive step forward. Although this new focus is being encouraged, minimal detail has been provided on engaging both public and private interests. WGs discussed the possibility of developing stewardship “toolkits” to promote this at the local level. They felt that market-based incentives would be important but not exclusive enablers.
- **Communication and Education-** WGs feel that education and awareness programs should be established at the outset in order to promote better understanding of the LUF at regional and local levels and engage the public in the process.
- **Terminology-** WGs feel that definitions (i.e. glossary) should be expanded and that further clarity is needed in the terminology used in the LUF. Doing so would improve the meaning and intent of several terms (e.g. “sustainability”, “balance”, “watershed planning areas”, and “culture”).

In addition, a large number of members of the working groups signaled their interest in continuing to be involved in the Land-use planning processes that are expected to ensue as the Draft Land-use Framework is finalized by the government later this year.

3. WORKING GROUP REPORTS – SUMMARIES

This section presents summary overviews of the key input, advice and recommendations offered by the working groups in their reports. The four working group final reports are included as appendices to this report.

3.1. Growth and Resource Management Working Group (see Appendix 2)

The Growth and Resource Management Working Group (GRMWG) is a diverse group of stakeholders who have participated in productive dialogue to provide input into the Land-use Framework (LUF) and feedback on the Draft LUF. This document reflects the general agreement of the stakeholders on the key issues pertaining to growth and resource management in the Draft LUF.

The GRMWG presents these findings based on the questions that framed the consultation process, the past work that was submitted by the group in the November 2007 Land-use Framework Multi-Stakeholder Working Groups Roll-up Report, and the timeframe for implementation as presented in the LUF.

The GRMWG indicated that overall, the draft LUF represented good progress towards finalizing the LUF and was generally representative of their input in early consultations. The draft LUF provides confidence that the province is taking the matter of land and resource management seriously. It was suggested that the success of the LUF will be in its ability to provide enough strategic direction on what is trying to be achieved at the regional level without an abundance of detail.

The inclusion of the Quadruple Bottom Line emerged as an important component of the LUF that had been excluded and because of the exclusion, questions were raised as to the meaning of balance with respect to the environmental, economic and social considerations of the LUF and the ability to effectively make land-use planning decisions without all components articulated in the QBL. However, following the session with Minister Morton and the MLA Committee, the group agreed that they would support the triple bottom line with the request that the definition of “social” is strengthened to ensure that “culture” is included as an important component.

The need to show that the desired outcomes were inextricably linked to each other was also noted as an area for improvement. It was agreed the LUF should ensure that no one outcome is perceived to carry more importance than another and that the language needed to be improved, to provide clarity and shared understanding of the outcomes.

The promotion of Efficient Land Use emerged as an important issue for the GRMWG and resulted in their recommendation to introduce another strategy into the LUF. Concern

that the message regarding the need to include this additional strategy in the Land-use Framework may not have been clearly articulated in the interim draft report or during the presentation on June 25, prompted the GRMWG to further engage in consultations on July 10. The aim of their additional effort was to come up with ways to describe the importance of the Efficient Use of Land Strategy. The strategy has been revised and included as the major amendment to the Interim Report. The GRMWG believes that the addition of this Strategy to the LUF is important to ensure that the vision and outcomes stated in the LUF are realized.

The sequencing of implementation activities also emerged as an important area for consideration due to the complexity of the regional planning process. Several considerations for implementation were presented in order to provide a basis for development of the implementation plan.

Finally, it was suggested that further mechanisms for stakeholder input should be considered in the planning process.

3.2. Planning and Decision-Making Working Group (see Appendix 3)

The output captured in this report mainly reflects consensus achieved by the Planning and Decision Making Working Group (PDMWG).

The PDMWG was pleased with the LUF and felt it was representative of their input and recommendations from previous consultations. While the LUF cannot resolve all operational issues, it does adequately represent the big picture solution and the PDMWG felt that the Government should continue on this policy direction. The PDMWG agreed that there is now a need to translate the direction provided in the LUF to a practical level of application.

The PDMWG provided ideas on improvements for the Framework and identified many important considerations for the LUF going forward. Of these, the group emphasized four areas where the document could be strengthened that it felt were most crucial.

- **Balancing economic, environmental and social considerations:** The PDMWG felt that the LUF put significant emphasis on environmental, and to a lesser extent economic considerations, while the social pillar received little attention. These need to be brought into balance.
- **Governance considerations:** The PDMWG recognized that the governance structure is essential to the success of the framework and was supportive of the bodies – Cabinet Committee, Secretariat, and Regional Advisory Councils (RAC)-outlined in the LUF. The group suggested that this structure could be enhanced, the role of departments and agencies recognized, and added concrete recommendations

on the roles of each. The PDMWG also proposed the addition of a Provincial Advisory Committee to the governance structure.

- **Policy considerations:** The PDMWG agreed the LUF was light on policy direction and required more clarity and direction on existing and emerging policies including mechanisms to address policy collisions. The group emphasized the need for the Province to clarify and integrate the policy context of the LUF to provide clear direction to the planning process, or indicate how policy direction would eventually evolve to form a stronger basis for planning.
- **Approach to the planning process:** The PDMWG agreed that the framework needs to better describe the planning process. Specifically, the group believes there is a need for greater clarity at the onset of regional planning for:
 - The functional roles and relationships between RAC and the Secretariat;
 - The identification of how the Province intends to measure success specifically; and
 - The timing and process that will be used to identify and develop measurable objectives, indicators and targets at the provincial and regional scale.

The PDMWG offered a number of suggestions around implementation of the LUF:

- Outline legislative intent in the LUF and define what will happen to existing legislation.
- Provide clarity around the existing Integrated Resource Plans in the province, (e.g. Eastern Slopes Policy), define how they fit into the LUF, and identify what plans are subsumed under the LUF.
- Leverage existing assets and practices that work.
- Determine what, if any, interim measures will be required and address them in the LUF.
- As part of the Terms of Reference, define urgent issues that need to be addressed.
- Provide regional planning authorities with a “trade-off analysis” planning tool.
- Begin planning in each region in parallel, rather than sequentially.
- Develop a process by which Provincial measurable outcomes and indicators will be established.
- Define Aboriginal participation in the context of Government to Government discussions.
- Define and communicate the resources and planning tools that will be available to local municipalities.

- Develop or strengthen mechanisms that allow stakeholders to propose amendments to regional plans.

3.3. Conservation and Stewardship Working Group (see Appendix 4)

The output captured in this report mainly reflects consensus achieved by the Conservation and Stewardship Working Group (CSWG).

The CSWG gave the LUF an overall “thumbs up” based on the process moving forward; and the fact that the environment is side-by-side with economic and social considerations as a desired outcome.

A main theme for CSWG was to strengthen outcomes with a stronger conservation and stewardship focus by adding statements such as: “Alberta lands are deliberately managed to ensure that healthy ecological systems are maintained or restored”.

CSWG noted that this document sets the strategic intent and as such it needs to include fundamental concepts such as the one above, and also ensure that the intent or meaning of some of the high-level statements is clear. CSWG sees a need to improve clarity in the document.

CSWG had 5 priority points addressed in more detail within the report:

- Integrate a stronger conservation and stewardship ethic into the desired outcomes.
- Enhance the role of municipalities in the implementation of LUF.
- Incorporate comprehensive recreational planning into LUF.
- Ensure there is capacity to implement LUF.
- Integrate current activities and partnerships in LUF planning.
- Increase the scope of “land” and rights”.

There are several other major points such as equal consideration of outcomes, trade-offs, risk management approaches, and quadruple bottom line which were also important to the group.

Suggestions for implementation include:

- Finding innovative ways to fund Conservation and Stewardship; acknowledge that multiple sources such as public investment, start-up funds and market based tools will play a role. Cost benefit accounting would enhance assigning a value to Conservation and Stewardship.

- Cumulative effects management is important to land-use planning. Simplification and availability of data and tools will enhance the ability of municipalities and other stakeholders to use cumulative effects in land use planning.

Consider a Conservation and Stewardship championship group such as a Land Use Council to work with the LUF organizational structures (LUS and RAC).

3.4. Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (see Appendix 5)

This report summarizes consensus achieved by the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (MEWG) in its review of the draft Land-use Framework and its advice on issues that should be addressed by the GoA in the LUF implementation.

Overall, the draft LUF is seen as a positive step towards developing comprehensive land use plans and signals commitment from the provincial government. Revisions and actions suggested by the MEWG in its overall review of the draft LUF include:

- The need for further clarification on the definition of the term “balance” in reference to the three pillars.
- There should be a comprehensive review of the existing legislative framework and its capacity to deliver the LUF before new legislation is considered.
- The MEWG suggests that the government immediately develop ‘terms of reference’ or mandate statements to guide the three planning groups (Cabinet Committee, RACs, and Land Use Secretariat).
- The LUF lacks a clear elaboration of how the actual monitoring and reporting will be accomplished across the social, economic, and environmental pillars.

The MEWG reviewed what it considered to be the key components for LUF implementation from the specific perspective of the MEWG’s subject area of focus. The MEWG recognizes that investments in information and information systems are required to support the implementation of the LUF. The following summarizes MEWG’s initial advice on implementation:

- There is an immediate need to advance the design and implementation of a LUF monitoring system – from identifying, compiling and coordinating data, to convening an expert group to design, test and implement monitoring programs.
- Recognizing the limits on government resources to invest in developing an information management system to support LUF, the GoA’s investment in land and resource data and information systems should be prioritized with a paramount focus on advancing the LUF. In this respect, the MEWG recommends that this work needs to be undertaken now and suggests a sequenced and cost-effective approach involving:

1. A review of existing sources of monitoring information within and outside of government to determine whether LUF needs can be met from currently available data and programs.
 2. Conducting a gap, overlap and “LUF relevance” analysis on existing government and government-funded land and resource information and data against LUF’s goals, objectives and performance measures. Those information needs not presently filled will be identified as gaps. Where duplications of efforts are identified, these could be reconciled to free up resources to invest in filling the gaps.
 3. Convening an experts group to review and validate the government’s gap, overlap and relevance assessment and report back on priorities for investment to support the LUF’s Monitoring and Evaluation needs and possible approaches to budget reallocation and incremental funding. Based on the experts’ group recommendations and the GoA’s own budget analysis, SRD should develop a budget to support LUF’s Monitoring and Evaluation requirements. This budget should be envisaged as a five year budget that can support sustainable operations over time.
 4. Considering innovative sources of funding to support LUF’s Monitoring and Evaluation programs and information systems needs – i.e. via resource-user contributions.
- Appropriate governance be established over information management and monitoring, evaluation and reporting programs in order to advance the LUF.
 - Recommends an implementation reporting structure including two reports (LUF Implementation progress report and a broader “State of Sustainability” in Alberta report) and an implementation audit in order to guide LUF implementation and enhance accountability to the public.

Additional items that the MEWG concluded were necessary for implementation include:

- Education awareness and training for GoA and regional/municipal staff focused on establishing new roles and responsibilities in the LUF process and recognizing the extent of change in these roles.
- Early alignment of the LUF with current GoA strategies (energy, caribou, water for life, grizzly, clean air) and other GoA processes (i.e. the Environmental Impact Assessment) in context of LUF implementation.
- Development of tool kits to support implementation (modeling tools, approaches for actual implementation, market based instruments, offsets, transfer of development credits).
- Assessment of capacity to engage: concern was expressed that many of the LUF implementation partners may lack resources and capacity to participate in LUF implementation. The GoA should assess partner capacity as part of the implementation process.

Alberta's Draft Land-use Framework
Working Group Participants for the Review of the Draft
Land-use Framework
(November, 2008)

Working Group Participants for the Review of the Draft Land-use Framework (2008)

Four working groups of stakeholders representing a wide range of interests in the Land Use Framework were established as part of previous (2007) consultations. These four working groups were asked to participate in the review of the Draft Land-use Framework released in May 2008 and were invited to attend workshops held in May and June, 2008 in order to provide input and feedback on the Draft LUF. The following list identifies the working groups and their membership.

In addition to the four working groups, an additional group of individual “reviewers” had also been established during the 2007 consultations. These individuals were also supplied with the May 2008 Draft Land-use Framework, and with drafts of the Working Groups’ reports as they were being developed. Comments and feedback received from these individual “reviewers” were provided to the Working Groups for consideration in the development of their reports.

Growth and Resource Management Working Group Participants

Following the June meeting with the Minister, the GRMWG determined that it was necessary to meet again to fully develop an Efficient Land-use Strategy, for presentation to the Minister and inclusion in the final report of the GRMWG.

The following is a list of the members who attended in person for the May 26-28 session:

- Peter Aschenmeier, Farmer/Rancher in the Edson area, recipient of the Golden Jubilee Medal, and member of the Regional Steering Group for the NES Strategy
- Allan Bolstad, Consultant and former Edmonton City Alderman
- Harvey Buckley, Action for Agriculture and Councillor for MD of Rocky View
- Nigel Douglas, Alberta Wilderness Association - Conservation Specialist and was representing the Alberta Environmental Network
- Neil Drummond, VP - Imperial Oil and representing Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Michael Gatens, CEO of Unconventional Gas Resources Canada; Past Chairman and Honorary Member of Canadian Society for Unconventional Gas
- Karen Geertsema, Director - Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council - Treaty Eight
- Nancy Hackett, Parkland Community Planning Services, City of Red Deer Division (previously employed with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs)
- Tjerk Huisman, Spray Lakes Sawmill - representative for Alberta Forest Products Association

- Judy Huntley, Executive Director of the Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition and a member of the Livingstone Landowners Group
- Myles Kitagawa, Co-Manager - Alberta Environmental Network and Associate Director for Toxics Watch Society of Alberta
- Jillian Lynn Lawson, Long Term Rancher and representing the Livingstone Landowners Group
- Nicole Martel, Urban Development Institute Alberta - Executive Director
- Roger Marvin, Former GoA public lands Executive Director and representing Alberta Equestrian Federation
- Bob Miller, City of Calgary - municipal planner; Calgary Regional Partnership
- Dorothy Moore, Former AUMA Board Director and Mayor- Didsbury
- Don Pope, ALPAC - Integrated Land Management Coordinator for North East Alberta
- Larry Roy, Alberta Research Council - Manager of Sustainable Ecosystems
- Edward Schultz, Alberta Pork Producers - General Manager (Retired)
- Jennifer Steber, Alberta Energy
- Glen Tjostheim, Transportation
- Peter Vana, Strathcona County - Planning Officer

Those in attendance at the June 25-26 session included:

- Peter Aschenmeier, Allan Bolstad, Harvey Buckley, Nigel Douglas, Neil Drummond, Michael Gatens, Karen Geertsema, Nancy Hackett, Tjerk Huisman, Nicole Martel, Roger Marvin, Bob Miller, Dorothy Moore, Don Pope, Larry Roy, Edward Schultz, Jennifer Steber, Glen Tjostheim, Peter Vana, Don Whittaker

Attendance at the July 10 session included:

- Peter Aschenmeier, Allan Bolstad, Harvey Buckley, Tjerk Huisman, Nicole Martel, Dorothy Moore, Edward Schultz, Glen Tjostheim, Don Whittaker, Dave Borutski

Other GRMWG members who were not able to participate in person were provided with all materials including a WG email account to which issues resulting from the review of the LUF could be posted. Previous WG attendees that were not present at this consultation included:

- Alden Armstrong, past President - Metis Settlements General Council
- Brad Churchill, Rocky Mountain Dirt Riders Association - representative
- Ken Glover, Woodlot Association of Alberta - Chief Administrator and also with Alberta Wood Works
- Mark Johns, AltaLink's Director of Conceptual Engineering and Siting and the leader of the consultation process for AltaLink.
- Norma LaFonte, Wheatland Surface Rights Action Group; landowner, land agent
- Andre Tremblay, Alberta Agriculture - Formerly with AAMDC - Director of Advocacy, Policy and Communications

- Don Whittaker, Reeve of the County of Vermilion River
- Dianne Zimmerman, Suncor - Senior Manager - Oil Sands

Planning and Decision Making Working Group Participants

Working Group Participants for the Review of the Draft Land-use Framework (2008)

The following PDMWG representatives participated in the May 26-28 session:

- Kirk Andries, Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute
- Peter Kinnear, Canadian Natural Resources Limited
- Susan Feddema-Leonard, Willmore Wilderness Foundation
- Shirley Pickering, Watershed Stewardship Group
- Judy Stewart, Bow River Basin Council
- Bob Anderson, former Councillor – MD of Rockyview
- Murray Summers, West Fraser Mills
- Jim McCammon, Alberta Newsprint
- Dave Kmet, Alberta Forest Products Association
- Hudson Foley, Altalink
- Veronica Bliska, Reeve – MD of Peace
- Ziad Saad, Canadian Energy Pipelines Association
- Linda Strong-Watson, Alberta Trailnet
- Tim Creelman, City of Calgary
- Rick Schneider, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Northern Alberta
- Steve Kennett, The Pembina Institute
- Bill Symonds, Municipal Affairs
- Jim Webb, Little Red River Cree Nation
- Dave Belyea, Alberta Environment
- Kate Hovland, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties.

Some members of the past PDMWG were not in attendance, but were provided with all materials including a WG email account to which issues resulting from the review of the LUF could be posted. Previous WG attendees that were not able to be present at the last consultation included:

- Brian Irmen, Clearwater County
- David Hill, Alberta Irrigation Project Association
- Diana McQueen, Former Mayor-Drayton Valley
- Stan Boutin, University of Alberta
- Doug Parrish, City of Leduc
- Gerald Cunningham, Metis Settlements General Council
- Dan Fouts, Stone Valley Contractors and Gravel Association
- Gerald Rhodes, AAMDC
- Peter Koning, Conoco Philips
- Bob Demulder, Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Bryan Walton, Alberta Cattle Feeders Association
- Kim McCaig, Canadian Energy Pipelines Association
- Glenn Selland, Sustainable Resource Development

- Brenda Allbright, Alberta Energy

Conservation and Stewardship Working Group Participants

The following CSWG representatives participated in the May 26-28 session:

- Gary Sargent, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Ernie Ewaschuk, Land Stewardship Centre - Executive Director
- Billie Milholland, North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance - Coordinator
- Brenda Wispinski, Strathcona County - Executive Director, Beaver Hills Initiative
- Wayne Pettapiece, Alberta Institute of Agrologists – Past President
- Margaret Glasford, Alberta Stewardship Network – Past Chair
- Louise Sherren, Alberta Snowmobile Association - Executive Director
- Ian Peace, Residents for Accountability in Power Industry Development and representing Alberta Environmental Network (AEN)
- Kim Schmitt, Ducks Unlimited and Director for Alberta Environmental Farm Plan Company
- Jim Webb, Manager of Intergovernmental and Corporate Affairs - Little Red River Cree Nation and policy advisor North Peace Tribal Council (Jim also served as a member of the Planning & Decision Making Working Group)
- Dave Borutski, Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management (SREM) Office
- Avelyn Nicol, Alberta Environment

These CSWG members participated in the June 25-26 session:

- Gary Sargent, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Ernie Ewaschuk, Land Stewardship Centre - Executive Director
- Brenda Wispinski, Strathcona County - Executive Director, Beaver Hills Initiative
- Wayne Pettapiece, Alberta Institute of Agrologists – Past President
- Margaret Glasford, Alberta Stewardship Network – Past Chair
- Louise Sherren, Alberta Snowmobile Association - Executive Director
- Ian Peace, Residents for Accountability in Power Industry Development and representing Alberta Environmental Network (AEN)
- Kim Schmitt, Ducks Unlimited and Director for Alberta Environmental Farm Plan Company
- Larry Simpson, The Natural Conservancy of Canada – Associate Regional Vice President
- Colin Reichle, Alberta Professional Outfitters Society - Managing Director
- Jacquie Gilson, Cross Conservation Area - Executive Director, Foothills Land Trust - Director
- Linda Jabs, Center Regional Committee Member for Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture

Other CSWG members who were not able to participate in person were provided with all materials including a WG email account to which issues resulting from the review of the LUF could be posted. Previous WG attendees that were not present at this consultation included:

- John Kolk, Chair of the Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership Advisory Committee, former Lethbridge Councillor
- Shawn Wasel, ALPAC - Director of Environmental Resources
- Jim Martin, Centre for Environment - Director
- Karissa Potiuk, AAMDC - policy advisor
- Brad Fenson, Alberta Fish and Game Association
- Gordon Harris, Summer Village Association - Director
- Davin Johnson, Youth Advisory Committee and member of the Oldman Watershed Planning and Advisory Council
- Beatrice Carpentier, O'chiese First Nation - Band Manager
- Grant Williamson, Ainsworth Lumber and representing Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA)
- Chris Gervais-Rusnak, Tolko Industries Limited - member of AFPA Landuse Subcommittee
- Rebecca Reeves, ParksWatch Program Coordinator - Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Edmonton Chapter and AEN
- Ron Bjorge, Sustainable Resource Development
- Keith Lyseng, Sustainable Resource Development

Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group Participants

The following MEWG representatives participated in the May 26-28 session:

- Craig Aumann, Alberta Research Council – Land-use Management Systems
- Mark Fawcett, P.Ag., EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd.
- William (Bill) Gillespie, Director, Community Planning Association of Alberta
- Calvin Rakach, Technical Director - Alberta off Highway Vehicle Association
- Brad Batten, Husky Energy (Canadian Association of Petroleum Land men Representative)
- Carla Stevens, Water Matters
- David Pryce, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers – VP Alberta Operations
- Peggy Holroyd, Environmental Policy Analyst – Pembina Institute and Alberta Environmental Network (AEN) Representative
- Lana Robinson, Alberta Environment
- Vonn Bricker, Sustainable Resource Development

These MEWG representatives participated in the June 25-26 session:

- Craig Aumann, Alberta Research Council – Land-use Management Systems

- William (Bill) Gillespie, Director, Community Planning Association of Alberta
- Calvin Rakach, Technical Director - Alberta off Highway Vehicle Association
- Brad Batten, Husky Energy (Canadian Association of Petroleum Land men Representative)
- TJ Schwanky, Alberta Fish and Game Association - Wildlife Projects Coordinator
- Kenton Ziegler, Member of Ag Food Council & Farmer
- David Pryce, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers – VP Alberta Operations
- Vonn Bricker, Sustainable Resource Development

Other MEWG members who were not able to participate in person were provided with all materials including a WG email account to which issues resulting from the review of the Draft LUF could be posted. Previous WG attendees that were unable to participate in the May and June sessions were:

- Jill Pelton, AAMDC- Policy Advisor
- Jeffrey Dawson, Red Deer – Former Councillor
- Karen Geertsema, Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council: Treaty Eight-Director
- Kathy Sloan, Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors
- Leonard Leskiw, Consultant for soils
- Tim McCready, Alberta Forest Products Association- Millar Western Industries
- Daryl Procinsky, Architect
- Jennifer Rowell, Water Management Consultant
- Joe Obad, University of Calgary and AEN Representative
- Bill desBarres, Alberta Equestrian Federation- Chair, Breeds & Industry
- Terry Kosinski, Sustainable Resource Development

Note: not all participants are identified here. They have been included based on their individual decision to allow their names to be published.

