

Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) Board of Directors Meeting



April 18, 2024

Edmonton and Microsoft Teams Conferencing

In attendance:

CASA Board Directors and Alternates:

Ahmed Idriss, Utilities

Alison Miller, Petroleum Products*

Ann Baran, NGO – Rural*

Dan Moore, Forestry

David Lawlor, Alternate Energy*

Holly Johnson-Rattlesnake, Samson Cree Nation*

Jamie Curran, Provincial Government – Environment

Jim Hackett, Utilities

Leigh Allard, NGO – Health

Mark McGillivray, Alternate Energy

Martin Van Olst, Federal Government

Rob Beletz, Mining*

Rob Hoffman, Petroleum Products

Ruth Yanor, NGO – Industrial

Shane Lamden, Chemical Manufacturers*

Andre Asselin, CASA Executive Director

CASA Staff:

Alec Carrigy, Anuja Hoddinott, Katie Duffett, Mariem Oloroso

Guests:

Cassandra Brown, Environment and Protected Areas*

Curt Horning, Environment and Protected Areas

Crystal Parrell, Environment and Protected Areas*

Geoff Wacowich, Environment and Protected Areas

Marilea Pattison-Perry, Environment and Protected Areas

Martina Krieger, Environment and Protected Areas

Randy Dobko, Environment and Protected Areas

Rhonda Lee Curran, Environment and Protected Areas*

Sarah Kaglik, Indigenous Relations

Sharon Willianen, Environment and Protected Areas

Terrence Ko, Environment and Protected Areas

Travis Tokarek, Environment and Protected Areas*

Warren Noga, Local Government – Rural*

Wendy Birch, Environment and Protected Areas

Presenters:

Cassandra Brown, Crystal Parrell, and Travis Tokarek, *Presentation on the Impacts of Wildfire on Air Quality in Alberta (Item 2.0)*

Rob Hoffman, *Roadside Optical Vehicle Reporter (ROVER) III Project Team (Item 3.0)*

Andre Asselin, *CASA's Core and Project Funding (Item 4.0)*

Alec Carrigy, *Best Practices Guide for Dust Management in Alberta Project Team Update (Item 5.0)*

Rob Hoffman, *Air & Waste Management Conference Committee (Item 6.0)*

Regrets:

Amber Link, Local Government – Rural

Brent Korobanik, Mining

David Spink, NGO – Urban

Don McCrimmon, Oil and Gas Large Producers
Humphrey Banack, Agriculture
Kai Horsfield, Chemical Manufacturers
Mary Onukem, Métis Settlements General Council
Randy Angle, NGO – Rural
Tom Tarpey, Forestry

*Denotes participants who attended the meeting via Microsoft Teams Conferencing.

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Executive Summary

Sherri Wilson, Deputy Minister (DM) of Environment and Protected Areas (EPA), has joined the board representing EPA and was appointed to the executive committee for the Government sector and was announced as CASA's new President. DM Wilson introduced herself to the board and is looking forward to engaging with the group.

The board received an information presentation on the impacts of wildfire on air quality in Alberta from EPA and measures being taken to prepare for the 2024 wildfire season.

A co-chair of the ROVER III Project Team provided a presentation and requested a decision from the board to amend the timeline in the project charter to extend the project's end date from April 2024 to September 2024. The team has developed draft recommendations, but some sectors will require a longer review period before they are asked to approve the project deliverables. The board approved the team's decision request to extend the project timeline.

The board received a presentation on how CASA's funding works. The presentation included definitions of core and project funding along with how the processes related to both types of funding have changed since CASA's inception.

The board received an update from the project manager of the Best Practices for Dust Management Project Team. The team's work has been put on hold as the team continues efforts in fundraising a \$26,000 shortfall required for the consultant to begin project work.

A co-chair of the Air & Waste Management Conference Committee provided an update. Speakers for a panel and two presentations have been confirmed and the committee is waiting on feedback from the conference organizers to finalize submissions. The committee continues to work on other conference logistics.

