



***NORTH SASKATCHEWAN WATERSHED ALLIANCE
2019 – 2021 STRATEGIC PLAN***

NORTH SASKATCHEWAN WATERSHED ALLIANCE 2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan

To achieve our vision and carry out our mission, we will strive for the following goals:

GOAL 1: The NSWA Supports Collaborative Watershed Planning.

Collaboration: A process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can explore constructively their differences and search for (and implement) solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible. Collaboration is a mechanism for leveraging resources; dealing with scarcities; eliminating duplication; capitalizing on individual strengths; building internal capacities; and increasing participation and ownership strengthened by the potential for synergy and greater impact. *(Alberta Environment Glossary of Water Terms Used in Alberta – 2008)*

Watershed Planning: is a comprehensive approach to the management of water and watershed resource within an inclusive shared governance framework. It includes ensuring that the appropriate stakeholders are engaged in developing and implementing a watershed management plan based on the goals of the Water for Life, the plan's more or less constant renewal through adaptive management processes and ongoing commitments by all partners to take action to achieve consensus-based management outcomes and improve watershed health. *(Recommendations for a Watershed Management Planning Framework for Alberta – Alberta Water Council 2008)*

Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
The NSWA Supports Collaborative Watershed Planning	NSWA collaborates with GoA on watershed planning and knowledge sharing programs.	NSWA provides advice to GoA on water management plans, regional planning and government policy.				NSWA/ GoA	Operating	Number of studies, partnerships or programs the NSWA collaborates with GoA.
		NSWA works with Government of Alberta departments that promote issues related to watershed health, such as Water for Life, Water Literacy and Respect our Lakes programs.						

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	NSWA collaborates with government agencies, industry, utilities, academia, municipalities and NGOs on watershed planning and knowledge sharing programs.	NSWA provides advice and works with government agencies, industry, utilities, academia, municipalities and NGOs to identify and support basin-wide watershed studies.				NSWA/ Key Stakeholders		Number of studies, partnerships or programs the NSWA collaborates with government agencies, industry, utilities, academia, municipalities and NGOs. Number of in-kind hours NSWA contributes to studies, partnerships or programs.
		NSWA aligns and leverages communications with watershed partners.						
	NSWA collaborates with sub-watershed groups on watershed planning and knowledge sharing programs.	Support and facilitate the development of the Headwaters sub-watershed group to encourage watershed planning at a local scale.				NSWA/ Municipalities	Operating Grants	Number of municipalities participating in sub-watershed group.
	Support and facilitate the development of the Sturgeon River sub-watershed group to encourage watershed planning at a local scale.				NSWA/ Municipalities/ AEP/NGOs	Operating Grants	Number and amount of grants received or leveraged by sub-watershed groups.	
	Support and facilitate the development of the Vermilion sub-watershed group to encourage				NSWA/ Municipalities /Irrigation	Operating Grants	Number of studies or reports completed by sub-watershed groups.	

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		watershed planning at a local scale.				Districts / ALUS		Number of in-kind hours contributed by sub-watershed groups.
		Support and facilitate the development of other sub-watershed groups such as Beaverhill and White Earth.				NSWA/ Municipalities	Operating Grants	
	NSWA collaborates with all levels of government (provincial, regional and municipal) to align watershed planning policies, studies and mapping	Collaborate to promote the alignment of North Saskatchewan River Regional Land Use Plan with regional and municipal level policies.				NSWA/ AEP/ EMRB/ Municipalities	Operating	Number of major policy areas that align between levels of government (such as wetland policy, riparian setbacks, lake management, protection of environmentally sensitive areas)
		Collaborate to promote the alignment of the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Board Growth Plan including GIS mapping and Natural Living Systems with municipal level policies.				NSWA/ EMRB/ Municipalities	Operating	
		Collaborate to promote the alignment of sub-watershed policies with individual municipalities.				NSWA/ EMRB/ Municipalities	Operating	
		Assess the potential for updating the NSWA Municipal Guide (2005)				Executive Director/ Committees	Operating Grants	
	NSWA collaborates with watershed stewardship groups to provide information and tools.	Assess the potential for developing a Watershed Stewardship and/or a Lake Stewardship Group Toolkit.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating Grants	Review as part of priorities for 2020/2021.

