



Technical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Updated March 17, 2021

CONTEXT

[*Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability*](#) was created by the Alberta Government in 2003 in response to increasing pressures on Alberta's water supplies. The three goals of the strategy are to preserve and maintain:

- Safe, secure drinking water supplies
- Healthy aquatic ecosystems
- Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy

To achieve these goals, *Water for Life* identifies three types of partnerships to lead collaborative watershed planning in Alberta: (1) the Alberta Water Council; (2) Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils; and (3) Watershed Stewardship Groups. Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs) are regional organizations with the mandate to engage governments, stakeholders, other partnerships and the public in watershed assessment and planning. The [North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance](#) (NSWA) is the WPAC for the North Saskatchewan River watershed in which the Sturgeon River watershed is located. The NSWA takes a leadership role in watershed planning, state of the watershed reporting, outreach and education.

Watershed Stewardship Groups (WSGs) include a range of local organizations with diverse mandates. These groups undertake actions to raise awareness or physically improve their watersheds or local water bodies. As part of these actions, WSGs may undertake local watershed assessment and planning activities. The [Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance](#) (SRWA) is a WSG taking a collaborative approach to watershed management in the Sturgeon River watershed. This approach is overseen by a Steering Committee consisting of municipalities, Indigenous communities, and interested stakeholders.

THE STURGEON RIVER WATERSHED

The Sturgeon River is a non-glacial river which flows approximately 260 km eastward from its headwaters upstream of Lake Isle to its confluence with the North Saskatchewan River near Fort Saskatchewan (Figure 1). A watershed is an area of land that contains streams and rivers that all drain into a single larger body of water such as a river, lake or ocean. The Sturgeon River incorporates a drainage area of approximately 3,301 km² and the watershed is home to a population of approximately 140,000 people.

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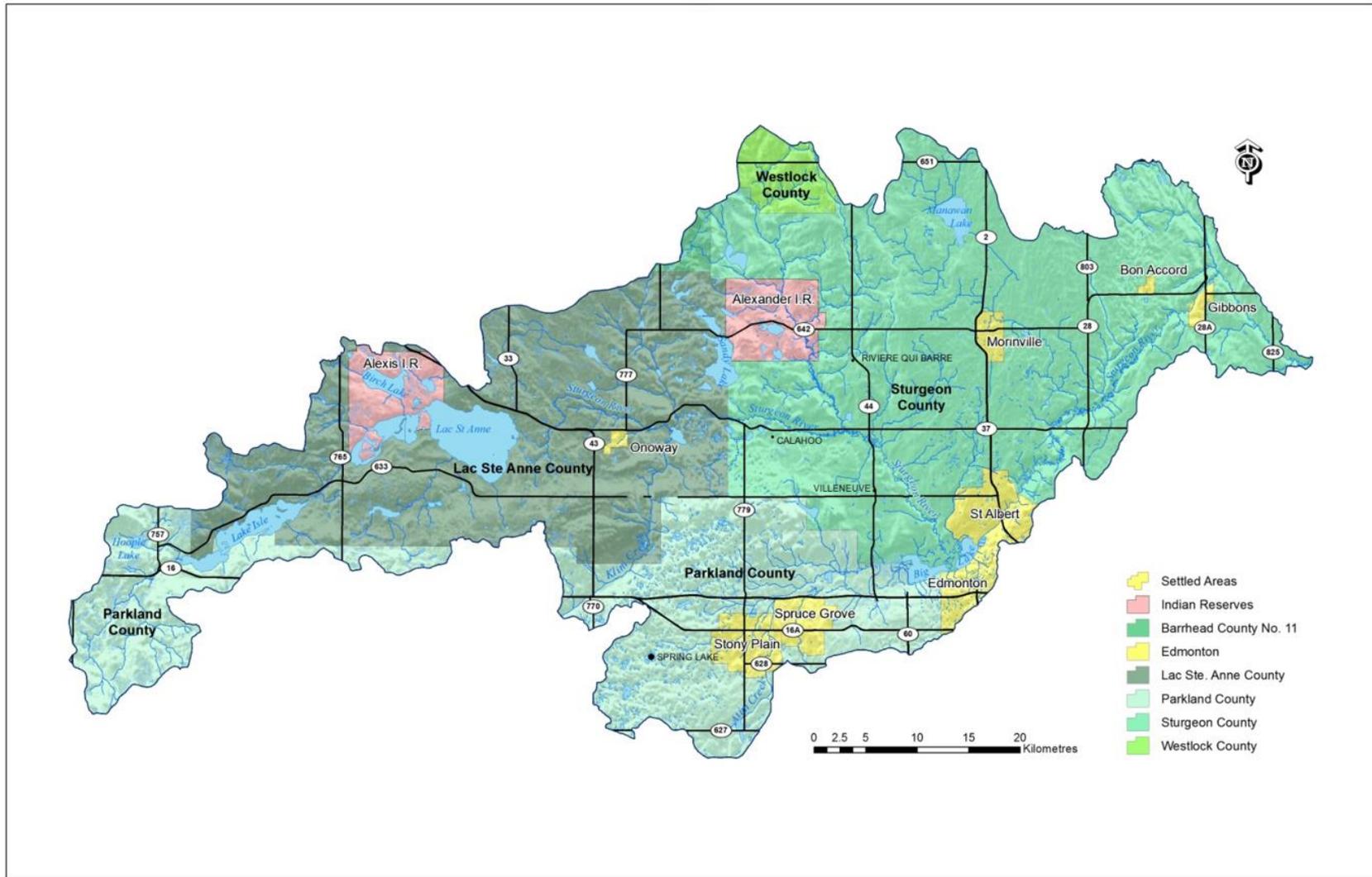


