

RMA Spring 2021 Submitted Resolutions

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Acceptance of Order Paper
- 3) Resolution Session

1-21S **Alberta Energy Regulator Directive 006 - Licensee Liability Rating (LLR) Program and License Transfer Process** (*Woodlands County*)

2-21S **Police Act Review** (*Lethbridge County*)

3-21S **Personal Cannabis Production for Medical Use** (*Wheatland County*)

4-21S **Agriculture Service Board Provincial Committee Funding** (*Brazeau County*)

5-21S **Preservation of Water Quality and Access to Water by Albertans** (*MD of Ranchland*)

6-21S **National Flood Insurance Strategy and Community Resiliency Advocacy** (*Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo*)

ER1-21S **Provincial Investigation into Creating an Alberta Provincial Police Service** (*County of Warner*)

- 4) Vote on Emergent Resolutions
- 5) Closing of Resolution Session

Alberta Energy Regulator Directive 006 – Licensee Liability Rating (LLR) Program and License Transfer Process

Woodlands County

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 3 (Pembina River)*

WHEREAS municipalities in Alberta are dependent on property tax revenues to provide essential municipal services; and

WHEREAS the ability of a municipality to recover property tax arrears for non-titled land is affected by provincial acts and regulations; and

WHEREAS the current legislation has limited options without liabilities for municipalities to recover tax arrears owed from oil and gas companies; and

WHEREAS Alberta Energy has established the **Alberta Energy Regulator** (AER), whose mandate is to ensure the safe, efficient, orderly, and environmentally responsible development of oil, oil sands, natural gas, and coal resources over their entire life cycle; and

WHEREAS the AER set out directives that contain requirements and processes that energy companies operating in Alberta must follow; and

WHEREAS Directive 006 – Licensee Liability Rating (LLR) Program and License Transfer Process uses a formula to determine whether a company has sufficient financial resources to purchase assets from another company;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Alberta Energy Regulator to amend Directive 006 to include as a condition of transfer of all oil, oil sands, natural gas, and coal resource assets from one company to another that municipal property tax arrears be paid in full.

Member Background

Attached is a copy of a letter from an oil and gas company that proposed a tax arrears settlement. The company has been operating in the municipality for a number of years and has not paid their municipal taxes for the last four years. Recently the company applied through the AER for 12 facility and 149 well license transfers from a bankrupted oil and gas company, that also owed three years in tax arrears.

The same company has also made offers to pay landowner lease agreements at a reduced rate for the new acquired assets.

Several resolutions relating to unpaid property taxes by the oil and gas industry have been recently endorsed by RMA membership, and advocated on by RMA, with no resulting action on the issue from the Government of Alberta.

Woodlands County is asking the RMA and its members to continue to advocate to the Alberta Energy Regulator to change Directive 006 to require full disclosure of oil and gas company financial situations, including unpaid property taxes, and not just a formula as currently defined in Directive 006.

The current formula measures the assets of an eligible producer licensee based on the sum of its cash flow derived from oil and gas production reported to Petrinex from wells for which it is the licensee calculated in accordance with section 1, and the cash flow derived from midstream activity from wells or facilities for which it is the licensee calculated in accordance with section 3.

RMA Background

6-19F: Municipal Recourse for Solvent Companies Choosing Not to Pay Taxes

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate that the Government of Alberta direct the Alberta Energy Regulator to add unpaid municipal taxes to the grounds for which a company may be denied a licence to operate in Alberta.

[Click here](#) to view the full resolution.

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta approved a new police funding model which requires urban municipalities with populations less than 5,000 and all rural municipalities to pay a portion of provincial policing costs; and

WHEREAS under the new police funding model, affected municipalities will contribute 10% of policing costs in 2020, 15% in 2021, 20% in 2022, 30% in 2023 and 30% in 2024; and

WHEREAS provincial policing costs represent a significant portion of the affected municipalities' annual operating budgets; and

WHEREAS for municipalities that have not borne provincial policing funding model costs in the past, these additional costs will be a significant budget line item in 2021 and beyond; and

WHEREAS like any municipal contracted service, municipalities require accurate and detailed information from the service provider to ensure that their taxpayer dollars are being used in the most cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS the increased costs of police funding, combined with other challenges currently facing municipalities, could have serious implications across the province and potentially threaten the viability of some municipalities; and

WHEREAS in 2020, the Government of Alberta undertook a review of the *Police Act* that involved little direct consultation with municipalities; and

WHEREAS changes to the *Police Act* could have further financial and service level impacts on municipalities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to undertake further and direct consultation with rural municipalities on the proposed *Police Act* changes and the future of policing in Alberta.