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GOAL 2: The NSWA Provides Leadership in Watershed Management

Leadership: The action of leading a group of people or organization (*Canadian Oxford Dictionary Online*)

Watershed Management: The protection and conservation of water and aquatic ecosystems, including their associated riparian area. Because land use activities on the uplands of a watershed can affect ground and surface water quality and quantity, a broader, more comprehensive approach to planning is often required. A Water Management Plan may look at water quantity, water quality, aquatic ecosystems, riparian area, as well as a variety of land use issues such as the impact water. Watershed management plans require water and land use managers to work together to ensure healthy watersheds. (*Glossary of Water Terms Used in Alberta – Alberta Environment 2008*)

Adaptive Management: The ability to provide for policy learning and adjustment of management actions on the basis of experience. Adaptive management ensures that a policy, plan or initiative need not be perfect before it can be implemented and that participants can adapt the policy, plan or initiative as required over time to meet agreed-upon outcomes. (*Recommendations for a Watershed Management Planning Framework for Alberta – Alberta Water Council 2008*); A structured iterative process that typically includes the steps of Plan-Do-Check-Adapt.

Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
The NSWA provides Leadership in Watershed Management	NSWA reviews and prioritizes watershed management projects to maximize use of resources and influence.	Review and prioritize watershed direction or projects annually.				Executive Director/ Strategic Planning and Priorities Committee/ Board	Operating	Strategic Planning and Prioritization Committee meets at least three times a year to receive updates and provide input on watershed projects.
	NSWA provides advice to GoA on water management plans, regional planning and government policy.	Provide advice, and participate on expert working groups when requested, on North Saskatchewan Regional Plan.				NSWA/GoA	Operating	Number of studies, partnerships or programs the NSWA provides advice to the GoA.
		Provide advice on government policies or guidelines such as the				NSWA/GoA	Operating	Number of IWMP goals and/or actions that are

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		Wetland Policy and tools and Surface Water Allocation Directive.						addressed by NSWA advice provided to GoA.
		Participate in government lead or supported watershed projects such as the Industrial Heartland Water Management Framework.				NSWA/GoA	Operating	Number of in-kind hours NSWA provides to GoA plans or projects.
	NSWA provides advice and works with government agencies, industry, utilities, academia, municipalities and NGOs to identify and support basin-wide watershed studies.	Participate in EPCOR/AEP/EMRB Long Term Water Quality Study.				EPCOR / AEP / EMRB / NSWA	Operating	Number of studies, partnerships or programs the NSWA provides advice on.
		Participate in Alberta Innovates/University of Guelph/ALUS Ecological Services Project.				Alberta Innovates/ University of Guelph/ ALUS / NSWA	Operating Grants	
		Participate in key stakeholder watershed projects such as EPCOR Spill Fate and Transport Model, U of A NSR Surface Water/Groundwater Interaction Study, etc.				EPCOR / University of Alberta / Alberta Innovates / NSWA	Operating Grants	Number of in-kind hours NSWA provides.
	NSWA uses an adaptive management process on the goals and actions of the Integrated Watershed Management Plan to assess progress and	Use IWMP review completed in February 2017 to initiate discussions on progress of five key goals and identify priority areas for focus.				Executive Director/ Strategic Planning and Priorities Committee/ Board	Operating	Strategic Planning and Prioritization Committee meets at least three times a year to receive updates and provide input on watershed projects.

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Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
	identify strategic and priority areas.	Review the benefits and costs of updating the State of the Watershed report.				Executive Director/ Strategic Planning and Priorities Committee/ Board	Operating	Review as part of priorities for 2020/2021.
		Discuss the possibility of reporting on the progress of the IWMP.				Executive Director/ Strategic Planning and Priorities Committee/ Board	Operating	Review as part of priorities for 2020/2021.
	NSWA provides leadership and support to sub-watershed groups.	Support and facilitate the development of the Headwaters sub-watershed studies such as the Riparian Health Assessment and groundwater overview.				NSWA/ Municipalities	Operating Grants	Number and amount of grants received or leveraged by sub-watershed group. Number of studies or reports completed by sub-watershed group. Number of in-kind hours NSWA provides.
		Support and facilitate the development of the Sturgeon River sub-watershed studies such as water quantity, water quality, groundwater,				NSWA/ Municipalities/ AEP/ NGOs	Operating Grants	Number and amount of grants received or leveraged by sub-watershed group.

