
SUSTAINABLE TIMES

Issue 1 – ISSN 1492-3890

April 2000

Welcome to the first edition of the *Sustainable Times*!

A lot has happened since the design of the Regional Sustainable Development Strategy for the Athabasca Oil Sands Area (RSDS) was completed on July 31, 1999. From the initial list of 72 environmental issues identified by people living and working in the region, a set of 14 themes were determined. Of those 14 themes, six have been identified as the first to receive new work during RSDS implementation. As we enter the implementation phase of RSDS things seem to be moving quickly. With five workshops in the past four months, an ongoing stream of summaries to read and review (it seems like there's always another one on the way), and work plans to make, it is difficult to keep track of where we've been and where we hope to go. The goal of the *Sustainable Times* is to keep everyone in the region up to date on where we are on the road to RSDS issue resolution. The newsletter will be published regularly and is open to anyone interested in providing articles concerning environmental management, environmental education or any other fun and exciting environmental topics that might be of interest to fans of sustainable development in the region. The *Times* will also list upcoming environmental association events in the region and will help keep everyone interested in the progress of the RSDS up to date.

Update on CEMA

The industry-led multi-stakeholder group CEMA (Cumulative Environmental Management Association) is in the throes of becoming a registered society. Terms of reference, bylaws and objectives have been completed for the purposes of application to Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The Interim Operating Committee (IOC) is preparing for the inaugural meeting planned for June 9 2000. Priority policies in the works include stakeholder funding, membership, financial, and Operating Committee make-up.

CEMA is a distinct organization that is working with Alberta Environment to initiate the RSDS. Through workshops, strategic direction has been set for a number of priority issue themes. CEMA working groups are being organized to develop work-plans and budgets for these themes. This is targeted for completion by mid-year. The work-plans will address questions on environmental capacity and



continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Update on CEMA
- 2 What has happened since the strategy was completed?
- 2 What happens now that work strategies are approved?
- 3 Calendar of Regional Meetings
- 4 Environmental Web-sites of interest
- 4 Proposed Strategy for RSDS Regional Information System



A breakout-group session at Nov. 25/26, 1999 CEMA RSDS workshop in Fort McMurray where Aboriginal, industry, and regional regulators discussed

This publication is developed by the Alberta Environment RSDS Team. Articles published in the *Sustainable Times* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of all RSDS participants.



What has happened since design of the strategy was completed?

The strategy identified five “Category A” theme areas for the majority of new work: 1. Sustainable ecosystems and land use, 2. Cumulative impacts on wildlife, 3. Soil and plant species diversity (biodiversity), 4. Effects of air emissions on human health, wildlife and vegetation, and 5. Bioaccumulation of heavy metals. The newly struck AENV RSDS Implementation Team (a.k.a. worker bees) felt the RSDS design phase workshops were so much fun that they would kick-off implementation with one more (o.k. five more but who’s counting?!)

1. RSDS Regulators Workshop, November 15/16, 1999:

Held in Edmonton, this workshop involved regulatory specialists from AENV, the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB), Environment Canada and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The focus was on information gathering and possible management objectives needed for Category A themes.

2. Strategic Planning – Group A themes, November 25/26, 1999:

Also known as the second ice age due to the subarctic conditions in the Nomad Inn meeting room, this workshop was held in Fort McMurray in conjunction with the Cumulative Environmental Management Association (CEMA). One of the key outcomes of the workshop was the decision by CEMA to have surface water themes (# 7, 10 and 12) moved into Category A. By the end of the two days work strategies were in the works for each of the first five themes. A commitment was made by the group to meet again to work on surface water themes before February 1st, 2000 when the final work strategies would be presented.

3. Regulators workshop on surface water themes,

December 10, 1999: To kick-start work on the surface water themes a workshop was held in Edmonton on December 10, 1999. Like November 15/16, regulators focused on information gathering and possible management objectives needed for surface water themes.

4. Strategic Planning on surface water themes, January 12,

2000: Yet another visit to the second ice age - except this time with a fan giving the added effect of airplanes landing right in the room! At this RSDS workshop on surface water themes, it was decided that surface water would require a more detailed analysis of the issues first before strategizing

on new work. This proposal was presented to CEMA on February 1, 2000.

5. Work Planning group start up, February 1, 2000:

As planned, the work strategies for themes 1-5 and the proposal for more detailed analysis of surface water themes were presented to CEMA for approval. At this meeting, potential partners to work with CEMA on each of the theme areas were discussed. CEMA decided that for some themes a new group would be struck under CEMA. In other cases, an existing group will be contacted to pursue the possibility of that group working in partnership with CEMA on a certain theme.