Alberta's Draft Land-use Framework

**Final Report of the Growth and Resource Management Working
Group to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development**

(November, 2008)

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Appendix A. Action Log

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Growth and Resource Management Working Group (GRMWG) is a diverse group of stakeholders who have participated in productive dialogue to provide input into the Land-use Framework (LUF) and feedback on the Draft LUF. This document reflects the general agreement of the stakeholders on the key issues pertaining to growth and resource management in the Draft LUF.

The GRMWG presents these findings based on the questions that framed the consultation process, the past work that was submitted by the group in the November 2007 Land-use Framework Multi-Stakeholder Working Groups Roll-up Report, and the timeframe for implementation as presented in the LUF.

The GRMWG indicated that overall, the draft LUF represented good progress towards finalizing the LUF and was generally representative of their input in early consultations. The draft LUF provides confidence that the province is taking the matter of land and resource management seriously. It was suggested that the success of the LUF will be in its ability to provide enough strategic direction on what is trying to be achieved at the regional level without an abundance of detail.

The inclusion of the Quadruple Bottom Line emerged as an important component of the LUF that had been excluded and because of the exclusion, questions were raised as to the meaning of balance with respect to the environmental, economic and social considerations of the LUF and the ability to effectively make land-use planning decisions without all components articulated in the QBL. However, following the session with Minister Morton and the MLA Committee, the group agreed that they would support the triple bottom line with the request that the definition of “social” is strengthened to ensure that “culture” is included as an important component.

The need to show that the desired outcomes were inextricably linked to each other was also noted as an area for improvement. It was agreed the LUF should ensure that no one outcome is perceived to carry more importance than another and that the language needed to be improved to provide clarity and shared understanding of the outcomes.

The promotion of Efficient Land Use emerged as an important issue for the GRMWG and resulted in their recommendation to introduce another strategy into the LUF. Concern that the message regarding the need to include this additional strategy in the Land-use Framework may not have been clearly articulated in the interim draft report or during the presentation on June 25, prompted the GRMWG to further engage in consultations on July 10. The aim of their additional effort was to come up with ways to describe the importance of the Efficient Use of Land Strategy. The strategy has been revised and included as the major amendment to the Interim Report. The GRMWG believes that the addition of this Strategy to the LUF is important to ensure that the vision and outcomes stated in the LUF are realized.

The sequencing of implementation activities also emerged as an important area for consideration due to the complexity of the regional planning process. Several considerations for implementation were presented in order to provide a basis for development of the implementation plan.

Finally, it was suggested that further mechanisms for stakeholder input should be considered in the planning process.

2. INTRODUCTION

On May 21, 2008, the Government of Alberta (GoA) released the Draft Land-use Framework (LUF). The Draft LUF was developed through a process that obtained input and advice from Albertans, including public information and input sessions, stakeholder working groups, and aboriginal engagement sessions, held from May 2006 to December 2007. On May 26-28, the Stakeholder Working Groups, established in these earlier consultations, re-convened in Red Deer, Alberta to review the Draft LUF and provide initial advice on implementation. As before, the stakeholders formed four separate, but interrelated, working groups: Growth and Resource Management; Planning and Decision Making; Conservation and Stewardship; and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The GoA retained Sierra Systems Group Inc. to facilitate the Working Groups (WG) discussions. Each WG was guided by a set of questions that facilitated dialogue on the review process and implementation recommendations. The output captured in this report reflects consensus achieved by the Growth and Resource Management Working Group (GRMWG).

This report summarizes the GRMWG's general agreement around key themes and recommendations that emerged during the Forum with respect to its impressions of the Draft LUF and its advice to government on implementation. In particular, given the short time to provide a more comprehensive document in support of the Efficient Use of Land Strategy, made it difficult for the group to come to total agreement on all aspects of the Strategy, however, the importance of the inclusion of the principles behind the Efficient Use of Land garnered general agreement among the group and is supported by the extra effort that was undertaken to develop and review the document that could be presented to the Government of Alberta.

3. MEETING OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of the stakeholder review process May 26 – 28 was to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Draft LUF towards the management of land and resources in the province in general and through the specific lens of each working group.
- Provide advice on any clarification that may be required as the GoA moves the LUF to a final version.
- Provide guidance on implementation considerations of the LUF, together with advice on managing challenges and opportunities.

The GRMWG also determined that its work would be guided by several Critical Success Factors, as follows:

- Provide advice on the fine tuning of the LUF.
- Provide advice on how to achieve clarity; i.e. provide better understanding on how we arrived at parameters from the policy level to the priority level in order to progress towards regional planning.
- Provide detail towards the implementation of LUF.
- Ensure close attention is paid towards the language used in the LUF to reflect the working group report.
- Provide further clarity on the First Nations engagement.

The purpose of the July 10 consultation process was to discuss the revised Efficient Land Use Strategy and work towards consensus in the areas for inclusion in the report. There is strong support for the strategy among the WG members, however, it was suggested that the Strategy should not be seen as a mechanism to impede any industry initiatives that are underway that promote the efficient use of land, but one that rewards actions that support the wise use of land.

Meeting Objectives:

4. GRMWG PARTICIPANTS

The GRMWG were brought together on May 26-28 session to review the Draft LUF and again on June 25-26 to present their findings to Minister Morton. Following the meeting with the Minister, the GRMWG determined that it was necessary to meet again to fully develop an Efficient Land-use Strategy, for presentation to the Minister and inclusion in the final report of the GRMWG. The following is a list of the members who attended in person for the May 26-28 session:

- Peter Aschenmeier- Farmer/Rancher in the Edson area, recipient of the Golden Jubilee Medal, and member of the Regional Steering Group for the NES Strategy.
- Allan Bolstad, Consultant and former Edmonton City Alderman.
- Harvey Buckley, Action for Agriculture and Councillor for MD of Rocky View.
- Nigel Douglas, Alberta Wilderness Association - Conservation Specialist and was representing the Alberta Environmental Network.
- Neil Drummond, VP - Imperial Oil and representing Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.
- Michael Gatens, CEO of Unconventional Gas Resources Canada; Past Chairman and Honorary Member of Canadian Society for Unconventional Gas.
- Karen Geertsema, Director - Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council - Treaty Eight.
- Nancy Hackett, Parkland Community Planning Services, City of Red Deer Division (previously employed with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs).
- Tjerk Huisman, Spray Lakes Sawmill - representative for Alberta Forest Products Association.
- Judy Huntley, Executive Director of the Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition and a member of the Livingstone Landowners Group.
- Myles Kitagawa, Co-Manager - Alberta Environmental Network and Associate Director for Toxics Watch Society of Alberta.
- Jillian Lynn Lawson, Long Term Rancher and representing the Livingstone Landowners Group.
- Nicole Martel, Urban Development Institute Alberta - Executive Director.
- Roger Marvin, Former GoA public lands Executive Director and representing Alberta Equestrian Federation.
- Bob Miller, City of Calgary - municipal planner; Calgary Regional Partnership.
- Dorothy Moore, Former AUMA Board Director and Mayor- Didsbury.
- Don Pope, ALPAC - Integrated Land Management Coordinator for North East Alberta.
- Larry Roy, Alberta Research Council - Manager of Sustainable Ecosystems.
- Edward Schultz, Alberta Pork Producers - General Manager (Retired), representing the Intensive Livestock Working Group.

GRMWG Participants

- Jennifer Steber, Alberta Energy - Business Unit Leader.
- Glen Tjostheim, Transportation - Roadside Planning Specialist.
- Peter Vana, Strathcona County - Manager Planning and Development Services.

Other GRMWG members who were not able to participate in person were provided with all materials including a WG's email account to which issues resulting from the review of the LUF could be posted. A number of Agencies were not present, but were asked to act as LUF reviewers and were consulted. Previous WG attendees that were not present at this consultation included:

- Alden Armstrong, past President - Metis Settlements General Council.
- Brad Churchill, Rocky Mountain Dirt Riders Association – representative.
- Ken Glover, Woodlot Association of Alberta - Chief Administrator and also with Alberta Wood Works.
- Mark Johns, AltaLink's Director of Conceptual Engineering and Siting and the leader of the consultation process for AltaLink.
- Norma LaFonte, Wheatland Surface Rights Action Group; landowner, land agent.
- Andre Tremblay, Alberta Agriculture - Formerly with AAMDC - Director of Advocacy, Policy and Communications.
- Don Whittaker, Reeve of the County of Vermilion River.
- Dianne Zimmerman, Suncor - Senior Manager - Oil Sands.

In attendance at the June 25-26 session included:

- Peter Aschenmeier, Allan Bolstad, Harvey Buckley, Nigel Douglas, Neil Drummond, Michael Gatens, Karen Geertsema, Nancy Hackett, Tjerk Huisman, Nicole Martel, Roger Marvin, Bob Miller, Dorothy Moore, Don Pope, Larry Roy, Edward Schultz, Jennifer Steber, Glen Tjostheim, Peter Vana, Don Whittaker.

Those in attendance at the July 10 session included:

- Peter Aschenmeier, Allan Bolstad, Harvey Buckley, Tjerk Huisman, Nicole Martel, Dorothy Moore, Edward Schultz, Glen Tjostheim, Don Whittaker, Dave Borutski.

Note: not all participants are identified here. They have been included based on their individual decision to allow their names to be published.

5. REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

5.1. Overall Working Group Impressions of Draft Land-use Framework

LUF Provides Confidence: There was broad consensus from the GRMWG that the draft LUF represented good progress towards finalizing the LUF and that it was generally representative of their input and recommendations from previous consultations as outlined in the November 2007 Land-use Framework Multi-Stakeholder Working Groups Roll-up Report. In particular, the GRMWG felt that the draft LUF provides confidence that the Province is taking the matter seriously through the commitment of human and financial resources, and the promise of a decision-making process that will be open and inclusive through a multi-stakeholder governance structure.

The need for increased emphasis on culture: The working group noted the limited reference to culture throughout. There was consensus that the culture of many Albertans is significantly influenced by their relationship to land. That relationship is part of what defines Alberta's culture. The working group felt that if culture had more prominence in the document, it would better reflect culture's place in LUF decisions.

Managing within the carrying capacity of the land: In its submission following the 2007 consultation, the WG indicated that defining and managing within the carrying capacity of the land should be a critical aspect of the approach to land use management. Although the concept is mentioned in the draft LUF the application of the concept to decision-making is not entirely clear.

Maintain Balance Between Strategy and Detail: The strategic nature of the document provides a vision for future land management in the province. The GRMWG indicated that there are some significant areas that still require further clarity and emphasis, however, it was agreed that a balance between strategy and detail needed to be maintained. It was also agreed that the success of the LUF will be its ability to provide enough strategic direction on what is trying to be achieved at the regional level. Moving forward, the GRMWG emphasized the need to focus the LUF on the following areas in order to successfully implement the LUF.

5.2. Evaluation of Working Group Key Points

A common theme emerged that encompasses many of the key points made by the GRMWG – the **Quadruple Bottom Line Model**.

1. It facilitates balanced consideration of all four pillars of sustainability.
2. Ensures culture is maintained as a separate pillar and not diluted in the social pillar.
3. Provides the basis to ensure the impacts of all pillars is taken into account when evaluating the carrying capacity of the land.
4. Ensures decision-making incorporates all four pillars of sustainability in order to promote the most efficient use of land.

Balanced Consideration for all four pillars of sustainability: The question around whether the draft LUF effectively balances economic, environmental and social considerations elicited considerable dialogue among the working group members on the concept of “balance”.

Recommendation: As a means to resolve the ambiguity of the term “balance”, it would be more productive to engage in a dialogue on the management of the impacts of human activities on the land, not necessarily in the activities themselves (as described in Direction 4: Limit Impacts to Manage Growth in the GRMWG Report).

Carrying Capacity: In the 2007 report of the WG, it was suggested that “it is not possible to manage for a future state of the land until an understanding is in place of its current state”. This is still believed to be a critical concept to managing land and resources in the province.

Recommendation: Emphasis needs to be placed on understanding the historic and present conditions of the landscape in order to help inform decisions pertaining to impacts on the carrying capacity of the land (pg. 31 WG Report 2007).

The WG report also recommended that the LUF should enable growth through more efficient use of land without compromising its natural carrying capacity, a focus that the group agreed the province needs to clearly articulate in order for growth to occur through the efficient use of land.

Efficient use of Land: Efficient use of land also emerged as an important element for the GRMWG. It was suggested that if we are to effectively develop regional plans, it is critical to come up with more innovative approaches in the province with respect to, urban, rural, & industrial land use. In addition to innovative approaches, it is important to effectively promote new ways of thinking about the efficient use of land with the purpose of determining how to better use space, resulting in a smaller footprint. It is recommended that in order to encourage a change in attitude among Albertans, an educational component regarding the consequences of certain land use behavior should also be built into the strategy.

Recommendation: Addition of a new strategy that would “Promote the Efficient Use of Land”.

(Recommendations on language on this strategy are included in Section 5 of this report on the review of the LUF Strategies.)

Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL): The GRMVG indicated that they had worked hard to achieve consensus in their earlier work regarding the QBL model (environmental, economic, social, and cultural). The QBL was seen to provide the foundation to ensure that land-use decision making is embedded in all four pillars of sustainability.

The use of the Triple Bottom Line in the draft LUF appears to have diminished the importance of the cultural pillar throughout the document. The LUF could be strengthened by providing an emphasis on culture as a stand alone pillar emphasizing its importance to quality of life for all Albertans.

Interim Report Recommendation: Inclusion of the QBL model should be considered in the final LUF in order to:

- Place more focus on all pillars of sustainability that would strengthen the social considerations and create equal importance among all components that make up sustainability.
- Address the carrying capacity in terms of all impacts on land.
- Promote efficient use of land within the natural carrying capacity through informed decision-making.

Final Report Recommendation: Support the Triple Bottom Line model for the final LUF with additional consideration for:

- Strengthening the social considerations and create equal importance among all components that make up sustainability.
- Address the carrying capacity in terms of all impacts on land.
- Promote efficient use of land within the natural carrying capacity through informed decision-making.

6. SPECIFIC COMPONENT REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

6.1. Vision

“The peoples of Alberta work together to respect and care for the land as the foundation of our economic, environmental, social and cultural well being”

The GRMWWG had general agreement that the vision stated in the LUF represents the desired direction for the efficient use of land and resources throughout the province.

6.2. Desired Outcomes

There was considerable discussion regarding the desired outcomes and a general feeling that the collective importance of all three outcome statements needed to be better conveyed in the document to remove any suggestion of one outcome being more important or desirable than another.

Recommendations:

- Outcomes need to be recognized as inextricably linked.
- Strengthening the preamble to the outcome statements could address these issues and remove the perception of one outcome being favoured over another.

Sustainable Prosperity supported by our land and natural resources: Reflecting on the individual outcome statements, the GRMWWG suggested that “Sustainable prosperity” does not appropriately articulate the desired outcome to “ensure that our natural resources continue to provide economic benefit to Albertans over time”.

Recommendation: To ensure this message is clear, the GRMWWG suggests changing the desired outcome to read:

- *Healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources.*

Liveable communities and recreational opportunities: This outcome description does not accurately provide meaning and clarity to what factors contribute to a liveable community, nor does it effectively define and describe recreational opportunities.

Recommendations:

- “Liveable” seems too minimal and should be replaced with “optimize community and recreational opportunities”.
- Clarity of Language: Replace first sentence of the outcome description to read (pg 9): “Albertans live in communities. How we design, plan and recreate in, and how we move through the communities, and how these communities grow, impacts the land and future land use in Alberta.”
- Expand the outcome description around opportunities for recreational activities.

- Suggested edit: “Alberta’s families have the right to recreate” need to rephrase to Citizens of Alberta” – does not limit statement to families.

6.3. Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles were generally acceptable to the GRMWG with a few editorial comments for consideration.

Sustainable: It was suggested that “towns and cities” does not encompass all the various structures for groups of people across the province.

Recommendation: Replace reference to “towns and cities” throughout the document with “communities” in order to provide a sense of inclusion of all peoples into the document.

Respectful of private property rights: It was generally agreed that the description needs to be expanded to provide more clarity as to the meaning, supported by a qualifying statement. The tone of the Draft LUF may cause some readers to be concerned that private property rights will “trump” other consideration in land use planning.

Recommendations:

- The meaning of “free markets” is unclear and should be clarified in this guiding principle; in addition, a qualifying statement should be added to provide further understanding of the purpose of the principle:
 - ♦ Is the statement alluding to or implying that the Government of Alberta would consider compensation for public acquisitions? Is the statement implying that the authority of municipal councils will be changed? There was no recommendation – just a point that the statement was unclear and could be interpreted many ways so it had better be clarified.

7. DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES

7.1. Six Regional Land-use Plans

Consistency across Regional Plans: The GRMWG discussed the six regional land-use plans and agreed that there was a need to embed consistency across the regional plans. There was concern that the opportunity for consistency of policy application will be lost if the first regional plans are developed in the absence of policy on matters: such as wetlands, energy and wildlife, and not incorporated in a Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Terms of Reference. The management of cross regional issues was also raised as an area that should be addressed in the LUF. The reference to “landscape” level also needs to be better articulated/defined as to its meaning and purpose in the document. There is not a common understanding of landscape level so it needs one definition.

Implementation considerations:

- Policy directions should be in place prior to implementation of the regional planning process to provide for the management of land and resources in the regions whose planning processes are scheduled for later in the implementation cycle to allow for consistency and transparency across the regions.
- Terms of Reference all need to be developed at the same time for all regions, with a common set of benchmarks developed for all the regional plans.
- Ensure that there is a common understanding of how the impact individual regional plans will have on one another will be managed.

Southern Alberta Regional Boundary:

There was specific discussion the complexity of the region and the capacity to deliver within the timeframe proposed. The GRMWG voiced concern that the boundary does not account for the scope and scale of the area in terms of geography, population, large number of municipalities, tourism, and the wide variety of land uses in the area. It was suggested that the diversity of the issues will need special consideration when determining how this regional plan will be developed.

It was also suggested that the issues articulated for the Southern Alberta Regional Plan appeared to be too focused on the Eastern Slopes, and is not reflective of the wide range of challenges contained in the southern region.

Implementation considerations:

- Considerations of the southern region should be expanded to go beyond the issues faced in the Eastern Slopes.
- Once the Calgary Regional Plan and the Southwest Alberta Regional Plan are complete, there will be a need to articulate the impact these plans will have on the sub-regional plans for the remainder of the Southern Region.

Clarity of Language:

- It was also recommended that the language around the word “zoned” with respect to the Eastern Slopes needed to be accurately articulated.
- It was suggested that there are actually six priorities identified in the Integrated Resource Plans for the Eastern Slopes, namely: water, recreation, fish and wildlife, management and development of natural resources, historical resources and research/education, which should be included in the LUF (pg 25).

7.2. Cabinet, Secretariat, Advisory Councils

Provide Greater Transparency: The overall governance structure was recognized as fundamentally the same as what was put forward by the GRMWG in its earlier work. Questions were raised regarding how the new agreement between the Aboriginal Governments and the Province of Alberta will impact the LUF. However, until such time that all the elements of this agreement are fleshed out it is difficult to recommend a course of action.

Implementation considerations:

- The group recommended that it may be beneficial to include additional mechanisms into the process to ensure greater transparency.
- Consideration of the Aboriginal/GOA agreement may need to be included in the Governance Structure of the LUF, following further consultation with the working groups.

7.3. Cumulative Effects Management/ Information, Monitoring and Knowledge System

Cumulative Effect Management (CEM) was recognized by the GRMWG as a clear indication that the government is serious about managing land-use in a more innovative way.

Implementation considerations:

- Develop an approach to the application of the CEM system to social, environmental and economic indicators recognizing that CEM is an emerging practice.
- Further define how CEM will be incorporated into the monitoring and knowledge system would provide additional clarity on how this system will provide support to the regional planning process.
- Include biodiversity in the strategy along with land, air and water in order to ensure that the diversity of our ecosystems is captured in the LUF.

7.4. Conservation and Stewardship

There was considerable discussion regarding the conservation and stewardship (C+S) strategy and it was suggested that the statements in support of the strategy need to be better articulated. For instance, the statement regarding the costs of supplying the “public

goods” appears to place undue responsibility on farmers and ranchers and may warrant a review of this section. There was also concern expressed by the GRMWG that this strategy (and the document in general) focuses more direction on the use of public lands and is lacking clarity and direction around private land use in the province.

Implementation considerations:

- Improve supporting statements.
- It is highly recommended that more work be undertaken around the strategic direction and possible trade-offs for private land-use in the final draft of the LUF.

Clarity of meaning was recommended on:

- Stewardship tools.
- Conservation of lands.
- Lease-swapping.
- Transfer of Development Credits – suggested change to definition: “This is a tool that can be applied to private lands to direct development away from specific landscapes...This approach has been used in some places to allow development but also to allow for the conservation of open spaces and agricultural land.”

7.5. Inclusion of Aboriginal People

In connection with the “Government to Government” agreement expressed previously, the GRMWG reiterates the need to better understand the purpose of this agreement in order to provide any direction as to its inclusion in the LUF. It was suggested that understanding how this agreement will impact the LUF will need to be presented and discussed with the working groups.

8. REVISED RECOMMENDATION OF ADDITIONAL STRATEGY: EFFICIENT LAND-USE STRATEGY

The GRMWG encourages the addition of the *Efficient Land-Use Strategy* into the LUF. This strategy is complementary to the cumulative effects and conservation and stewardship strategies. It provides further mechanisms to encourage the change in behavior among all Albertans to ensure human activities are conducted in a manner that promotes the most efficient use of the land throughout the province. This strategy supports the vision of the LUF that “*The peoples of Alberta work together to respect and care for the land as the foundation of our economic, environmental, social and cultural well being*”.

