

Topic: Approval of the Steering Committee Terms of Reference and Technical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference for the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance.

Introduction:

This report provides background information and details on the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance Steering Committee Terms of Reference, and the Technical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

Facts (Background Information):

Parkland County, along with several municipal and regional partners have been meeting since spring 2013 to discuss the development of a watershed management plan for the Sturgeon River Watershed. On February 11, 2014, Parkland County Administration presented the Terms of Reference for the Sturgeon River Watershed Partnership. At the same meeting, Council appointed Councillor Jensen as the elected official for the Sturgeon Watershed Partnership, and Councillor Kobasiuk as the alternate elected official. Since February 11, 2014, several updates to this Partnership have occurred:

1. Elected officials from several jurisdictions met on March 27, 2014 to discuss and propose changes to the original Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan Terms of Reference;
2. the Sturgeon River Watershed Partnership was **renamed to the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance** (SRWA); and,
3. At the request of the elected officials present at the March 27, 2014 meeting, the original Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Steering Committee was split into two (2) separate Terms of References.

The new Terms of References for the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance include:

1. Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance Steering Committee Terms of Reference
This Terms of Reference outlines the roles and responsibilities of **elected officials from participating municipalities** on the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance. This Terms of Reference also details information on membership, voting, the general purpose of the Technical Advisory Committee, and the frequency of the Steering Committee meetings.

The overall role of the Steering Committee will be to "oversee" the completion of the Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan by providing direction to the Technical Advisory Committee (see below).

2. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Terms of Reference
This Terms of Reference outlines the roles and responsibilities of the **administrative representatives from participating municipalities on the Watershed Alliance**. The Terms of Reference also details information on membership, voting, and meeting frequency. Members on the TAC may also include elected officials (where no administrative representation is available), First Nations, Industry representatives, non-governmental associations, and representatives from higher learning institutions. The TAC may also call upon representatives from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource (AESRD), Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, and Alberta Transportation to provide technical

advice. Staff from the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA) provides on-going advice to both committees.

On May 22, 2014, the Steering Committee for the Watershed Alliance (elected officials) met to review the final revisions to both Terms of References. The final Terms of References for both committees were formally approved by the Watershed Alliance Steering Committee in late June 2014 through e-mail voting.

Administration is requesting Council to approve the Steering Committee Terms of Reference and the Technical Advisory Terms of Reference. Approval of both TOR's formalizes Council's continued commitment to partnering with adjacent municipalities and regional partners to complete the Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan.

Analysis:

The creation of two (2) separate Terms of Reference distinguishes the roles of elected officials and administrative staff on the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance.

The Watershed Alliance Steering Committee provides the overall direction for completing the Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan, while the Technical Advisory Committee provides technical advice to Steering Committee members. The Technical Advisory Committee is also responsible to develop the final Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan – though guidance from the Steering Committee.

Parkland County Administration feels that a focused and more effective approach to completing the Sturgeon River Watershed Plan has been established through the creation of the two separate Terms of References.

Continued Parkland County participation on the Watershed Alliance supports several key County initiatives including the completion of the Environmental Conservation Master Plan (ECMP) project, and completion of the Community Sustainability and Development Plan (CSDP). Continued participation on the Watershed Alliance also aligns to Council's commitment to the Environment identified in the *Parkland County Strategic Plan*.

Alternatives:

I. Council to not approve the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance Steering Committee Terms of Reference and Technical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

Administration does not support this alternative. Continued participation on the Watershed Alliance will assist the County in completing County projects (see Analysis section). Continued participation will also maintain Parkland County as an active participant in planning land uses and identifying means to protect the Sturgeon River Watershed in the future.

Conclusion/Summary:

Administration recommends that Council approve the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance Steering Committee Terms of Reference, and the Technical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference. Council approval of both TOR's formalizes the County's continued participation in the Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance, and its continued interest in developing the Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan.

Completion of the Watershed Management Plan will assist the County in completing several key County projects, and further acknowledges Parkland County as a key regional player in planning and protecting the Sturgeon River Watershed.

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