Member Background

Lethbridge County, like other rural municipalities across the province, is concerned with the Government of Alberta's decision to require rural municipalities to contribute significantly to policing costs with no indication that service levels will improve or local input into policing will increase. At the December 17, 2020 Lethbridge County Council meeting, Council discussed the Government of Alberta's review of the *Police Act*. Consequently, the following motion was adopted by Council:

That a letter be sent to the RMA indicating Lethbridge County recommends that an RMA resolution requesting greater consultation with rural municipalities on proposed *Police Act* changes be adopted and sent to the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, prior to any changes being made.

RMA Background

1-20F: Police Funding Model Freeze

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate to the Government of Alberta to freeze municipal contributions under the police funding model at no greater than 10% of the total policing costs under the Provincial Police Services Agreement (PPSA) until a corporate review of the PPSA and the overall organizational structure, efficiency and effectiveness of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) policing service has been completed and the review made available to all municipalities in Alberta; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA advocate to the Government of Alberta that all monies collected from the police funding model remain in the Rural Municipalities of Alberta district from which they were collected.

[Click here](#) to view the full resolution.

2-19F: Government of Alberta's Police Costing Test Model

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta urge the Government of Alberta to engage in further consultation with municipalities on the police costing test model to examine options to meet the Government of Alberta's goal of reducing policing costs without negatively impacting policing service delivery or municipal financial viability.

[Click here](#) to view the full resolution.

Personal Cannabis Production for Medical Use

Wheatland County

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 2 (Central)*

WHEREAS the Government of Canada is responsible for setting strict requirements for producers who cultivate and process cannabis, and for setting industry-wide rules and standards; and

WHEREAS provinces and territories are responsible for developing, implementing, maintaining, and enforcing systems to oversee the distribution and sale of cannabis; and

WHEREAS under the provincial *Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act*, Alberta municipalities are empowered to make rules that are directly linked to their jurisdictions including establishing land use bylaw regulations on where cannabis can be commercially grown, produced, and sold, as well as where cannabis can be consumed; and

WHEREAS the regulation of personal cannabis production for recreation and medical use is currently ill-defined; and

WHEREAS municipalities recognize that there are reasonable medical reasons for cultivation and consumption of cannabis; and

WHEREAS established municipal policies and land use regulations related to cannabis are directed towards commercial cannabis production and sales and are not applicable to personal cannabis production; and

WHEREAS under a license approved by Health Canada, one can cultivate up to 485 cannabis plants at home to treat their medical needs without the requirement to notify local authorities; and

WHEREAS the federal Cannabis Regulations permit a registered person to register a designated producer to produce medical cannabis on their behalf; and

WHEREAS four registered producers may operate in the same location, potentially resulting in 1940 plants grown in one location; and

WHEREAS the application and approval process related to producing cannabis for medical purposes does not require confirmation that all municipal requirements have been met; and

WHEREAS there is significant municipal concern with ensuring compliance with municipal bylaws, regulations, and safety code requirements as personal cannabis production increases on residential properties; and

WHEREAS the health and environmental risks associated with indoor cultivation and processing of cannabis cannot be addressed or mitigated if the producer fails to notify municipal authorities or fails to obtain the appropriate permits; and

WHEREAS the lack of regularity clarity related to notification requirements for medical cannabis consumption contributes to health, safety, and nuisance concerns for residents of municipal jurisdictions;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta collaborate with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to advocate to Health Canada that confirmation of municipal compliance for personal medical cannabis production facilities be required for existing license holders, and prior to approval for all future license applicants.