Efficient Land-Use Strategy

Alberta is experiencing rapid economic growth resulting in unprecedented increases in population and industrial development. This growth has the potential to threaten water resources, and reduce available farmland, natural open spaces, and environmentally sensitive areas. The Land-use Framework envisions “that managing our land is a shared responsibility that involves all Albertans - including industry, landowners, aboriginal people, individual Albertans and government”. Therefore, prompt and focused attention is necessary to ensure human activities are planned in a manner that promotes efficient land use throughout the province. In order to ensure that the outcomes of the Land-Use Framework: Sustainable prosperity supported by our land and natural resources; Healthy ecosystems and environment; and Liveable communities and recreational opportunities; are realized, the strategies contained in the Land-use Framework need to provide clear support and direction. The Land-use Framework already identifies the importance of the Integrated Land Management (ILM) program as a means to manage the footprint of land users on provincial Crown land, however there is a need to consider the same approach to development on non-Crown lands, such as those within the White Area of the Province.

The Efficient Use of Land as a strategy within the Land-use Framework specifically addresses the reduction of the negative impacts of human activities on the land. The essence of this Strategy is to promote innovative approaches to the use of agricultural, urban, rural, natural, recreational & industrial lands by focusing on making more efficient and effective use of space. This strategy also recognizes a need for improved public education with respect to land use.

Implementation will be supported by a variety of tools ranging from best practices guidelines to provincial policy and compliance and regulatory mechanisms. The goals of this Strategy complement the cumulative effects, and stewardship and conservation strategies. It will encourage Albertans to use space more efficiently today, in order to conserve lands to accommodate the broadest range of activities and interests well into the future.

Goals of the Strategy:

The objectives of the Efficient Use of Land Strategy have been developed to support the goals of the Strategy. The goals are to:

- Use agricultural, urban, rural, natural, recreational & industrial lands with a focus on making more efficient and effective use of space to reduce the negative impacts of human activities on the land.
- Support existing communities, where feasible target resources to support development in areas where infrastructure exists (both residential and industrial).
 - Save taxpayers from the high cost of building infrastructure to serve development that has spread far from our traditional population centers.
- Conserve our unique ecological areas before they are forever lost.
- Provide Albertans with a high quality of life, whether they choose to live in a rural community, suburb, small town, or city.

Objectives:

The following objectives have been developed to support the strategy:

Sustainable Municipal Development

Objective: Municipalities encouraged the efficient use of land within their boundaries in collaboration with neighbouring communities.

Sustainable Industrial Development

Objective: Industry to demonstrate that they have designed facilities in a manner that uses an appropriate amount of land; to minimize the amount of land used, and minimize the impacts on water, natural resources, and the air shed.

Agricultural Sustainability

Objective: To conserve agricultural land base and the agricultural industry in rural municipalities and encourage urban agricultural practices.

Infrastructure Corridors

Objective: To develop well-planned, effective infrastructure corridors on both private and public lands that use the least amount of land and avoid sensitive lands where possible.

Conservation of Open Lands, Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Wildlife Habitat

Objective: Conserve and manage identified Provincial landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, wildlife habitat and corridors, scenic agricultural, and the recreation based nature of the community.

Create a toolkit of knowledge, best practices, innovation, incentives, compliance, monitoring, and planning tools

A variety of programs and policies that promote these objectives need to be implemented in order to direct the management of all land use, both private and public.

Recommendations:

- Review existing planning tools (used in other planning processes) and reuse or develop new ones as required such as zoning and development planning tools; land-use forecasting simulators; density transfer tools, etc.
- Develop compliance tools including legislation and regulation.

- Develop incentives to motivate Albertans to adopt beneficial land management practices.
- Initiate a monitoring program to determine at an early date whether our long term land use objectives are in line with the regional societal Albertan needs.
- Develop a value and pricing mechanism for functional land, goods, and services over a planning horizon period.
- Provincial Decisions:
 - Government Decisions support efficient use of land in Alberta
 - Establish a system in which projects funded by the Province consider and have regard for efficient use of land / possibly get priority if they have a smaller footprint
- Soil Conservation and Land Reclamation:
 - Topsoil and subsoil resources on lands to be disturbed for development should be salvaged in a manner that conserves their inherent physical, chemical and biological properties for appropriate uses.
 - Design land use plans with future development in mind to optimize the use of that land indefinitely.

Support continuing development of tools

Recommendations:

- Develop continuous improvement tools to support management adaption based on targeted research, thorough monitoring practices and identification of practices that maximize land-use efficiency and improve mitigation efforts.
- Initiate up to date training programs for elected officials that have limited land use skills or knowledge that limits their ability to plan effectively.

Initiate Education and Awareness

Some land use decisions are made by the province or municipalities, however, individual Albertans also make decisions about how they will use land. Choices about transportation, housing form, and where to work or shop all impact Alberta's efficient use of land. It is recommended that in order to encourage awareness and a pro-active attitude among Albertans about efficient use of land, an education program regarding the consequences of land use decisions should also be built into the strategy.

- Develop education plan that will assist Albertans in understanding the impact of their choices when it comes to the use of land in the province of Alberta.

9. PRIORITY ACTIONS AS DESCRIBED IN DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

9.1. Policy Gap

Identify Provincial Objectives: There was a strong feeling among the GRMWG that provincial objectives on specific issues needs to be included in the LUF. It was suggested that when the province is sliced up into regions, there is a critical need to ensure there is a layer of policy in place to inform regional planning.

Implementation Considerations:

- Include measures in the LUF as a remedy to bridge the gap between the pre-planning stages for regions and the future state of the regions.
- Develop an inventory of policy initiatives already underway in the province and ensure there is a process developed to evaluate the inconsistencies and conflict with the LUF and a strategy developed to bring them in line with the LUF.
- Develop additional strategies, such as an energy strategy, may need to be considered in order to provide a strategic direction for the regional plans in policy areas that have not yet been considered.

9.2. Immediate Planning Priorities

There were some general concerns raised with respect to the immediate planning priorities that should be addressed in the LUF:

- How did we get to the immediate priority levels?
- Concern that the three planning priorities:
 - Will leave other areas of the province out that are experiencing cumulative effects issues.
 - Cannot address provincial issues if the regional plans are not initiated at the same time.

10. WORKING GROUP ADVICE ON LAND-USE FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

The GRMWG provided some overall advice on implementation of the LUF and also some specific advice on the various components. In general, there was concern around the presentation of the implementation schedule in the LUF which elicited several suggestions on how to approach the implementation plan.

10.1. Sequencing of activities:

It was suggested that the current schedule of implementation activities contained in the Draft LUF does not appropriately reflect how the implementation activities will occur and created concern regarding the timeframe to implementation.

Implementation considerations:

- Employ a project management approach to support the sequencing of activities through the development of a critical path that would provide more clarity around which activities are foundational upon others.
- While recognizing the urgency to put a LUF in place warrants an aggressive schedule; it is more important to ensure that the LUF is drafted and implemented correctly than to have it completed by an arbitrary date.
- Focussing on the most challenging issues in the early phases will ensure that the new RACs are not overwhelmed by difficult issues in the early days.
- Effective participation of stakeholders is critical to ensuring the comprehensiveness of the LUF and the support as it is implemented.

Implementation considerations for Priority Actions:

- First define the Critical Success Factors to implementation and then define and implement the Priority Actions.
- Develop an inventory of initiatives and strategies to ensure alignment with regional plan development and also to provide the policy mechanisms to bridge the gap to the start of the regional planning process.
- Inclusion of the Omnibus Bill needs to be considered as a fundamental component in the implementation plan with respect to regulatory alignment.

10.2. Land-use Regions and Plans

Specific recommendations were also provided by the GRMWG with respect to the implementation activities of the Land-use Regions and Plans.

Implementation considerations:

- Include incentive mechanisms into the regional planning process.

- Build on the list of traditional regulatory mechanisms included in Section 8 on C+S and develop new incentives and penalties that incent desired behaviour.
- Develop interim regional plans based on outcomes in absence of the regional plans.
- Critical Success Factors to be defined in advance of regional plan development:
 - Establishing regional planning
 - Define how we will be working with Municipalities
 - Appeal Mechanisms
 - Clarify how this will be done; and what process will be designed to address the complexity of LUF
 - Define:
 - How and when municipal context statements will be put in place and the level of detail required
 - How funds will be accessed
 - The GoA review process for the regional plans
 - Mechanism for “How” regional plans will be connected with other regional plans (for example, wildlife, air quality, transpiration routes etc. are decisions that impact more than one region and need to be integrated.).

10.3. Governance Structure – Regional Advisory Councils:

The methodical development of the Terms of Reference for RACs will be a critical success factor to the LUF and the regional plans. In that regard, the GRMWG considers the following actions and questions of particular importance in the consideration of the development of the Terms of Reference:

Implementation considerations:

- Consider how lines of authority and communication will enable dialogue between the RAC and the Cabinet Committee ensuring that decisions and information are not inappropriately filtered by the Secretariat.
- Provide a process for sector-based nomination of individuals and organizations for the RACs.
- Determine how Government will ensure RACs receive “buy-in” from all Albertans.
- Ensure RAC members have the capacity to acquire feedback from their constituents.
- Define a clear role for the RACs:
 - Include review and recommendation of sub-regional plans in role description for RACs
 - Include additional clarity on what the “right amount” of input into the decision-making and planning for the regional plans looks like for RACs.

10.4. Cumulative Effects Management System:

The GRMWG recommends consideration for the following with respect to implementation of the CEM System for the LUF.

Implementation considerations:

- Define whose role it is to manage cumulative effects.
- Define knowledge authority - How is it used to make decisions?
- Establish a Centre of Excellence in order to ensure the knowledge base is managed.
 - Ensure CEMS is supported by good data and is science-based.

10.5. Information and Knowledge System:

The following are recommendations for inclusion in the implementation activities for the information and knowledge system:

Implementation considerations:

- Under the *knowledge* heading: add *Traditional Knowledge* into the networking connection. (pg 28).
- Decision-making: ensure that the best available knowledge is used; need to delineate the approvals process and determine who's responsible.
- Monitoring and evaluation: include implementation activity that will ensure consistency across the regional plans.

10.6. Policy Gaps:

Stakeholder input into the areas identified to be policy gaps and areas of provincial interest was considered as an important to the GRMWG.

Implementation considerations:

- Develop a mechanism to allow for stakeholder input into the Provincial Policy Gaps and Areas of Provincial Interest as outlined in the document.
- Inclusion of implementation considerations around the tourism industry needed to be reflected in the document.

10.7. Priority Action Items:

Minor editorial comment: Exclusion of “implementation” in the Calgary planning initiative. (pg 28)

10.8. Conservation and Stewardship:

It was agreed that there is a need to develop innovative approaches to C+S that would provide incentives and penalties.

Implementation considerations:

- Development of best practices conservation Tool Box that addresses diversity of the province.
- Develop and initiate an education and awareness plan for the LUF.

11. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND NEXT STEPS

The GRMWG concluded that the Draft LUF is on the right track to reaching the desired state for the province in terms of efficient land-use, however, they concluded that it is critical that we get it right in the beginning otherwise, the success of the initiative will be in jeopardy.

Ensuring the consistency of language and the shared understanding of the desired outcomes needs to be a strong focus of the next iteration of the LUF. Without shared understanding, the LUF may ask more questions than it provides answers to.

There is a clear indication that the inclusion of the Efficient Use of Land Strategy is an important component that the GRMWG is looking for in the document. Ensuring that the triple bottom line principles are balanced and the social pillar strongly supports culture in the broadest sense and is not diluted in the document. The three pillars of sustainability also need to ensure that the most efficient use of land is promoted throughout the LUF.

The inclusion of the Efficient Land-Use Strategy is viewed as an important component to the LUF and is fundamental to achieving the vision and outcomes of the LUF. The essence of this Strategy is to specifically address the reduction of the negative impacts of human activities on the land through applied decision making processes that focus on making more efficient and effective use of space. This new strategy will enable the LUF to go one step further in providing strategic direction in the promotion of innovative approaches to land use, coupled with an awareness and education component to elicit the desired behaviour of Albertans.

Terms of Reference for the RACs is critical to the successful implementation of the regional plans and as such must be developed in a deliberate and thorough manner again, in order to ensure shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of these bodies and to ensure consistency of approach across the regional plans.

Implementation of the LUF is a complex endeavour and should be recognized as such when considering the sequencing of activities for implementation. Ability to effectively participate (both stakeholders and government) is of concern to the GRMWG; therefore, the development of a comprehensive implementation plan will also be critical to the success of the LUF.

Appendix A. Action Log

The following is a summary of the recommended changes for the GRMWG:

Section	Action Required	Report Page #
Balanced Consideration for all four pillars of sustainability	As a means to resolve the ambiguity of the term “balance” it would be more productive to engage in a dialogue on the management of the impacts of human activities on the land, not necessarily in the activities themselves (as described in Direction 4: Limit Impacts to Manage Growth in the GRMWG Report).	Revisions Required throughout LUF
Carrying Capacity	Emphasis needs to be placed on understanding the historic and present conditions of the landscape in order to help inform decisions pertaining to impacts on the carrying capacity of the land (pg. 31 WG Report 2007).	Clarity required throughout the LUF
Efficient use of Land	Addition of a new strategy that would “Promote the Efficient Use of Land”.	New Strategy to be inserted (See section 7 of this report)
Triple Bottom Line (TBL)	Support the Triple Bottom Line model for the final LUF with additional consideration for: Strengthening the social considerations and create equal importance among all components that make up sustainability; Address the carrying capacity in terms of all impacts on land; and Promote efficient use of land within the natural carrying capacity through informed decision-making.	New language to be inserted (see page 10 of this report)
Desired Outcomes	Outcomes need to be recognized as inextricably linked. Strengthening the preamble to the outcome statements could address these issues and remove the perception of one outcome being favoured over another.	Page 9 of LUF
Sustainable Prosperity supported by our land and natural resources	Change the desired outcome to read: <i>Healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources</i>	Page 9 of LUF
Liveable communities and recreational opportunities	“Liveable” seems too minimal... replace with “optimize community and recreational opportunities”. Clarity of Language: Replace first sentence of the outcome description to read (pg 9): “Albertans live in communities. How we design, plan and recreate in, and how we move through the communities, and how these communities grow, impacts the land and future land use in Alberta.” Expand the outcome description around opportunities for recreational activities. Suggested edit: “Alberta's families have the right to recreate”	Page 9 of LUF

Action Log

Section	Action Required	Report Page #
	need to rephrase to Citizen's of Alberta" – does not limit statement to families.	
Guiding Principles		
Sustainable	Replace reference to "towns and cities" throughout the document with "communities" in order to provide a sense of inclusion of all peoples into the document.	Page 9 of LUF
Respectful of private property rights	The meaning of "free markets" is unclear and should be clarified in this guiding principle; in addition, a qualifying statement should be added to provide further understanding of the purpose of the principle. It was also recommended that inclusion of a statement around the "compensation for public acquisitions/zoning/etc." should also be added to the principle.	Page 10 of LUF
Collaborative and Transparent	Improve the language to "ensure transparency of the process".	Page 10 of LUF
LUF Strategies		
Six Regional Land-use Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terms of Reference all need to be developed at the same time for all regions, with a common set of benchmarks developed for all the regional plans. Policy directions should also be in place prior to implementation of the regional planning process to provide for the management of land and resources in the regions whose planning processes are scheduled for later in the implementation cycle to allow for consistency and transparency across the regions. Ensure that there is a common understanding of how the impact individual regional plans will have on one another will be managed. 	Page 11 of LUF
Governance Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group recommended that it may be beneficial to include additional mechanisms into the process to ensure greater transparency. Consideration of the Aboriginal/GOA agreement may need to be included in the Governance Structure of the LUF, following further consultation with the working groups. 	Page 17 of LUF
CEMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop approach to the application of cumulative effects management system to social, environmental and economic indicators recognizing that CEM is an emerging practice. Further define how CEM will be incorporated into the monitoring and knowledge system would provide additional clarity on how this system will provide support to the regional planning process. Include biodiversity in the definition of land, air and water in order to ensure that the diversity of our ecosystems is captured in the LUF. 	Page 18 of LUF
Conservation and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve supporting statements. 	Page 19 of LUF

Action Log

Section	Action Required	Report Page #
Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is highly recommended that more work be undertaken around the strategic direction and possible trade-offs for private land-use in the final draft of the LUF. 	
Clarity of Meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stewardship tools Conservation of lands Lease-swapping Transfer of Development Credits – suggested change to definition: “This is a tool that can be applied to private lands to direct development away from specific landscapes...This approach has been used in some places to allow development but also to allow for the conservation of open spaces and agricultural land.” 	<p>Page 19</p> <p>Page 19</p> <p>Page 20</p> <p>Page 19 of LUF</p>
Promotes the Efficient Use of Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insert Strategy from Section 7 	New Strategy to be inserted (see section 7 of this report)
Policy Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include interim measures in the LUF as a remedy to bridge the gap between the pre-planning stages for regions and the future state of the regions. Develop an inventory of policy initiatives already underway in the province and ensure there is a process developed to evaluate the inconsistencies and conflict with the LUF and a strategy developed to bring them in line with the LUF. Develop additional strategies, such as an energy strategy, may need to be considered in order to provide a strategic direction for the regional plans in policy areas that have not yet been considered. 	Page 25 of LUF
Southern Alberta Regional Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complexities of the southern region should be expanded to go beyond the issues faced in the Eastern Slopes. Once the Calgary Regional Plan and the Southern Alberta Regional Plan are complete, there will be a need to articulate the impact these plans will have on the sub-regional plans for the remainder of the area. 	Page 25 of LUF
Clarity of Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was also recommended that the language around the word “zoned” with respect to the Eastern Slopes needed to be accurately articulated. It was suggested that there are actually six priorities identified in the Integrated Resource Plans for the Eastern Slopes, namely: water, recreation, fish and wildlife, management and development of natural resources, historical resources and research/education, which should be included in the LUF (pg 25). 	Page 25 of LUF
Implementation of Framework		
Sequencing of Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ a project management approach to support the sequencing of activities through the development of a critical path that would provide more clarity around which 	Page 27 of LUF

Action Log

Action Log

Section	Action Required	Report Page #
	<p>activities are foundational upon others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While recognizing the urgency to put a LUF in place warrants an aggressive schedule; it is more important to ensure that the LUF is drafted and implemented correctly than to have it completed by an arbitrary date. • Focussing on the most challenging issues in the early phases will ensure that the new RACs are not overwhelmed by difficult issues in the early days. • Effective participation of stakeholders is critical to ensuring the comprehensiveness of the LUF and the support as it is implemented. 	
Implementati on of Priority Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First define the Critical Success Factors to implementation and then define and implement the Priority Actions. • Develop an inventory of initiatives and strategies to ensure alignment with regional plan development and also to provide the policy mechanisms to bridge the gap to the start of the regional planning process. • Inclusion of the Omnibus Bill needs to be considered as a fundamental component in the implementation plan with respect to regulatory alignment. 	Page 28 of LUF
Land Use Regional Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include incentive mechanisms into the regional planning process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Build on the list of traditional regulatory mechanisms included in Section 8 on Conservation and Stewardship and develop new incentives and penalties that incent desired behaviour. • Develop interim regional plans based on outcomes in absence of the regional plans. 	Page 27 of LUF
Land Use Regional Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Success Factors to be defined in advance of regional plan development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establishing regional planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define how we will be working with Municipalities. – Appeal Mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify how this will be done; and what process will be designed to address the complexity of LUF. – Define: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How and when Municipal context statements will be put in place and the level of detail required. ▪ How funds will be accessed. ▪ The GOA review process for the regional plans. ▪ Mechanism for “How” regional plans will be connected. 	Page 27 of LUF
Regional Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how lines of authority and communication will enable dialogue between the RAC and the Cabinet 	Page 27 of LUF

Action Log

Section	Action Required	Report Page #
Councils	<p>Committee ensuring that decisions and information are not inappropriately filtered by the Secretariat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a process for sector-based nomination of individuals and organizations for the RACs. • Determine how Government will ensure RACs receive “buy-in” from all Albertans? • Ensure RAC members have the capacity to acquire feedback from their constituents. • Define a clear role for the RACs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Include review and recommendation of sub-regional plans in role description for RACs. – Include additional clarity on what the “right amount” of input into the decision-making and planning for the regional plans looks like for RACs. 	
CEMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define whose role it is to manage cumulative effects. • Define knowledge authority - How is it used to make decisions? • Establish a Centre of Excellence in order to ensure the knowledge base is managed. • Ensure CEMS is supported by good data and is science-based 	Page 27 of LUF
Information and Knowledge Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the <i>knowledge</i> heading: add <i>Traditional Knowledge</i> into the networking connection. • Decision-making: ensure that the best available knowledge is used; need to delineate the approvals process and determine who's responsible. • Monitoring and evaluation: include implementation activity that will ensure consistency across the regional plans. 	Page 28 of LUF
Policy Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mechanism to allow for stakeholder input into the Provincial Policy Gaps and Areas of Provincial Interest as outlined in the document (i.e. Managing Flood Risk and other policy gaps identified in the current consultation process). • Inclusion of implementation considerations around the tourism industry needed to be reflected in the document. 	Page 29 of LUF
Priority Action Items	<p>Minor editorial comment: Exclusion of “implementation” in the Calgary planning initiative.</p>	Page 28 of LUF
Conservation and Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of best practices conservation Tool Box that addresses diversity of the province. • Develop and initiate an education and awareness plan for the LUF. 	Page 27-28 of LUF

Appendix B. Comprehensive Version of the *Efficient Land-Use Strategy*

Alberta is experiencing rapid economic growth resulting in unprecedented increases in population and industrial development. This growth has the potential to threaten water resources, and reduce available farmland, natural open spaces, and environmentally sensitive areas. The Land-use Framework envisions “that managing our land is a shared responsibility that involves all Albertans - including industry, landowners, aboriginal people, individual Albertans and government”. Therefore, prompt and focused attention is necessary to ensure human activities are planned in a manner that promotes efficient land use throughout the province. In order to ensure that the outcomes of the Land-Use Framework: Sustainable prosperity supported by our land and natural resources; Healthy ecosystems and environment; and Liveable communities and recreational opportunities; are realized, the strategies contained in the Land-use Framework need to provide clear support and direction. The Land-use Framework already identifies the importance of the Integrated Land Management (ILM) program as a means to manage the footprint of land users on provincial Crown land, however there is a need to consider the same approach to development on non-Crown lands, such as those within the White Area of the Province.