The board received an update on the status of the strategic plan that was conditionally approved at the December board meeting. Conditional approval was based on the board finalizing the plan's mandate and vision statements. The board decided to defer discussions to complete the mandate and vision statements until the new president has been briefed.

The board received an update on CASA's draft 2024-2027 Multi-year Communications Strategy which will be distributed for feedback in the coming weeks. An update on CASA's Performance Reporting System was presented which included findings from a review of CASA's past Performance Measures Strategy and next steps for advancing a new reporting system.

A series of information reports were provided and there was opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions. The next meeting will be held in Calgary on September 12.

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Meeting Summary

Jim Hackett convened the business meeting at 10:25 a.m.

1 Convene General Business Meeting and Approve Agenda

Participants were welcomed to CASA's 112th general business meeting.

The draft agenda was included in the meeting package. There were no additions to the agenda.

Decision: The agenda was approved by consensus.

2 Presentation on the Impacts of Wildfire on Air Quality in Alberta

Director of Airshed Sciences, Crystal Parrell, and Atmospheric Scientists, Travis Tokarek and Casandra Brown from EPA, provided a presentation on how wildfire influence is accounted for in annual air quality assessments, wildfire smoke impacts on air quality, and air quality reporting during wildfire events. The slide deck, along with a list of information resources, was included in the supplementary meeting package.

Highlights from the presentation were as follows:

- The area burned by wildfires in Alberta in 2023 was the highest in recorded history (~2.2 million hectares).
- In 2023, the majority of particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) Alberta Ambient Air Quality Objectives (AAAQO) exceedances were in the summer months.
- Identifying and removing wildfire smoke influence on air quality levels is a key step in assigning levels in status of air quality assessments.
- A variety of resources are used to identify wildfire smoke influence on air quality levels.
- Wildfire smoke often causes PM_{2.5} exceedances, all of which are reported.
- EPA is now using wildfire smoke as an air indicator in condition of the environment reporting, which is part of Alberta's Environmental Science Program.
- In Alberta, wildfires are becoming more prevalent (i.e., the average area burned is increasing) in the spring months.
- The effects of wildfires and wildfire smoke on air quality differ across regions and depending on the time of year.
- Traditionally, air quality monitoring stations are located near population centres. However, with wildfires more recently affecting all areas of the province, there have been gaps in monitoring. Portable air monitors have been used to fill in these monitoring gaps.
- As portable air monitors are lower-cost sensors, airsheds and citizens scientists have been able to deploy them across the province.
- Data collected from all air monitors are shared through a suite of publicly available tools.

- Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reporting has been updated to allow for earlier warnings of air quality events and more consistency in reporting across bordering provinces and territories.
- Alberta is the first jurisdiction in Canada to pilot a sensor (Aeroqual AQY 1) that provides a full AQHI. This sensor is being piloted in Leduc.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is rolling out a new two-tier air quality statement alert system based on the unprecedented number of air quality alerts issued in the last year.

Discussion

- **Q:** With the dry and warm trends continuing, what's predicted for 2024?
 - **A:** Another significant wildfire season. The province has put extra resources and budget towards wildfire management and suppression.
- Management actions the government could take include things like advising the public to work from home when there are special air quality statements issued and making clean air spaces publicly available during these events, especially in rural communities.
- During these events, there is a large burden on the health system. There is a collective (personal and corporate) responsibility to help individuals protect their health (e.g. workplaces allowing people to work from home, keeping schoolchildren indoors).
- **Q:** Any reasons as to why there is a difference between Alberta and Saskatchewan in when their peaks in average area burned happen?
 - **A:** Not sure as there hasn't been any backtrack analysis on these data yet.
- **Q:** Regarding the speciation studies for PM, what are the different species?
 - **A:** There have been several studies done for speciation. Currently working on determining whether there are differences between communities.
- **Q:** How does EPA let communities know that there are portable sensors available?
 - **A:** EPA works with partners like the airsheds and ECCC. Requests from emergencies come from Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services, and emergency management. There's also a webpage with general information on monitoring.
- The Alberta Lung Association receives a lot of calls about the PurpleAir sensors, so it's helpful to know that the public can go to the GoA for more information and resources.
 - There is a limit to how many sensors can be deployed as they may occasionally require maintenance which is something the GoA needs to keep track of.