*Summaries for each of these workshops are available - contact Lisa Wilde at Alberta Environment (780) 422-5556 or lisa.wilde@gov.ab.ca. ☺



What happens now that the work strategies have been approved ?

The next stage in RSDS implementation is to draft work plans which will be presented to CEMA for approval in the summer of 2000. Five working groups are planned to begin this work:

1. Theme 1 – Sustainable Ecosystems, Theme 2 – Wildlife, and Theme 3 – Biodiversity:

Two main objectives of this theme are: 1) to determine what limits are sustainable, and 2) to determine how values will be returned by reclamation. A new group will be formed under CEMA to do work planning for objective 1. Subgroups to address theme 2, Wildlife, and theme 3, Biodiversity, will also be formed under the new theme 1 group. Co-chairs for this group are Lynne Kemper (Fort McKay IRC, ph: 250-656-7002) and Judy Smith (Albian Sands, ph: 403-691-2113). The Reclamation Advisory Council (RAC) will be contacted for possible partnership with CEMA to do work planning around objective 2.

continued on page 3

ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

National Forest Week

“Learning from the Past, Building for the Future”
May 7-13, 2000

Environment Week

“This Week, Every Week”
June 4 -11, 2000

CALENDAR OF REGIONAL MEETINGS

MAY 3, 2000

CONRAD Environmental Technical Planning Group (TPG) Contact: Wayne McKee (Syncrude, ph: 780-790-8247)

MAY 4, 2000

CONRAD TPG Technical Symposium
Contact: Wayne McKee (Syncrude, ph: 780-790-8247)

MAY 8, 2000

CEMA Biodiversity Working Group (subgroup of theme 1), Contact: Monique Richard (AENV, ph: 403-297-7880)

MAY 10, 2000

NO_x / SO₂ Management Working Group
Contact: Kim Eastlick (EUB, ph: 403-297-4325)

MAY 11, 2000

CEMA Vegetation/Soils/Landscape and Watershed Integrity Working Group (subgroup of theme 1),
Contact: Chris Hale (AENV, ph: 780-799-7469)

MAY 11, 2000

Terrestrial Environmental Effects Monitoring (TEEM)
Contact: Bruce Friesen (Syncrude, ph: 780-790-6450)

MAY 16, 2000

Reclamation Advisory Committee,
Contact: Mike Boyd (AENV, ph: 780-422-2598)

MAY 23, 2000

CEMA Wildlife Working Group (subgroup of theme 1),
Contact: Judy Smith (AENV, ph: 403-297-7880)

MAY 31, 2000

CEMA Water Themes Working Group,
Contact: Pat Marriott (AENV, ph: 780-427-7033)

JUNE 9, 2000

CEMA Inaugural Meeting
Contact Don Klym (Suncor, ph: 780-743-6532)

JUNE 21, 2000

CEMA Sustainable Ecosystems Working Group,
Contact: Monique Richard (AENV, ph: 403-297-7880)

JUNE 22, 2000

Wood Buffalo Environmental Association (WBEA),
Contact: Bob Scotten (WBEA, ph: 780-799-4420)

JULY 11, 2000

Cumulative Environmental Management Association (CEMA), Contact: Don Klym (Suncor, ph: 780-743-6532)

JULY 25, 2000

Reclamation Advisory Committee (RAC) Tour of Facilities, Contact: Mike Boyd (AENV, ph: 780-422-2598)

JULY 26, 2000

Reclamation Advisory Committee (RAC),
Contact: Mike Boyd (AENV, ph: 780-422-2598)

Update on CEMA (continued)

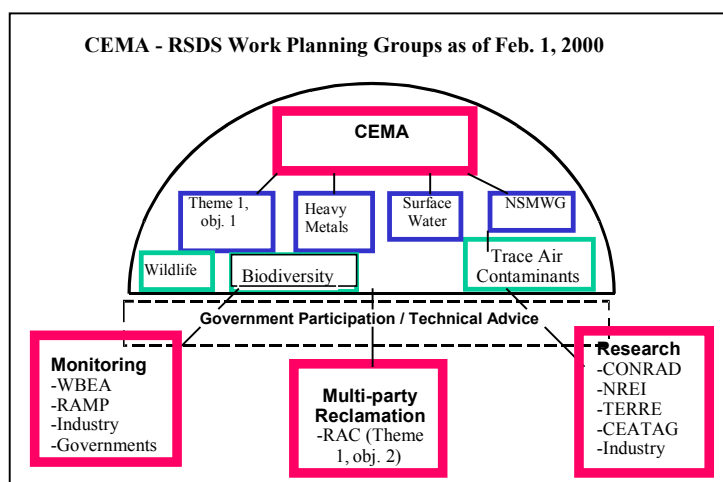
management strategies. The work areas are sustainable ecosystems (including wildlife habitat and biodiversity), heavy metals, and surface water quantity/quality. The water issues were originally ranked as less urgent themes in the RSDS, but with further Aboriginal consultation they were included with the themes which require immediate attention. The reclamation component of sustainable ecosystems and trace air contaminants issues were referred to the existing Reclamation Advisory Committee and NO_x/SO₂ Management Working Group, respectively. ☺

continued from page 2

What happens now that the work strategies have been approved ? (continued)