Comprehensive Version of the Efficient Land- Use Strategy

The Efficient Use of Land as a strategy within the Land-use Framework specifically addresses the reduction of the negative impacts of human activities on the land. The essence of this Strategy is to promote innovative approaches to the use of agricultural, urban, rural, natural, recreational & industrial lands by focusing on making more efficient and effective use of space. This strategy also recognizes a need for improved public education with respect to land use.

Implementation will be supported by a variety of tools ranging from best practices guidelines to provincial policy and compliance and regulatory mechanisms. The goals of this Strategy complement the cumulative effects, and stewardship and conservation strategies. It will encourage Albertans to use space more efficiently today, in order to conserve lands to accommodate the broadest range of activities and interests well into the future.

Goals of the Strategy:

The objectives of the Efficient Use of Land Strategy have been developed to support the goals of the Strategy. The goals are to:

- Use agricultural, urban, rural, natural, recreational & industrial lands with a focus on making more efficient and effective use of space to reduce the negative impacts of human activities on the land.
- Support existing communities, where feasible target resources to support development in areas where infrastructure exists (both residential and industrial):
 - Save taxpayers from the high cost of building infrastructure to serve development that has spread far from our traditional population centers;
- Conserve our unique ecological areas before they are forever lost.
- Provide Albertans with a high quality of life, whether they choose to live in a rural community, suburb, small town, or city.

Objectives:

The following objectives have been developed to support the strategy:

Sustainable Municipal Development

Objective: Municipalities encouraged the efficient use of land within their boundaries in collaboration with neighbouring communities.

The following list provides suggestions of possible actions that could support the municipal growth objective:

- Provincial government encourages density targets where appropriate for settlement areas of the province through incorporation of targets into annexation decisions, provincial grant decisions, and other mechanisms that encourage changed behaviour.
- Municipalities adopt policies within their Municipal Development Plans and Area Structure Plans that promote more liveable communities that attempt a reduced ecological footprint.
- Rural municipalities prohibit the fragmentation of prime agricultural lands for residential purposes.
- Adjacent municipalities continue to develop mutually beneficial long term services cost and taxation revenue sharing agreements.
- Encourage development to locate on land already within a developed area.
- Provincial funding mechanisms to municipalities will consider and encourage efficient use of land.
- Encourage mixed uses – incorporating various services and jobs within neighbourhoods and sectors of communities.
- Encourage easy access to public transit, transit-oriented development in urban zones.
- Encourage the development of land use plans that promote water retention and protect sources of water to conserve water quality and quantity.
- Updated provincial standards for wells and septic systems to ensure the protection of groundwater.
- Encourage inclusion of walkway systems in municipal developments to move people in an environmentally friendly and healthy way.

Sustainable Industrial Development

Objective: Industry to demonstrate that they have designed facilities in a manner that uses an appropriate amount of land; to minimize the amount of land used, and minimize the impacts on water, natural resources, and the air shed.

The following list provides suggestions of possible actions that could support the industrial growth objective:

- Provincial Policies and Guidelines should not allow incompatible land uses in areas affected by Heavy Industrial land use zoning.
- Locate heavy industry away from densely populated areas.
- Establish economic policies that encourage compatible heavy industries to co-locate in clusters to reduce the amount of land consumed by individual plant sites.

- Encourage the development of land use plans that promote water retention and protect sources of water to conserve water quality and quantity.
- Updated provincial standards to ensure the protection of groundwater.

Agricultural Sustainability

Objective: To conserve agricultural land base and the agricultural industry in rural municipalities and encourage urban agricultural practices.

The following list provides suggestions of possible actions that could support the agricultural sustainability objective:

- Urban municipalities incorporate policies into Municipal Development Plans and Area Structure Plans to promote and establish urban agriculture practices.
- Urban agriculture:
 - Promote opportunities for urban residents to produce their own food (e.g. roof top gardens, community gardens, farmers markets, market gardens and green houses) – encourage where feasible urban agriculture production.
- Rural municipalities identify and preserve prime and productive agricultural land where appropriate in their Municipal Development Plan and establish policies to limit the fragmentation for non-agricultural purposes.
- Rural agriculture:
 - Identify quality soil within rural areas and promote innovative/efficient land management practices and ensure the protection of these lands.
- Maintain, to the best ability possible, the capacity of all classes of lands used for purposes other than agriculture to provide water, air, and other land-based products.
- Initiate a comprehensive inventory of agricultural and white area lands for the purpose of providing baseline data, which would be updated at regular intervals into the future.
- Identify and protect healthy native rangelands.

Infrastructure Corridors

Objective: To develop well-planned, effective infrastructure corridors on both private and public lands that use the least amount of land and avoid sensitive lands where possible.

The following list provides suggestions of possible actions that could support the Infrastructure Corridors objective:

- Transportation infrastructure: provide a variety of efficient transportation options to move people and goods across the province using less land, for example, railways are much more efficient in their use of space when it comes to moving people and goods than cars or trucks and roads.
- Utility corridors: encourage shared utility corridors wherever possible.

- Create transportation and utility corridors in a manner to protect natural ecosystems.
- Establish corridors that are protected for future expansion.
- Encourage Development (e.g. industrial businesses and employers) to locate along corridors to reduce commuting time.

Conservation of Open Lands, Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Wildlife Habitat

Objective: Conserve and manage identified Provincial landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, wildlife habitat and corridors, scenic agricultural, and the recreation based nature of the community.

The following list provides suggestions of possible actions that could support the agricultural sustainability objective:

- Design land use plans where appropriate so development does not adversely affect the health and integrity of the watersheds, the critical habitats for native lands, wildlife, wetlands and recreational areas.
- The adoption of integrated land use and planning principles on all public lands, as well as, private lands where appropriate: would enhance the opportunity of the stated objective.
- Amend the MGA and other Provincial legislation to enable municipalities to preserve, protect and manage environmentally sensitive areas, and wildlife habitat and corridors.
- Municipalities must identify in their MDP's local and regionally significant landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, and wildlife habitat and corridors.
- Municipalities must make more efficient use of land in order to reduce the impact on local and regionally significant landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, and wildlife habitat and corridors.

Create a toolkit of knowledge, best practices, innovation, incentives, compliance, monitoring, and planning tools

A variety of programs and policies that promote these objectives need to be implemented in order to direct the management of all land use, both private and public.

Recommendations:

- Review existing planning tools (used in other planning processes) and reuse or develop new ones as required such as zoning and development planning tools; land-use forecasting simulators; density transfer tools, etc.
- Develop compliance tools including legislation and regulation.
- Develop incentives to motivate Albertans to adopt beneficial land management practices.
- Initiate a monitoring program to determine at an early date whether our long term land use objectives are in line with the regional societal Albertan needs.
- Provincial Decisions:

- Government Decisions support efficient use of land in Alberta
- Establish a system in which projects funded by the Province consider and have regard for efficient use of land / possibly get priority if they have a smaller footprint
- Soil Conservation and Land Reclamation:
 - Topsoil and subsoil resources on lands to be disturbed for development should be salvaged in a manner that conserves their inherent physical, chemical and biological properties for appropriate uses.
 - Design land use plans with future development in mind to optimize the use of that land indefinitely.

Support continuing development of tools

Recommendations:

- Develop continuous improvement tools to support management adaption based on targeted research, thorough monitoring practices and identification of practices that maximize land-use efficiency and improve mitigation efforts.
- Initiate up to date training programs for elected officials that have limited land use skills or knowledge that limits their ability to plan effectively.

Initiate Education and Awareness

Some land use decisions are made by the province or municipalities, however, individual Albertans also make decisions about how they will use land. Choices about transportation, housing form, and where to work or shop all impact Alberta's efficient use of land. It is recommended that in order to encourage awareness and a pro-active attitude among Albertans about efficient use of land, an education program regarding the consequences of land use decisions should also be built into the strategy.

- Develop education plan that will assist Albertans in understanding the impact of their choices when it comes to the use of land in the province of Alberta.

Appendix C. Examples of Efficient Land Use and Growth Management Strategies being used in various jurisdictions within Alberta, Canada, and the United States

In support of the objectives for the Efficient Use of Land Strategy, we have developed a list of examples, together with internet links to comprehensive growth/ efficient land use strategies being implemented in jurisdictions in Alberta, Canada and the United States:

- **Sustainable Municipal Development:**

Examples:

- Integrated Community Sustainability Plans-ICSPs (or provincial Municipal Sustainability Plans MSPs) Municipal governments have the lead role in coordinating and orchestrating the delivery of sustainable communities. In order to make better decisions, Councils are now developing tools to assess the sustainability of their plans and actions. Their MSPs will help them undertake a balanced assessment of their decisions – not just the economic implications, but also the social, cultural, environmental and governance implications. These ICSP/MSP plans must be in place before 2010. (Source: Alberta Urban Municipal Sustainability Planning Guide. <http://msp.auma.ca/>)
- State of Maryland's brownfield redevelopment policies which support reusing abandoned lands in city or town centres rather than always focusing on building on new land (e.g. a brownfield is an already developed site that might be vacant or abandoned – such as cleaning up and reusing old gas stations, old factories or plants). Maryland's policies state: Many unused or abandoned properties that are contaminated, or even perceived to be contaminated, are not attractive to commercial and industrial developers because of the uncertainty about future liability. Because of these liability concerns, developers and businesses often choose to locate on "greenfields" - pristine farms and open spaces - without needed infrastructure, such as roads and utilities. This contributes to the loss of farms and open spaces, increases the amount of taxpayer dollars spent on funding new infrastructure and impedes neighbourhood revitalization efforts. (Source: Smart Growth Strategy: State of Maryland <http://www.mdp.state.md.us/smartintro.htm>)
- The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, released on June 16, 2006, is a 25-year plan that aims to: Revitalize downtowns to become vibrant and convenient centres. Create complete communities that offer more options for living, working, learning, shopping and playing. Provide housing options to meet the needs of people at any age. Curb sprawl and protect farmland and green spaces. Reduce traffic gridlock by improving access to a greater range of transportation options. (Source: http://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9&Itemid=12)
- In Maryland and Ontario – municipal grants are subject to meeting what the state/province deems to be efficient use of land. Alberta could begin to link their grants to meeting more stringent criteria such as meeting agreed to density

Examples of Efficient Land Use and Growth Management Strategies being used in various jurisdictions within Alberta, Canada, and the United States

targets, or only to areas where existing or planned water and sewer systems are in place, or only to areas where mixed use development is planned to reduce commuting. The Province can set the targets desired – the grants work as the “carrots”.

- San Francisco provides interactive tool for measuring what density should be for a city. (Source: Neighbourhood Explorations – This View of Density San Francisco <http://www.sflcv.org/density/index.html>)
- Vancouver City Council has unanimously voted to adopt an EcoDensity Charter that commits the City to make environmental sustainability a primary goal in all city planning decisions – in ways that also support housing affordability and liveability. Charter includes: Rezoning Policy for Greener Buildings; Rezoning policy for Greener Larger Sites; priority actions include: A report on issues and options for backyard/laneway housing; Removal of existing zoning or related barriers to green building approaches; More options for secondary suites, including dealing with zoning barriers to creating basements in single family houses; looking at requiring “suite ready” basements; and investigating options for suites in higher density housing; An interim EcoDensity Rezoning. (Source: <http://www.vancouver-ecodensity.ca/>)

- **Sustainable Industrial Development:**

- *Industrial Heartland Association: Clustered Industrial Development:*
Advantages: minimizes impact area, increased opportunity for symbiosis, maximizes efficient transportation use, minimized land use conflicts, centralized emergency response, orderly development, flexibility to deal with design changes
Disadvantages: emergencies may impact more than one facility, greater potential for negative air quality impacts, more localized traffic impacts, may raise price of industrial land. (Source: http://www.industrialheartland.com/pdf/jan_2000.pdf)
- Alberta’s Industrial Heartland Association (AIHA) has created an Eco Industrial Master Plan Strategy which seeks to address the challenges and opportunities relating to land use, transportation, utilities, and social factors that face the four municipalities (Strathcona County, Lamont County, Sturgeon County and City of Fort Saskatchewan) within Alberta’s Industrial Heartland created by the heavy industrial development within the area. (Source: <http://www.industrialheartland.com/>)
- The City of Gresham in Oregon is developing sustainable industrial development practices (social balance, green site development, sustainable building design, and eco-industrial development) as part of their Industrial Land Use Assessment (ILA) project, which will be incorporated into future industrial site development. (Source: <http://www.ci.gresham.or.us/departments/planningServices/pdf/20080428ILUAsustainabilityOptions.pdf>)

**Examples of Efficient
Land Use and Growth
Management Strategies
being used in various
jurisdictions within
Alberta, Canada, and
the United States**

- **Agricultural Sustainability:**

- Utilize the Made in Alberta Tool for land profiling, to enable land managers to identify more appropriate land uses within the overall agricultural community for the purposes of designing long term sustainable industrial added value development.
- Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR): Smart Growth BC: Initiative Creating More Livable Communities: Local governments and private landowners can apply to the Agricultural Land Commission to: permanently exclude land from the ALR by rezoning it for industrial, commercial, or residential use; sub-divide larger pieces of the ALR into smaller parcels, which limits the types of farming that can occur and in some cases is a middle step to eventually having the land excluded; pursue “non-farming” uses on the ALR land, which may or may not be monitored to ensure compliance with the ALC Act (Source: <http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/AboutUs/Issues/AgriculturalLandReserveALR/tabid/111/Default.aspx>)
- Land Use Principles to Achieve Agricultural sustainability in Ventura County: Land use practices of building residential neighborhoods directly next to farmland cause continual conflicts, resulting in the steady erosion of the agricultural industry. The principles set forth in this document suggest buffers and reasonable boundaries between agricultural and urban uses to reduce conflicts and allow the best use for each segment of society, allowing both to survive and prosper. (Source: http://portal.countyofventura.org/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/AGCOMMISSIONER/LAND_USE_PLANNING/AFALANDUSEPAPER_0.PDF)

- **Infrastructure Corridors:**

Examples:

- Places to Grow: Places to Grow is the Ontario government's initiative to manage growth and development in Ontario in a way that supports economic prosperity, protects the environment and helps communities achieve a high quality of life. Through Places to Grow, we develop regional growth plans to guide government investments. Ontario's growth plan is very focused on building public transit and reducing the need for new highways. (Source: <http://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?lang=eng>)
- Maryland has a policy of incentives to businesses locating along public transit corridors and also gives tax refunds to transit riders.
- Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association (AIHA) is in the process of creating linear corridors for pipelines and utilities within the Industrial Heartland region and unifying the utility plans from the four municipalities into one. (Source: <http://www.industrialheartland.com/>)
- The federal government in Canada is also refunding tax credits to transit riders.

- **Conservation of Open Lands, Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Wildlife Habitat:**

Examples:

- Beaver Hills Initiative, Central Alberta: The area is a critical source of surface and ground water, and a large proportion of lands, both public and private, exist in their natural state. Faced with increasing demands from recreational, urban and rural residential land uses, the Beaver Hills ecosystem is disappearing and requires special consideration for conservation. The proposed regional management approach for the Beaver Hills would address two aspects of effective protected area network design: regional management of a protected area network and buffered human use around the protected areas. Buffering human use effectively means limiting the extent of fragmentation and human activity immediately adjacent protected areas. Ideally, land use in the buffer lands surrounding the various protected areas across the Beaver Hills would concentrate development in the outer buffer lands and be less intensive near the protected areas. (Source: <http://www.beaverhills.ab.ca/>)
- Southern Ontario Landform: Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust – established to identify, protect, conserve and restore the integrity of the natural environment and heritage sites of the Oak Ridges Moraine. This includes trails and physical features of scientific, ecological, hydrological, historic, architectural, archaeological, scenic and open space interest. The vision: in working with local land owners, committed volunteers and donors, the Trust is dedicated to encouraging a greater understanding and awareness of the natural environment and heritage of the Oak Ridges Moraine for protection for future generations. **Actions:** landowners donate land within the Moraine to the Land Trust; keep the land but protect all or part of it through a conservation easement protecting owners wishes even when it passes to future owners. (Source: <http://www.oakridgesmoraine.org/>)
- Hay Zama process in northwestern Alberta: A cooperative process with industry, first nations and environmental groups led to a process of planned industrial activity: oil and gas development would be allowed, but within a strict time limit: it must be completed by 2017. This allows for industrial certainty about extraction of the resource, but also allows for future planning of the region once industrial activity is complete. The Dene Thá First Nation will be directly involved in future management of a protected area (see Edmonton Journal - <http://www.canada.com/edmontonjournal/story.html?id=72744e17-b973-442a-ac4d-92af662c060c>).
- The Proposed Big Gully ALUS Project - The purpose of the three year Big Gully Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Demonstration Project is to demonstrate the use of wetlands to mitigate flooding in the Big Gully area, as recommended by the engineering study, through the cooperative efforts of the local municipal government and private landowners. Landowners, primarily farmers and ranchers, will be provided with incentives to assist them with wetland restoration and conservation. By holding excess water in these areas, flooding of residential and commercial urban properties as well as high value cropland will be reduced or eliminated. Significant cost savings associated with flood damage and cropland loss should be achieved. These conserved/restored wetlands will provide multiple benefits to Alberta society at large. Additional examples of

how this is being implemented can be found at www.deltawaterfowl.org and http://gorsuch.ca/wiki?title=Alternative_Land_Use_Services.

Other suggested sources and links to various Growth and Land Use Strategies in Alberta, Canada, and the United States

Alberta

Reducing Calgary's ecological footprint: Living within the means of what nature can provide. (Source: http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/environmental_management/ecological_footprint/what_is_ecological_footprint.pdf)

Industrial Heartland Association Eco-Industrial Master Plan

Canada

Smart Growth BC: Initiative Creating More Liveable Communities Smart growth is a collection of land use and development principles that aim to enhance our quality of life, preserve the natural environment, and save money over time. Smart growth principles ensure that growth is fiscally, environmentally and socially responsible and recognizes the connections between development and quality of life. Smart growth enhances and completes communities by placing priority on infill, redevelopment, and green space protection. (Source: <http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/Default.aspx?tabid=95>)

United States

Smart Growth Strategies: Creating Liveable Healthy Communities link to the IFC http://www.icfi.com/Markets/Community_Development/doc_files/smart-growth.pdf

Town of Eagle, Colorado: Eagle Land Use Strategy <http://www.townofeagle.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=956>

Smart Growth network: The Network was formed in response to increasing community concerns about the need for new ways to grow that boost the economy, protect the environment, and enhance community vitality. The Network's partners include environmental groups, historic preservation organizations, professional organizations, developers, real estate interests; local and state government entities. (Source: <http://www.smartgrowth.org/sgn/default.asp>)

Sustainability Communities Network: Bringing citizens to resources and to one another to create healthy, vital, sustainable communities. (Source: <http://www.sustainable.org/>)

Washington State Growth Management Plan: Smart growth is a movement among communities to coordinate land use and transportation planning in order to create more liveable, walkable, healthy places to live. Conventional development patterns often create sprawl – paving over undeveloped lands at low densities and creating a dependence on private automobiles to carry out daily tasks.

The long-term, regional considerations of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) and the principles of smart growth can help us to overcome the traffic congestion and loss of sense of community associated with conventional development patterns. Rather than sprawling outward, new growth can enrich existing communities. Smart growth strengthens neighbourhoods by mixing commercial and residential uses, and provides more transportation choices by balancing the needs of pedestrians and bicycles with those of automobiles.

The GMA is a regulatory framework in which smart growth can, and does, thrive. Many smart growth principles match growth management goals. Others can enhance comprehensive planning and help in crafting development regulations that achieve the goals of the GMA. The ten classic principles of smart growth (from [smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)) are generally supported by and consistent with GMA goals. (Source: <http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Planning/gma/GMAupdates.aspx>)

**Examples of Efficient
Land Use and Growth
Management Strategies
being used in various
jurisdictions within
Alberta, Canada, and
the United States**

Alberta's Draft Land-use Framework

**Final Report of the Planning and Decision Making Working Group
to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development
(November, 2008)**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The output captured in this report mainly reflects consensus achieved by the Planning and Decision Making Working Group (PDMWG) arising from May and June 2008 workshops.

The PDMWG was pleased with the LUF and felt it was representative of their input and recommendations from previous consultations. While the LUF cannot resolve all operational issues, it does adequately represent the big picture solution and the PDMWG felt that the Government should continue on this policy direction. The PDMWG agreed that there is now a need to translate the direction provided in the LUF to a practical level of application.

The PDMWG provided ideas on improvements for the Framework and identified many important considerations for the LUF going forward. Of these, the group emphasized four areas where the document could be strengthened that it felt were most crucial.

- **Balancing economic, environmental and social considerations:** The PDMWG felt that the LUF put significant emphasis on environmental, and to a lesser extent economic, considerations while the social pillar received little attention. These need to be brought into balance.
- **Governance considerations:** The PDMWG recognized that the governance structure is essential to the success of the framework and was supportive of the bodies – Cabinet Committee, Secretariat, and Regional Advisory Councils (RAC)-outlined in the LUF. The group suggested that this structure could be enhanced, the role of departments and agencies recognized, and added concrete recommendations on the roles of each. The PDMWG also proposed the addition of a Provincial Advisory Committee to the governance structure.
- **Policy considerations:** The PDMWG agreed the LUF was light on policy direction and required more clarity and direction on existing and emerging policies including mechanisms to address policy collisions. The group emphasized the need for the Province to clarify and integrate the policy context of the LUF to provide clear direction to the planning process, or indicate how policy direction would eventually evolve to form a stronger basis for planning.
- **Approach to the planning process:** The PDMWG agreed that the framework needs to better describe the planning process. Specifically, the group believes there is a need for greater clarity at the onset of regional planning for:
 - The functional roles and relationships between RAC and the Secretariat;
 - The identification of how the Province intends to measure success specifically; and
 - The timing and process that will be used to identify and develop measurable objectives, indicators and targets at the provincial and regional scale.