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Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
		<p>aquatic health, riparian assessment, natural areas mapping, municipal planning tools, modelling of effects of land use change on hydrological characteristics of watershed.</p> <p>Use information from technical reports to develop a sub-watershed management plan.</p>						<p>Number of studies or reports completed by sub-watershed group.</p> <p>Number of in-kind hours NSWA provides.</p>
		<p>Support and facilitate the implementation of the IWMP for the Vermilion sub-watershed.</p> <p>Coordinate the Vermillion watershed restoration grants until 2021.</p>				NSWA/ Municipalities/ ALUS/ Ducks Unlimited/ NGOs	Operating Grants	<p>Number and amount of grants received or leveraged by sub-watershed group.</p> <p>Number of studies or reports completed by sub-watershed group.</p> <p>Number of in-kind hours NSWA provides.</p>
	NSWA provides leadership and support to watershed stewardship groups.	Provide support to the Parkland County Wabamum Lake Initiative.				NSWA/ Municipalities/ WSGs	Operating Grants	Completion of Wabamum Lake Watershed Management Plan by December 2019.
		Provide support to the implementation of lake				NSWA/ AEP/	Operating Grants	

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Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
		management plans for Baptiste/Isle Lake and Mayatan Lake.				Municipalities/ WSGs		
		Complete State of the Lake Watershed Reports for Antler and Hubbles Lakes				NSWA/ Municipalities/ WSGs	Operating Grants	Reports completed, and grant reports submitted by December 2019.
		Discuss the benefits and costs to develop a watershed and/or lake stewardship toolkit				Executive Director/ Strategic Planning and Priorities Committee/ Board	Operating Grants	Review as part of priorities for 2020/2021.

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GOAL 3: The NSWA Promotes Watershed Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing: is an activity through which knowledge (information, skills, or expertise) is exchanged among people, communities or organizations.

Communication: the sharing of information through different media (website, newsletter, email, reports).

Engagement: listening and gathering feedback on an issue or topic.

Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
The NSWA Promotes Watershed Knowledge Sharing	NSWA focuses its communication efforts on key stakeholders and strategic issues.	Update NSWA Communications and Engagement Plan annually.				Executive Director/ Communications Committee/ Board	Operating	Communications and Engagement Plan is updated once a year. Communications and Engagement Committee meets at least three times a year to receive updates and provide input on communications and engagement efforts.
	NSWA is a key resource for watershed information.	Information sharing is encouraged between watershed stakeholders including government, industry, academia and NGO's.				NSWA	Operating	Number of contacts that NSWA has with stakeholders to share information.
		Input and support (such as staff participation or letters of support) is provided to watershed stakeholders conducting projects or				NSWA	Operating	Number of projects that NSWA provides support to.

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Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
		studies related to the North Saskatchewan watershed.						
		Promote and optimize the use of the NSWA website for sharing information on the North Saskatchewan Watershed.				Executive Director/ Communications Committee/ Board	Operating	Website use statistics such as number of individual user hits, number of web pages visited, information downloaded, and length of time spent on website.
		NSWA provides information to media on watershed issues when requested.				Executive Director/ Communications Committee/ Board	Operating	Number of media requests responded to and/or number of mentions of NSWA in media outlets such as newspaper, TV, Radio.
	NSWA increases awareness and understanding of the value and benefits of healthy watershed to key stakeholders.	Use the NSWA website, <i>Living in the Shed</i> book and high profile events such as Edmonton Riverfest and World Water Day to share knowledge and generate interest with the general public.				Executive Director/ Communications Committee/ Board	Operating	Website statistics. Books sales/donations. Number of events attended (plus number of attendees and/or individuals talked to).
		Use the NSWA website, forums, newsletters, annual report and social media to share knowledge with membership, municipalities, WSGs and NGOs.				Executive Director/ Communications Committee/ Board	Operating	Website statistics. Forum attendance and survey feedback. Newsletter sign up. Social media statistics such as followers, reposts/tweets.

