

**ALBERTA GAME POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL
(AGPAC)**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE:

1. To engage game-resource stakeholders in a collaborative process to advise and inform development of game management policies and legislation in Alberta, through:
 - Knowledge transfer on key game management issues
 - Eliciting perspectives and proposed solutions on identified topics
 - Facilitating development of a shared vision for game management

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

1. Maintain a positive, strategic relationship with game-resource stakeholders
2. Maintain open, transparent and inclusive dialogue
3. Maintain a collaborative relationship, based on mutual respect for diverse stakeholder values.
4. Maximize stakeholder understanding of government policy and regulatory process
5. Council is effective, efficient and relevant in advising on desired game management outcomes in Alberta.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. Provincial scope game policy issues is the council's focus.
2. Council membership is commensurate with responsibility and expertise required to achieve the AGPAC's purpose and desired outcomes
3. Members are accountable to their organization in the representation of interests, while also being accountable to AGPAC in developing solutions that may not entirely align with these interests
4. The council will be engaged at the earliest opportunity possible in the process, and Stakeholder perspective will be used to inform decisions
5. Discussions will be informed by the best available knowledge, with new information incorporated as it becomes available
6. Although consensus will be sought, this council is not a decision-making body. Final authority for policy and legislative decisions rests with the Minister or their representative.
7. The intent is for a collaborative relationship, based on common values, interests and understandings and members agree to, within their respective organizations, take the steps necessary to ensure this intent is realized

DELIVERABLES AND COMMUNICATION:

- The council will provide all recommendations, products and deliverables to the Executive Director of Fish and Wildlife Policy, AEP.
- Council members will not disclose drafts, working documents or other specified information outside the council unless agreed to by the council in advance

- To facilitate open and frank discussion, comments expressed at AGPAC meetings will not be attributed to organizations or individuals in public communications (Chatham House Rules)
- A post-meeting briefing note will be developed for both the AEP Minister and the general public to facilitate both public transparency and ongoing relevance to the Minister

MEMBERSHIP

AGPAC membership represents relevant GOA departments along with established stakeholders representing sectors with mandates relevant to and/or significantly affected by game management policy and legislation.

Provincial Government

- Alberta Environment and Parks - Game Policy Unit (CHAIR)
- Alberta Environment and Parks - Regional Operations staff (as required).
- Alberta Justice and Solicitor General - Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Branch.
- Alberta Environment and Parks - Parks Division

Land Use:

- Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
- Alberta Beef Producers
- Crop Producers

Science/Academic:

- Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society
- University of Alberta

Recreational Hunting:

- Alberta Fish and Game Association
- Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
- Hunting For Tomorrow Foundation
- Alberta Bow-hunters Association
- Foundation for North American Wild Sheep
- Safari Club International
- Delta Waterfowl Foundation
- Upland Birds Alberta

Outdoors Media

- Alberta Outdoorsmen Magazine

Council meetings will comprise one member from each stakeholder group. Alternate members may be designated to participate in meetings and other council business if the primary member is unable to do so. The Chair needs to be kept apprised of alternate member designations. Alternates will be expected to function fully for the duration of their role.

MEETING SCHEDULE & LOCATIONS

Council meetings will be held semi-annually (approximately spring and fall), at a minimum with potential for special meetings and/or specific task group meetings to address emerging issues as required. Meeting locations may vary within the province, depending on the Committee's needs and interests.

ROLE OF THE CHAIR (Head, Game Policy Unit, AEP)

- The Chair will manage secretariat services, including:
- Logistical arrangements for meetings
- Communication with members about meeting arrangements
- Development of agendas (with member input)
- Distribution of meeting materials
- Preparation and distribution of meeting records
- Official communications between and among the committees and groups
- Internal Reporting to relevant GOA staff

Communication of relevant support materials, for discussion, will be coordinated by the Chair, and sent to stakeholders approximately two weeks in advance of meetings.

In the event that the Chair is unable to function, the Chair will assign the role to an alternate member of the Game Policy Unit

ROLE OF MEMBERS

AGPAC Members have three primary roles:

1. to provide knowledge, advice and expertise to discussions on contemporary issues related to hunting and game management in Alberta
2. to provide information on issues and concerns of their particular constituencies
3. to communicate back to their constituencies on AGPAC business

Members or designated alternates are expected to prepare for meetings by reviewing relevant materials and participate fully while in meetings. Members or alternates will RSVP a minimum of 5 days prior to a meeting date.

Members may contribute items to be considered for council meeting agendas. It is expected that such items be communicated to the Chair in a timely fashion, for review, to resolve any necessary clarification and ensure accompanying support materials are in place for fulsome discussion. As such, members submitting items should be mindful of the "two week advance" communication guideline

Note: Non-members may communicate issues or ideas directly to AEP. These items will be forwarded to the council if required for further discussion

From time to time, the council may decide to form a working group or task team. Members may be invited to commit to leading or participating in such sub-groups.

ROLE OF COUNCIL SUB-GROUPS OR TEAMS

Council sub-groups may be formed to fulfill a specific task, as defined by the council. The nature of the task, along with required deliverables and timeframe, will be agreed upon by the council. Members and leadership of a sub-group will be set and agreed upon by the council. Such sub-groups may include non-members recognized as content experts or otherwise beneficial to completing defined deliverables.

Task Teams will develop their own Terms of Reference, subject to approval by the council. Teams will also develop project plans, containing timelines and deliverables

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- Local issues or ideas will be addressed through regional stakeholder meetings conducted through AEP Regional Operations. Policy and Legislative changes developed at this level will be communicated to AGPAC through periodic communications.
- Early in the process of addressing an issue, a decision will be made as to the scope of engagement desired, including the potential need to engage others outside AGPAC.
- Meetings and processes will involve a full spectrum of participation principles, depending on the situation. These include the following:
 - Informing** (communicating the Minister's decisions made, along with supporting information)
 - Consulting** (eliciting stakeholder feedback on analysis and alternatives, with the intent to inform the Minister's decisions with stakeholder input)
 - Involving** (working closely with stakeholders on the Minister's proposed decisions, with the intent to consider these in developing policy)
 - Collaborating** (eliciting advice and support and engaging stakeholders in jointly developing recommendations to the Minister)
 - Empowering** (providing advice and support and delegating final decisions on recommendations to stakeholders)For any particular Committee business item, its position on this spectrum will be clarified and communicated by the Chair prior to being dealt with.
- Consensus will be based on a group decision making process that seeks consent, not necessarily agreement, of participants and resolution of objections.
- In the event that consensus cannot be achieved, such will be communicated, along with the proportion of members voting for and against in the matter, to the Executive Director, Fish and Wildlife Policy.
- All relevant outcomes will be recorded in meeting records

COMMITTEE LIFESPAN AND DISSOLUTION

The Alberta Game Policy Advisory Committee has an indeterminate term and will function at the discretion of the Executive Director, Fish and Wildlife Policy, who may terminate and or modify the function of this committee based on evolving need.