Member Background

In November of 2020, Wheatland County Council directed administration to draft a letter and White Paper to distribute to the federal and provincial elected officials representing the Wheatland County area, including the following:

- Honourable Martin Shields, Member of Parliament, Bow River
- Honourable Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta
- Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs, Tracy Allard

- MLA Nathan Cooper – Olds – Didsbury – Three Hills
- MLA Leele Aheer – Chestermere – Strathmore
- MLA Angela Pitt – Airdrie – East
- MLA Joseph Schow – Carston – Siksika

The purpose of the study was to investigate the current realities that (specifically) Wheatland County and rural municipalities are experiencing in relation to the cultivation of cannabis for medical purposes. Rural municipalities are concerned with ensuring compliance with municipal bylaws, regulations, and safety code requirements related to the increase of personal cannabis production. The health, safety, and environmental risks associated with indoor cultivation and processing of cannabis cannot be addressed or mitigated if the producer fails to notify municipal authorities or fails to obtain the appropriate permits. There are no requirements under the Personal Medical Use of Cannabis license; up to 485 plants can be cultivated for personal medical use without the requirement to notify local authorities. Options to obtain compliance for personal cannabis production operations are limited and would require the cooperation of Health Canada to include confirmation that municipal requirements have been met prior to issuing a license.

APPENDIX A – WHITE PAPER

WHITE PAPER: PERSONAL CANNABIS PRODUCTION FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

1.0 Introduction

Since the enactment of the Cannabis Act in October 2018, legislation around the regulation of personal cannabis production has been ill-defined. From this, health, safety, and nuisance concerns for the residents of Wheatland County (the County) have arisen. Like many other municipalities, the County established policies and land use regulations in response to the legalization of cannabis, however these policies are directed towards commercial cannabis production and sales and are not applicable to cannabis production at home.

Under Medical Use of Cannabis (Personal Use), individuals can apply and register to produce and possess a limited amount of cannabis for their own medical purposes. Under this license, one can cultivate up to 485 cannabis plants at home to treat their medical needs without the requirement to notify local authorities. The license holder is expected to meet local bylaws, regulations, and safety code requirements (municipal requirements), but the application and approval process does not require confirmation that all municipal requirements have been met. Without the requirement for an applicant or license holder to confirm that all municipal requirements have been met, these home growing operations are able to circumvent building and safety code requirements which may lead to health and safety concerns.

License holders may be reluctant to notify local authorities for personal and/or privacy reasons; however, from an approval's perspective, there is no reason to circumvent the requirement to obtain approvals related to development or safety codes permits. If an applicant applied to construct an accessory building, the development permit and subsequent building permit would be issued without asking what it would be used for. Obtaining development, building, electrical permits for example means they have met municipal requirements; therefore, meeting the provisions of the Health Canada license.

This report reviews the issues and concerns that have arisen regarding cannabis grown for personal use since its legalization in October 2018. The report discusses the County's inability to ensure these properties comply with municipal requirements, including regulating neighbourhood disputes over nuisance issues.

2.0 Background

The Cannabis Act came into effect on October 17, 2018, creating a legal and regulatory framework for controlling the production, distribution, sale, and possession of cannabis in Canada. Implementation of the Cannabis Act is a shared responsibility between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments.

The Federal government's responsibilities are to set strict requirements for producers who cultivate and process cannabis, and to set industry-wide rules and standards. Provinces and territories are responsible for developing, implementing, maintaining, and enforcing systems to oversee the distribution and sale of cannabis. Municipalities are empowered to make rules that are directly linked to their jurisdictions. These

types of things include establishing land use bylaw regulations on where cannabis can be commercially grown, produced, and sold, as well as where cannabis can be consumed. There is some overlap between provincial and municipal responsibilities.

Prior to the legalization of cannabis, enforcement issues related to the illegal production and sale of cannabis was the responsibility of the local police and the RCMP with municipal authority limited to passing bylaws (e.g. nuisance issues such as odours, public behaviour, etc.) to address community impacts. With the legalization of cannabis, enforcement of cannabis related issues is still the responsibility of the local police and RCMP with municipal authority consisting of inspection and compliance with provincial building codes and municipal bylaws.

