



# **NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan 2021 - 2022**

*March 2021*

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

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# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## A. BACKGROUND

### 1. Water for Life Strategy and role of Water Planning and Advisory Councils

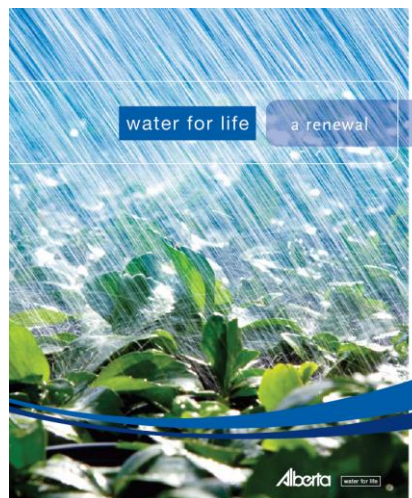
The North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance is a non-profit organization designated by the Government of Alberta as the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) for the North Saskatchewan River watershed. WPACs are regional in scope and are multi-stakeholder groups that lead watershed planning efforts in their respective regions. The NSWA seeks consensus on land and water resource management strategies that support the achievement of shared environmental, social, and economic outcomes for the watershed.

The NSWA is supported by both individual members and organizational members, which include:

- Federal, provincial, and municipal governments
- First Nations and Métis
- Industries and Utilities
- Oil and Gas and Forestry
- Agriculture
- Non-profit Organizations
- Members-at-large

In 2005, the NSWA was appointed by the Government of Alberta as the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) for the North Saskatchewan River watershed under the [Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability \(2003\)](#). The three goals of the Water for Life Strategy are:

1. Safe, secure drinking water supply
2. Healthy aquatic ecosystems
3. Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy



# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils are considered important stewards of Alberta's major watersheds. The NSWA is an independent, non-profit organization whose roles and responsibilities include leading collaborative partnerships, reporting on the health of the watershed, and facilitating education and stewardship activities.

As one of the four partnerships under the *Water for Life Strategy*, the NSWA works closely with the other groups including the Government of Alberta, the Alberta Water Council, the 10 other WPACs and Watershed Stewardship Groups.



## 2. NSWA Vision and Mission

### VISION

*People working together for a healthy and functioning North Saskatchewan River watershed – today and tomorrow.*

### MISSION

*To protect and improve water quality, water quantity (instream flow) and the health of our watershed by:*

- *seeking, developing and sharing knowledge;*
- *facilitating partnerships and collaborative planning; and,*
- *working in an adaptive management process.*

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## 3. NSWA Communications Policy B.18

<b>B.18 Board Communications and Authorized Spokespersons</b>		
<b>Purpose:</b>	Establish effective strategies and guidelines to allow NSWA to communicate clearly with one voice to all members, stakeholders and partners.	
<b>Context:</b>	A communications policy and plan allows the organization to develop a coherent, clear message that ensures understanding of NSWA's role and mandate by all members and partners of the NSWA society.	
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Communications and Engagement Committee	
<p>Board communications strategy is developed by the Executive Director with advice and guidance of the Board of Directors. The Board has established a Communications Committee to work with the Executive Director to ensure the strategy considers all means of communications focused on the various audiences of the NSWA. The committee will report to the Board at regular intervals. The communications plan will be included as part of the operational plan approved by the Board on an annual basis. (See the communications Committee Terms of Reference)</p> <p>Note that communication includes messaging developed for internal (members) and external (stakeholder and partner) groups as well as the collection of information from stakeholders to ensure the society is meeting expectations.</p> <p><b>Authorized Spokespersons</b>            Authorized spokespersons for the NSWA utilize the:  <i>NSWA's Guidelines</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>NSWA Vision, Mission and Values</i></li> <li>• <i>NSWA Board Policies on Advocacy, Code of Conduct and Confidentiality</i></li> </ul> <p>The Executive Director speaks on behalf of the NSWA as an organization. The Executive Director may direct a staff member to do this or ask the President or another Board member if unavailable or appropriate.</p> <p>The President, or Vice-President in the President's absence, speaks on behalf of the NSWA Board, and may appoint a delegate as the Board's spokesperson.</p>		
<b>Revision</b>		
<b>Board Meeting Date</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
June 7, 2013	New*	<i>*Earliest date on record</i>
April 10, 2019	Updated	<i>Edited for clarity</i>
<b>Review Date:</b>	2021	

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## 4. NSWA Public Participation Policy B.19

<b>B.19</b>	<b>Public Participation</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To outline how NSWA engages our watershed stakeholders.
<b>Context:</b>	The purpose of the NSWA includes sharing information as well as developing collaborative partnerships with watershed stakeholders. These actions involve different levels of engagement which can be identified on the spectrum of public participation developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). For the use of this policy public participation will be interpreted as how NSWA engages its watershed stakeholders.
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Communications and Engagement Committee

NSWA supports public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders. Depending on the issue or project, NSWA will have different goals for public participation that will be communicated to our stakeholders. The NSWA will use the IAP2 public participation spectrum as a model in its approach to engagement, with the term stakeholder(s) replacing the term public in the table below.

developed by the international association for public participation

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

NSWA recognizes it has multiple stakeholders that include but are not limited to:

- federal and provincial government agencies
- municipal governments
- indigenous communities
- industry and utility organizations
- agricultural associations and landowners
- watershed stewardship groups
- non-profit organizations
- academia, and
- the public at large.