Figure 1. Map of the Sturgeon River and the surrounding watershed

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TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE PURPOSE

The Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance (SRWA) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has the following objectives:

- to provide technical advice and support to the SRWA Steering Committee
- to address data gaps identified in the *Sturgeon River State of the Watershed Report*
- to build on the findings of the *Sturgeon River State of the Watershed Report* by developing and implementing a watershed management plan for the Sturgeon River Watershed
- to provide project findings, recommendations, and advice on implementing the Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan (SRWMP) to the Steering Committee

The 2012 [Sturgeon River State of the Watershed](#) report, prepared by the City of St. Albert, identified a number of information gaps. The SRWA raised funds and commissioned several technical reports to address these gaps and these reports are available on the [NSWA webpage](#) for the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance. This technical information provided the foundation for development of the [Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan](#) (SRWMP), completed by the SRWA in 2020 (available on the same webpage). A watershed management plan provides effective guidance when making decisions about the types of activities and development occurring in a community. The development of watershed management advice involves collaborative, long-term thinking and proactive decision-making about key land and water management issues. Watershed plans serve to sustain the health of our aquatic ecosystems.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The SRWA TAC will consist of one staff or elected official representative from each member municipality and one representative from each member First Nations and Métis organization. Industry representatives, non-governmental organizations and learning institutions will also be asked to participate, particularly when relevant to particular areas of study. Each member organization has one vote. Members can appoint alternates.

Representatives from provincial and federal governments (e.g., Alberta Environment and Parks; Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development; Alberta Transportation, or other ministries) will be invited to participate and provide expertise to the TAC. Representatives from the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA) will provide secretariat support to the TAC and houses official records. Since not all municipalities in the watershed are able to participate due to various constraints, a cc list of interested parties will receive information and updates about the Alliance and can chose to participate in future if resources permit. A membership schedule listing active members is updated regularly. The TAC may I select a chairperson at the first meeting of every calendar year.

VOTING

Every reasonable effort will be made to achieve consensus in decisions and recommendations. Where consensus cannot be reached, decisions and recommendations of the TAC will be made by simple majority vote provided that a quorum of members is present. Quorum shall consist of 50% + 1 of the

TAC members based on confirmed active membership. Voting can also be submitted electronically through email in times when a decision is required quickly but quorum cannot be reached. Dissenting votes will be noted and recorded.

MEETINGS

Meetings of the TAC will be held four to six times a year. TAC members are also welcome to attend Steering Committee meetings.

The North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA) will provide administrative and technical support and will house the official records of the SRWA.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide technical support and advice to the Steering Committee and municipal councils
- Prepare briefings and other materials for the Steering Committee and respective administrations/organizations
- Address data gaps and recommendations of the *Sturgeon River State of the Watershed Report*
- Seek funding sources and provide letters of support for grant applications
- Commit to communicating project updates with their respective administrations, organizations, and others
- Work collaboratively towards the implementation of the *Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan (SRWMP)* in consultation with local and regional stakeholders
- Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the SRWMP
- Ensure the plan supports the overalls goals of the *North Saskatchewan River Integrated Watershed Management Plan*
- Work towards integrating the *SRWMP* with municipal policy and other strategic and operational processes
- Forward project findings, recommendations and implementation actions to appropriate government agencies, municipal representatives, and non-governmental organizations
- Review *SRWMP* annual reports that document progress towards plan goals and outcomes