The PDMWG offered a number of suggestions around implementation of the LUF:

- Outline legislative intent in the LUF and define what will happen to existing legislation.
- Provide clarity around the existing Integrated Resource Plans (IRP) in the province, (eg. Eastern Slopes Policy), define how they fit into the LUF, and identify what plans are subsumed under the LUF.
- Leverage existing assets and practices that work.
- Determine what, if any, interim measures will be required and address them in the LUF.
- As part of the Terms of Reference, define urgent issues that need to be addressed.
- Provide regional planning authorities with a “trade-off analysis” planning tool.
- Begin planning in each region in parallel, rather than sequentially.
- Develop a process by which Provincial measurable outcomes and indicators will be established.
- Define Aboriginal participation in the context of Government to Government discussions.
- Define and communicate the resources and planning tools that will be available to local municipalities.
- Develop or strengthen mechanisms that allow stakeholders to propose amendments to regional plans.

2. INTRODUCTION

To accomplish Alberta’s vision of a “vibrant and prosperous province,” the Government of Alberta (GoA) pledged a commitment to sound management of natural resources and the environment. The development of a Provincial Land Use Framework (LUF) was articulated in *Alberta’s 20-Year Strategic Business Plan*.

In 2007, the GoA completed a process to obtain advice and input from Albertans, including public information and input sessions; stakeholder working groups; and aboriginal engagement sessions. A Draft LUF document was released in May 2008 with the final version to be completed around late summer 2008. This final version will be informed once again by a similar three element consultation process.

The 2008 multi-stakeholder consultation involved workshop sessions of the four separate, but interrelated, working groups: Growth and Resource Management; Planning and Decision Making; Conservation and Stewardship; and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The PDMWG was guided by a set of questions that facilitated discussion. The output captured in this report mainly reflects consensus achieved by the PDMWG.

3. MEETING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the stakeholder review process was to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Draft LUF towards the management of land and resources in the province in general and through the specific lens of each working group.
- Provide recommendations to bring the LUF from draft to final.
- Provide guidance on initial implementation considerations of the LUF, together with advice on managing challenges and opportunities.

4. PDMWG PARTICIPANTS

The following PDMWG representatives participated in the May 26-28 session:

- Kirk Andries, Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute
- Peter Kinnear, Canadian Natural Resources Limited
- Susan Feddema-Leonard, Willmore Wilderness Foundation
- Shirley Pickering, Watershed Stewardship Group
- Judy Stewart, Bow River Basin Council
- Bob Anderson, former Councillor – MD of Rockyview
- Murray Summers, West Fraser Mills
- Jim McCammon, Alberta Newsprint
- Dave Kmet, Alberta Forest Products Association
- Hudson Foley, Altalink
- Veronica Bliska, Reeve – MD of Peace
- Ziad Saad, Canadian Energy Pipelines Association
- Linda Strong-Watson, Alberta Trailnet
- Tim Creelman, City of Calgary
- Rick Schneider, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Northern Alberta
- Steve Kennett, The Pembina Institute
- Bill Symonds, Municipal Affairs
- Jim Webb, Little Red River Cree Nation
- Dave Belyea, Alberta Environment
- Kate Hovland, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC)

Some members of the past PDMWG were not in attendance, but were provided with all materials including a WG email account to which issues resulting from the review of the LUF could be posted. . A number of Agencies were not present, but were asked to act as LUF reviewers and were consulted. Previous WG attendees that were not present at the last consultation included:

- Brian Irmen, Clearwater County
- David Hill, Alberta Irrigation Project Association
- Diana McQueen, Former Mayor – Drayton Valley
- Stan Boutin, University of Alberta
- Doug Parrish, City of Leduc
- Gerald Cunningham, Metis Settlements General Council
- Dan Fouts, Stone Valley Contractors and Gravel Association

- Gerald Rhodes, AAMDC
- Peter Koning, Conoco Philips
- Bob Demulder, Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Bryan Walton, Alberta Cattle Feeders Association
- Kim McCaig, Canadian Energy Pipelines Association
- Glenn Selland, Sustainable Resource Development
- Brenda Allbright, Alberta Energy

Note: not all participants are identified here. They have been included based on their individual decision to allow their names to be published.

PDMWG Participants

5. REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

This report summarizes the main issues emerging from the PDMWG's review of the LUF, why these issues are important and how they might be addressed by the GOA in the LUF's implementation.

5.1. Overall Working Group Impressions of Draft Land-use Framework

The PDMWG was pleased with the LUF and felt it was representative of their input and recommendations from previous consultations as outlined in the November 2007 Land-use Framework Multi-Stakeholder Working Groups Roll-up Report. While the LUF cannot resolve all operational issues, it does adequately represent the big picture solution and the PDMWG felt that the Government should continue on this policy direction.

The LUF provides high-level directional focus for land-use management in Alberta. The PDMWG agreed that there is now a need to translate the direction provided in the LUF to a practical level of application. Looking at the LUF through both a planning and decision making lens and an overall systems lens, the PDMWG was able to identify core areas of focus that will be critical to making the transition from the direction provided in the LUF practical application.

The PDMWG provided ideas on improvements for the Framework and identified many important considerations for the LUF going forward. Of these, the group emphasized four areas where the document could be strengthened that it felt were most crucial.

- **Balancing economic, environmental and social considerations:** The PDMWG felt that the LUF put significant emphasis on environmental, and to a lesser extent economic, considerations while the social pillar received little attention. These need to be brought into balance.
- **Governance considerations:** The PDMWG recognized that the governance structure is essential to the success of the framework and was supportive of the bodies – Cabinet Committee, Secretariat, and Regional Advisory Councils (RAC)-outlined in the LUF. The group suggested that this structure could be enhanced, the role of departments and agencies recognized, and added concrete recommendations on the roles of each. The PDMWG also proposed the addition of a Provincial Advisory Committee to the governance structure.
- **Policy considerations:** The PDMWG agreed the LUF was light on policy direction and required more clarity and direction on existing and emerging policies including mechanisms to address policy collisions. The group emphasized the need for the Province to clarify and integrate the policy context of the LUF to provide clear direction to the planning process, or indicate how policy direction would eventually evolve to form a stronger basis for planning.

- **Approach to the planning process:** The PDMWG agreed that the framework needs to better describe the planning process. Specifically, the group believes there is a need for greater clarity at the onset of regional planning for:
 - The functional roles and relationships between RAC and the Secretariat;
 - The identification of how the Province intends to measure success specifically; and
 - The timing and process that will be used to identify and develop measurable objectives, indicators and targets at the provincial and regional scale.

5.2. Evaluation of Working Group Key Points

The PDMWG focused much of its time and effort during the stakeholder review session around four key areas. These areas were deemed by the group to be critical high-level considerations that need to be addressed in order to support other more granular level decisions. The PDMWG emphasized the following four core issues.

5.2.1. Balancing economic, environmental and social considerations

The LUF is built around the so-called triple bottom line of economic, environmental and social considerations. The PDMWG felt that significant emphasis was put on environmental aspects such as cumulative impact assessment and conservation and stewardship, and to a lesser extent on processes to incorporate economic considerations. It was the group's consensus that social considerations and processes to incorporate them were also underrepresented in the LUF. This underrepresentation can result in an imbalance between the three pillars and has the potential to skew planning and decision making in the future.

A great deal of discussion occurred in all four working groups on how to ensure that the Framework and subsequent regional plans demonstrate the essential balance among the "pillars" of sustainable development. In the final version of the Framework and in the transition to implementation, the PDMWG continue to encourage a balanced representation of all pillars in any documentation, data systems and tools developed to support planning.

- The PDMWG suggested that the LUF should not treat the environment, economic and social pillars as silos but rather integrate them and better address the balance between the three.
- Decision making tools and data are necessary to properly balance social and economic values with environmental values.
- To help measure success and outcomes related to all three components, the LUF needs to include integrated provincial level progress indicators and provide guidance on how regional plans will address all three pillars.

- The PDMWG suggested that adequate representation at the RAC level is important to ensure regional plans are able to strike the appropriate balance between environmental, economic and social considerations.

5.2.2. Governance considerations

The PDMWG viewed governance of the LUF as an essential component and felt the proposed structure, including a Cabinet Committee, Secretariat and RAC, adequately reflected their recommendations from previous consultations. The PDMWG also suggested that the strength of the governance structure could be enhanced. To accomplish this, the group proposed some salient changes to the roles and reporting structure outlined below:

- The LUF should enable a hybrid approach where the RAC and Secretariat work cooperatively in the development of plans.
- The RAC should be advisory to the Cabinet Committee, not the Secretariat as the LUF proposes.
- The RAC should take a more active role in the plan development process than appears to be contemplated in the governance structure.
- The Councils should be “more than advisory, but not bureaucratic”.
- The LUF should acknowledge the role that various governmental departments will play (Departments are important sources of policy knowledge, data management, scenario modeling, and technical capacity & resourcing. They will also play critical roles in plan implementation, so building their support is essential).
- A Provincial Advisory Committee should be added to assist in Provincial level guidance and advice to the Secretariat on policy issues.

5.2.3. Policy considerations

Planning in the absence of broad policy direction is very difficult, if not impossible. In the absence of such direction, it is inevitable that policy based collisions will occur in the regional planning process and tradeoffs will need to be made by elected representatives who balance individual interests in the market system with protection and maintenance of the greater public good. The PDMWG found the LUF light on policy direction, and agreed there is an opportunity to enhance policy in the LUF context. An opportunity exists to use the regional planning process, as an integrating mechanism. The group suggested that there must be an instrument or process in place to efficiently address policy conflicts and to clearly articulate policy direction.

- The PDMWG identified a critical need for the Provincial Government to be as clear and detailed as possible about the relationship between existing/emerging policies and planning processes affecting land, environment and resources as instruction to RAC at the onset of regional planning.

- The PDMWG viewed governance as inextricably linked to planning and policy. Most members felt that it is the role of the governance structure to tie together relevant policies with overarching, integrated policy direction. While there are some strategies in place there needs to be a better bridge between the LUF and application of planning at the regional and local levels.
- The PDMWG viewed the eventual process of planning implementation as an important part of addressing the policy gap. The TOR, clarity of roles and the hybrid approach of the RAC were deemed by the PDMWG as important parts of solidifying policy direction. The Secretariat would bridge the relationship between regions and the Province, support policy reconciliation and address emergent policy challenges.
- The group acknowledged that providing interpretations of the policy context will take time, and should not unduly delay commencement of the regional planning process. There should be a concerted effort to provide an initial interpretation that speaks to balancing the major policies affecting land use, environmental management and resource development.

5.2.4. Approach to the planning process

The PDMWG felt that the LUF needs to better describe the planning process as it is to move forward. Many questions remain around how the high level direction provided by the LUF will translate into regional and local level planning. In short it needs to bridge the Framework and the application of planning and provide better definition of objectives and policies that will allow regional planning to proceed. While the group acknowledged that many questions around land-use planning are yet unanswered, they believe that the LUF can and should address how such questions will eventually be answered including a significantly enhanced framing of such direction in the initial LUF.

- The PDMWG agreed that it is essential that the planning process used be thoughtfully developed and clearly communicated to the RAC and stakeholder groups. The Secretariat should lead the development of this work.
- The LUF should outline the process that will be used to define measurable objectives, identify indicators and set targets at the provincial and regional level.
- Finally, the LUF should outline what support mechanisms and tools will be provided to enable regional planning to get off the ground. The key tools identified include those that provide access to substantive social, economic and environmental information, and those that enable trade-off analysis and option generation to support the advisory role of the RAC.

6. SPECIFIC COMPONENT REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

6.1. Vision

“The peoples of Alberta work together to respect and care for the land as the foundation of our economic, environmental, social and cultural well being”

The PDMWG had general agreement that the vision stated in the LUF represents the desired direction.

6.2. Desired Outcomes

The PDMWG agreed that the outcomes listed in the LUF were general and high-level. Specific outcomes at all levels - including provincial, regional and local - are necessary to measure the success of the LUF and individual planning processes. While the outcomes listed in the LUF are adequate and necessary for gauging direction, the group indicated they would like to see the document articulate how specific outcomes will be derived. A deeper level of detail is required on how success will be measured.

- The LUF should describe the process of how to arrive at the desired outcomes and include more on Provincial policy direction.
- A mechanism is required to get planning off the ground and at the same time provide cohesive policy alignment and direction from the Government. (ie. “integrate and articulate”)
- The LUF should describe the process by which provincial measurable outcomes and indicators will be established, including “pan-regional” direction and “progress indicators”.

6.3. Guiding Principles

The PDMWG supported and endorsed the guiding principles outlined in the LUF. They did, however, indicate that there is room for more and that some existing ones could be expanded:

- Balancing the public good with private interests is one example of a guiding principle the group suggested could be added.
- Guiding principles should reference social and cultural values of all Albertans and raise the social focus to “livable and sustainable communities” and identify what factors contribute to a livable community.

- The WG suggested that the LUF development team review recent multi-stakeholder processes that have generated guiding principles (Integrated Land Management, Oil Sands Multi-stakeholder Committee) with the goal of developing clearer and more complete wording of the existing principle statements.

7. DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES

7.1. Six Regional Land-use Plans

The group discussed the notion and composition of the six regional integrated plans outlined in the LUF with differing opinions on whether or not the number of regions was right or the boundaries aligned properly. There were realignment suggestions put forward, however, there was eventual agreement that the task of setting these regions is beyond the WG's capacity and that no matter what the configuration there will be challenges. The group conceded that the current number of regions is workable with effective management. With this in mind, the group focused on challenges and suggestions for the regional alignment proposed in the LUF.

- The group agreed that sub-regional plans have a place in the LUF, but that regional planning should be the focus. The group suggested that sub-regional plans not become a 3rd level of planning across the whole province, but that there may be areas where sub-regional plans are appropriate. The sub-regional contribution needs some elaboration in the LUF including any priority areas for sub-regional planning and the linkages to the regional planning governance structures.
- They determined also that there are many important issues to be addressed, particularly around inter-regional infrastructure projects and sub-regional plans.
- Mechanisms for change, including a hierarchy of plans, should be developed that clarify and prioritize how regional and sub-regional plans fit together and how regions and municipalities work together when there are inter-regional initiatives.
- The role of the Secretariat could be expanded to ensure effective management of pan-regional infrastructure and policy matters to achieve alignment of regional and sub-regional plans.

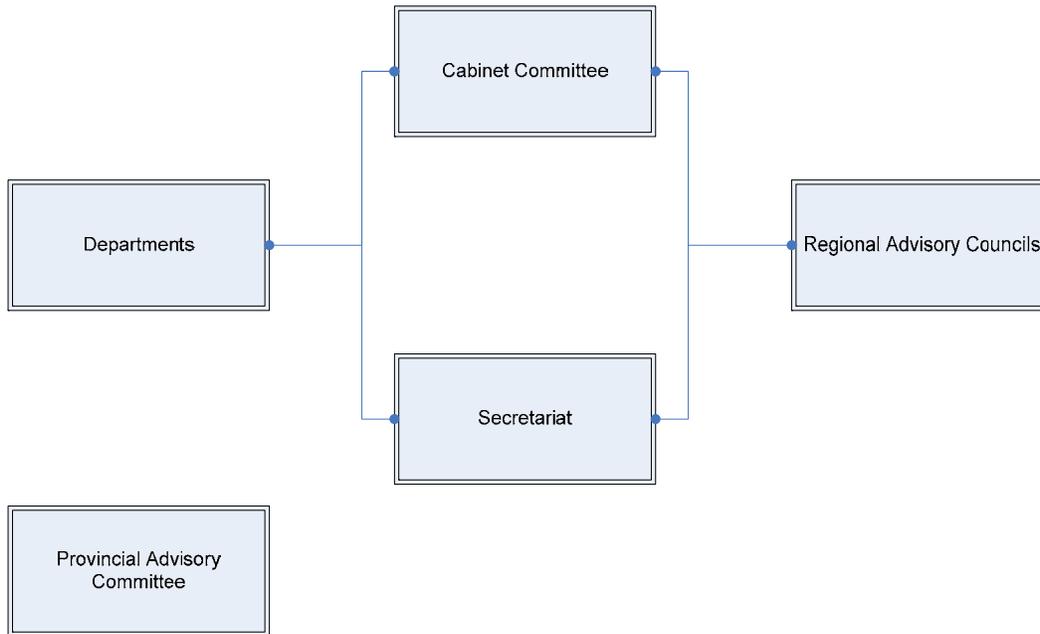
7.2. Governance

The PDMWG highlighted the governance structure, and in particular the roles of the Cabinet Committee, Secretariat and RAC as being critical to the success of the LUF. The group agreed the structure outlined in the LUF was good but that it could be enhanced and roles further clarified.

The group also suggested adding a Provincial Advisory Committee that reflects the key sectors of Alberta society, possibly with an elected representative as chair, and addressing the important role that Government departments play in the structure. The recommendation to add a Provincial Advisory Committee reflects the need to obtain stakeholder input on broad policy, pan-Alberta and inter-regional issues that arise through planning. The PDMWG recognizes that there may be other options that would address this perceived weakness in the Framework.

The envisioned structure in Figure 1 is illustrative only with specific linkages to be determined. The roles of the Cabinet Committee, Secretariat and RAC are outlined below.

Figure 1



7.2.1. Cabinet Committee

In addition to the roles outlined in the LUF, the Cabinet Committee should:

- Set Terms of Reference for regional planning.
- Appoint Regional Advisory Councils.
- Address policy issues – directional and emergent.
- Establish Provincial performance metrics (social, economic, environmental).
- Provide pan-regional direction.
- Hold accountability for implementing decisions.
- Monitor regional plans and performance.

7.2.2. Land Use Secretariat

In addition to the roles outlined in the LUF, the Secretariat should:

- Provide a policy integration and articulation function by:

- Supporting policy reconciliation
- Bridging the relationship between the regions and the province by providing advice to regional bodies on provincial policy
- Addressing emergent policy challenges - with advice from the Provincial Advisory Committee.
- Support the development of Terms of Reference for regional plans.
- Provide the administrative infrastructure (ie. “the heavy lifting”) to:
 - Hold responsibility for planning process design
 - Provide overall process facilitation
 - Run planning scenarios and write and prepare planning documents in support of the RAC
 - Direct and facilitate departments and technical resources.
- Ensure continuity and continuous improvement of planning process by:
 - Conducting regular review of regional plans
 - Reporting performance to Cabinet Committee
 - Conducting consultations relating to monitoring and compliance between planning events.

7.2.3. Regional Advisory Councils

In addition to the roles outlined in the LUF, the RAC should:

- Be advisory and accountable to the Cabinet Committee.
- Take a more active approach that involves developing regional plans with the support of resources from the Secretariat including consideration of social, economic and environmental information and the trade- offs associated with planning options.
- Review Secretariat deliverables and provide independent advice.
- Bring regional perspectives and input forward in full recognition that such input may not be fully representative of a sector’s interests and priorities.
- Advise and participate in public and stakeholder consultation for the planning process.

The group agreed that the RAC can be accountable and learning without being permanent in nature. This can be accomplished through continuous improvement elements such as trigger mechanisms that activate if plans deviate from targets and thresholds.

The PDMWG suggested appointments to the RAC be made largely based on the range of knowledge of the region represented. While RAC members would bring regional perspectives forward, there was consensus among the group that it would be unrealistic to expect members to represent in any reasonable fashion the interests of the region. A

public consultation process is necessary to ensure the wide range of regional interests are heard and considered in the planning process.

It was cited by the PDMWG that a critical factor in the success of the RAC is the First Nations Government to Government relationship resolution. This participation is envisioned to occur as an opportunity to participate directly in the deliberations of the RAC and through a parallel Government to Government relationship whereby the need for First Nations consultation is met.

7.3. Cumulative Effects Management

The PDMWG supported the Cumulative Effects Management strategy and agreed that it reflects the recommendations put forth previously by the group in the stakeholder input process.

7.4. Conservation and Stewardship on Private and Public Lands

The PDMWG supported the Conservation and Stewardship on Private and Public Lands strategy. The delivery tools discussed in the Framework need to be developed and made available for implementation.

7.5. Information, Monitoring, and Knowledge System

The PDMWG supported the Information, Monitoring and Knowledge System strategy. They offered the following suggestions to enhance the strategy:

- Ensure linkages – as part of the planning process - to traditional knowledge of the land through groups such as hunters, trappers, farmers and Aboriginals.
- Ensure there are mechanisms in place to provide all Albertans with the ability to access the information from the system.
- The LUF describes the need for the system but also needs to identify a process for establishing measurable outcomes.

7.6. Inclusion of Aboriginal Peoples in Land Use Planning

The PDMWG agreed that the LUF addresses the legal requirement to consult with Aboriginal communities. The group also recognized the First Nations Government to Government relationship resolution and its importance to the success of the LUF.

8. PRIORITY ACTIONS AS DESCRIBED IN DRAFT LAND- USE FRAMEWORK

8.1. Immediate Planning Priorities

The PDMWG understood and agreed with the priorities outlined in the LUF and it was suggested that politicians likely have a good understanding for what the most pressing priorities are.

8.1.1. Metropolitan Plans for Calgary and Edmonton

The PDMWG emphasized the importance of ensuring consistency between metropolitan planning and the LUF, and agreed that there appears to be alignment between the two. They supported the importance of metropolitan planning as a sub-set of regional plans.

8.1.2. Southern Alberta Regional Plan

The PDMWG was in agreement that the Southern Alberta Regional Plan should go ahead. They did question whether or not it should be part of the regional framework or proceed as a sub-regional plan. Either way was deemed workable as long as it fits into the governance structure of the overall framework.

8.1.3. North East Alberta Regional Plan

The PDMWG was in support of the North East Alberta Regional Plan and felt that there were two critical considerations:

- Inclusiveness of Aboriginal groups in the planning process.
- Planning relationships to other regions.

8.2. Addressing Provincial Policy Gaps

The PDMWG agreed that the LUF describes some of the policy gaps that exist in the province, but should be more comprehensive and demonstrate the specific outcomes contemplated for each of the areas identified. Being clear on the outcomes will provide stakeholders the confidence that the gaps are being closed. The group suggested that the Secretariat develop a tool that identifies the policy gaps, describes how they will be filled and by when, and outlines how the policies fit into the LUF. Other important observations include:

- It was suggested that there was a lack of clarity around changes to the Aboriginal relationship with LUF and that this needs to be resolved on a timely basis.
- The PDMWG suggested that certain key policy areas are not adequately addressed in the LUF (i.e. watershed management and provincial biodiversity).