3 Roadside Optical Vehicle Reporter (ROVER) III Project Team

Rob Hoffman, co-chair of the ROVER III Project Team, presented an update on the work of the project team.

The team has been working to obtain feedback on the draft recommendations from CASA members, partners, and other organizations. The project was scheduled to be complete in April 2024, however, some groups have indicated that they require a longer review period before being asked to decide on the project deliverables. The presentation included a review of the remaining project timeline and a request to approve an amendment to the ROVER III project charter to extend the project end date from April 2024 to September 2024. The decision request would not impact the project budget.

Discussion

- There was no discussion on this item.

Decision: The board approved extending the project timeline to September 2024 and amending ROVER III's project charter to reflect this change.

4 CASA's Core and Project Funding

Andre Asselin gave a presentation on how CASA's core funding and project funding works and how this has changed over the years. Following a discussion at the December 2023 meeting about funding required in support of the Best Practices Guide for Dust Management project, he noted that the board would benefit from a reminder on how core and project funding works. A slide deck that was included in the supplementary meeting package was not followed, rather an updated version was provided after the meeting.

Since its inception in 1994, CASA's core operations have largely been grant-funded by the Government of Alberta, first through annual grants from various departments, and since 2018, through multi-year grants. Core funding is used to support CASA's operations (e.g., salary, overhead costs, stakeholder support). Project funding is used to support project work, and typically involves hiring consultants with expertise to undertake specific objectives necessary to complete a project. Project funding has typically been raised as donations from CASA's members or grants from external organizations.

Prior to 2018, unspent funds from core operations grants could be reallocated by the board. Since 2018, amendments to the core operations grants have been required to reallocate unspent funds to specific project needs. Outside sources of funding for projects is still sought, but reallocated core funds can be an attractive source of seed funding to leverage other sources of funds. This is the most significant change in recent years to how CASA projects are funded. Staff are working with GoA to ensure that core funding and project funding are properly recorded, reported, and allocated to satisfy all parties needs.

Discussion

- **Q:** Do inflationary pressures have any impacts on your operations?
 - **A:** Yes, and this is especially apparent through vendor pricing.
- **Q:** Has there been consideration to have the executive committee be involved in budget discussions with the GoA so that all sectors are fully informed?
 - **A:** The executive committee regularly discusses the budget.
- **Q:** How is the accumulated interest considered on unspent funds?
 - **A:** This is an area being investigated because the grant stipulates that returned funds would include interest.
- **Q:** Why is there a difference between your revenues for 2022 and 2023 if you get the same grant funds?
 - **A:** Not-for-profit organizations cannot have any profit, so expenses and revenues are shown to be equal. Any remaining funds become deferred contributions.
- **Q:** Will government funds be sorted from non-government funds?

- **A:** Yes. There is some work to do to sort those out, and I would expect the vast majority will be government funds.
- Going forward, the board should make motions on money raised being available for future projects (i.e., use surplus funds for the future work coming out of previously funded projects).
 - The GoA will take this into consideration but are looking at changing funding approaches based on the government’s fiscal responsibilities. Government rules sometimes change how money is managed, but ultimately, CASA will have money to operate.

5 Best Practices Guide for Dust Management in Alberta Project Team

Alec Carrigy, project manager of the Best Practices Guide for Dust Management in Alberta Project Team, presented an update on its work.

In early 2024, the team selected a consultant to undertake several project tasks (complete a jurisdictional review, plan and execute a workshop, and write the Guide). The budget required to complete this work is \$86,000, but there is only \$60,000 of funding available currently.

