

Groundwater Mapping and Management Tools

Bob Chandler, Alberta Environment

Alberta's Water for Life strategy outlines a framework for water management linked to three major goals: safe, secure drinking water supply; healthy aquatic ecosystems; and reliable, quality water for a sustainable economy. Does Alberta have the groundwater resource knowledge, the policies and tools necessary to support these objectives? In the past three years there have been three key reports assessing the state of groundwater knowledge in Alberta, and recommendations for various courses of action. These reports identified parallel paths forward to enhance science, policy and information management. Using this input, Alberta Environment has developed a groundwater action plan based on four themes: building capacity; improving knowledge; building appropriate groundwater management policies; and improving stewardship. The Groundwater Mapping Program is a key component in most of these themes. The Program was initiated in 2007/08 to enhance groundwater knowledge and develop tools that will provide AENV with opportunities to manage groundwater and link groundwater to surface water resources. Alberta Environment is working with stakeholder groups to define the groundwater management systems and information management tools that are envisioned to support initiatives such as the Land Use Framework and Cumulative Effects Management.

Bob Chandler

Bob was raised in Manitoba and earned his B.Sc. in Civil Engineering at the University of Manitoba. Life is full of opportunities, and Bob took advantage of one – an offer to move on to Colorado State University to learn from some of the leading minds in groundwater research. After graduating as Dr. Bob, he accepted an opportunity to return to Canada and work for Alberta Environment. This short-term prospect blossomed into a 26-year career, focusing on groundwater contamination, remediation and ultimately groundwater protection. Dr. Bob retired from public service in 2005, and immediately stepped into the environmental consulting industry where he labored for two years before being enticed back to Alberta Environment. He is now working part-time in the Water Policy Branch where his work focuses on advancing groundwater resource management and protection. He is still looking for that opportunity to retire to warm places.