9. WORKING GROUP ADVICE ON LAND-USE FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

The PDMWG offered the following suggestions around implementation of the LUF:

- Outline legislative intent in the LUF and define what will happen to existing legislation (i.e. “legislative pre-requisites”). This should be added to priority actions.
- Provide clarity around the existing Integrated Resource Plans (IRP) in the province, (e.g. Eastern Slopes Policy), define how they fit into the LUF, and identify what plans are subsumed under the LUF.
- Leverage existing assets and practices that work. Identify the planning related activities around the province that are currently working well and ensure they are not lost as the LUF is implemented. (e.g. Local autonomy, municipal development planning process, inter-municipal development planning process, existing land use planning documents)
- Determine what, if any, interim measures will be required and address them in the LUF.
- As part of the Terms of Reference, define urgent issues that need to be addressed.
- Provide regional planning authorities with a “trade-off analysis” planning tool.
- Begin planning in each region in parallel, rather than sequentially.
- Develop a process by which Provincial measurable outcomes and indicators will be established.
- Define Aboriginal participation in the context of Government to Government discussions.
- Define and communicate the resources and planning tools that will be available to local municipalities.
- Develop or strengthen mechanisms that allow stakeholders to propose amendments to regional plans.

10. OTHER COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

The work of the PDMWG documented in this report represents the consensus view of the group. The PDMWG recognizes that its report cannot capture the full range of viewpoints expressed throughout its work. There were discussion points that could not gain consensus of the group either because of dissenting views or because time constraints of the working session would not allow further discussion. There were also general comments, suggestions and observations made that should be noted.

- While the group agreed that there was an imbalance (high emphasis on environment and economic, low emphasis of social) in the LUF around the triple bottom line, no consensus could be reached on where that imbalance should be addressed. Some believed that balance should be addressed at the provincial level and the regions should only have to meet thresholds. While others believed that balance needs to be addressed at all levels of decision making.
- There should be a better tie-in between regional, provincial and municipal decisions in the framework. The LUF is missing a piece that ties these all together.
- The definitions list (i.e. glossary) should be expanded as key terms are either missing or could be better explained. For example, culture is not defined. It should refer to glossaries of previous WG reports to make sure important terms were captured.
- The timelines in the LUF may be too ambitious. Some PDMWG members believe that meeting the timelines proposed in the LUF will lead to mistakes. Others believe the timelines must be aggressive in order to move the process forward.
- The LUF is vague on the appeals process and dispute resolution. More detail should be added, specifically on regional appeals.
- Details are missing on Regional Advisory Councils such as how they are chosen and how they will operate. More clarity is needed around RAC including how input is “pushed up from the bottom” in the planning process.
- Very clear direction from the province is crucial.
- Details are needed in the LUF on tools (beyond simply money) that will be provided from the Province to municipalities to ensure planning can be accomplished and that compliance is achieved.
- More direction is required in the LUF on major infrastructure projects and how inter-regional decisions will be made and priorities set. The role of the GoA around such projects should be strengthened and communicated to address the question: “How do we reconcile certain projects (eg. Transmission lines) that span multiple regions and even sub-regions and municipalities?”
- Details around Aboriginal participation in decision making are absent from the LUF.

**Other Comments,
Suggestions and
Observations**

- The LUF should address the capacity of Non-Government Organizations into the process.
- It is important that the LUF demonstrate clearly how all the pieces fit together, particularly how provincial, regional and local decisions are made.
- Property rights needs to be better defined, specifically around how decisions will be made with respect to the balance between private property rights and the public good.
- Transparency needs to be better addressed and decision making should be open and inclusive. If decisions are being made, the rationale for those decisions should be articulated.
- Suggestions put forward to possibly amend the regional boundaries:
 - Move the Western portion of the South Central region into North Central
 - Create a “region 7” that is the foothills of Western Alberta
- Providing incentives (i.e. to farmers for using their land for other uses) needs to be balanced against the public good and not just for farmers.
- There is little in the framework regarding specific feedback from First Nations on Aboriginal issues. Lack of clarity around changes to aboriginal relationship with LUF will have an impact. This needs to be resolved on a timely basis.
- There was a division of opinion around interim measures and whether or not they need to be addressed in the LUF. Some members thought interim measures should be an immediate priority issue while others disagreed and felt they should be not be addressed.
- There is a need to express that if culture now included under social pillar then the definition of social needs to be expanded and that cultural includes the values of all Albertans (rural, urban, FN, agriculture, etc).
- There is a need for more clarity and emphasis on the carrying capacity of the land as a fundamental component of the LUF.
- The document is more developed from the perspective of public lands (more work is required around private lands).
- An inventory of existing initiatives and strategies should be developed to ensure alignment with regional plan development. (i.e. energy strategy; oil sands strategy; Wetlands Policy; Water for Life Strategy; Cumulative Effects Projects.)
- Need to include the Omnibus Bill into the implementation plan with respect to regulatory alignment.
- The ability to effectively participate (both stakeholders and government) is of concern to the PDMWG (ie. a capacity concern).
- There is a need to include mechanisms for stakeholder input into the Provincial Policy Gaps and Areas of Provincial Interest. (i.e. managing flood risk)

- There is an expectation that there is representation from a multi-stakeholder group in the regional planning process.
- The following comment comes from a WG member that disagrees with the recommendation that RAC should be advisory to the Cabinet Committee, not the Secretariat as the LUF proposes: “I fundamentally disagree with this and stated so several times during the deliberations. The governance structure in the current draft is what I prefer as it keeps Cabinet as the accountable decision-maker. RAC members will be appointed by government. That is fine-but they will not necessarily represent anyone or any sector. The idea that one person can represent a sector is very problematic.”
- The following comment comes from a WG member that disagrees with the recommendation that the RAC should take a more proactive role in the governance structure. “I disagree. RACs should be advisory and short term as currently provided in the draft.”
- The following comment comes from a WG member that disagrees with the recommendation that the RAC should use somewhat of a hybrid approach where they combine with the resources of the Secretariat to produce regional plans: “The RAC should not produce the plans-the government should make the trade-offs as a matter of provincial policy-not handpicked reps that are not elected and therefore not accountable. Further, regional reps rarely represent anyone but themselves and therefore their statements are usually embroiled in self-interest.”
- The following comment comes from a WG member that disagrees with the recommendation that the PDMWG suggests adding a Provincial Advisory Committee to assist in Provincial level guidance and advice to the Secretariat on policy issues: “I disagree with this notion absolutely. A provincial advisory committee puts a layer of unnecessary bureaucracy between levels of government. Public policy is for government-advisors that can be hired at the call of the cabinet committee as required-no need for any standing committees whose only function seems to be the continuation of their existence. We need to incur less government-not more.”
- WG member comment: “Some of the stated tools to meet LUF objectives are imports from US property rights conundrum that does not exist in Canada. These include the notion of Transfer of Development Rights or credits. We do not need these very complicated and value laden monsters. We need to be more creative in how we employ existing tools in the MGA and other legislation like sections 96 in the Water Act and sections 47 and 54 of the Public Lands Act.”
- WG member comment: “There is considerable confusion, both within government and outside, as to the scope of LUF, the planning system and the secretariat. This is because it has grown to something much bigger than what conventionally we mean by “land-use.” We should recommend that the framework, the plans and the secretariat all be “rebranded” better to reflect that broader scope.”

Alberta's Draft Land-use Framework
Final Report of the Conservation and Stewardship Working
Group to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development
(November, 2008)

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The output captured in this report mainly reflects consensus achieved by the Conservation and Stewardship Working Group (CSWG).

The CSWG gave the LUF an overall “thumbs up” based on the process moving forward; and the fact that the environment is side-by-side with economic and social considerations as a desired outcome.

A main theme for CSWG was to strengthen outcomes with a stronger conservation and stewardship focus by adding statements such as: “Alberta lands are deliberately managed to ensure that healthy ecological systems are maintained or restored”.

CSWG noted that this document sets the strategic intent and as such it needs to include fundamental concepts such as the one above, and also ensure that the intent or meaning of some of the high-level statements is clear. CSWG sees a need to improve clarity in the document.

CSWG had several priority points addressed in more detail within the report:

- Integrate a stronger conservation and stewardship ethic into the desired outcomes.
- Enhance the role of municipalities in the implementation of LUF.
- Incorporate comprehensive recreational planning into LUF.
- Ensure there is capacity to implement LUF.
- Integrate current activities and partnerships in LUF planning.
- Increase the scope of “land” and rights”.

There are several other major points such as equal consideration of outcomes, trade-offs, risk management approaches, and quadruple bottom line which were also important to the group.

Suggestions for implementation include:

- Finding innovative ways to fund conservation and stewardship (C+S); acknowledge that multiple sources such as public investment, start-up funds and market based tools will play a role. Cost benefit accounting would enhance assigning a value to C+S.
- Cumulative effects management is important to land-use planning. Simplification and availability of data and tools will enhance the ability of municipalities and other stakeholders to use cumulative effects in land use planning.
- Consider a C+S championship group such as a Land Use Council to work with the LUF organizational structures (LUS and RAC).

2. INTRODUCTION

To accomplish Alberta's vision of a "vibrant and prosperous province," the Government of Alberta (GoA) pledged a commitment to sound management of natural resources, social goals and the environment. The development of a provincial Land Use Framework (LUF) was articulated in the *Alberta's 20-Year Strategic Business Plan*.

In 2007, the GoA completed a process to obtain advice and input from Albertans, including public information and input sessions; Stakeholder Working Groups (WG); and aboriginal engagement sessions. A Draft LUF document was released in May 2008 with the final version to be completed in late summer 2008. This final version will be informed again by a similar three element consultation process.

In May and June 2008, a stakeholder review process occurred in Red Deer that "re-activated" the working group members from the 2007 consultations. The Red Deer workshop sessions involved the four separate, but interrelated, working groups: Growth and Resource Management; Planning and Decision Making; Conservation and Stewardship; and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Conservation and Stewardship Working Group (CSWG) was guided by a set of questions that facilitated discussion. The output captured in this report mainly reflects the discussions of the CSWG.

3. MEETING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the stakeholder review process was to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Draft LUF towards the management of land and resources in the province in general and through the specific lens of each working group.
- Provide recommendations to bring the LUF from Draft to final.
- Provide guidance on initial implementation considerations of the LUF, together with advice on managing challenges and opportunities.

4. CSWG PARTICIPANTS

The following CSWG representatives participated in the May 26-28 session:

- Gary Sargent, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Ernie Ewaschuk, Land Stewardship Centre - Executive Director
- Billie Milholland, North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance - Coordinator
- Brenda Wispinski, Strathcona County - Executive Director, Beaver Hills Initiative
- Wayne Pettapiece, Alberta Institute of Agrologists – Past President
- Margaret Glasford, Alberta Stewardship Network - Chair
- Louise Sherren, Alberta Snowmobile Association - Executive Director
- Ian Peace, Residents for Accountability in Power Industry Development and representing Alberta Environmental Network (AEN)
- Kim Schmitt, Ducks Unlimited and Director for Alberta Environmental Farm Plan Company
- Jim Webb, Manager of Intergovernmental and Corporate Affairs - Little Red River Cree Nation and policy advisor North Peace Tribal Council
- Dave Borutski, Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management (SREM) Office
- Avelyn Nicol, Alberta Environment

These MEWG representatives participated in the June 25-26 session:

- Craig Aumann, Alberta Research Council – Land-use Management Systems
- William (Bill) Gillespie, Director, Community Planning Association of Alberta
- Calvin Rakach, Technical Director - Alberta off Highway Vehicle Association
- Brad Batten, Husky Energy (Canadian Association of Petroleum Land men Representative)
- TJ Schwanky, Alberta Fish and Game Association - Wildlife Projects Coordinator
- Kenton Ziegler, Member of Ag Food Council & Farmer
- David Pryce, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers – VP Alberta Operations
- Vonn Bricker, Sustainable Resource Development

Other CSWG members who were not able to participate in person were provided with all materials including a WG's email account to which issues resulting from the review of the LUF could be posted. A number of Agencies were not present, but were asked to act as LUF reviewers and were consulted. Previous WG attendees that were not present at this consultation included:

- John Kolk, Chair of the Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership Advisory Committee, former Lethbridge Councillor
- Shawn Wasel, ALPAC - Director of Environmental Resources
- Jim Martin, Centre for Environment - Director
- Karissa Potiuk, AAMDC - policy advisor
- Brad Fenson, Alberta Fish and Game Association

CSWG Participants

- Gordon Harris, Summer Village Association - Director
- Davin Johnson, Youth Advisory Committee and member of the Oldman Watershed Planning and Advisory Council
- Beatrice Carpentier, O'chiese First Nation - Band Manager
- Grant Willamson, Ainsworth and representing Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA)
- Chris Gervais-Rusnak, Tolko Industries Limited - member of AFPA Landuse Subcommittee
- Rebecca Reeves, ParksWatch Program Coordinator - Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Edmonton Chapter and AEN
- Ron Bjorge, Sustainable Resource Development
- Keith Lyseng, Sustainable Resource Development

Note: not all participants are identified here. They have been included based on their individual decision to allow their names to be published.

5. REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

5.1. Overall Working Group Impressions of the Draft Land-use Framework

Very good overall impression- The CSWG gave the LUF an overall “thumbs up”. Some observations were:

- The process is moving forward.
- Applause over the fact that the environment is side-by-side with economic and social considerations as a desired outcome.

Strengthen outcomes with a stronger conservation and stewardship focus.

- Integrate a stronger conservation and stewardship ethic into the “healthy ecosystem” outcome, by adding the following statement to the outcome statement, so that it becomes a fundamental component of the outcomes sought within the Alberta land use framework.

“Alberta lands are deliberately managed to ensure that healthy ecological systems are maintained or restored”.

- Adding this statement helps the conservation and stewardship ethic become a fundamental component of the outcomes sought within the Alberta land use framework.

The intent or meaning of some of the high-level statements was unclear-

- As a land use framework, this document sets strategic intent. Thus it is important that this lack of clarity be resolved, and additional detail added where it is difficult to evaluate the intended direction setting strategic intent of the document.

5.2. Evaluation of Working Group Key Points

5.2.1. Five Key Points

The following **major CSWG key points** are listed below, and elaborated further in other sections of this report:

- Integrate a stronger conservation and stewardship ethic into the desired outcomes. (Section 4.1, 5.1 and 6.3).
- Enhance the role of municipalities in the implementation of LUF. (Section 8.2.).
- Incorporate comprehensive recreational planning into LUF. (Section 5.2).
- Ensure there is capacity to implement LUF.(Section 8.1).
- Integrate current activities and partnerships in LUF planning. (Section 6.3 and 8.1).
- Increase the scope of “land” and rights” (Section 5.3).

5.2.2. Other Key Points

These key points are also important and are mainly elaborated in this section.

Ensure that all outcomes are considered equally- The CSWG felt that LUF does not speak to the relationship between the outcomes. The following statements describe the synergies, dependencies and inter-relationships that were noted among the three outcomes.

- Land and natural resources support prosperity. A healthy ecosystem sustains the other two outcomes.
- An economic base is required for the other two to draw on.
- There is a tendency to assume that the order of items in a list represents a ranking order of importance or priority. Putting economics first implies it is most important.

In each land use decision, all the outcomes must initially be equally considered.

LUF does not speak to the implications behind achieving the outcomes- CSWG suggested these clarifications:

- Trade-offs will be required with every land use decision.
- Balance between the outcomes and integration among them should be considered in every land-use decision.
- Use the guiding principles when making trade-off decisions.

Trade-offs may need to cross regional boundaries- The CSWG felt that inter-regional considerations must be developed. The following are some recommended suggestions:

- Ecological areas are contiguous and may cross regional boundaries.
- Federal lands and other jurisdictions will come into play.

Use a risk management approach to decision making- This approach is particularly appropriate when limited facts and science are available. CSWG suggests adding this principle to supplement the knowledge-based guiding principle and providing a definition of risk management in the glossary to support the interpretation above.

A risk management approach may identify situations when / where it is appropriate to consider very cautious and / or preventative measures. This is especially important when there may no recourse to reverse a decision, and the consequences to the particular decision will be significant. The CSWG discussed a few example situations when such a cautious risk management approach would be particularly important such as, when adverse human health effects, or irretrievable land pollution could result from the decision.

A quadruple bottom line-

The CSWG felt that culture, and activities that support cultural sustainability, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, ranching, etc. need an explicit position with the outcome statements. The social pillar does not present a strong enough emphasis on cultural sustainability. It's possible to infer a cultural component within the "social" outcome, but the CSWG preference is to have cultural sustainment as an explicit fourth outcome.

Narrow focus on “culture”, especially with respect to aboriginal and First Nations rights-

- The implication is that cultural sustainability is represented by acknowledging and sustaining sacred sites.
- The CSWG recommends a much broader interpretation such as: a healthy ecosystem with ecological integrity and biodiversity which is needed to support First Nations culture. This may extend to other Alberta “cultures” such as ranching.

Continuous improvement of land-use planning and decision-making-

- CSWG recommends a broader view of continuous improvement; one that would cover improvement of the ecosystem itself, not simply the planning process.

Good concepts with unclear meaning and intent- The CSWG felt that several positive messages were lost due to wording. Using stronger language would help to better understand the intent. The following are some examples of this: Provincial Parks and tourism industry development are mentioned as “Responsibilities for Land Use”. In addition, there is a “Recreation” division which has a mandate and should be acknowledged as its mandate plays a role in community quality of life and active living (pg 6).

- The statement about healthy ecosystem and environment could be rewritten as “must drive/strive to maintain healthy ecosystem” (pg 9).
- In support of the overall vision, the following addition was recommended by the CSWG - “conservation is to perpetually sustain urban and rural landscapes”.

Update glossary- The CSWG felt that modifications would help clarify meaning and intent of the LUF language. CSWG found some words in the document that were not defined or clarified which led to discussions about wording intent.

- i.e. “liveable communities”.
- i.e. watershed: “The area of land, bounded by topographic features, that drains water to a water body such as a lake, river, or wetland.” Consideration of watersheds necessitates consideration of land uses and land use planning.

6. SPECIFIC COMPONENT REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

LUF significantly advances land and resource planning and decision-making in Alberta. The CSWG applauded the work within the specific component sections of the LUF framework and felt that it elevated the importance of conservation and stewardship (C+S).

Input by Treaty 8 stakeholders.

There is concern with respect to input by Treaty 8 stakeholders, that their input is not fully reflected in the document. The CSWG acknowledges the valuable information that Treaty 8 representation has provided to the CSWG and understands that Treaty 8 will be afforded further opportunity in the stakeholder process to provide their unique view on the land use needs of aboriginals and First Nations peoples.

6.1. Vision

“The peoples of Alberta work together to respect and care for the land as the foundation of our economic, environmental, social, and cultural well being.”

First Nations and Métis support the use of the term “peoples” in the vision statement.

Conservation and stewardship ethic as part of the introduction to the Vision- The CSWG felt that the vision should introduce a statement of ethics in the ‘Vision’ section of the document.

- i.e. A preferred statement would be: “In support of the vision, conservation aims to perpetually sustain our urban and rural landscapes”.

6.2. Desired Outcomes

A conservation and stewardship ethic should be stated as a part of the environment outcome.

Role of local government in meeting outcomes- The document speaks to the role of provincial government in addressing outcomes. Municipalities will be better positioned to participate if an expectation of their role in meeting outcomes is clearer.

- The municipal governments are not addressed with respect to roles, responsibilities and accountability in achieving outcomes.
- Municipalities have a local role in stewardship and can support the regional plan through local participation and accountability.

Recreational planning is narrow in intent- Recreation is a significant land use that is presently occurring on both public and private lands. LUF references the growth in recreational needs (Pg 7). [Updated numbers in LUF are current as of December 2007. Registrations for all terrain vehicles are now at 94,420 and registered snowmobiles are

now at 28,173.] There is also a significant non-motorized usage of public lands which needs to be taken into consideration. LUF references outdoor recreation as one of the infrastructure pieces that compete for land (Pg 1). The CSWG felt that:

- Outcomes speak of “recreational opportunities” but do not add it as a point. This should be strengthened with suggested wording in an additional bullet point such as “recreational opportunities are to be identified for recreational development and sustainability”.
- LUF should support planning for a comprehensive provincial outdoor recreational plan.
- Recreational planning should include both public and private lands.
- Recreational planning must go beyond parks and protected areas e.g. it must also include such things as corridors / trails / lakes (and accompanying amenities).
- LUF should advance consideration of sustainability in recreational uses of land.

Outcome statements are stated as goals.

- Augmentation with more active statements would be a helpful next level of detail.
- As an example, for the ecosystem outcome, an active statement might start with “Maintain” or Restore”.

6.3. Guiding Principles

The CSWG provided recommendations for guiding principles that were not taken up in the Draft LUF document.

- Principles suggested in original CSWG work spoke to maintaining an environment that sustains hunting, trapping and fishing on public lands which supports the culture and way of life of First Nations.

Increase the scope of “land” and “rights” where these are referenced in the document. The LUF will impact all lands and all rights – private, public (municipal, provincial and federal) and aboriginal lands – and the rights that various parties have by law (or obtain). Presently, there are gaps in the document, so that the document does not encompass this suggested scope. CSWG suggested addressing this gap in the principles by:

- Acknowledge and expand on treatment of common (public) land rights and aboriginal land rights. Add private land rights to the existing scope.
- Broaden the perspective of public lands beyond just “parks and protected areas” on page 14. Consider inclusion of all public lands in a framework that addresses the broad range of uses of public lands.

Include a focus on recreation in the Sustainability principle-

- Inter-generational responsibility applies to recreation and tourism, in addition to the items mentioned.

7. DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES

The following summarizes key insights and advice offered by the CSWG during its review of the LUF Draft.

Evaluate achievements of the strategy- The CSWG feels that research questions could be drafted at the outset for each strategy so that performance can be measured over time to see if the strategy is being met.

Comparison across outcomes- The CSWG felt that more work is required to determine a value system for ecological functions, to the point of full-cost accounting¹ (accounting which includes both costs and benefits). A question that arose was, “what would be the factor used to compare the results of outcomes in trade-off decisions?”

- Economic prosperity has money as a measurement or “value” system.
- There is no equivalent measurement or “value” system for a healthy ecosystem.
- What factors can be used to equally compare trade-offs across the three outcomes?

7.1. Six Regional Land-use Plans

The CSWG felt that there was a limited appeal mechanism.

- In particular, there don’t seem to be formal appeal processes within LUF.

LUF refers to alignment of land-use, watershed, and airshed planning.

- Water and air quality are impacted by land use.
- CSWG sees these three as part of a single integrated planning effort, compared to three individual efforts that require alignment.