The team has been in discussions with the selected consultant to confirm their interest in continuing with the project and securing the remaining funds. The consultant is willing to be on hold while funding is secured. CASA issued a call for funding to the board in January and again in late March, and staff have also reached out to project team members to request funding. The team has also investigated grants but there are no known opportunities. No additional funding beyond the \$60,000 has been secured yet. There are a few leads for funding that staff are following up on in May. Further delays in securing funding will impact the project timeline and any shortfall will require the team members to complete work that would otherwise be done by the consultant.

Discussion

- **Q:** Has the team investigated online crowdfunding platforms?
 - **A:** No. It is an interesting option but would add another administrative layer, we don’t have processes in place to manage those yet, and crowd-sourced funding is not always guaranteed.

6 Air & Waste Management Conference Committee

Rob Hoffman, co-chair of the Air & Waste Management Conference Committee, presented an update on the committee’s work and next steps.

Speakers for CASA presentations have been confirmed: David Spink will be presenting on the IRTAQ project and Niranjana Vescio (Opus Inspection, Inc.) will be presenting on the ROVER III project.

Panelists for the panel session on CASA have been identified to represent different perspectives and interests. The panel members are:

- Rob Hoffman
- Holly Johnson-Rattlesnake
- Bev Yee
- Ruth Yanor
- Chris Severson-Baker

The board was asked if there were any members planning on attending the conference as CASA will have an exhibit booth. While the booth will largely be manned by CASA staff, it provides a good opportunity for members to network with other conference attendees.

Action: Board members to inform CASA staff if they are attending the AWMA conference and interested in manning CASA’s exhibit booth.

Discussion

- **Q:** What is the purpose of the booth?
 - **A:** The primary purpose is to showcase CASA and its members to a broader North American audience, especially as it relates to CASA’s consensus decision-making process.
- **Q:** Could extra funds be used to support other attendees?
 - **A:** This is unlikely as the current budget is just enough to support the attendance of all CASA staff and speakers.

7 CASA’s 2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan

CASA’s 2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan was conditionally approved at the September board meeting, pending the finalization of the vision statements. The purpose of this item was to discuss and land on wording for the vision statements. At the September 2023 board meeting, it was recognized that any approved version of the plan would likely need to be updated once the board received the Mandate and Roles Document (MRD) from EPA. The board has not yet received the MRD, so there was discussion around whether this item should be tabled until the MRD is ready or if the plan should be approved once the Vision statements have been finalized.

Discussion

- One option is to remove the mandate portion for now, then add it once the MRD is ready.
- The section of the September meeting summary that was included in this package does not include a statement made that CASA’s Vision does not necessarily have to align with the GoA’s vision statement in the Clean Air Strategy. That should be considered.
- The condition regarding CASA’s vision being revised (p. 71 of the meeting package) had more to do with making revisions only if it was necessary, not that it would be revised. The 2012 vision is fine to be kept as it is.
- The separate CASA vision reads more like a mission statement of how to do CASA’s mission than an aspirational vision.
- It would be best to defer this matter until CASA’s new president is onboarded. CASA appears to have a clear operating direction and looks to be heading in the right direction based the work it is currently completing.

