

# Prairie Provinces Water Board

## CHARTER

### **BACKGROUND**

Recognizing that water use within one province may impact another province and because federal and provincial governments have shared responsibility for water, the Governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba signed the *Master Agreement on Apportionment (MAA)* in October 1969. The purpose of this Agreement is to apportion water between the Provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, and to protect surface water quality and transboundary aquifers. The *MAA* also provides for the cooperation of the governments in transboundary water management and establishes the Prairie Provinces Water Board (PPWB) to administer the Agreement. The *MAA* is comprised of the core agreement, five schedules, and two amending agreements. Schedule C defines the duties and authority of the PPWB.

While the *MAA* provides a core foundation for the sharing and protection of transboundary waters, the Board understands the need to ensure the Agreement is current. Consequently, over the years the Board has recommended amendments to the Agreement and revised its work program to respond to new challenges. This is exemplified by the addition in 1992 of the Agreement on Water Quality (Schedule E) and the inclusion of a groundwater mandate. The Board has created a Charter, Strategic Plan and five-year Operational Plan to ensure that the PPWB effectively administers the core principles and deliverables of the *MAA* that reflect current priorities of governments.

The purpose of the Charter is to identify the vision and mission of the PPWB, key elements of the *MAA*, accountability and responsibilities of Governments and Board Members and Board operations.

### **VISION**

Effective transboundary water management on the Prairies.

### **MISSION**

1. To ensure that transboundary waters are equitably apportioned and protected in accordance with the *Master Agreement on Apportionment*;
2. To provide a forum for the exchange of information in order to prevent and resolve transboundary water management conflicts; and,
3. To promote cooperation in transboundary water management.

## **ELEMENTS OF THE AGREEMENT**

The overarching deliverable for the PPWB is to report on the achievement of the terms of the *MAA*. The *MAA* provides for an equitable sharing of available waters for all eastward flowing streams, including transboundary lakes, crossing provincial boundaries. The Schedules to the Agreement describe the role of the Board and stipulate the amount and quality of water that shall pass from Alberta to Saskatchewan and from Saskatchewan to Manitoba. The PPWB interprets its core duties to be:

- foster and facilitate transboundary surface water management and use that encourages the protection and restoration of the aquatic environment;
- facilitate co-operative management and use of transboundary aquifers to ensure their protection and sustainable use and consider groundwater matters that have transboundary implications;
- promote and facilitate a cooperative and consensus-based approach to prevent, and where necessary, resolve concerns related to transboundary water issues;
- exchange information and consult on transboundary water development amongst governments;
- make recommendations to governments on transboundary surface and groundwater quantity and quality issues referred to the Board; and
- report to governments on the achievements of the terms of the *MAA*.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The *Master Agreement on Apportionment* and its Schedules were signed by Ministers representing the Governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

These governments are accountable for meeting the terms of the *MAA*.

The PPWB is accountable for the administration of the *MAA* and reporting achievement of the terms of the agreement to the governments.

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Provincial governments** perform the primary role of water management, including operation and regulation of major water control infrastructure, flood forecasting, regulation of drinking water, management of water quality, enforcement of laws for the protection of source water, and licensing of water uses.

The provinces have the responsibility to ensure that apportionment and water quality requirements, as stipulated in the *MAA*, are met at the boundaries. Provinces also contribute to scientific evaluations required to fulfill the PPWB mission.

Each province provides one sixth (1/6) of the funding for the approved annual operational budget of the PPWB.

**The Government of Canada** has authority for the protection of fish habitat and prevention of pollution detrimental to fish, regulation of toxic substances, navigation and shipping, shared Canada-U.S. waters, federal property, and First Nations and lands reserved for them, including responsibility, with First Nations governments, for provision of drinking water and wastewater services on Reserves.

Environment and Climate Change Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada represent the Government of Canada on the PPWB.

The Government of Canada provides one-half (1/2) of the funds for the approved annual operational budget of the PPWB.

The *MAA* commits the Government of Canada to collect, compile and publish water quantity and quality data to fulfill conditions of the *MAA*, subject to funds being voted by the Parliament of Canada. Under the authority of the *Canada Water Act*, Environment and Climate Change Canada is empowered to act for the Government of Canada on federal-provincial water agreements. Thus, Environment and Climate Change Canada conducts water quantity apportionment and water quality objective excursion monitoring as prescribed in the *MAA*. Both federal member agencies contribute to scientific evaluations required to fulfill the PPWB mission.

The signatory parties agreed in the *MAA* that any dispute, difference or question can be referred for determination to the Federal Court of Canada under the *Federal Court Act of Canada*.

## **BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Board Members** are responsible for the PPWB performing its duties as described in the *MAA* and Schedules and in accordance with PPWB By-laws and Rules and Procedures.

Board members represent the Governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba and are senior officials engaged in the administration of water resources in each Province of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and senior officials from Environment and Climate Change Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. In addition, Board members are responsible for briefing relevant Ministers, managers and staff of various departments within their governments to ensure the achievement of the Agreement.

Schedule C in the *MAA* appoints a Government of Canada Board member to be the Chair of the PPWB; by practice the Environment and Climate Change Canada member is the Regular Chair and the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada member is the Alternate Chair.

Within the *MAA*'s framework, Board members will:

- work cooperatively with one another to achieve the best management of the water resource in the prairies while representing their own government's interests;
- ensure that the Board is informed of any potential projects or policies that have the potential to impact another province and, when requested, provide the Board with an analysis of those potential impacts;

- share with one another policies, programs and practices of mutual interest;
- liaise within government departments or other organizations within their jurisdiction on behalf of the PPWB;
- ensure services from government agencies required by the PPWB are provided;
- distribute the PPWB Annual Report within government agencies following its transmittal to Ministers by the PPWB;
- appoint government representatives to Board committees;
- inform senior officials and Ministers about significant issues being considered by the Board; and
- provide direction to the PPWB Executive Director and all Board committees.

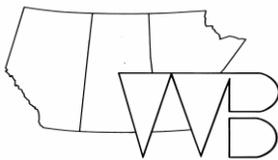
### **PPWB OPERATIONS: COMMITTEES AND SECRETARIAT**

The Board is supported by a PPWB Secretariat and four Standing Committees (Committee on Hydrology, Committee on Flow Forecasting, Committee on Water Quality, and Committee on Groundwater). The PPWB's Operational Work Plan is approved annually by the Board and directs the activities of the Executive Director and the Standing Committees.

Each of the four Committees is comprised of representatives from the Governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. These Committees conduct technical work identified in the Work Plan, requested by the Board and provide technical advice to the Board. The Standing Committees develop recommendations on technical and analytic methods, monitoring, and transboundary objectives, and produce annual technical reports to assess adherence to MAA commitments.

Environment and Climate Change Canada houses the secretariat, employs its staff, and administers its financial resources. The secretariat staff provide technical and administrative support to the Board. Funding to support the secretariat are shared among governments as noted above.

The PPWB Charter was approved by the Board at its Meeting No. 120 on February 8-10, 2017.



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