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	NSWA aligns and leverages communications with watershed partners.	NSWA works with Government of Alberta departments that promote issues related to watershed health, such as Water for Life, Water Literacy and Respect our Lakes programs.				NSWA/ GoA	Operating	Number of programs that NSWA aligns or supports. Number of meetings held with watershed partners to align programs and communications.
		NSWA participates with Alberta Water Council on provincial wide watershed studies and projects.				NSWA/ AWC	Operating	
		NSWA works with the other 10 Watershed and Advisory Councils to share and align communications and information sharing programs and initiatives.				NSWA / WPACs	Operating	
		NSWA works with key stakeholders such as industry, utilities, municipalities, agriculture to share information on watershed issues.				NSWA/ Key stakeholders	Operating	
		NSWA works with NGO's that have programs that align with watershed goals such as Land Stewardship Centre, Alberta Lake Management Society, Alternative Land Use				NSWA/ NGOs	Operating	

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Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
		Services, Cows and Fish and Inside Education.						
	NSWA recognizes achievements and celebrates successes.	Use website, newsletters, annual report and annual general meeting to highlight achievements of NSWA.				Executive Director/ Communications Committee/ Board	Operating	Number of achievements highlighted annually.
		Apply for Emerald Award for Riparian Assessment Studies completed in watershed.				Executive Director	Operating	Application for grant submitted by February deadline. NSWA selected as semi-finalist for award.

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GOAL 4: The NSWA remains a Functional and Sustainable Organization

Functional: of or having a special activity, purpose, or task; relating to the way in which something works or operates. *(Canadian Oxford Dictionary Online)*

Sustainable: able to be maintained at a certain rate or level. *(Canadian Oxford Dictionary Online)*

Goal	Objective	Actions	2019	2020	2021	Lead/ Partners	Budget	Performance Measure
The NSWA is a Functional and Sustainable Organization	NSWA is a functional organization with a strong multi-stakeholder society and board structure.	NSWA Society obligations are met annually such as annual general meeting, financial audit, record keeping and reporting.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Annual General meeting is held within 3 months of March 31 year end. Financial Audit is presented and approved at AGM. NSWA Society Annual Report is submitted to Alberta Registries by September 30 of each year.
		NSWA Board of Directors has regular meetings to discuss watershed issues, provide strategic direction and support to NSWA Society.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	The Board meets a minimum of four times per year. The Board of Directors has no less than 10 and no more than eighteen members elected to represent a variety of sectors and regions throughout the watershed.

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								The Board meets once a year to review the strategic direction of the Society.
		NSWA Board of Directors reviews Society Bylaws regularly.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	NSWA Society Bylaws to be reviewed and updated prior to 2020 AGM.
		NSWA Board of Directors to review Governance Manual and policies regularly.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	The Governance Manual and policies will be updated by May 31, 2019. A schedule for the review of policies will be established.
		NSWA Board of Directors to review Society and Board membership and fee structure.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Membership and fee structure reviewed prior to 2020 AGM.
	NSWA is a sustainable organization with predictable core funding and well supported staff	Draft and approve a 3-year strategic plan. Report on progress and review annually.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	3-year strategic plan reviewed and approved by January of each year.
		Draft and approve a 1-year operational plan and budget.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Annual operational plan and budget drafted and reviewed by the Board prior to the AGM .
		Work with key funders (Alberta Environment and Parks, EPCOR and				Executive Director/ Committees/	Operating	Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) Grant

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		municipalities) to ensure core funding and in kind support is sustained.				Board		<p>application and reporting completed by deadlines.</p> <p>Funding requests and follow ups sent to key funders (EPCOR and municipalities) in a timely manner.</p> <p>Key funders are acknowledged by NSWA in major communications such as website, annual report and forums.</p> <p>Track in-kind contributions of key funders and others to report to membership, AEP and use for grant application support.</p>
		Apply for grants for key project areas such as basin wide studies and sub-watershed focused work.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Number and amount of grant funding received.
		Partner with other organizations on projects that would increase watershed knowledge.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Number of projects where NSWA is a supporting partner.

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		Review staff organizational and compensation structure to ensure effective delivery of NSWA strategy.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Review completed by December 2019.
		Review staff succession planning to ensure organizational sustainability.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Review completed by December 2019.
		Evaluate office space needs for NSWA prior to lease expiry at the end of 2020.				Executive Director/ Committees/ Board	Operating	Evaluation completed by March 2020.