- Regarding the “About CASA” statement in the strategic plan (line 5), “representing environmental interests” should be amended to “representing environmental and health interests” because it is previously mentioned that health interests are at the table, so this should be acknowledged alongside any environmental interests. There also needs to be more emphasis on CASA’s collaborative consensus decision-making (CDM) process in any “About CASA” statements that are in any CASA publications.
 - Future reports and publications can take this into account.
- **Q:** Does anyone have a block to adding a line about the collaborative process being integral to CASA? Conditional approval means there’s room for adding or changing things.
 - **A:** Regarding conditional approval, what is on the table is the vision statement. Process-wise, at the September meeting, the board landed on the strategic plan’s text except for changes to text on operating principles and adding examples of non-point source emissions. Everything else was approved with the condition that the vision and mandate statements could be reviewed. No other changes to the strategic plan were provided in advance of its conditional approval.
- There’s a long history of people being able to make changes to the plan and this isn’t an iterative process. The strategic plan has already been agreed to by the board, so the board should only be discussing the vision statement today. It’s best not to open other things back up again.
- It’s important to get the president on board and get her input so that she can help take the vision forward. Any other changes to the strategic plan can be presented to the board for discussion offline until the president has been briefed, so suggest deferring the conversation until September.
- CASA’s collaborative consensus decision-making process is mentioned in CASA’s mission statement, so this should be sufficient to cover the importance of CDM in CASA. The board is stuck on the vision statements which could be closer to be resolved once the MRD is received and the President briefed.

Decisions: The board agreed to the following items:

- 1. Deferring the discussion of around developing a mandate statement, a vision for CASA, and a Vision for Clean Air, to the September board meeting once the President has been briefed, and***
- 2. Limiting the September discussion to the strategic plan’s mandate and vision statements and adding wording to the effect of CASA’s consensus decision making process to the “About CASA” section.***

8 Administration Items

8.1 Meeting summary from the December 14, 2023, Board Meeting

Minor clarifying edits were submitted to staff. These were reflected in the revised version of the summary, which was included in the meeting package.

Discussion

- There was no discussion on this item.

Decision: The board approved the summary of the December 14, 2023, by consensus and the summary will be posted to the website.

8.2 Review actions from the December 14, 2023, Board Meeting

There were three actions from the December board meeting. A written update was included in the meeting package.

Regarding the first action item for board members and alternates to submit their bios to be added to the website and CASA Board SharePoint, there are still some missing bios so board members will be receiving a reminder.

Regarding the third action item on EPA distribution lists that board members can join for updates on air-related topics, this will be sent in the post-meeting package and shared on SharePoint.

Action: Staff to include information on EPA distribution lists in the post-meeting package and SharePoint.

8.3 CASA's Draft 2024 – 2027 Multi-year Communications Strategy

The first draft of the revised strategy and action plan has been compiled by staff, which was included in the meeting package. The executive committee has reviewed the strategy and suggests the board have an opportunity to provide feedback over the next few months. Based on the input gathered from the board, staff will revise the strategy before the executive committee signs off, followed by board sign off in September.

Action: Staff to distribute the Draft CASA 2024-2027 Multi-year Communications Strategy for board feedback.

8.4 CASA's Performance Reporting System

Andre presented an update on CASA's performance measures strategy (PMS), which included findings from a review of the PMS and next steps towards revising the PMS into an updated Performance Reporting System (PRS).

The main findings from the review were:

1. The intent of the PMS is sound and reporting on performance at the board, project, strategic plan, and processes, is a best practice.
2. There is overlap among PMS work and other business-as-usual activities of CASA and other members and partners.
3. There is an opportunity to streamline how CASA ensures transparency, accountability, and satisfaction from its members and partners, and create end products to appeal to various audiences.

The next steps in developing the system include:

- creating a standalone project team recommendation tracking system

- developing performance measures for the strategic plan
- using a staff-supported approach to continue work towards reporting on CASA’s performance using existing mechanisms
- engaging the board for feedback on this updated approach

Staff will strive to present either an update or a draft for board feedback at the September meeting, if not, the December meeting.

Discussion

- **Q:** What performance measures are going to be done on the secretariat and the executive director (ED)? CASA used to have annual milestone surveys. If there were quick surveys completed after each meeting, especially on the process, compared to annual and quarterly surveys, this would be helpful and more efficient.
 - **A:** Before the shift to online meetings, surveys were distributed to be completed after each project team meeting and the response rates were dismal. Now, nearly all project team meetings are held online. We are looking at milestone surveys for project teams. We welcome the board’s input. After every board meeting there is a survey distributed to provide feedback and the executive committee considers those in their meetings. We try to acknowledge and address any issues as they are brought up.
 - **A:** The board’s only employee is the executive director. CASA has their own internal performance processes for their staff. In other organizations, EDs are asked to provide a report on how they think they’re doing which is given to the board for feedback. But to measure things properly, the board’s strategic plan needs to first be completed.
- Would like to see something here in the “About CASA” section on the multi-stakeholder collaborative CDM process as it is integral to the organization.
 - Staff will review each document in development to ensure that CASA’s CDM process is highlighted in the “About CASA” section.