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

The North Saskatchewan River watershed has a diversity of people, landscapes, and economic activity within its boundary. At different points in time, stakeholder concerns and interest to engage with the NSWA have been different from place to place within the watershed.

Based on experience, NSWA recognizes that the level and types of stakeholder engagement will vary depending on the scope of the issue or project, the importance of the issues being discussed to each stakeholder, and the resources and time that are available for engagement. These considerations should be carefully reviewed during the development of any engagement strategy and guide the implementation of the strategy.

NSWA recognizes that the level and types of public participation will vary depending on the scope of the issue or project, the individual differences between stakeholders and the resources and time that are available.

Examples of types of engagement the NSWA may undertake include:

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Website Forums Newsletters	Forum Surveys AGM Surveys	State of the Watershed Reports	NSWA Integrated Watershed Management Plan	Subwatershed Alliances

## Revision

Board Meeting Date	Status	Comments
March 17, 2021	New	<i>Recommended by Governance Committee</i>
<b>Review Date:</b>	2024	

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## 5. NSWA Communications and Engagement Committee B.17.2

<b>B.17.2 Communications and Engagement Committee</b>		
<b>Purpose:</b>	To advise and monitor communications and stakeholder engagement strategies appropriate to achieve goals and objectives of the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance.	
<b>Context:</b>	Committees have advisory functions to the Board. Their roles are delegated by the Board.	
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Communications and Engagement Committee	
<b>Duties and Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise the Executive Director on the communication activities undertaken by the NSWA.</li> <li>Provides recommendations to the Board of Directors.</li> <li>Identifies potential stakeholders and audiences of the NSWA communications and recommends engagement strategies.</li> <li>Provides advice on the development of an annual Communication and Engagement Plan.</li> </ul>	
<b>Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standing Committee provides advice to the NSWA Board.</li> </ul>	
<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake annual review and provide advice on the Communications and Engagement Strategy as part of the NSWA's strategic planning and priorities.</li> <li>Provide recommendations to the Board communications and engagement direction and strategy to achieve NSWA strategic objectives.</li> <li>Provide advice on the annual NSWA Operating Plan and Budget as it relates to communications and engagement issues or projects.</li> <li>Encourages each Board Director to communicate information about the NSWA to his/her sector.</li> <li>Reviews the Communications Committee Terms of Reference annually.</li> </ul>	
<b>Membership</b>	NSWA Board– Board members (up to 5) NSWA – Executive Director	
<b>Meetings</b>	Meet as required but recommended at least 3 times per year.	
<b>Renumeration</b>	None, aside from Board approved expenses associated with mileage, accommodation, meals, travel.	
<b>Reporting and key dates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sept. – Nov.(typically) advise Board on communication and engagement aspects of NSWA Strategic Plan as per the Strategic Planning Session -</li> <li>November - Annual review of NSWA Communications and Engagement Strategy</li> <li>February - advise Board on communication and engagement aspects of NSWA Annual Operating Plan and Budget</li> </ul>	
<b>Revision</b>		
<b>Board Meeting Date</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
September 18, 2013	New	
December 12, 2018	Updated	<i>Edited for clarity</i>
September 11, 2019	Updated	<i>Edited for clarity</i>
November 18, 2020	Updated	<i>Edited for clarity</i>
<b>Review Date:</b>	Annually	



# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## 5. Alignment with Alberta Government communications

The Government of Alberta provides information and communications materials on a range of watershed related topics including:

- [Water for Life Strategy](#)
- [Watershed Management](#)
- [Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils](#)
- [Watershed Management Resources](#)

It is important that NSWA aligns with this fundamental watershed information in its key messages and communications materials.

As part of the Water for Life Strategy Renewal in 2009 an emphasis was put on water literacy, or the ability to think, plan and act with water in mind, and foster behavioral changes among target audiences. This will ensure that the legacy and longevity of water resources in Alberta are maintained for use by current and future generations.

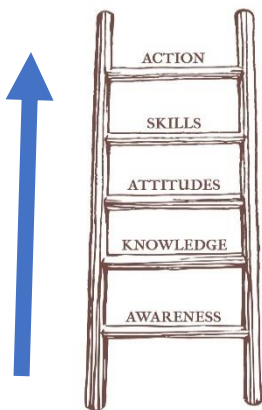
The **ultimate or long term goal** of the water literacy strategy, as stated in Water for Life, is:

*Albertans have the knowledge, tools and motivation to implement actions that will maintain or improve the province's water resources.*

### Water and Watersheds (Overarching water category)

#### Learning Objectives

Target Audiences will:

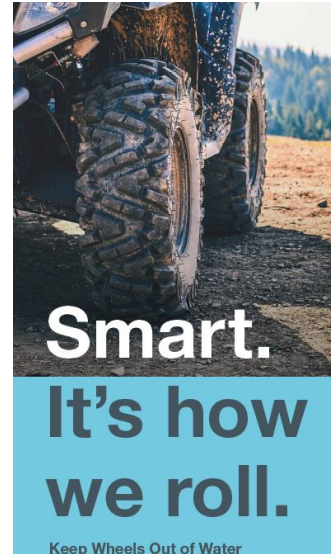
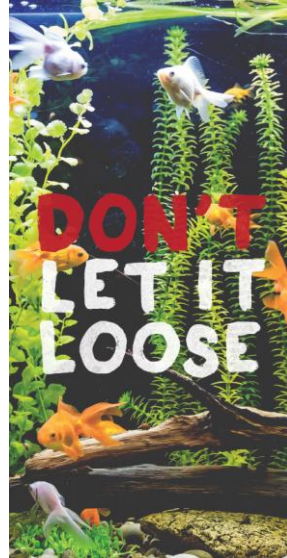
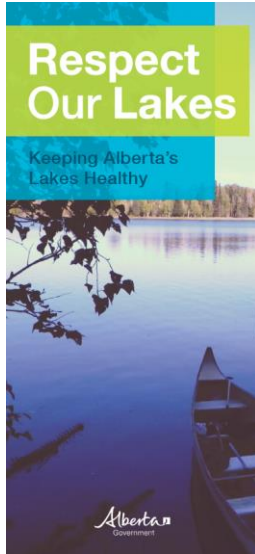


• Be active stewards of healthy aquatic ecosystems, water and watersheds.
• Have the skills and resources required to apply their knowledge and participate in the creation of water policies, plans and stewardship activities.
• Adopt attitudes of appreciation and concern for water and healthy watersheds.
• Understand watershed function and provincial water management functions.
• Be aware of the significance of water within social, economic, spiritual and ecological systems.

In addition to information on water and watersheds there are also Alberta Government topic specific communication campaigns that NSWA uses to address important issues such as:

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

- Respect Our Lakes
- Don't Let it Loose (Invasive Aquatic Species)
- Keep Wheels out of Water

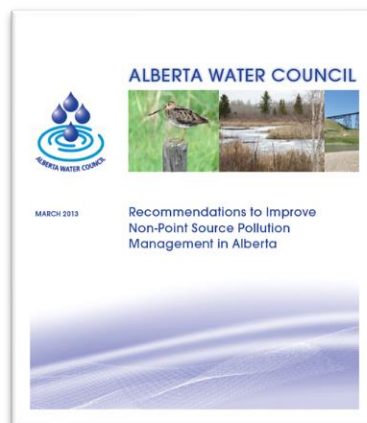


### 6. Alignment with other Non-government Communications

In addition to aligning with the Alberta Government communications in relation to the Water for Life Strategy and watershed management, NSWA leverages the work of other non-governmental organizations that have communications objectives that overlap with topics our stakeholders are interested in.

#### Alberta Water Council

As one of the four key partners in the Water for Life Strategy, the Alberta Water Council provides leadership, expertise and sector knowledge to engage and empower industry, non-governmental organizations, and governments to achieve the outcomes of the Water for Life Strategy.



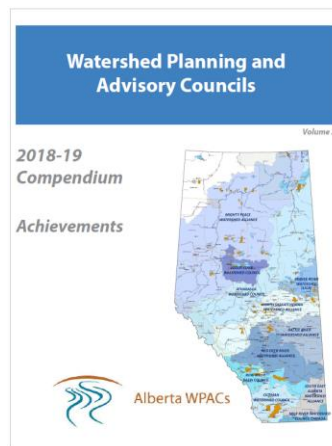
# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

The Alberta Water Council has facilitated over 20 project team research projects that have provided useful provincial overviews, definitions and recommendations related to watershed specific topics such as:

- Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems
- Riparian Land Conservation and Management
- Lake Management
- Non-Point Source Pollution

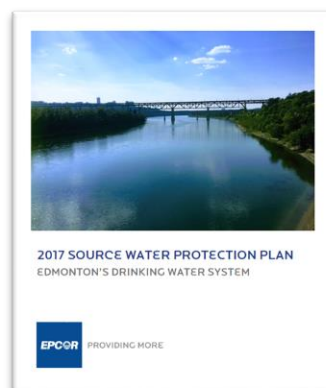
## Other Water Planning and Advisory Councils

Whenever possible, the 11 Alberta WPACs collaborate on communications materials to save resources and align key messages. An example of this is the WPAC Compendium developed which summarizes the activities and benefits of the provincial wide partnerships fostered by the WPACs.



## Utilities

Utility organizations within the North Saskatchewan watershed have good resources on drinking water, wastewater and stormwater systems and processes. EPCOR also has resources on source water protection and watershed management on its website and as part of the Edmonton Riverfest events.