7.2. Governance

Set out formal relationships. The CSWG felt that LUF is a policy level initiative and doesn’t seem to speak about relationships and input of stakeholders impacted by land uses.

- A federal commission, the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry (also called the Berger Commission), held meetings in many communities and cities impacted by the Pipeline, providing opportunity for native concerns to be voiced by the people themselves. This is an example of the potential new processes and/or relationships between various stakeholders and the Government of Alberta that may need to be developed.
- CSWG felt that it would be useful for a document such as this to address which stakeholders are involved and what their relationship would be in LUF planning.

¹ CSWG use the term “full cost accounting” to mean including both costs and benefits of an action or potential action.

7.3. Conservation and Stewardship on Private and Public Lands

Strengthen the intention of the GoA strategy for C+S.

- LUF speaks about the intention for Alberta to be a world leader.
- Strong statements that support this intent are:
 - “Ensure Alberta lands are deliberately and effectively managed to ensure that healthy ecological systems are maintained or restored.”; and
 - “Ensure adequate provincial resources are available to partner and invest in conserving ecologically significant private lands”.
 - “The intent is to conserve and steward a perpetually sustained mosaic of natural, urban, rural and working landscapes to ensure the provision of ecological goods and services”.
 - Public and private land require different strategic approaches.

CSWG recommends building these statements into the C+S section (Pg 19) of LUF. Introductory paragraphs of the C+S section could be framed more positively, using some of the wording suggested here.

Missing linkage between initiatives already underway and LUF- The CSWG felt that mechanisms must be developed to integrate regional planning already underway.

- There are already initiatives underway in watershed and air shed venues, which should be leveraged by the LUF planning processes.

The CSWG felt that the wording in the **LUF infers that conservation and stewardship costs** “lots of money”. It is preferable to address that inference with the following points:

- C+S does not universally cost “lots of money”, as there are instances where conservation and stewardship actions can result in significant savings.
- In addition, a more long-term view is that today’s expenditures in conservation and stewardship are a timely investment bringing future benefits arising from the land and other resources that are conserved today.
- Finally, the financial barriers that are implied in the LUF may be offset by finding new and unique funding mechanisms for conservation and stewardship.

Financial support for conservation and stewardship requires:

- Both investments and market based instruments (MBI).
- Innovative means to expand or supplement these tools.
- An enabling legislative framework as a tool that will also support land stewardship.

Experience may determine that both incentives and legislation may be needed to achieve C+S outcomes.

The following are **CSWG suggestions for Market Based Instruments (MBI)**:

- Through the concept of eco-offsets, market based instruments can be a revenue source to fund ecological sustainability. As an example, when an industrial or developmental activity occurs with implications for land use, there could be an assessment and implementation of an off-set (financial or otherwise), that could then be applied towards conservation. CWSG feels that creating a revenue-neutral situation like the above example provides for a win-win situation.
- CSWG recognizes that MBIs may need to be more than “revenue-neutral” for some situations in order to cover the conservation and stewardship costs in other situations.

Investment of public funds

- In situations where public good arising from environmental sustainability can be demonstrated, CSWG members feel that the investment of public fund expenditures may be appropriate and worth-while.
- Public fund expenditures in such cases are an investment as conservation and stewardship provide for future benefits.

Look at **innovative approaches to obtaining funds** for conservation and stewardship efforts.

LUF speaks only to MBIs.

- Other instruments that could be used are: Public funds, private funds, public interest, as well as incentives for both public and private stakeholders to invest in support of land stewardship.
- Municipalities are well situated to use the local taxation system to support desired outcomes.
- Farmers and ranchers receive some economic benefits from their conservation efforts. Incentives should focus on their efforts over and above what they do for economic benefit.
- Compensation could be provided for stakeholders who exceed outcome thresholds.

Potentially useful C+S ideas from other jurisdictions. As part of their work in considering the development of the land-use framework the CSWG has gathered some international information about emergent ideas that could be applied to advancing C+S within the LUF: two examples follow.

- **“Voucher” funding.** An act of the Colorado State Legislature in May 2004 established a new way for the State to provide state tax dollar support for higher education at the undergraduate level. The state is no longer appropriating monies to institutions for undergraduate education, but is providing direct funding to undergraduate students through the "College Opportunity Fund" or "COF." This program is also known as "vouchers" or "stipends." COF is not a loan, nor is it financial aid.
- Wyoming's private landowners provide essential habitat for most of that State's fish and wildlife species. The **Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)** provides flexible opportunities for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to partner with private landowners who are willing to implement habitat improvements and manage their

lands to benefit at-risk species. By partnering with the department, private landowners receive technical and financial assistance to implement management practices that will benefit both fish and wildlife habitat, and the agricultural productivity of their land. Additional funding may include non-governmental and industrial contributions to ensure long-term plan effectiveness.

CSWG recommends that additional research and consideration be given to the discovery, analysis and future use of a broad range of tools. Partnerships of government and C+S groups are an ideal coalition to generate additional examples of incenting C+S behaviours and innovative funding mechanisms.

C+S initiatives will require start-up funds.

- Initial funds are often required. Later, the conservation efforts may become self-supporting or even cost-saving.

The CSWG felt that priority should be given to investing in start-up funding for specified C+S initiatives.

7.4. Information, Monitoring, and Knowledge System

The CSWG felt that widespread ability to understand and model cumulative effects would allow many more stakeholders to participate in managing cumulative effects and use the information in decision making.

Data enables implementation and an understanding of cumulative effects.

- Move information management ahead in the schedule.
- Information is needed to measure how well the strategies are doing.
- Ensure that the information available is current.
- Ensure the data picks up emerging trend information, as well as existing trends.

A simple way to model cumulative effects is needed.

- Champion the development of a data modelling application that can model cumulative effects.
- Make it user friendly for public use.
- Distribute it widely.

8. PRIORITY ACTIONS AS DESCRIBED IN DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

8.1. Immediate Planning Priorities

LUF mentions only four immediate planning priorities, covering Edmonton, Calgary and 2 regions. The CSWG felt that mention should be made of the other regions, within the schedule; to ensure that it is obvious they will be completed as well, just not within the short-term (2010). This clarifies any confusion about regional planning for the other regions.

9. WORKING GROUP ADVICE ON LAND-USE FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

9.1. What and How - Key Components of Implementation

Engage municipalities with GoA in stewardship.

- Identify municipalities as key stakeholders who should be brought in early to the planning process.

Integrate both current activities already underway, and existing partnerships, with proposed LUF planning- Implementation plans must identify all present activities and include an integration strategy. In some examples below (such as watershed management planning) the initiatives are so fundamental to land use planning, that regional planning work must include the component as part of the regional plan. Existing related work examples are:

- Present government programs (e.g. Integrated Land Management, Water For Life, etc.).
- Departmental programs (e.g. Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture).
- Private initiatives (such as these ENGO examples: Cows & Fish, Ducks Unlimited Canada).
- Partnerships (government, private, public).
- Integrated watershed management planning and air shed planning..

Implementation tools- The CSWG regarded the use of implementation tools as useful, and had suggestions about them.

- Land use planning is complex, and it deserves application of the best available methodologies:
 - Use a risk management approach.
 - Be diligent in identifying and managing risks.
- Alberta Government departments need to share a toolbox with stakeholders involved in the planning process. The process might be to ask stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of tools that are in use and to rank them. These tools could be used in regional planning.
- GoA could collect and rank existing documents / tools from around the world (i.e. come up with 100 policy tools used internationally in managing air quality). Ranking the tools would provide stakeholders and planners with a collective view on which ones are preferred by agencies /stakeholders and the GoA. Armed with the tools and a preferred ranking, the Regional Advisory Councils engaged in the development of LUF Regional Plans (RACs) would have a much better idea of what to use in their regional planning.

Strongly encourage the initiative towards cost benefit accounting- This type of accounting would assist in assigning an appropriate value to C+S outcomes and enable more even-handed trade-off decisions between outcomes.

- Public goods are consistently undervalued; and a lack of accounting prevents a value assignment that allows even-handed comparison to other economic based goods and services.

There is a growing shift in ethics and culture towards conservation and stewardship, thus communication and an education plan needs to be up-front.

- Stakeholders, including the public, need updates on regional planning.
- There is a growing shift in ethic and culture towards conservation and stewardship. It is important for stakeholders to understand the ethics driving the outcomes that have a conservation and stewardship focus. Communications and education can support the shift in values and ethics.

Include strategies for program delivery.

- Planning should not stop at the point of describing a plan and desired outcomes. Strategies on how to deliver on the implementation plan should also be part of the planning process.
- The CSWG recognized the GoA initiative of establishing the Institute of Agriculture, Forestry and the Environment, but was unclear as to its “public good” objectives and pointed out that it had no program delivery responsibilities.
- Delivery action plans should include coordination of involved and impacted stakeholders as well as both public and private agencies.

Therefore, CSWG suggested that more attention be paid to delivering on the action plans within the implementation strategies.

Several suggestions were made by the CSWG regarding the **implementation schedule-** the following are suggestions:

- The publication of an implementation strategy in the schedule.
- An action item to hand down and communicate policies and procedures to the regions during the regional planning process.
- A start date to implement the strategy.

Ensure capacity to implement LUF. Without adequate capacity, implementation will fail. Capacity includes:

- Resources (people, expertise and money) to work on planning and implementation.
- Addressing the need for both:
 - Market based tools,
 - Government investment.
- Ensuring that the required capacity / resources will be stable and sustainable across years.

- The priority development of tools that don't yet exist.

Implementation will be staggered. As each region is planned, implementation of strategies and tools should occur in that region, rather than waiting until all plans were complete.

- The LUF Secretariat can advise the early implementers to expect to revisit their plans so they can insert any subsequent conservation strategies or tools developed at a provincial level through later plans.

Partnering for implementation. The CSWG suggested that the GoA look for partners to participate in planning and developing the implementation strategies and in carrying out the implementation activities.

- Municipalities may administer aspects of achieving ecological outcomes, in particular those that are local.
- Municipalities and other stakeholders can identify and prepare local level plans that support the regional plan. They can initiate action at the local level to achieve regional desired outcomes.
- In some cases, implementation can be achieved through groups and programs that are ahead of government in the planning process.
- However, capacity should be assessed if plans call for implementation actions that call for more than GoA resources.

Integration of current activities and partnerships for implementation.

- Engage groups already working on C+S planning. They are ahead of the game, and leveraging their work, rather than starting from scratch can lead to quick wins.
- This can be supplemented with asking groups and agencies for ideas on key areas that would make the most gain in a short period of time. Give them a date to respond with their ideas.
- With regards to the statement "develop strategies for enhanced C+S", look to develop strategies (may require incentives for innovation) that cause improvements to occur at a faster pace.
- Use existing examples (both within Alberta and internationally) for examples of what works and what doesn't.
- LUF is complex. Start with what can be achieved.

Additional implementation suggestions are available in the November 2007 CSWG detailed report.

9.2. Who – Responsibilities

Role of Municipalities - Municipalities have a role in planning and implementing regional plans.

- Albertans need more information on the accountability of municipalities.

- The GoA needs to identify how municipalities could administer the ecological aspects of the regional plans at a local level.
- The GoA should develop and modify provincial legislation to direct municipalities ability to balance outcomes (e.g. MGA).
- Provincial legislation should support municipal ability to enforce ecological outcomes at the local level.
- Use municipal authorities (e.g. bylaws and taxation) to support desired outcomes of market based incentives.

The process of identifying, setting and monitoring cumulative effects management (CEM) requires sophisticated modelling tools and available data. The CSWG feels that **the GoA will need to support municipalities** to gain access to the knowledge and tools needed to participate in cumulative effects work at their local level. The CSWG feels that municipalities are willing to support CEM.

The following are some considerations:

- Scientific and technical expertise.
- Traditional ecological knowledge (i.e. Aboriginal, local, agricultural, etc.).
- Practical linkages.

Participate in setting and managing thresholds for cumulative effects- LUF intends to establish a process to identify regional parameters (such as thresholds, other information to be collected / held in GIS tools) for each regional plan.

- A process is needed to identify local level parameters.

Leveraging, engaging and getting buy-in from stakeholders.

- Within the C+S arena of planning, stakeholders are already engaged in planning and implementing for ecological outcomes.

CSWG suggested that these groups are ideal stakeholders to approach in the early stages of planning.

Help speed up regional planning- By leveraging and tapping into stakeholders who are already involved with C+S, the CSWG felt that this could be achieved. The following are recommendations by CSWG members:

- Municipalities gather at semi annual AUMA and AAMDC conventions, therefore, these opportunities can be used as a forum to discuss this document (LUF).
- Landscape architects and building associations can be approached and educated on the LUF strategies.
- Rural municipalities are becoming a new area of growth. So far, they have little culture around conservation.

Establish accountabilities and responsibilities. The CSWG suggested that any or all of the following actions would address responsibilities and accountabilities.

- Decide to leverage the expertise and money that has been raised through Non Government Organizations (NGO) and community-based groups by getting these groups together to help build the C+S strategy.
- Update an existing draft registry of stewardship organizations. The updated registry could be used as a list of organizations to contact during regional planning.
- Expand this initial group to include industry groups and other groups and programs currently involved in stewardship.
- Form a province-wide advisory “Land Use Conservation and Stewardship Council” (provincial stakeholder council) consisting of those who are C+S practitioners. A Council could coordinate with all the groups who are interested in C+S.
- Fund a way for groups in the registry to give collective advice to such a Council.
- If each Regional Advisory Council (RAC) is temporary, a member of the GoA’s LUF Secretariat could be assigned a championship role for C+S.
- The person / “champion” on the LUF secretariat who was assigned responsibility for C+S could liaise with the Council.

Potential role of the Land Use Council:

- Spearhead the provincial strategy on C+S.
- Focal point for developing the strategy.
- Take a leadership role across the province.
- Communicate.
- Research the economics of strategies based in C+S.
- Implement some of the MBIs.
- Ensure people are sufficiently informed. Identify key decision makers or decision-making bodies (e.g. AAMDC) and use them to inform stakeholders.

9.3. When – Critical Path/ Sequencing Considerations for Implementation

Risk of rush of implementation.

- LUF contains a published schedule
- There is a risk that stakeholders may rush to implement actions of interest to them before the lens of LUF is applied to their region. Some suggestions to mitigate this risk include:
 - Identify potential hot spots, and don’t let these rush through the planning processes. Appropriate interim measures may be needed to address such areas.
 - Where significant development is proposed, a comprehensive risk analysis process (based on the outcomes proposed in LUF) should be applied to the development, before approvals to go ahead are granted.

10. OTHER COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

The work of the CSWG documented in this report represents the consensus view of the group. The CSWG recognizes that its report cannot capture the full range of viewpoints expressed throughout its work. There were discussion points that could not gain consensus of the group either because of dissenting views, or simply because time constraints of the working sessions would not allow further discussion.

Alberta's Draft Land-use Framework
Final Report of the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group
to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development

(November, 2008)

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes consensus achieved by the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (MEWG) in its review of the draft Land-use Framework and its advice on issues that should be addressed by the GoA in the LUF implementation.

Overall, the draft LUF is seen as a positive step towards developing comprehensive land use plans and signals commitment from the provincial government. Revisions and actions suggested by the MEWG in its overall review of the draft LUF include:

- The need for further clarification on the definition of the term “balance” in reference to the three pillars.
- There should be a comprehensive review of the existing legislative framework and its capacity to deliver the LUF before new legislation is considered.
- The MEWG suggests that the government immediately develop ‘terms of reference’ or mandate statements to guide the three planning groups (Cabinet Committee, RACs, and Land Use Secretariat).
- The LUF lacks a clear elaboration of how the actual monitoring and reporting will be accomplished across the social, economic, and environmental pillars.

The MEWG reviewed what it considered to be the key components for LUF implementation from the specific perspective of the MEWG’s subject area of focus. The MEWG recognizes that investments in information and information systems are required to support the implementation of the LUF. The following summarizes MEWG’s initial advice on implementation:

- There is an immediate need to advance the design and implementation of a LUF monitoring system – from identifying, compiling and coordinating data, to convening an expert group to design, test and implement monitoring programs.
- Recognizing the limits on government resources to invest in developing an information management system to support LUF, the GoA’s investment in land and resource data and information systems should be prioritized with a paramount focus on advancing the LUF. In this respect, the MEWG recommends that this work needs to be undertaken now and suggests a sequenced and cost-effective approach involving:
 1. A review existing sources of monitoring information within and outside of government to determine whether LUF needs can be met from currently available data and programs.
 2. Conducting a gap, overlap and “LUF relevance” analysis on existing government and government-funded land and resource information and data against LUF’s goals, objectives and performance measures. Those information needs not presently filled will be identified as gaps. Where duplications of efforts are

Executive Summary

- identified, these could be reconciled to free up resources to invest in filling the gaps.
3. Convening an experts group to review and validate the government's gap, overlap and relevance assessment and report back on priorities for investment to support the LUF's Monitoring and Evaluation (M+E) needs and possible approaches to budget reallocation and incremental funding.
 4. Based on the experts' group recommendations and the GoA's own budget analysis, SRD should develop a budget to support LUF's M+E requirements. This budget should be envisaged as a five year budget that can support sustainable operations over time.
 5. Considering innovative sources of funding to support LUF's M+E programs and information systems needs – i.e. via resource-user contributions.
- Appropriate governance be established over information management and monitoring, evaluation and reporting programs in order to advance the LUF
 - Recommends an implementation reporting structure including two reports (LUF Implementation progress report and a broader “State of Sustainability” in Alberta report) and an implementation audit in order to guide LUF implementation and enhance accountability to the public.

Additional items that the MEWG concluded were necessary for implementation include:

- Education awareness and training for GoA and regional/municipal staff focused on establishing new roles and responsibilities in the LUF process and recognizing the extent of change in these roles.
- Early alignment of the LUF with current GoA strategies (energy, caribou, water for life, grizzly, clean air) and other GoA processes (i.e. the Environmental Impact Assessment) in context of LUF implementation.
- Development of tool kits to support implementation (modeling tools, approaches for actual implementation, market based instruments, offsets, transfer of development credits).
- Assessment of capacity to engage - concern was expressed that many of the LUF implementation partners may lack resources and capacity to participate in LUF implementation. The GoA should assess partner capacity as part of the implementation process.

2. INTRODUCTION

To accomplish Alberta’s vision of a “vibrant and prosperous province,” the Government of Alberta (GoA) pledged a commitment to sound management of natural resources, social goals and the environment. The development of a provincial Land Use Framework (LUF) was articulated in the *Alberta’s 20-Year Strategic Business Plan*.

In 2007, the GoA completed a process to obtain advice and input from Albertans, including public information and input sessions; Stakeholder Working Groups (WG); and aboriginal engagement sessions. A Draft LUF document was released in May 2008 with the final version to be completed in late summer 2008. This final version will be informed again by a similar three element consultation process.

In May and June 2008, a stakeholder review process occurred in Red Deer that “re-activated” the working group members from the 2007 consultations. The Red Deer workshop sessions involved the four separate, but interrelated, working groups: Growth and Resource Management; Planning and Decision Making; Conservation and Stewardship; and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The output captured in this report reflects consensus achieved by the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (MEWG) in its review of the government of Alberta’s draft Land-use framework. This report summarizes the MEWG’s consensus around key themes and recommendations that emerged during the Forums with respect to the WGs’ impressions of the Draft LUF and its advice to government on implementation.

Introduction

3. OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

The purpose of the stakeholder review process was to:

- Review the LUF in general and through the specific lens of each working group.
- Provide advice on any clarification that may be required as the GoA moves the LUF to a final version.
- Provide guidance on implementation considerations of the LUF, together with advice on managing challenges and opportunities.

From the perspective of the MEWG, the following five implementation actions were considered to be the highest priority to build and establish an effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting process for the LUF (along with associated page number references to this report or the MEWG's November 2007 report):

- Early commitment to build the monitoring and evaluation (M+E) machinery to develop baselines and enable measuring (page 14).
- Defining the attributes to be measured under the environmental, economic, and social outcomes (WG roll-up report Strategy 2).
- Clarification of how M+E will encompass the three pillars and regional planning processes (page 11).
- Governance for M+E and information management (WG roll-up report Strategy 3).
- Reporting: State of Sustainability and LUF Progress Reporting (page 16).

Objectives and Overview

4. MEWG PARTICIPANTS

The following MEWG representatives participated in the May 26-28 session:

- Craig Aumann, Alberta Research Council – Land-use Management Systems
- Mark Fawcett, P.Ag., EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd.
- William (Bill) Gillespie, Director, Community Planning Association of Alberta
- Calvin Rakach, Technical Director - Alberta off Highway Vehicle Association
- Brad Batten, Husky Energy (Canadian Association of Petroleum Land men Representative)
- Carla Stevens, Water Matters
- David Pryce, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers – VP Alberta Operations
- Peggy Holroyd, Environmental Policy Analyst – Pembina Institute and Alberta Environmental Network (AEN) Representative
- Lana Robinson, Alberta Environment
- Vonn Bricker, Sustainable Resource Development

The following MEWG representatives participated in the June 25-26 session:

- Craig Aumann, Alberta Research Council – Land-use Management Systems
- William (Bill) Gillespie, Director, Community Planning Association of Alberta
- Calvin Rakach, Technical Director - Alberta off Highway Vehicle Association
- Brad Batten, Husky Energy (Canadian Association of Petroleum Land men Representative)
- TJ Schwanky- Alberta Fish and Game Association - Wildlife Projects Coordinator
- Kenton Ziegler- Member of Ag Food Council & Farmer
- David Pryce, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers – VP Alberta Operations
- Vonn Bricker, Sustainable Resource Development

Other MEWG members who were not able to participate in person were provided with all materials including a WG's email account to which issues resulting from the review of the LUF could be posted. A number of Agencies were not present, but were asked to act as LUF reviewers and were consulted. Previous WG attendees that were unable to participate in the May and June sessions were:

- Jill Pelton, AAMDC- Policy Advisor
- Jeffrey Dawson, Red Deer – Former Councillor
- Karen Geertsema, Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council: Treaty Eight- Director
- Kathy Sloan, Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors
- Leonard Leskiw, Consultant for soils

MEWG Participants

- Tim McCready, Alberta Forest Products Association- Millar Western Industries
- Daryl Procinsky, Architect
- Jennifer Rowell, Water Management Consultant
- Joe Obad, University of Calgary and AEN Representative
- Bill desBarres, Alberta Equestrian Federation- Chair, Breeds & Industry
- Terry Kosinski, Sustainable Resource Development

Note: not all participants are identified here. They have been included based on their individual decision to allow their names to be published.