Action: Staff to distribute the Draft CASA Performance Reporting System to the board for input.

Action: Staff to update the “About CASA” blurb to include and highlight the multi-stakeholder CDM process for use in all future documents.

9 Information Reports and Opportunity for Questions

9.1 Executive Director’s Report

An updated Executive Director’s report was included in the supplementary package. There were no comments on the Executive Director’s report.

9.2 Government of Alberta Update

Discussion

- **Q:** Will there be a webinar on how people can access data from the Air Data Management Program?
 - **A:** We are planning to host a webinar in the next few weeks, which will include a demonstration and provide stakeholders with the opportunity to ask questions.
- **Q:** What is the Retrospective Stock-take Project?
 - **A:** As part of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) process, there is an ongoing CCME subcommittee project that is an opportunity for all the provinces and territories to provide feedback on how the CCME's Air Quality Management System has gone so far. The project is currently in phase 1 which involves an external contractor interviewing the jurisdictions. The GoA are currently working on what this feedback will look like.

9.3 CASA Sector Updates

Ann Baran (NGO – Rural) and Rob Hoffman (Industry – Petroleum Products) provided updates on their respective sectors. These and other sector updates were included in the meeting package.

NGO – Rural:

- The Oldman Dam is currently at 35% of its capacity when it should normally be at ~60% of its capacity at this time of year.
- The Livingstone Landowners Group has created a short film about the drought situation in southern Alberta which can be found on their website:
<https://www.livingstonelandowners.net/>

Industry – Petroleum Products:

- In Alberta, there are four petroleum refineries. Two of these refineries (Imperial Oil and Suncor) publish air emissions data on their websites, in addition to the air quality data that is available on the Canadian Fuels Association's website.
- In 2020, ECCC published the Reduction in the Release of Volatile Organic Compounds [VOC] Regulations, which enhanced leak detection and repair requirements and added fenceline monitoring to all of Canada's refineries.
- These regulations are now entering a second phase that proposes increasing control of VOCs from volatile liquids with gasoline being the main target. As some places in Canada already have controls, this regulation will allow for more consistent control across jurisdictions.
- The sector has been engaged with ECCC on this front for the last five years and the plan is to implement actions from this second phase of regulations in the next five years.

Discussion

- **Q:** Any idea of how much you would save from capturing these fugitive emissions?
 - **A:** It depends, but there is payback.

9.4 AWC Update for CASA Board

There were no comments or questions on the AWC update.

No new or other business was identified when the agenda was approved.

New Business

There was no new business.

Andre provided a few reminders:

Evaluation forms for the meeting will be sent out electronically; please fill them out as they help the executive committee and staff set up future meetings.

The next meeting will be held in Calgary, on September 12.

Board members and guests were given tokens for CASA's 30th anniversary. These tokens will be available at the September board meeting for those who were unable to attend today's meeting in person.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

The following action item(s) arose from the meeting:

Action: Board members to inform CASA staff if they are attending the AWMA conference and interested in manning CASA's exhibit booth.

Action: Staff to include information on EPA distribution lists in the post-meeting package and SharePoint.

Action: Staff to distribute the Draft CASA 2024-2027 Multi-year Communications Strategy for board feedback.

Action: Staff to distribute the Draft CASA Performance Reporting System to the board for input.

Action: Staff to update the "About CASA" blurb to include and highlight the multi-stakeholder CDM process for use in all future documents.