

Wetlands BMP Workshop

Opening Table Top Discussion

January 20, 2016

Edmonton, Alberta

The morning of Day 1 started with introductory table top discussions where participants were asked to share their responses to a couple questions with those sitting at their table. The first question explored participant's motivations for attending the workshop: "Why did you say yes to the invitation? What are you hoping for as a results of your participation? What is important to you about wetland BMPs? Why do you care?" The second question explored participants' thoughts on the future of Best Management Practices and the goalposts for success: "BMP 2020: What if you got it right and how would we know?" Participants were asked to brainstorm responses to these questions, capture the highlights on flip charts, and share highlights with the room. [Disclaimer](#)

Why did you say yes?

- Assigned to be here
- Okay's prior to budget cuts
- **To share knowledge and information (x7)**
- **To see what others are doing and share our own work/experiences (x6)**
 - Identify and address needs of stakeholders
 - Broader knowledge base from multiple industries
 - Compare BMPs
 - Find people with similar issues, what's working/ what's not
- **Network (x3)**
 - Potential partnership opportunities
 - Connecting 'environment people', industry, and operational folks
- Corporate/ department commitments to consider wetlands
 - Regulated industries have a responsibility to control their development footprint
- Curiosity
- Our job is translators of policy to construction, influencers, and communicators with policy developers, leadership at companies and within communities, public construction partners, and engineers.
 - Policy implementation – increased time and cost burden – managing expectations but also 'do the right thing'
 - Lack of enforcement hinders implementation of BMPs
 - Need alignment and clarity of overlapping policies and regulations
- Policy
 - **Alberta wetland policy (x2)**
 - Learn how to prepare clients for this
 - Regulatory update

- Advancing public policy
 - Implementing the policy vs. 'ground truthing'
- Move beyond ducks; peatland function vs. value
- Education – need to learn and learn to teach
- **To learn**
 - To bring information back to operations and industry clients
 - Practices specific to peatlands
 - Learn more about BMPs practically in the boreal
 - Improved understanding of how boreal wetlands function and what functions we need to conserve (gov)
 - How can we use wetland BMPs to avoid and minimize vs. replacement
 - About boreal wetland BMPs for the wetland policy and cross pollination (gov)
 - Integrate ecosystem based management into wetlands (rather than traditional uplands approach, paradigm shift?)
 - What are the information management needs of this group
 - Other perspectives re: BMPs
 - New tricks
 - How industry is meeting guidelines
 - To make things work better
- Learning from government policy specific
- Likes talking about wetlands, get a feel for what Alberta regulations are going to look like and share information about how to minimizing
- Peatland reclamation criteria was intro to wetland reclamation. Reclamation problems start at construction phase, move towards minimal disturbance. Interested in reclamation criteria and practices
- Was at conservation solutions workshop, BMPs were developed over 2 days, never really heard much more about it – reinvent the wheel
- BMPs how they might relate to regulation, workshop – no detail, curiosity. Determine what can be done when purchase.
- Policy development replacement strategies and assisting regulators with codes of practice, here as a presenter, what's needed to take them to the next level? Learning about everything else that's going on, bring his experience to the table
- Information sharing/ exchange, certification coordinator. ISO etc. supposed to present environmental degradation and pollution – minimize impacts. Experience from other industry players. Continuous improvement
- Put new ideas in front of the O and G companies. Give presentation on pile supported roads. Grandfathered roads – pile supported culverts. Minimizing footprint. Understand range and scale of the challenges learn, share experiences.
- Transmission lines – sitting, planning, constructing, monitoring. Inject BMPs at all levels of the TL process. Up to date with the most recent practise (winter mostly – winters aren't as reliable as they used to be so do practices need to change?) What are people doing to monitor?

What do you hope to learn/ get from this workshop? Desired Outcomes

- Water quantity and quality improvements
- Actual practices
- What other organizations are doing in terms of BMPs
- Understanding more about DUC's mandate and results
- Learn about science to support road construction to reduce impacts
- Learn policy impacts on industry and how we can help
- What's new and improving
- Reclamation BMPs, new peatland criteria
- What are BMPs and what is feasible for policy implementation
- Looking for collaboration and understanding of what is important to others
- Planning ahead to make restoration easier and efficient at time of construction and installation
- Concerns related to learning curves and timelines for regulatory process
- Mechanisms to reduce regulatory burden for low impact activities/ strong BMPs
- Understanding activities on wetlands (+/-), understanding of extent of impacts and how to mitigate/ minimize them
- Better understanding of wetlands
- Good decisions being made
- Get tools for decision making
- Revision of standards (SFI) relating to water
- Learn how to minimize impacts
- "What to tell the boys (or girls) with their toys"
- How to manage effectively in this regulatory regime and have beneficial environmental outcomes
- How do you make BMPs regulatory requirements, get buy in?
- Move beyond working in silos – in organizations, in projects, in funding cycles and approval times
- How do you keep corporate knowledge flowing through the whole project

What is important to you about wetland BMPs? Why do you care?