It is difficult to ascertain the number of legal personal cannabis production operations that are located within the County and whether they have all the proper permits in place. Many of these license holders may not have notified the County about their license but may have obtained the appropriate permits. They are not required to disclose the reason for the necessary improvements to an accessory building or to their home.

2.1 Growing Cannabis at Home

The Cannabis Act permits adults to cultivate up to four (4) cannabis plants per household (not per person). If a private resident is growing more than the restricted four (4) plants that are allowed for and does not have a production license issued by Health Canada, it becomes an offence under the Cannabis Act. Investigation and enforcement of the Cannabis Act is the responsibility of the RCMP and will be investigated by way of a formal complaint.

Under Accessing Cannabis for Medical Purposes, an adult can apply to Health Canada to produce their own cannabis for medical purposes. If a license is granted, an individual can cultivate a limited quantity of cannabis at home to treat their medical needs. The number of plants permitted is determined by entering the number of grams prescribed daily into a calculator tool which then determines the number of plants (up to 485 plants) that a person can grow on their property. This license does not include selling cannabis.

3.0 Discussion

The County can establish policies and land use bylaw regulations for personal cultivation of cannabis but is limited in its ability to enforce these regulations. Since individuals authorized to produce cannabis for their own medical use do not have to notify local authorities, there is no way for a municipality to know how many of these personal cultivation operations exist and to ensure compliance with safety code requirements. There are limited enforcement tools to control home cultivation or processing, which increases overall environmental health and safety risks associated with these operations. Some of the concerns that have been raised are outlined below.

3.1 Safety Concerns

Individuals with a license to grow cannabis in their home for medical purposes are expected to abide by the relevant building and fire code requirements, as well as public health and residential tenancy regulations; however, they are not required to notify local authorities that they have been granted a license to grow cannabis. While some license holders may obtain the appropriate permits for cultivating cannabis on their property (without specifying what the improvements are for), there are others that may make changes to their property to accommodate cannabis cultivation without acquiring permits, which may compromise their health and safety.

Some of the safety issues or concerns associated with personal cannabis production are outlined below.

3.1.1 Electrical and Fire Hazards

Changes and/or upgrades to a home to accommodate personal cannabis production may require an electrical, gas, or building permit depending on the work to be completed. Permits are reviewed for compliance with the Alberta Building Code and then inspected by a Safety Codes Officer when the work is completed to ensure that it was properly installed or constructed.

For example, indoor cannabis production may require high wattage lights to enhance plant growth and the license holder may install or make changes to their electrical system without applying for an electrical permit. Without review and inspection to ensure that the upgrade or changes meet Alberta Building Code requirements and properly installed, it raises concerns that the changes/upgrades could trigger a large fire.

Another safety concern is the use of generators or “burners” that are powered by propane or natural gas to enhance plant growth and increase plant yield. These generators produce carbon monoxide, which can negatively accumulate within the home depending on the home’s ventilation system leading to carbon monoxide poisoning. The presence of pressurized carbon dioxide cylinders and propane powered carbon dioxide generators, increases the level of carbon dioxide within the growing room displacing oxygen, leading to asphyxiation. Also, if the propane cylinders and the tubing used have any leaks, this increases the risk of an explosion.

Another hazardous practice utilized by growers is to vent furnaces or water heater exhaust fumes directly into the growing (plant) room to increase carbon dioxide, which also enhances plant growth. This releases carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide into the room, which could lead to carbon dioxide poisoning. If exposed to fire, these metal cylinders could cause a boiling liquid expanding vapor explosion (due to cylinder fatigue and container failure).

Since license holders do not have to notify local authorities about their license to produce or provide confirmation to Health Canada that they have met all provincial and municipal requirements for the operation, they can proceed growing cannabis without obtaining any permits. This impedes the ability for municipalities to ensure compliance and reduce the safety and environmental risks associated with home cannabis production.

3.1.2 Environmental and Health Hazards

Environmental health issues are associated with personal cannabis production due to poor indoor air quality when plants are grown within the home. If proper ventilation of HVAC systems is not installed to address the increased moisture from the plants along with the moisture from other household sources, mould and mildew will occur. Mould and mildew in the home are associated with respiratory infections, asthma, upper respiratory tract symptoms, etc. Remediating mould and mildew in a home can be costly.