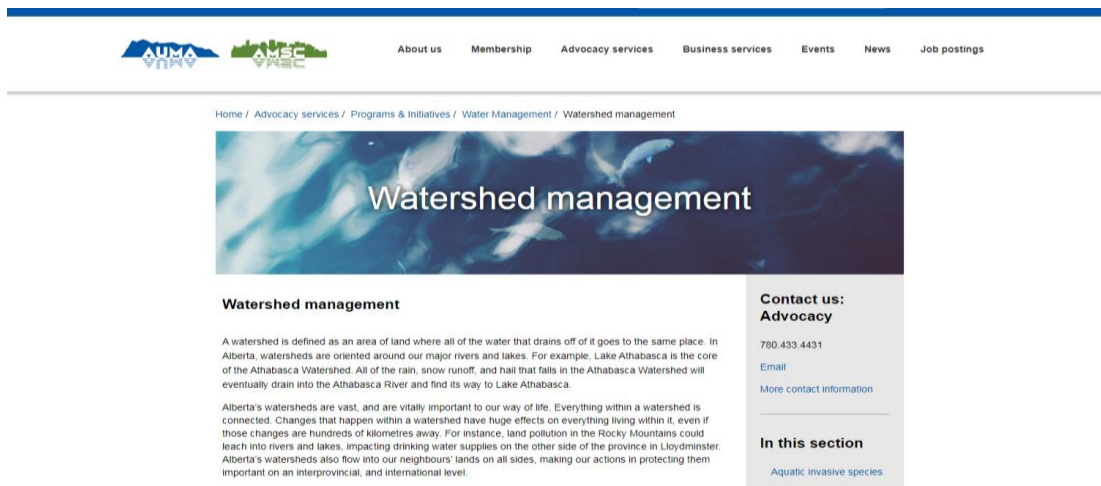


# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## Municipal Organizations

The Cities of Edmonton and St. Albert provide good resource information on their river valleys and mechanisms in place to conserve and protect river riparian areas and floodplains. The Counties of Parkland and Lac Ste. Anne have maps, information and videos specifically for landowners adjacent to lakes. Strathcona County has good information on the Beaverhills Biosphere and its role in surface and groundwater protection and biodiversity through protection of wetland systems.

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) has resource pages on its website dedicated to watersheds, wetlands and water conservation information for urban municipalities. The Rural Municipalities Association (RMA) has provincial position papers on water and water issues available to Alberta rural municipalities.



## On the Ground Action Non-profit Organizations

For on the ground action such as grants, shoreline protection, riparian and wetland restoration there are good information and resources available from the following non-profit organizations:

- [Land Stewardship Centre](#)
- [Alberta Lake Management Society](#)
- [Nature Alberta](#)
- [Cows and Fish](#)
- [ALUS Canada](#)
- [Ducks Unlimited](#)

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### 1. NSWA Strategic Goals

The NSWA Board updated its 3-year Strategic Plan in 2019 and outlined four goals to achieve the vision and mission of the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance. The goals also align with the mandate of Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils set out by the Government of Alberta.

**Goal 1:** *The NSWA supports Collaborative Watershed Planning*

**Goal 2:** *The NSWA provides Leadership in Watershed Management*

**Goal 3:** *The NSWA promotes Watershed Knowledge Sharing*

**Goal 4:** *The NSWA remains a Functional and Sustainable Organization*

The four goals are further detailed by key objectives and actions which direct the work of the NSWA organization.

### 2. NSWA Communications and Engagement Objectives

The objectives for goal 3 included in the NSWA Board Strategic Plan 2019-2021 includes four objectives.

Goal 3	Objectives
<b>The NSWA Promotes Watershed Knowledge Sharing</b>	NSWA focuses its communication efforts on key stakeholders and strategic issues.
	NSWA is a key resource for watershed information.
	NSWA aligns and leverages communications with watershed partners.
	NSWA recognizes achievements and celebrates successes.

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## C. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

Since March 2020, the world COVID pandemic has altered the way that we communicate and engage, and we have had to find new and innovate ways to connect with our NSWA stakeholders.

- Our 2020 Annual General Meeting was scaled back to the basics and held online rather than an in-person celebration of NSWA's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Our popular educational forums transitioned from a one day in-person gathering in February to a series of online speakers dubbed '*Knowledge in Know-vember*' each Tuesday during lunch.
- Instead of attending summer community events to talk with people about NSWA our two summer students provided support to our partner Watershed Stewardship Groups and Alberta Lake Management Society in distributing watershed information house to house and sampling lakes in our watershed for blue green algae and invasive species.

This year we will continue to see restrictions on social gatherings and will adapt our methods and tactics to reach our key stakeholders. Using more online engagement techniques and optimizing our newsletter and social media coverage will be priorities.

NSWA is still a small organization with one part-time staff to fulfil its core communications tasks. We have started to identify communications resources in our grants and have used this funding to contract out specific communications tasks for grant projects when needed. These grant communications efforts are above and beyond the core NSWA communications plan.

Working with many stakeholders and partnerships across the watershed it is important that NSWA manages the expectations of the communications support and resources it can provide. Stakeholders, particularly watershed stewardship groups, can look to the NSWA to provide locally specific and detailed communications materials. To address this challenge, we have started to develop 2-page information summaries on riparian health, lake water quality and what you can do topics. We have also begun to summarize state of the watershed reports for lakes into short and graphic handouts. Watershed stewardship groups can easily use these resources for their websites, social media or as handouts.

It should also be noted that significant reorganization and layoffs at Alberta Environment and Parks has impacted our collaborative relationship with AEP staff and the ability to promote Alberta wide programs such as *Water Literacy*, *Respect our Lakes* and *Don't let it Loose*.

# NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

## D. TARGET AUDIENCE/KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Over 1.4 million residents in the North Saskatchewan watershed use water on a daily basis. Water from the North Saskatchewan river, its tributaries and lakes and groundwater that supply our communities, farms and industries with water for drinking, recreation, crops, industrial processes and the generation of electricity.

The NSWA recognizes that the organization has limited resources and that communications efforts should focus on the groups that have the highest potential for influencing positive change in watershed management. The Communications and Engagement Committee reviewed the NSWA key stakeholders in 2020 and assessed their priority based on gradients of interest and influence.

Although, communications are targeted towards key stakeholders, it is recognized that many of the materials and programs are applicable to multiple audiences and the public in general.

### Target Audiences

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>NSWA Membership</b>	Active stakeholders and champions of NSWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society Membership</li> <li>• Society Board</li> <li>• Newsletter Subscription Holders</li> </ul>
<b>Government of Alberta</b>	Partners in the implementation of the Water for Life Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alberta Environment and Parks</li> <li>• Agriculture and Forestry</li> <li>• Alberta Energy Regulator</li> <li>• Municipal Affairs</li> <li>• Indigenous Relations</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Government</b>	Cities, towns, summer villages and counties that share responsibilities of water management and land-based decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 cities</li> <li>• 23 towns</li> <li>• 19 villages</li> <li>• 18 summer villages</li> <li>• 15 counties</li> </ul>
<b>Utilities</b>	Utilities that use water for electrical generation, drinking water sources, wastewater discharges or stormwater discharges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TransAlta</li> <li>• EPCOR</li> <li>• Capital Region Wastewater</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>	Companies who use water for industrial uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golf Courses</li> <li>• Aggregate Companies</li> <li>• Oil and Gas</li> <li>• Forestry</li> </ul>

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

<b>Water for Life Partners</b>	Partners in the implementation of the Water for Life Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AWC</li> <li>• WPACs</li> <li>• WSGs</li> </ul>
<b>Non-government Agencies – Key Partners</b>	Agencies that promote watershed specific programs or grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Stewardship Centre</li> <li>• Alberta Lake Management Society</li> <li>• Cows and Fish</li> <li>• ALUS Canada</li> </ul>
<b>Indigenous Organizations</b>	First Nations and Metis Settlements in the North Saskatchewan River watershed that share responsibilities of water management and land used decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 First Nations</li> <li>• 2 Metis Settlement</li> <li>• 12 Metis Locals</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture</b>	Stakeholders who use water for managing livestock, crop production or specialty operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers</li> <li>• Ranchers</li> <li>• Greenhouse operators</li> </ul>
<b>Non-government Agencies</b>	Agencies that promote environmental conservation, management or action that positively influences watershed health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature Alberta</li> <li>• Ducks Unlimited</li> <li>• ACA</li> <li>• EALT</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Organizations</b>	Organizations that provide support and resources for municipalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AUMA</li> <li>• RMA</li> <li>• EMRB</li> <li>• Drainage Councils</li> </ul>
<b>General Public</b>	Residents who use water for domestic or recreational reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents</li> <li>• Recreational User</li> </ul>



<b>INTEREST</b>	9						<i>Ministers</i>	<i>Munis</i>	<i>AEP</i>
	8						<i>TransAlta</i>	<i>AAF</i>	<i>EPCOR</i>
	7					Ducks Unlimited	AAFC EMRB	<i>NSWA Members</i>	
	6				Nat Conserv EALT AFG	MLAs AUMA	Agriculture Forestry ACA	Industry Land St Ct ALUS	AWC
	5				Oil and Gas RMA	AER NGOs M at Large		ALMS	WSGs WPACs
	4				Trout Unlimited	Nature AB		Cows & Fish NSWA Subscribers	
	3				Gen Public Drainage Councils				First Nations Metis
	2								
	1								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	<b>INFLUENCE</b>								

Table 1: Key Stakeholder Assessment

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

<b>INTEREST</b>	9	<b>Monitor and Inform Occasionally</b>			<b>Keep Satisfied</b>			<b>Manage Communications Closely</b>					
	8												
	7												
	6	<b>Minimal Effort</b>			<b>Keep onside, Monitor Interest</b>								
	5												
	4												
	3	<b>Minimal Effort</b>			<b>Keep Informed and Encourage Collaboration</b>								
	2												
	1												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
	<b>INFLUENCE</b>												

Table 2: Communication Action

## E. KEY MESSAGES

- NSWA was designated as a Water Planning and Advisory Council by the Government of Alberta for the North Saskatchewan River watershed in 2005.
- As a Watershed Planning and Advisory Council, NSWA partners with the Government of Alberta, Alberta Water Council and Watershed Stewardship Groups to achieve the Water for Life Strategy goals which are:
  - Safe and secure drinking water
  - Health aquatic ecosystems
  - Reliable water supplies for a sustainable economy.
- NSWA promotes a common platform for multi-stakeholder perspectives and uses a consensus-based approach to decision making.
- Watershed management requires planning that balances environmental, social and economic benefits.
- Watershed management is best achieved through multi-sector collaboration and partnerships.
- Watershed stewardship is a shared responsibility of all watershed stakeholders.
- The vision of the NSWA is *“People working together for a healthy and functioning North Saskatchewan River watershed – today and tomorrow”*.
- NSWA’s mission is *“To protect and improve water quality, water quantity (instream flow) and the health of our watershed by:*
  - *Seeking, developing and sharing knowledge*
  - *Facilitating partnerships and collaborative planning, and*
  - *Working in an adaptive management process”*