- Moving from regulatory to collective interest in doing the right thing
- Change from Best management practice to beneficial management practices, see a gradient of good, better and best practices
- BMPs could help improve conservation efforts
- Social license – people care about wetlands and wildlife
- Sustainable development
- Passion for wetlands and the boreal forest
- Nature conservation
- Effectively regulate and conserve natural resources

BMP 2020

- Science based (more research; wetland dynamics and successions, NRV), integrated across ecosystem types
- Objective driven; risk based BMPs
- Multi-sectoral, consistent, used across the country
- Fewer uncertainties, continuous improvement
 - Address key gaps
- Do it right the first time – systems are slow to recover so avoiding or minimizing initial footprint is key
- More projects being done
- More consequences – audits, enforcement – resulting in good compliance
- People have the tools and have ‘bought in’
- More knowledge cradle to grave (ops, planners, gov)
- No go zones
- Transparency about successes and challenges, sharing knowledge (x2)
- Better dissemination of information
- Adoption and motivation processes in place
- Attained ecological goods and grappled with cumulative effects
- In compliance
- On budget
- Is there an ultimate stop development point?
- Collaboration with other industries, information sharing ‘top down’
- Documentation – efficacy (may not be known in 4 years) and cost
- Awareness of BMPs and monitoring
 - Widely accepted across industry
 - World class monitoring – continuous improvement; minimized wetland loss
 - Speaking the same language in terms of what BMPs are and mean
 - Wildlife surveys conducted pre and post disturbance
 - ecosystem monitoring
 - benchmark requirements set by pre-disturbance conditions (hydrology, vegetation, wildlife)
 - Modeling and monitoring short and long term
- Biodiversity maintained and or improved
- Common target for wetland conservation
- BMPs specific to wetland classes (known operating limits)
- Communicate differences between BMPs and why (+/-)
- Broader understanding of the full suite of services wetlands provide (by wetland class) to evaluate competing values
- Awareness of the impacts to wetlands – maintain wetland function
- Objective based approach – cumulative effects, integrated systems
- Long-term requirements in understanding practices
- Incorporate into mandate/ training
- Equal access to knowledge

- Catalogue of BMPs people can utilize
- Alignment of regulations to all industry sectors
 - Consistent application
- Wetland mapping, complete wetland inventory
- Reclamation
 - Identify reclamation criteria
 - Restore ecosystem function
 - Effects on peatlands
- IMES – need a system to be able to evaluate, filter, or rank/rate
 - A list is not enough.
 - Do BMPs actually work in specific temporal extents
 - How/ where/ when have they been applied
 - Is there a standard around evaluation that can be applied?
 - Can examples with photos, maps, be included to provide validity to the BMP?

What if you got it right and how would we know?

- Healthy wildlife populations
- Reduced footprint on the landscape
- BMPs are the norm for all stakeholders
- Sharing of information – total transparency
- Reclamation certificates were more common
- Less replacement. More avoidance and minimization
- Approval systems that require wetland BMPs vs. replacement
- Implementation and use of BMPs into SOP and ground rules
- Successful partnerships
- If we are having a different conversation than we are having today. More progress than we have seen to date.
- More implementation? Information dissemination
- Widespread acceptance of what's being decided.
- Less Unknown
- Continual improvement – evidence of improvement
- Options for BMPs that industry, NGOs and government could live with
- BMPs need testing and evaluation – a fluid and evolving process
- Adoption – tends to be voluntary. Successful implementation requires understanding monitoring factors. What are the costs?
- Innovation for adoption – BMPs take “the set” over and above the regulatory context
- Regs are too easy – we want to be regulated more
- Better connection between cost and adoption of new practices
- Minimization vs. avoidance. How do you even measure the area of what you need to replace?
- How to offset the costs?
- 2020 is soon, we might not know?
- Finding the balance between innovation and prescription
- We will have better understanding of cumulative effects

- Ecological goals are attained? Includ. Billion acres.
- I'm in compliance
- It is socially acceptable
- On budget
- Relationship with DU maintained.

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