Another environmental health issue associated with personal cannabis production is the indoor use of chemicals such as herbicides, pesticides, or fungicides. Each of these chemicals create health hazards if absorbed into the skin or inhaled. Health Canada does provide some general guidance for the use of chemicals used for growing cannabis in the home; however, it is insufficient regarding controlling pests, diseases, or fungi on cannabis plants.

If cannabis products are not processed and disposed of properly, children, pets, or unaware adults may inadvertently consume cannabis with detrimental effects. There is little guidance from the federal government on what is considered an acceptable method of destroying cannabis. Health Canada recommends the “Kitty Litter Method” which provides guidance to persons producing cannabis for their own medical purposes. It recommends rendering cannabis unfit for use or consumption by blending the cannabis with water and mixing it with cat litter (for odour control) before disposing of it. The destroyed cannabis can be placed in the garbage and sent to the landfill.

3.2 Nuisance Issues

Municipalities have previously approached issues associated with cannabis and cannabis production through nuisance bylaws. However, there are limited tools to enforce compliance through nuisance bylaws.

Complaints most frequently received by the County associated with cannabis production is regarding the pungent odour emitted from cannabis plants. When the County receives a complaint about the odour and suspicion of an illegal cannabis cultivation or production operation, County staff will investigate the complaint by confirming whether the property has any development permit in place for the growing of commercial cannabis. If there is no development permit, the County will contact the RCMP to determine if an investigation is being conducted, or to advise them of the situation.

If the occupant/owner has a license to grow cannabis for personal medical purposes, the County's only option to address the nuisance complaint is let the license owner know about the complaint and work towards a voluntary solution to resolve the issue.

3.3 Planning Issues

Under the Cannabis Act, municipal governments can address planning matters related to cannabis and associated businesses by establishing bylaws to regulate location, density, setbacks, etc. but are limited in the ability to regulate and enforce bylaws for personal medical production operations. The County's Land Use Bylaw requires a development permit for a cannabis production facility, which addresses cultivation, processing, labelling and packaging, testing, destroying, storing or transporting cannabis, but the County does not have the authority to ask for a development permit for the growing of cannabis for personal medical use.

If the County pursues bylaws to regulate or consider prohibiting personal cannabis cultivation within a private residence, the ability to enforce these bylaws would be hindered due to the current licensing process. The license holder does not need to provide confirmation that all municipal bylaws have been met when applying for a license or notify the municipality that they have received a license. So, once the license has been issued, cannabis production can proceed. It then becomes the responsibility of the license holder to abide by municipal bylaws or provincial safety codes.

3.3 Health Canada Notification of Issued Licenses

Under Medical Use of Cannabis (Personal Use), an individual authorized to produce cannabis for their own medical use is not required to notify local authorities. They are informed as part of the application process that they must comply with municipal laws, including bylaws dealing with electrical and fire safety. If permits were required and not obtained prior to cannabis cultivation, compliance would occur only if a complaint were received and work had been undertaken without the appropriate permits.

Health Canada does not readily share information on the number of licenses issued for personal medical production or where they are located with municipalities due to privacy reasons. Without information on the number of personal cannabis licenses issued within the municipality or a requirement from Health Canada on municipal compliance, the County cannot effectively address the social, health, and safety risks associated with cannabis production in a residence.

4.0 Summary

The County is concerned with ensuring compliance with municipal bylaws, regulations, and safety code requirements as personal cannabis production increases on residential properties. The health and environmental risks associated with indoor cultivation and processing of cannabis cannot be addressed or mitigated if the producer fails to notify the County or fails to obtain the appropriate permits. Options to obtain compliance for personal cannabis production operations are limited and would require the cooperation of Health Canada to include confirmation that municipal requirements have been met prior to issuing a license.

The County could also undertake an educational campaign on the County's website informing license holders that they are to abide by applicable municipal bylaws and safety code permits. Information should be provided to advise license holders that they do not need to disclose why the upgrades or improvements are being done and that the County's goal is to ensure that installation is done properly.