## F. SPECIFIC TACTICS – BY KEY STAKEHOLDER

Key Stakeholder	Action	Tactics
<b>Ministers</b>	<b>Keep key ministers informed of work of NSW.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively send ministers offices NSWA calendars, copies of LITS and invitations to NSWA events, e.g., AGM, grant or award celebrations.</li> </ul>
<b>AEP</b>	<b>Work with key AEP departments to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AEP representative on Board</li> <li>AEP representatives attend quarterly WPAC meetings.</li> <li>AEP representatives attend WPAC Communications staff meetings.</li> <li>Annual WPAC Compendium/Value Proposition for AEP</li> <li>Annual NSWA AEP Operating Grant report</li> <li>NSWA representation on AEP committees, e.g., CR/IH Water Quality Framework, Designated Industrial Zone Project, Regional Landuse Framework</li> <li>AEP representatives on SRWA, VRWA and Lake Stewardship Groups</li> <li>NSWA supports AEP grant applications and projects e.g., Watershed Integrity, WaterSHED</li> </ul>
<b>AAF</b>	<b>Work with key AAF departments to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSWA representation on AAF committees, e.g., Prairie Stream Nutrients</li> <li>NSWA supports AAF programs such as Environmental Farm Plans</li> </ul>
<b>Municipalities</b>	<b>Work with municipalities to support and empower watershed planning.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipal representatives on Board</li> <li>Municipal representatives on subwatershed alliances</li> <li>NSWA provides regular presentations to municipal staff and councils.</li> <li>Information package sent to municipalities each fall with contribution request letters.</li> <li>NSWA provides reports, data, and mapping resources to municipalities.</li> <li>NSWA attends and supports municipal events, particularly in summer months.</li> <li>NSWA provides copies of calendar and LITS to municipalities.</li> <li>NSWA highlights municipal events, projects and awards in newsletter and social media.</li> <li>NSWA provides links to municipalities on website.</li> <li>Potential subwatershed alliance/municipal survey in 2021.</li> </ul>
<b>EPCOR</b>	<b>Work with EPCOR staff and committees to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPCOR representatives on Board</li> <li>EPCOR representatives on Headwaters Alliance</li> <li>NSWA partners on WaterSHED project</li> <li>NSWA member of committee on IH/CR Water Quality Framework</li> <li>NSWA participates in EPCOR engagement projects e.g., SROI Water Treatment Plant Residuals Options, EPCOR ESG Third Party Assessment, E.L. Smith Solar Project</li> </ul>

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

Key Stakeholder	Action	Tactics
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSWA provides letters of support for EPCOR grant applications, e.g., Surface and Groundwater Interactions, Spill Modelling</li> <li>• NSWA sends an information package to EPCOR each spring with contribution request letter.</li> <li>• EPCOR presents regularly at NSWA Educational Forums.</li> </ul>
<b>TransAlta</b>	<b>Work with TransAlta staff and committees to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TransAlta representative on Board</li> <li>• TransAlta presentations and support for Wabamun Lake Watershed group.</li> </ul>
<b>NSWA Members</b>	<b>Keep members up to date on Society and technical work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership updates on website, newsletters, and social media</li> <li>• Membership direct emails on Society business, e.g., AGM, call for directors</li> </ul>
<b>Industry</b> Forestry Oil and Gas NCIA	<b>Work with key industry representatives to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry representatives on Board</li> <li>• NSWA representatives on IH/CR Water Quality Framework, Designated Industrial Zone Project</li> </ul>
<b>AER</b>	<b>Work with key AER departments to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AER representative on Board</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Work with key agricultural organizations to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture representatives on Board</li> <li>• Agriculture representatives on subwatershed alliances, e.g., Ag Fieldmen, ALUS reps</li> </ul>
<b>Water for Life Partners</b> AWC WPACs WSGs	<b>Work with Water for Life partners to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WPAC representative on AWC Board and regular input into AWC reviews</li> <li>• Quarterly WPAC meetings</li> <li>• Quarterly WPAC communications staff meetings</li> <li>• Annual WPAC Compendium</li> <li>• Biannual WPAC summit/conference</li> <li>• Partner with other WPACs on provincial or regional projects</li> <li>• Support to WSGs through technical, grant, facilitation, and communication support</li> <li>• Provide summer students to help out WSGs programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Key NGOs</b> LSC ALMS ALUS Cows and Fish	<b>Work with partner NGOs to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSWA representatives on NGO committees e.g., ALUS Public Advisory Councils</li> <li>• NGO representatives on NSWA committees e.g., Riparian Web Portal development</li> <li>• NGO representatives present at NSWA Forums.</li> <li>• Highlight NGOs on website, newsletters, and social media.</li> </ul>