MEWG Participants

5. REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

This report summarizes the main issues emerging from the MEWG's review of the LUF, why these issues are important and how they might be addressed by the GoA in the LUF's implementation.

5.1. Overall Working Group Impressions of Draft Land-use Framework

A Positive Step – The MEWG concluded that while the LUF should not be seen as a final “end state” for land use planning, it offers good direction for the GoA to move towards comprehensive land use plans. Importantly, the LUF is a “signal of commitment” by the GoA, and definitely a step in the right direction.

Definition of “Balance” – There should be further clarification and definition of the word “balance” when used in context to the three pillars (economic, social, environmental), the triple bottom line upon which the LUF is founded. It was felt that the current structure of the LUF leads to the perception of less emphasis on the social and economic aspects of land use than is warranted. The MEWG acknowledged that regional differences will prevent a “one size fits all” approach to managing resources.

Legislative Framework – There is a need to identify, clarify and commit to what needs to be legislated to implement the LUF. There should be a comprehensive review of the existing legislative framework and its capacity to deliver the LUF before new legislation is considered. It was considered appropriate that the GoA should provide the kind of policy guidelines that the local levels of government cannot.

Interim Measures – There is concern, on the part of some, that interim measures may be required prior to the 2010 LUF implementation and that they have not been clearly identified. Such measures provide assurance that future opportunities will not be lost while the LUF is being implemented. In addition, the LUF lacks details as to how failure to comply or implement the LUF will be enforced across cities, municipalities, and planning regions.

To address these implementation issues, the MEWG suggests that the following clarifications are required in the document:

- A clear definition of the word “balance” and further details as to how trade offs will occur.
- An evaluation of the existing legislative and regulatory framework to identify any gaps that may need to be addressed by new legislation or regulation in order to implement the LUF and also to avoid increasing the regulatory burden on government and industry.

- The GoA declare its intention to implement the framework in a timely nature.
- In addressing this non-consensus point, provide information on any proposed interim measures prior to 2010 LUF full implementation target.
- Develop accountabilities for implementing the LUF.

5.2. Evaluation of Working Group Key Points

In addition to a general overview, the MEWG had several observations on the LUF from the perspective of its specific focus and mandate.

Information Coordination and Monitoring and Evaluation - The MEWG applauded the GoA acknowledgement of the need for Information Coordination and M+E. However, it was concerned that the LUF lacks a clear elaboration of how the actual monitoring and reporting will be accomplished across the social, economic, and environmental pillars originally suggested by this working group. Without monitoring information that spans these three pillars, meaningful reporting and thus adaptive management will not be possible in the future. Relative to the amount of information in this draft on “Plan-Do”, there is a paucity of information on “Check-Adapt”.

To address this in implementation, the MEWG suggests:

- Clear definition of the who, what, how, and when in terms of a M+E framework for collection of data necessary to support decision making within the LUF;
- An early commitment to adapt existing monitoring programs or build new monitoring programs and other necessary M+E “machinery” (IT systems, reporting mechanisms) to meaningfully enable the underlying “plan-do-check-adapt” principle in this framework;
- Clearer definitions around the wording and mandates of M+E governance and accountability.

6. SPECIFIC COMPONENT REVIEW OF DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

6.1. Vision

“The peoples of Alberta work together to respect and care for the land as the foundation of our economic, environmental, social and cultural well being”

The GoA was successful in achieving the criteria for the vision of the LUF laid out by the MEWG. Additionally, the group concluded that new Draft LUF properly presents the vision that various stakeholder groups had suggested.

6.2. Desired Outcomes

The GoA identified three outcomes in order to translate its vision into reality:

1. Sustainable prosperity supported by our land and natural resources.
2. Healthy ecosystems and environment.
3. Liveable communities and recreational opportunities.

The MEWG concluded that the first two outcomes are in line with its previous recommendations for the draft LUF. However, a consensus was reached that the definition of “Liveable communities” (LC) is neither clear nor broad enough to cover all components originally envisioned (i.e. social cohesion, well planned communities, culture).

To address this in implementation, the MEWG suggests:

- The GoA consider how “culture”, considered by many to be a LUF pillar, fits within this third outcome.
- Develop a broader, more encompassing definition of “Liveable communities” that goes beyond the current rather limiting “safe and healthy” definition.

6.3. Guiding Principles

The MEWG concluded that the principles in the LUF are integral as touchstones for accountability for planning and implementation of the LUF. Concerns included the fact that the list of principles contained in the LUF was not complete, and as such should be reviewed to address the following issues (relative to specific principles outlined in the LUF).

Collaborative and Transparent – This section lacks the necessary reference to open and transparent reporting of LUF both in terms of ongoing monitoring and evaluation and in terms of implementation progress. Although the section speaks to decision-making processes being open and inclusive, it is important to define the actual method of public reporting envisioned so there is no ambiguity for future planning.

Definition of “Sustainable” – The LUF needs to clarify the principle of “Sustainable” (in the context of the glossary definitions of “Sustainability” / “Sustainable development”) as there were discrepancies between the definitions contained in the glossary and those written in the report. MEWG concluded that the definition of “sustainable” contained within the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report should be the basis for the definition contained in the LUF – namely, *development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*

Moreover, the LUF does not incorporate or reflect the concept of full cost-benefit analysis of issues and initiatives across the three LUF pillars (environmental, economic and social) within the guiding principles. Full cost-benefit analysis acknowledges that our current focus of economic indicators (i.e. GDP, profits, etc) needs to be balanced with an equal focus on environmental and social indicators. This approach to a more complete cost-benefit analysis is one way to assess genuine progress or whether a region’s growth, increased production of goods, and expanding services have actually resulted in the improvement of welfare (well-being) in the region. Fundamentally, such welfare is far broader than just economics.

Integrated and Responsive Principles – There is a need to clarify the description of these two principles. Both principles need to support the “*Plan, Do, Check, Adapt*” approach to land use planning and accommodate the need to adapt plans.

To address these issues in implementation, the MEWG suggests:

- Full cost-benefit analysis be a stand alone principle (or at least be better reflected within a revised “sustainable” principle).
- The definition of “Sustainable Development”, contained within the LUF glossary, needs to be reflected correctly in the body of the report.
- The principle of “Integrated” should include both current and new land use planning processes well as the integration of decision-making.
- The principle of “Responsive” needs to be changed to define the principle as one that is “adaptive” both to changing economic, environmental and social factors and to the findings from ongoing monitoring conducted to quantify performance with respect to the three pillars.

7. DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES

The MEWG reviewed the six strategies articulated in the LUF to improve land-use decision making in Alberta. The following summarizes key insights and advice offered by the MEWG during its review.

7.1. Six Regional Land-use Plans

Consensus on Boundaries – Consensus was achieved that the GoA was successful in defining regional boundaries and that the use of watershed boundaries was appropriate. However, the LUF should elaborate a process for adapting regional boundaries if this is deemed necessary in the future. Concern was also expressed as to how the GoA aims to deal with the integration of cross-regional issues in the separate regional planning processes.

Integration – The regional level integration of the LUF - both horizontal and vertical - with other GoA plans (i.e. Industrial Heartland, Water for Life, Caribou Conservation Strategy, etc) needs to be better developed and/or clarified (refer to diagram on p.15 of Draft LUF). Observations and issues include:

- While a “top down“ direction for regional planning is appropriate to direct other plans (i.e. other GoA plans, municipal plans), however, it remains unclear how the LUF will connect with existing municipal planning processes. The Draft LUF introduces a new regional planning process to Alberta’s land use planning hierarchy. Accordingly, there is a need to clearly define how municipal planning will take direction from and relate to the regional planning processes (i.e. including its impact on Area Structure Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans, Land-use bylaws, development permits and sub-division approvals) to ensure compliance and alignment of these plans with the LUF.
- Clarification of how sub-regional plans will be developed and integrated into the LUF.
- Clarification of the role that the LUF will play in setting direction for current GoA policies and how alignment will be achieved.
- The need to ensure that local planning mechanisms/authorities remain intact while noting concern over the capacity of smaller municipalities to adhere to LUF at the local level (may require increased resources to ensure engagement).
- The need for greater clarity on how ongoing monitoring and assessment will be implemented across the planning regions.
- Clarification of the planning hierarchy for provincial land-use decision making that will ensure agencies such as the Energy Conservation Board, Alberta Utilities Commission and the Natural Conservation Board can comply with the LUF.

To address these in implementation, the MEWG suggests:

- Adaptation of existing or development of new legislation to ensure appropriate connectivity and integration between municipal and regional plans;
- Assessment of resources that may be needed to build capacity to engage in LUF implementation in smaller municipalities;
- Clarification of the role of sub-regional plans and how these will be implemented;
- A clear process for adapting regional boundaries if this is deemed necessary in the future.

7.2. Governance

Role of Cabinet Committee – There was consensus and support for the development of the Cabinet Committee and Land Use Secretariat and that their ‘top down, coordinating approach’ is consistent with what the group had recommended. It was felt that the proposed Cabinet committee would be critical to providing appropriate direction and leadership in the development of actual regional plans. Issues that emerged from the discussion included:

- Clarification as to the role of government agencies and municipalities as the implementers of regional plans.
- Clarification of the mandate, role and resourcing of the proposed Land Use Secretariat.

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) – There was consensus that the proposed small size of the RAC is appropriate and would improve the effectiveness of regional planning processes. However, the MEWG is concerned about what will happen when the RAC is disbanded. Clarification is needed as to how plans will be adapted, managed and resourced once RACs are disbanded.

To address these issues in implementation, MEWG suggests:

- A clearer definition, within the LUF, as to the roles of agencies and municipalities.
- Development of a governance and management roadmap to guide plan management once RACs are disbanded.

7.3. Cumulative Effects Management

The MEWG concluded that the Cumulative Effects Management (CEM) proposed in the LUF appears too focussed on only one of the three pillars (environment) and does not address the triple bottom line in a balanced way. The following is a list of issues surrounding how CEM is used within the LUF.

Setting of Thresholds – Lack of present scientific certainty should not be a barrier to setting thresholds, but a signal that more information is needed, including a necessary commitment to acquire additional information and to provide resources to do so. In addition, the MEWG feels that:

- Modelling is a critical component in CEM and is necessary for evaluating trade-offs among possible thresholds when current scientific knowledge is insufficient to inform such decisions. However, such modeling tools only achieve minor mention in the report.
- Traditional knowledge, economic, social values, and scientific knowledge all need to be incorporated into the setting of thresholds.
- Thresholds set today must be able to adapt to the provision of future information.

Regional Boundaries – There is a need for a mechanism to address how CEM will cross regional boundaries to facilitate regional planning.

Accountability and Governance for Thresholds – A clear elaboration is needed on how thresholds are to be developed, who is responsible for their development and under what guidelines such development will occur. It was agreed that Cabinet approval of thresholds is integral to LUF implementation.

To address these issues in implementation, MEWG suggests:

- Clarification of how modelling, traditional knowledge, economic, social values, and scientific knowledge will be used to develop thresholds.
- Clarification as to the framework to be used for CEM within specific regions and municipalities.

7.4. Conservation and Stewardship on Private and Public Lands

LUF's approach for conservation and stewardship (C+S) is supported by the MEWG as a good guide to planning. However, the MEWG expressed concern that it contains an unbalanced focus on market-based approaches and that non-market based approaches should be acknowledged as possible methods achieving C+S objectives in some situations. The following issues arose during discussions of C+S on private and public lands:

Development of a Toolkit – The development of a C+S 'toolkit' will allow for good planning that can encourage rather than discourage C+S (especially on private lands). While market-based approaches can be highly efficient in some situations, more traditional tools (zoning, taxes, incentives, offsets, volunteer activities, not-for-profit partnerships, etc.) may actually perform better in others. The aim of the toolkit is to

describe the full range of possibilities and the “pros” and “cons” of these different tools under alternative circumstances so that informed decisions can be made within the regional planning processes.

Conservation and Stewardship Incentives – There is a need to focus on incenting C+S rather than punishing landowners/rights owners with heavy-handed measures. There is also a need to clarify the potential roles and accountabilities of C+S partnerships, land trusts, and environmental offsets. The key is that such incentives need to provide appropriate compensatory value to the land or rights owners. There is also a need to reform the current system which can create perverse incentives for unjustified compensation in some situations.

Encouraging Public Involvement in Conservation and Stewardship Activities – The LUF seems to focus on C+S in public and private landowners, yet fails to recognize community volunteers and non-profit C+S groups MEWG reached consensus that the LUF requires defined mechanisms to encourage the general public to be involved in C+S activities.

To address these issues in implementation, MEWG suggests:

- Elaboration within the LUF of the ‘toolkit’ available to support C+S activities.
- Clarification of the province’s plan for determining accountability in partnerships and land trusts.

7.5. Information, Monitoring, and Knowledge System

This section of the LUF is most reflective of the MEWG’s specific subject mandate. The MEWG concluded that this section was both vague and incomplete. The WG also felt that the current title was inadequate and suggested that a new title – “Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting” would better reflect its work. Additional comments are as follows:

Positioning of Diagrams – The *Plan, Do, Check* diagram (LUF p. 22) should be moved up to the Principles section so as to apply to all sections of the LUF. In its place, the *Facilitating Continuous Improvement Diagram* (from the MEWG Report - p. 167) should be inserted, as it provides a better description of the flow of information regarding monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring Environmental, Economic, and Social Outcomes - While the LUF focus on the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute is positive, it does not capture the full scope of attributes the MEWG identified to be monitored – i.e. soil quality, water quality, social and economic issues, etc. Without this critical monitoring piece, the GoA will have to explain how “Plan, Do, Check, Adapt” or full cost-benefit analysis will be accomplished in a meaningful way.

Governance and Information Management – Neither of these topics are adequately covered in this section. The GoA needs to be defined as the ultimate authority for information governance and management and it should possess oversight responsibilities that cannot be delegated. In its previous report to the GoA, the MEWG recommended four key implementation strategies. Two of these strategies (Strategies 2 and 3) that specifically addressed governance and information management are inadequately addressed in the draft LUF. Accordingly, the MEWG reiterates these strategies for recommended inclusion in the LUF:

- Convene separate groups of knowledgeable and experienced experts to design, test, and implement monitoring programs (Strategy 2).
- Establish a governance structure for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting programs (Strategy 3).

Virtual Centre of Excellence (VCOE) – The MEWG was unclear as to what exactly this is, where it came, and how it fits into the LUF’s general Monitoring and Evaluation and Information Management model. Is it part of the proposed Land-Use Secretariat? Supporting the Secretariat as an independent body?

To address these issues in implementation, MEWG suggests:

- Transferring the locations of the *Plan, Do, Check* and the Facilitating Continuous Improvement Diagrams as described above.
- A commitment to develop cost-effective monitoring programs to enable the kind of full cost-benefit analysis proposed by the group.
- Direct inclusion and commitment to MEWG’s Strategy 2 and 3 in the LUF.
- Defining the purpose of the VCOE, including information on who will operate it, and its link to the Cabinet Secretariat.

7.6. Inclusion of Aboriginal Peoples in Land Use Planning

There appears to be little discussion on this topic in the LUF. In reference to the triple bottom line approach, if the Draft LUF is intended to include the “culture pillar”, an important component for aboriginal people, as part of the “social pillar” (Liveable communities and recreational opportunities), there is a need for this to be clearly defined within the description of this pillar.

It was determined by the MEWG that issues regarding aboriginal peoples are likely best addressed in the proposed government consultation with aboriginal people. In this regard, the MEWG suggests that the government clarify to how the Aboriginal and Public input streams would be communicated to and coordinated with the stakeholder WG stream in a timely and effective manner.

8. PRIORITY ACTIONS AS DESCRIBED IN DRAFT LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

The MEWG expressed a sense of urgency regarding the finalization of the LUF. The following provides an overview of issues that were raised in regards to the immediate priorities including GoA policy gaps addressed in the Draft LUF.

8.1. Immediate Planning Priorities

- Consensus was reached that Priority Actions 1, 2 and 3 are appropriate priorities, and although difficult to implement, are necessary actions to the LUF.
- Consideration of a second “wave” of priorities to appropriately include land use planning for the Eastern slopes and the Edmonton – Calgary corridor.

8.2. Addressing Provincial Policy Gaps

The MEWG concluded that the Draft LUF’s consideration of provincial policy gaps and areas of provincial interest is appropriate and on track. However, several suggested additions or clarifications were offered, which included:

- Building capacity (local, municipal, stakeholder groups) to engage in land use planning.
- The need to start developing the monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems immediately.
- Consideration for changing the objective of “conserving and protecting the diversity of Alberta’s *land base*” to “conserving and protecting the diversity of Alberta’s *ecological regions*”.

9. WORKING GROUP ADVICE ON LAND-USE FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

The MEWG reviewed implementation considerations for the LUF - focussing on what it considered to be the key components for implementation, implementation processes, accountabilities and a critical path or timeline for implementation. Summarized below is the WG's initial advice on implementation.

9.1. Key Components of Implementation

Governance – The MEWG suggests that the government immediately develop ‘terms of reference’ or mandate statements to guide the three planning groups (Cabinet Committee, RACs, Land Use Secretariat). The terms of reference will help describe how the main committees of LUF implementation will interact. In the case of the RACs, it is also important to demonstrate how fair and equitable representation of interested stakeholders will be achieved. Additional recommendations included:

- Development of a reporting process between the three governing bodies.
- Roadmap for the resourcing of money, people, infrastructure - both start up and long-term - for the Land Use Secretariat and RACs.

Monitoring System – There is an immediate need to advance the design and implementation of a LUF monitoring system. Key factors for success of the monitoring system include:

- Identification of data needed to support a LUF evaluation across its key components (i.e. what kind of a monitoring and evaluation framework is needed to enable cumulative effects management?).
- Compilation, collection and coordination of government data.
- A commitment to build and resource the monitoring system at the outset.
- Implementation of Strategy 2 in the MEWG's November 2007 report which would see identifying and convening knowledgeable and experienced experts to design, test and implement monitoring programs.

The MEWG recognizes that investments in information and information systems are required to support the implementation of the LUF. Recognizing the limits on government resources to invest in this area, the MEWG discussed how to achieve the objective of building a robust and sustainable M+E system in the most cost-effective manner that is focused on what is actually needed - rather than “nice to haves”. Based on the MEWG's November 2007 report, the MEWG recommends the following process:

1. Identify what M+E-related information is needed and, in particular, what is needed in the short-term to support LUF's decision-making processes. This will

- require a confirmation of the objectives and performance measures that the government and other LUF WGs are recommending.
2. Review existing sources of monitoring information within and outside of government to determine whether the above needs can be met from currently available data and programs. The MEWG acknowledges that SRD has work underway in consolidating existing mapping and resource information across government.
 3. GoA's investment in land and resource data and information systems should be prioritized with a paramount focus on advancing the LUF. It is recommended that SRD conduct a gap, overlap and "LUF relevance" analysis on existing government and government-funded land and resource information and data against LUF's goals, objectives and performance measures. Those information needs not presently filled will be identified as gaps. Where duplications of efforts are identified, these could be reconciled to free up resources to invest in filling the gaps. Where the government is investing in land and resource data that is not clearly relevant to addressing LUF's priorities, those resources should be considered for reallocation to higher-priority information needs and gaps.
 4. Convene an experts group to review and validate the government's gap, overlap and relevance assessment and report back to SRD on priorities for investment to support the LUF's M+E needs and possible approaches to budget reallocation and incremental funding.
 5. Based on the experts' group recommendations and the GoA's own budget analysis, SRD should develop a budget to support LUF's M+E requirements. This budget should be envisaged as a five year budget that can support sustainable operations over time.

With respect to possible alternate sources of funding to support development of M+E programs and information systems, the MEWG recommends that the government consider the model employed by the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta which charges a levy across the forest sector and uses this money to finance research benefitting that sector. It was suggested the government explore expanding the application of such a levy to other resource sectors within the province so that the beneficiaries of resource-use can contribute, in part, to the development of the LUF's M+E programs and machinery. Since such M+E programs (when operational) will enable these sectors to reduce their own monitoring costs, this funding model should be acceptable to industry across Alberta.

Additional items that the MEWG concluded were necessary for implementation include:

- Education awareness and training for GoA and regional/municipal staff focused on establishing new roles and responsibilities in the LUF process and recognizing the extent of change in these roles.
- Early alignment of the LUF with current GoA strategies (energy, caribou, water for life, grizzly, clean air) and other GoA processes (i.e. the Environmental Impact Assessment) in context of LUF implementation.
- Development of tool kits to support implementation (modeling tools, approaches for actual implementation, market based instruments, offsets, transfer of development credits).

- Assessment of capacity to engage - concern was expressed that many of the LUF implementation partners may lack resources and capacity to participate in LUF implementation. The GoA should assess partner capacity as part of the implementation process.

9.2. Implementation Reporting

The MEWG recommended that two reports and one implementation audit be produced in order to guide LUF implementation and enhance accountability to the public:

1. **Implementation Progress Report** – A progress report produced by Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) and issued by the Minister that will provide stakeholders with a regular progress report on LUF implementation.
2. **State of “Sustainability” in Alberta Report** – A recurring report that will provide clear reporting on how the goals of the LUF, as set out in the three pillars, are being achieved across the regions and provincially. The MEWG acknowledged the need for the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute, but felt that biodiversity alone does not capture the broader scope of sustainability as discussed above in this report.
3. **Implementation Audit** – An audit that assesses whether those charged with implementing the LUF, within the GoA and outside of it, are actually doing what they committed to do. While MEWG members agreed such an audit would be valuable, they did not reach consensus whether this should be an independent audit report.

9.3. Monitoring and Evaluation Governance

The MEWG suggests that the GoA implement its earlier advice on establishing appropriate governance over Information Management and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting programs as per Strategy 3 of its November 2007 report.

9.4. Sequencing Considerations for Implementation

The MEWG concluded that enough consultation with stakeholders has taken place and that it is necessary that the LUF be finalized by the end of summer 2008 so that the GoA and interested stakeholders can focus on implementation. In this context, concern was expressed that the other two streams of LUF consultation (public and Aboriginal streams) could challenge this timeline. Accordingly, there is a need for improved information exchange among all consultation streams to ensure their work can be completed in a timely manner and implementation launched expeditiously.