As this issue is not unique to Wheatland County, it may be beneficial to initiate dialogue with other municipalities to identify common concerns and ideas for working together to find a solution to address personal cannabis production with the provincial government.

References

1. Government of Canada. Information for Municipalities – Medical Use of Cannabis [Internet]. August 19, 2016. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/information-municipalities.html>.

2. Government of Canada. Calculator for the production of a limited amount of cannabis for medical purposes [Internet]. January 16, 2018. Available from: <https://health.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drug-health-products/buying-using-drug-health-products-safely/cannabis-medical-purposes/accessing-cannabis-medical-purposes/production-cannabis-medical-purposes/calculator.html>.
3. Eykelbosh, Angela and Leela Steiner (March 2018). Growing at Home: Health and Safety Concerns for Personal Cannabis Cultivation. National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health.
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5. Government of Canada. Information bulletin: safety and security considerations when producing cannabis for your own medical purposes [Internet]. August 11, 2016. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/information-municipalities.html>.

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Agriculture Service Board Provincial Committee Funding

Brazeau County

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 3 (Pembina River)*

WHEREAS the Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee has experienced changes necessitating sustainable funding; and

WHEREAS increased advocacy is necessary in the current political and economic climate; and

WHEREAS advocacy for agriculture and forestry across the province will be very individualistic;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta urge the Government of Alberta to ensure adequate and sustainable funding for the Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee.

Member Background

Brazeau County Council and the Brazeau County Agricultural Services Board are in support of a lobbying entity for Agricultural Service Boards (ASBs). The Government of Alberta is currently downloading multiple service and costs to municipalities. With the downloading of police costs, assessment model changes and current economic climates, further downloading is untenable. The provincial ASB program was reviewed by the Government of Alberta and resulting provincial reductions to ASB funding are being passed on to municipalities to subsidize.

ASB funding is also being reduced. Brazeau County's funding is listed below:

On a yearly basis from 2017 – 2019, Brazeau County received:

- \$168,359 in legislative funding
- \$15,000 in environmental funding
- \$183,359 total per year for three years

On a yearly basis from 2020 – 2024 Brazeau County expects to receive:

- \$123,907 in legislative funding
- \$0 in resource management funding
- \$123,907 total per year for five years

Attached: Letter from Corey Beck, Chair Provincial ASB Committee

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Preservation of Water Quality and Access to Water by Albertans

MD of Ranchland

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 1 (Foothills-Little Bow)*

WHEREAS the headwaters of the South Saskatchewan River Basin found within the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains are the source of water for a significant number of Alberta and Saskatchewan industries and residents; and

WHEREAS water is a limited resource that all Albertans rely on and requires careful management; and

WHEREAS downstream users, both rural and urban, depend on an ample supply of high-quality water to sustain their communities and livelihoods; and

WHEREAS specific water allocation commitments have been made to agriculture producers, residential users, municipalities and industry; and

WHEREAS in the past, the process for the allocation of water has been implemented in an orderly manner with opportunity for meaningful input from Albertans; and

WHEREAS some industrial uses consume large quantities of water and are unable to restore the quality of that water before it is returned to the system; and

WHEREAS the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan 2014-2024* cites the creation of the South Saskatchewan Region Surface Water Quality Management Framework as a proactive and dynamic management approach that assures water quality and a collaborative approach to water quality management; and

WHEREAS the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan 2014-2024* states that “collaboration and shared stewardship will be essential to achieving responsible management [of the Headwaters].”; and

WHEREAS the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan 2014-2024* clearly states under “Section 4: Water” that “shared stewardship is essential. The Province will continue to work with municipalities and other stakeholders to...encourage protection of water resources and responsible development.”;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to take proactive measures to ensure that the headwaters of the South Saskatchewan River Basin are managed to maintain water recharge capabilities, to sustain high water quality and to provide access to sufficient water supplies for a large number of Albertans.