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

Key Stakeholder	Action	Tactics
BHB		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide summer students to help NGO programs.</li> <li>• Provide letters of support for NGO grant applications.</li> <li>• NSWA is a 'parent' organization for Watershed Stewardship Grants for small NGOs or landowners.</li> </ul>
<b>Indigenous Communities</b>	<b>Work with indigenous communities to support and empower watershed planning.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous communities participate in subwatershed alliances, e.g., HA, SRWA.</li> <li>• TSAG presents indigenous community projects at NSWA forums.</li> <li>• Indigenous communities' section on website</li> </ul>
<b>MLAs</b>	<b>Keep MLAs informed of work of NSWA.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send MLAs NSWA calendars, copies of LITS and invitations to NSWA events, e.g., AGM, grant or award celebrations.</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Organization</b> EMRB AUMA RMA	<b>Work with municipal organizations to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EMRB presentations to subwatershed alliances</li> <li>• NSWA provides reports, data, and mapping resources to EMRB, e.g., GIS layers.</li> <li>• NSWA attends EMRB engagement activities, e.g., Regional Agricultural Master Plan.</li> <li>• NSWA highlights EMRB, AUMA and RMA events, projects and awards in newsletter and social media.</li> <li>• AUMA has a watershed resources section on their website.</li> </ul>
<b>NGOs</b> Ducks Unlimit Nat Conserv EALT ACA AB F and G Trout Unlimit Nature AB	<b>Work with other NGOs to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGO representatives on NSWA subwatershed alliances e.g., DU on VRWA, ACA on SRWA.</li> <li>• NGO representatives present at NSWA Forums.</li> <li>• Highlight NGOs on website, newsletters, and social media.</li> </ul>
<b>Drainage Councils</b>	<b>Work with Drainage Councils to inform and align work.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drainage council representative on Board</li> <li>• Drainage council representatives on subwatershed alliances, e.g., VRWA</li> </ul>
<b>General Public</b>	<b>Share watershed knowledge with people in watershed.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use website, newsletters, social media, educational forums, and attendance at community events to improve water literacy and watershed knowledge.</li> </ul>

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

### G. SPECIFIC TACTICS – BY MEDIA TYPE

NSWA Media	Action	Tactics	Deliverables	Timeline	Resources
<b>Brand Identity</b>	<b>Build on the strong NSW brand with consistent materials</b>	Use standard logos, colors and templates when producing communications materials.	All staff use branded email signatures, PowerPoint, and letter templates.	December 2021	Brand Identity Package completed by Habit Consulting March 2019  Staff time
			Any new business cards issued will use new branded format.		
			Incorporate logo into images, documents, reports when possible.		
			Incorporate logo standards when we put out RFP or get a report done.		
			New event items such as hats, pulls ups, postcards use new logo.		
			Potential NSW designed QR code.		
		Update Tag Line	Existing tag line <b><i>“Your watershed; your voice”</i></b> indicates NSW advocates when really what we do is collaborate.	May 2021 (In time for AGM)	Committee and staff time
			Consider new tag line such as: <b><i>“Connecting water, land and people”</i></b> which emphasizes the interconnection of land and water and collaboration.		
<b>Website</b>	<b>Use NSW website as source of information on the organization, watershed planning and resources.</b>	Promote website via newsletters, forums, social media and promotional materials	<b>Measurement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # users/year</li> <li>• Length of time/user visit</li> <li>• #web connects/newsletter</li> </ul>	Annual or Quarterly analytics	Staff time
	<b>Improve/refine NSW website</b>	Use website analytics to assess user trends and patterns	Improvements to key webpages to address user preferences, e.g., <i>Resources, Partnership, WaterSHED</i> pages.	May 2021	Significant changes to be done by Habit Consulting.

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

NSWA Media	Action	Tactics	Deliverables	Timeline	Resources
			Resources classifications and SEOs for new reports and pages updated regularly.  Update photos for landing pages.		
	<b>Develop or enhance website landing page links to frequency used pages</b>	Use website analytics to determine most visited pages to refine user experience	Web landing page updated once a year or more to address input, e.g., 20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, video, move <i>What's New</i> further up, new <i>Projects</i> tab?	May 2021	Significant changes to be done by Habit Consulting.
	<b>Improvements to <i>Who we are</i> webpages.</b>	Add information or photos to page to add more detail	Update staff and/or Board photos  Add information on Board members?	December 2022 (after AGM and Muni elections)	
<b>Newsletters</b>	<b>Publish regular NSWA newsletters</b>	Use regular NSWA newsletters to inform stakeholders of key messages and other NSWA resources.	Publish 10-12 newsletters per year.  Survey subscribers once a year  Outline 12-month newsletter strategy with links to NSWA calendar, board members, speaker series and special events. Align with social media strategy.  <b>Measurement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #newsletter subscribers</li> <li>• #opens/newsletter</li> <li>• #connects/newsletter</li> </ul>	Monthly  October 2021  February 2021	Staff time
<b>Online Speaker Series</b>	<b>Host online speaker series</b>	Use educational forums to share knowledge and encourage collaboration	Hold <i>Watershed Wednesdays</i> speaker series in Feb/Mar/April and Sept/Oct/Nov  Fourth Wednesday of every month from 12-1  <b>Measurement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #attendees/year</li> <li>• Attendee satisfaction surveys</li> </ul>	Six days/year	Staff time



## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

NSWA Media	Action	Tactics	Deliverables	Timeline	Resources
<b>Social Media</b>	<b>Host Facebook, Twitter and Linked In social media accounts</b>	Use regular and strategic updates to social media to share key messages and other NSWa resources.	<p>Post to social media accounts 4-8 times per month on strategic NSWa items</p> <p>Develop social media strategy that aligns with newsletter and key events.</p> <p>Summarized analytics for Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter annually and use to refine strategy.</p> <p>Develop strategy for Instagram in summer months when most active.</p> <p><b>Measurement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # followers</li> <li>• Links to website from social media</li> <li>• Links to social media from newsletter</li> </ul>	Annual or Quarterly analytics	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Summer students</p>
<b>Media Releases</b>	<b>Issue media releases</b>	Use print and other media to promote <u>significant</u> NSWa issues and achievements	<p>Issue 1-3 media releases per year depending on newsworthy events, e.g. SRWA WMP, Wabamum WMP, Web Portal Annual Report.</p> <p>Work with AEP, EPCOR and CoE on WaterSHED media coverage.</p>	Annually	Staff time
<b>Living in the Shed book</b>	<b>Promote Living in the Shed book</b>	<p>Use book to introduce key stakeholders to NSWa and watershed.</p> <p>Sales will be limited after 2020.</p>	<p>Distribute book to key stakeholders such as MLAs, Councils and Subwatershed Alliances.</p> <p>Develop list of key stakeholders to provide complimentary copies of LITS, e.g., new councillors after municipal elections, AEP programs, NGO partners, for university graduates in water or environmental programs.</p> <p><b>Measurement:</b></p>	Annually	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Postage</p> <p>Travel costs</p>

## NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan

NSWA Media	Action	Tactics	Deliverables	Timeline	Resources
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #complimentary LITS/year</li> </ul>		
<b>Calendars</b>	<b>Create NSWA calendar</b>	Use calendar to highlight key watershed topics, subwatershed photos and NSWA organization.	600 annual calendars printed by December each year.	December 2021	Staff time Printing costs Postage
<b>One-page Value Statements</b>	<b>Create value statements for stakeholder groups</b>	Use value statements to attract/retain key stakeholders	Value statements created for municipalities, industry, NGOs, WSGs	May 2021	Staff time
<b>Annual Report</b>	<b>Issue Annual Report</b>	Use NSWA Annual Report to inform stakeholders of NSWA progress and achievements	Annual Report distributed at Annual General Meeting and as part of introduction letters to new stakeholders and included in contribution request letters to municipalities.	Annually	Staff time Printing costs
<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	<b>Hold Annual General Meeting</b>	NSWA Annual General Meeting is used to inform stakeholders of NSWA progress and achievements	Annual Report and summary presentation provided at Annual General Meeting  <b>Measurement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #attendees/AGM</li> <li>• Satisfaction of attendees from survey</li> </ul>	Annually	Staff time Meeting costs
<b>Presentations</b>	<b>Provide NSWA presentations</b>	One-on-one presentations provided to stakeholders by request.	Number of presentations made to stakeholders, e.g., municipal councils, NGOs, WSGs.  Number of presentations made at conferences or workshops.  <b>Measurement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #presentations/year</li> </ul>	Annually	Staff time Travel costs
<b>Water-focused Events</b>	<b>Attend water-focused events</b>	Attend key water-focussed events such as Edmonton Riverfest, NAIT World Water Day	<b>Measurement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #interactions with stakeholders.</li> <li>• # NSWA materials handed out.</li> </ul>	2-4 per year	Staff time Travel costs

## **H. DESIRED OUTCOMES**

The NSW Key Directions for 2020-2021 include identifying measurements of success for the work of the NSW. For Goal 3: Knowledge Sharing of the NSW Strategic Plan, the Communications and Engagement Plan offers some indicators of success including:

### **Communication Survey**

In October 2020, NSW conducted a communications survey which asked for stakeholders use and satisfaction with our main communication tools including website, newsletter, educational forums, and social media. The survey was advertised through the monthly NSW newsletter and we received 61 responses.

The satisfaction questions are based on a scale of 0-5 and averages were provided for each question. The survey can be repeated annually, and satisfaction scores compared between years and trends noted. The optional comments in the survey also provide insights into how the stakeholders feel about each communication tool, positive or negative.

This information can be supplemented by analytics collected for each communication tool.

#### **Website:**

- # users/year
- Length of time/user visit
- #web connects/newsletter

#### **Newsletters:**

- #newsletter subscribers
- #opens/newsletter
- #connects/newsletter

#### **Social Media:**

- # followers
- Links to website from social media
- Links to social media from newsletter

### **Forum/Speaker Series Survey**

Participant surveys are also conducted after each NSW educational forum/speaker series and the satisfaction ratings and individual comments of these results can also be tracked over time. The number of attendees at each session has also been tracked since 2010.