

## Joint Program Committee Operational Agreement

Between:

Alberta Environment and Parks  
(AEP)

-and-

Alberta Conservation Association  
(ACA)

This agreement is made pursuant to the *Wildlife Regulation*, AR143/97 and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between AEP and ACA dated Dec 9 2021.

### Description

Through an annual integrated planning process ACA and AEP shall each identify provincial priorities, outcomes and performance metrics that guide the Association's annual operational plans.

As part of the ongoing commitment to work together to provide effective and efficient delivery of the delegated responsibilities, ACA and AEP support a joint committee designed to integrate agency priorities with clear performance measures and accountabilities. The Joint Programs Committee (JPC) serves as an integrated working group that provides oversight to the program agreements and is accountable to fulfill the requirements of the MOU and delegated programs.

### Outcomes

AEP and ACA agree to participate in cooperative review and of High Priority Conservation Outcomes (HPCOs) aimed at addressing provincial level priorities. Both parties agree that HPCO development will be led by AEP and that HPCOs will guide the Annual Operating Plan for ACA on a yearly basis. The process in the flow diagram provided in the MOU will be followed in each year to support the planning cycle. The following principles are represented within this process:

- (i) Although AEP leads the development of HPCOs, ACA will be given the opportunity to provide input (through the JPC) into AEP's process, allowing for refinement of HPCOs, or the development of unique HPCOs.
- (ii) AEP will provide to the Association a set of HPCOs prior to June 15, annually. These HPCOs will be discussed and refined at the following JPC meeting to ensure both parties have a clear understanding of the intent of each HPCO. The

discussion will lead to an agreed set of HPCOs, most of which should be valid for multiple years.

- (iii) As part of the HPCO discussion, AEP will share with ACA proposed approaches to be undertaken by AEP and how AEP proposes to address specific HPCOs. This information will be used by ACA to ensure no overlap occurs in proposed work plans.
- (iv) Sound communication between the parties on established HPCOs and proposed approaches to address HPCOs will be key to ensure full alignment and no overlap between ACA and AEP activities.
- (v) While AEP will lead the development of HPCOs (with ACA input), ACA will be responsible for the development of ACA approaches (with AEP input). However, it is recognized by both parties that the adoption of HPCOs is meant to allow for a non-prescriptive process in approach development, as many different approaches may address the same outcome.
- (vi) ACA will develop approaches that address the HPCOs, based on ACA's available financial and human resources, and in alignment with the appropriate program agreement. ACA will be responsible for leading the implementation of these approaches and will provide a list of proposed approaches to the JPC prior to August 1, annually.
- (vii) It is recognized by the parties that not all HPCOs will be addressed equally in every year. In some years a particular HPCO may have no associated ACA activities.
- (viii) The JPC will meet prior to August 15 each year, to review and discuss ACA's proposed approaches, at which time AEP will be given the opportunity to provide input into proposed approaches. This meeting will result in an endorsed suite of approaches that will be developed by ACA into a Draft Operating Plan for Approval by ACA's Board of Directors, in December of each year.

## **Program Elements**

### Mandate

This JPC is designed for the successful delivery of the MOU between the ACA and AEP, inclusive of the program agreements, and is in a supporting role in fulfillment of the delegated programs. JPC will advance the HPCO process by focusing on priority setting, resource allocation, performance expectations, business needs and requirements, and communication. The JPC has the authority and autonomy to take action within this mandate.

Taking an integrated agency and AEP policy focused perspective, the JPC will:

- be involved in a collaborative strategic planning process to ensure HPCOs are appropriately delivered;
- be involved in addressing emerging or unforeseen issues as they pertain to the delivery of the Program Agreements;
- mutually identify the list of agreed to approaches supporting HPCOs to be addressed each fiscal year;
- annually evaluates performance metrics and mutually agrees on improvement to successfully adapt programs to evolving needs;
- bring forward projects and priorities to the ACA Board of Directors or responsible Assistant Deputy Minister AEP for awareness as required; and
- provide completed, and mutually agreed, projects that align with AEP for approval by the ACA Board of Directors.

### Composition

The JPC consists of co-chairs and program specific managers, as required.

The co-chairs are the President and CEO of the Alberta Conservation Association and the Executive Director of Fish and Wildlife Stewardship for AEP.

Agency specific managers are afforded opportunities to attend, present and discuss collaborative outcomes to help support both the ACA and AEP priorities.

### Operating Guidelines

In order to ensure issues are addressed in an efficient and effective manner, the JPC will focus on the mandate identified above. In doing so:

- meetings will be held quarterly or as required;
- sub-committees will be utilized where appropriate (e.g. program specific area); and
- issues arising from development of HPCOs will be addressed by the co-chairs for resolution

### Roles and Responsibilities

Co-Chairs:

- report to the ACA Board of Directors and appropriate AEP Ministry contact (Deputy Minister / Minister);
- communicate agreed to activities supporting HPCOs to management and staff on matters that impact the JPC's mandate;
- set agendas and chair meetings;
- ensure that the JPC is focused on the mandate and that it works as a cohesive group;

- request feedback, advice and/or strategic intent from the Deputy Minister / Minister or the ACA Board of Directors; and
- establish sub-committees as needed to deliver on mandate.

#### Committee members

- take an integrated perspective to their role on the JPC;
- bring forward program area decisions and information that may benefit the JPC;
- champion decisions affecting projects and ongoing work in their respective agencies;
- keep all applicable personnel in their respective areas up-to-date on JPC deliberations, taking confidentiality requirements into account as necessary;
- attend meetings regularly, and actively and openly participate in discussions, ensuring that multiple perspectives are considered; and
- solicit input from staff and other stakeholders on behalf of JPC as required.

Secretariat support will initially be provided by AEP. This situation will be reviewed annually to determine the requirement for any changes.

### **Performance Measures**

As a mechanism to track and report on effectiveness of this operational agreement, both parties have agreed to adopt the following performance measures. Both parties may report on these measures to stakeholder groups as they deem appropriate:

- the JPC has met at minimum four times throughout the year (to be reviewed annually);
- timelines for development of HPCOs have been met;
- all issues arising from the development of HPCOs are satisfactorily addressed by the co-chairs; and
- both AEP and ACA are satisfied with the Annual Operating Plan approved by ACA Board of Directors.

### **Program Term**

This Agreement shall commence upon the date of signature and remain in effect until \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

This Agreement is subject to annual review and may be amended from time to time as outlined in the MOU signed Dec 9, 2021 between ACA and AEP.