Member Background

The Government of Alberta has historically relied on an open and transparent consultation process when dealing with events that could have huge impacts on water quality and access to water by Albertans. Recently the Government of Alberta has arbitrarily circumvented normal public consultation processes in favour of the development of a single industry at the expense of other industries, the aquatic environment and the citizens of Alberta. By doing so, the quality and access to water quantities could be put at serious risk.

In addition, the Government of Alberta has initiated actions to dismantle water allocation orders duly put in place to ensure that Albertans have a fair access to water to serve agriculture producers, residential users, municipalities and industry.

Furthermore, this issue was in part brought to the attention of the Government of Alberta in 2003 by RMA Resolution ER3-03F. The then-Minister of Environment was urged to ensure that the upper reaches, headwaters and source areas of the South Saskatchewan River were included in the South Saskatchewan River Basin Water Management Project with special focus being given to many of the issues raised in this proposed resolution, including broad public consultation.

RMA Background

19-19F: Water Security in Southern Alberta

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate that the Government of Alberta address water security issues in southern Alberta by constructing additional water storage in southern Alberta for the purpose of buffering flood events and to retain water during periods of shortage.

[Click here](#) to view the full resolution.

National Flood Insurance Strategy and Community Resiliency Advocacy

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 4 (Northern)*

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has created a National Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation (the “Task Force”), including representation from the federal, provincial, and territorial governments and the insurance industry; and

WHEREAS Indigenous Services Canada will work with First Nations partners on a dedicated Steering Committee on First Nations Home Flood Insurance Needs to examine the unique context on reserves; and

WHEREAS the Task Force will consider options to protect homeowners who are at high risk of flooding and do not have adequate insurance protection and examine the viability of a low-cost national flood insurance program, among other goals; and

WHEREAS flooding is the most common and costly natural disaster in Canada, causing over one billion dollars in direct damage to residential property and impacting thousands of Canadians every year; and

WHEREAS according to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, in 2019 only 39 percent of residential property owners had access to overland flood insurance; and

WHEREAS many of the property owners unable to access flood insurance (affordable or otherwise) have properties located in high-risk flood areas;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate for the Government of Alberta to participate in and contribute to the work of the National Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Alberta’s participation on the National Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation focus on advocating for the development of a national high-risk residential flood insurance program and sustainable, long-term funding for provinces, Indigenous communities and municipalities for flood mitigation programs, projects and initiatives that increase overall community resiliency.

Member Background

Government of Canada Creates Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation

From: Public Safety Canada news release (November 23, 2020)

“The cost of climate change is undeniable. Flooding continues to be the most frequent and costly natural disaster in Canada. Water damage goes beyond the destruction of property; it also places an emotional toll on individuals as their homes are destroyed and families are displaced. Each year, too many Canadians, including Indigenous communities, are exposed to the worst effects of climate change. To help people get ready for climate risks and realities, the Government of Canada is taking action to create a more resilient and sustainable approach to floods in Canada.

Today, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, the Honourable Bill Blair, and the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, announced the creation of an interdisciplinary Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation. As a first step in creating a National High Risk Residential Flood Insurance Program, the Task Force will look at options to protect homeowners who are at high risk of flooding and don’t have adequate insurance protection, and examine the viability of a low-cost national flood insurance program. The Task Force will also consider options for potential relocation for residents of areas at the highest risk of recurrent flooding.

The Task Force will be composed of representatives from federal, provincial and territorial governments and the insurance industry. At the same time, Indigenous Services Canada will work with First Nations partners on a dedicated Steering Committee on First Nations Home Flood Insurance Needs to examine the unique context on reserves.

The Government of Canada is also committed to ensuring that broad Indigenous perspectives are included in flood risk management in Canada. The Task Force and Steering Committee will share information with one another, and work closely together to engage with various partners, including with First Nations off-reserve, Inuit, and Métis communities and organizations. Both entities will begin their work by January 2021 and will report on their findings by Spring 2022.

We will continue to help people whose jobs and livelihoods are affected when disasters strike and help people and communities deal with the realities of increased climate-related risks and disasters and ultimately, increase the country's resiliency to natural disasters. To further support communities in effectively managing, mitigating, preparing, and responding to all sorts of hazardous events, including flooding, Public Safety Canada will also be undertaking a review of the Disaster Financial Assistance arrangements, in order to assess and improve the sustainability of this program.

