



**Communications and Community
Engagement Committee
Terms of Reference
June 2016**

1. Name and Type of Committee

The Communications and Community Engagement Committee is a standing committee of the Athabasca Watershed Council (AWC-WPAC) Board of Directors.

2. General Purpose

The purpose of the Communications and Community Engagement Committee is to engage watershed residents in the work of the Athabasca Watershed Council by providing opportunities to build trust, share knowledge, and promote awareness of and participation with the AWC-WPAC mission.

Vision: The Athabasca watershed is ecologically healthy, diverse and dynamic.

Mission: The Athabasca Watershed Council promotes, fosters respect, and plans for an ecologically healthy watershed by demonstrating leadership and facilitating informed decision-making to ensure environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Values:

- We value integrity, trust, and transparency.
- We respect all points of view.
- Water is a blessing and gift and is essential for the environment, society, the economy and the spirit.
- We respect the environment and people.
- We believe in consensus decision making.
- We respect economic necessities.
- We value a high standard of achievement and conduct in the Athabasca Watershed Council.
- We value ecological health as foundational to all life.
- We value timely responses to issues.
- We value and respect the aboriginal communities, culture, and knowledge in the Athabasca watershed.
- We value inclusivity.
- We value creativity, innovation, and risk taking.
- We are responsible and accountable to all members.
- We are purpose driven.

3. Duties and Responsibilities

- Promote public awareness and understanding of the role of the Athabasca Watershed Council - Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (AWC-WPAC).
- Improve public knowledge and awareness of the Athabasca watershed.
- Engage and encourage sharing of scientific, local and traditional knowledge with the AWC-WPAC.
- Employ a variety of tools to inform the public of AWC-WPAC activities.
- Promote participation and engagement of individuals and communities in watershed activities.
- Promote public participation and engagement in watershed assessment and planning activities.

- Provide education and outreach opportunities about interests and concerns in the watershed.
- Learn from the local community, citizens and aboriginal communities about interests and concerns in the watershed.
- Celebrate the beauty and value of the Athabasca Watershed.
- Facilitate partnerships and sharing with all sectors and stakeholders.
- Support and work with Watershed Stewardship Groups.
- Work to fulfil the goals and outcomes of the Board approved Strategic Communications Plan.
- Annually review and update the communications plan.
- Operate with respect and support for AWC-WPAC strategic planning processes and outcomes.

4. Composition and Appointments

- Committee members must be AWC-WPAC members.
- Based on expertise relevant to current projects, the Committee invites communications or outreach advisors to join the Committee.
- Communications or outreach advisors outside of the committee may provide expertise and advice to the committee.
- The Board of Directors approves appointments of members to the Committee, and these appointments are reviewed annually.
- The Committee selects one (1) Chair or two (2) Co-Chairs from among the AWC-WPAC Directors on the Committee.
- Committee members are encouraged serve minimum one (1) year terms.
- All sectors of the AWC-WPAC Board are encouraged to be represented on the Communications Committee.

5. Meetings

- Face to face meetings and teleconferences occur as needed.
- Meetings are called by the Chair or Co-Chair, and will also be called by the Chair or Co-Chair upon request in writing from any two committee members.

6. Financial and Staff Resources

- Funding is approved by the Board in the budget and operational and project plans.
- Administrative staff provides support.

7. Accountability

- Submit project status reports and invoices to funders as required.
- Record meeting notes and distribute to all committee members and the board.
- Ensure that approved minutes are available to the public via the web site.
- Provide status reports to Board members through the secure website.
- Provide reports to the public through the AWC-WPAC website, and supply hard copies when requested.
- Provide verbal project updates at each Board of Directors meeting.
- Provide feedback to the board from public participation events.
- In April review lessons learned and celebrate successes.
- Document accomplishments in the AWC-WPAC Annual Report.
- Announce project completions and results at the Annual General Meeting.

8. Terms of Reference Review

- Review annually and if required submit amendments to the Board for approval.