2. Themes 4 and 5 – Trace Air Contaminants and Heavy Metals Deposition: The NO_x / SO₂ Management Working Group (NSMWG) will be contacted for possible partnership with CEMA to do work planning for trace air contaminant issues. For theme 5, heavy metals deposition, a new group will be struck under CEMA to do work planning. The interim chair for this group is Ron Pauls (Syncrude, ph: 780-790-8382). You may also contact Lisa Holmes (AENV, ph: 403-297-5937) for more information.

3. Themes 7, 10 and 12 – Surface Water: A more detailed analysis of the surface water issues will be conducted to determine if the objectives proposed in the strategy are required and to identify any possible objectives. Interim chair for this work group is Pat Marriott (AENV, ph: (780) 427-7033).



* A larger version of the flow chart showing environmental groups in the region and the new RSDS work planning and detailed analysis groups is available - contact Lisa Wilde at AENV (780) 422-5556. ☺

WEBSITES OF INTEREST:

ALBERTA GOVERNMENT HOME PAGE:

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/index.cfm>

ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT HOME PAGE:

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/env/>

ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT REGIONS PAGE ([DOWNLOAD RSDS HERE](#))

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/env/regions.html>

ALBERTA HEALTH

<http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/>

ENVIRONMENT CANADA GREENLANE:

http://www.ns.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

<http://woodbuffalo.ab.ca/>

WOOD BUFFALO ENVIRONMENTAL ASSOCIATION (WBEA):

<http://www.wbea.org/>

FORT McMURRAY INDUSTRIAL DIRECTORY

<http://www.mcmurraynews.com/business/industrial.asp>

CLEAN AIR STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

[HTTP://WWW.CASAHOME.ORG/](http://www.casahome.org/)

Proposed Strategy for RSDS Regional Information System (RIS)

The Regional Information System or RIS, has been mentioned frequently throughout the design and implementation phases of RSDS.

The purpose of the RIS is to provide RSDS users with reliable spatial information, analysis, and decision-making tools needed to make informed decisions. The RIS will provide the quantifiable baseline information necessary to measure the impact of industrial developments on water, air and land resources.

The components of the RIS will consist of base map information, resource information, and environmental modelling and analysis tools.

Mapping will include features such as roads and other access, geoadministrative boundaries, disposition (traps, oil and gas permits, reservations), hydrography (rivers and lakes), hypsography (elevations) and others.

The resource component will include information on resources such as vegetation, wildlife and fisheries inventories and flow-needs.

As scientists begin to improve their understanding about how the environment reacts to change, resource managers will be able to develop scenarios to examine the impact of cumulative change within the RSD area. These environmental models will be the key tools in scientifically evaluating change within the area.

Analysis tools will permit the multiple use of information products in developing environmental models. These tools include desktop and main frame computers, Geographic Information System (GIS) software, databases and other applications.

An RIS team will be assembled to evaluate the data needs of the other workgroups to consider data availability and to look into acquiring that data which is not available.

Please contact Tim Polzin of AENV at (780) 623-5254 for information on the RIS. ☺

HUMOROUS QUOTE: "IT ISN'T POLLUTION THAT'S HARMING THE ENVIRONMENT. IT'S THE IMPURITIES IN OUR AIR AND WATER THAT ARE DOING IT."
- FORMER US VICE-PRESIDENT DAN QUAYLE

Did you know?

Media	Parts per million (ppm)	Parts per billion (ppb)
Time	1 minute in 2 years	1 second in 32 years
Money	1 cent in \$10,000	1 cent in \$10,000,000
Golf	1 bogey in 3,500 rounds	1 bogey in 3.5 million rounds
Water	1 cup in a pool	1 drop in a pool

For more information on the newsletter or to submit an article please contact Lisa Wilde at (780) 422-5556 (lisa.wilde@gov.ab.ca), or Randall Barrett at (780) 427-0689 (randall.barrett@gov.ab.ca). ☺

Alberta
ENVIRONMENT