Further, as committed in the July 2020 Economic Update, the National Disaster Mitigation Program will be extended through to 2022, to cost-share flood mitigation projects with provinces and territories. A call for proposals will soon be launched to continue this important work."

Quick facts

- Flooding is the most common and costly occurring natural hazard in Canada, causing over one billion dollars in direct damage to households, property and infrastructure and affecting thousands of Canadians each year.
- As announced in the Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada is investing in reducing the impact of climate-related disasters, like floods and wildfires, to make communities safer and more resilient.
- The Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation is tasked with examining a national residential flood insurance program for homeowners living in areas of high-risk flooding and measures for a national action plan to assist high-risk homeowners with potential relocation to safer areas.
- In the event of a large-scale natural disaster, the Government of Canada provides financial assistance for recovery to provincial and territorial governments through Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA). In order to assess the sustainability of the DFAA, Public Safety Canada is undertaking a review of its terms and conditions.
- According to an estimate by the Insurance Bureau of Canada, approximately 39 per cent of homeowners had access in 2019 to overland flood insurance. While the availability of flood insurance in Canada has grown since the insurance industry introduced it in 2015, it is mostly homes in low and medium risk areas that have been insured against flood damages. Homeowners in high-risk flood areas cannot access flood insurance because the high costs make it challenging for the industry to offer insurance at an affordable rate for homeowners.
- According to Canadian Voices on Flood Risk 2020, a report by Partners for Action, only 6% of respondents knew that they live in a designated flood risk area.

RMA Background

16-20F: Federal and Provincial Disaster Support

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Government of Alberta for continued Disaster Recovery Program funding to support community resilience and enable the relocation of affected property owners where re-construction is impractical or inadvisable.

[Click here](#) to view the full resolution.

Provincial Investigation into Creating an Alberta Provincial Police Service

County of Warner

*Simple Majority Required
Emergent Resolution*

WHEREAS the **Alberta-Canada Provincial Police Service Agreement** (PPSA) establishes a federal financial contribution to policing in Alberta constituting 30% of total provincial policing costs; and

WHEREAS, if the PPSA were to be cancelled, the Government of Alberta and municipalities would have to absorb the 30% of costs paid by the Government of Canada; and

WHEREAS the new provincial police funding model increases front line policing costs for urban municipalities with populations less than 5,000 and all rural municipalities; and

WHEREAS direct consultation with municipalities regarding the creation of an **Alberta provincial police service** (APPS) has been limited; and

WHEREAS it is not apparent that the benefits of an APPS will outweigh the possible financial strain it will place on municipalities and the province;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Government of Alberta in opposition of the creation of an Alberta provincial police service to replace the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Member Background

The formation of an Alberta provincial police service (APPS) would affect every municipality in the province, and especially those in rural areas. The County of Warner's positive working relationship with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachments within our County prompts us to advocate for the continued support of an RCMP presence in Alberta, and for each municipality to work with their local detachments to improve communication and to ensure community input in priority setting and crime reporting.

The investigation into creating an APPS is based on Recommendation 14 of Alberta's Fair Deal Panel (FDP) Final Report presented in May 2020. Cancelling the current Alberta-Canada Provincial Police Service Agreement would result in the loss of the federal cost sharing portion of 30% of current RCMP funding, which is \$112.4 million annually according to the FDP Final Report. This contribution would have to be fully or partially absorbed by the province and municipalities. To urban municipalities with populations less than 5,000 and all rural municipalities this cost would come in addition to current increases in contributions to policing costs under the new police funding model. There will likely also be extra costs to the transfer of administrative and oversight responsibilities, training facilities, an IT system, and other unforeseen costs.

The transition study report by PriceWaterhouseCooper is expected to be completed by April 30th, 2021, and in June 2021 cabinet is expected to make the decision whether to proceed or not with additional studies, analyses, and stakeholder engagement. Considering the current timeline, now is the time to proactively take a stronger stance on the issue of creating an APPS, before the next steps are set in motion. Further studies and analyses would only cost more money.

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.