



## TERMS OF REFERENCE RECLAMATION WORKING GROUP (RWG)

Updated by RWG: February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Approved by CEMA Board: March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010

### **PURPOSE**

The RWG will produce and maintain guidance documents that provide recommendations and best practices which ensure that reclaimed landscapes within the Athabasca oil sands region meet regulatory requirements, satisfy the needs and values of stakeholders, and are environmentally sustainable. The RWG will provide these guidance documents to the CEMA Board as recommendations to government.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Provide guidance for reclamation on oil sands leases in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo on the following:

- appropriate design, construction, integration, reclamation and maintenance of landforms and landscapes;
- reclamation certification;
- leading practices for conservation and reclamation;
- re-establishing biodiversity of the reclaimed landscape;
- riparian ecosystem establishment;
- land capabilities for forest ecosystems on natural and reclaimed lands;
- forest vegetation (ecosystems) establishment;
- wetland & aquatics establishment;
- end pit lake establishment; and
- other reclamation guidance as agreed upon by RWG and the CEMA Board.

### **CONTEXT**

RWG focuses on providing guidance to operators and stakeholders to address environmental impacts (reclamation). The Regional Sustainable Development Strategy (RSDS) identified 72 major issues of concern in 14 theme areas. RWG's scope of work comes from the RSDS Theme 1 (sustainable ecosystems and land-use) which was split into two separate objectives, one of which is being addressed by RWG: "To define the process and standards needed to return developed land to sustainable ecosystems with desired end land use values." RWG's work applies to surface mineable oil sands and other surface disturbances including *In Situ*.

### **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

The RWG will operate in a manner that is consistent with the [principles](#), rules, [policies](#), and [procedures](#) adopted by CEMA. The RWG will follow the CEMA's [policies](#) and [guidelines](#).

The RWG will:

- oversee, coordinate, and integrate the work of technical sub-groups and task groups that focus on the development of guidelines for specific aspects of reclamation and closure;
- develop greater understanding of all resource development operations and reclamation technologies and government regulations and policy;
- promote a proactive and progressive integration of closure and reclamation planning across all industrial developments and within the regional context;
- make recommendations to CEMA on regional reclamation planning and management, regulation and policy; consider additional reclamation research to address knowledge gaps for guidelines. This may result in the formation of sub-groups or task groups and recommending research related to reclamation; and
- conduct other activities agreed to by the group and CEMA members.



The RWG will consider the need to formally interface with other CEMA working groups and other related groups. These may include, but is not limited to:

- the Canadian Oil Sands Network for Research and Development (CONRAD);
- the CEMA Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK) Advisory Committee;
- the Oil Sands Developer’s Group (OSDG)
- the Sustainable Ecosystem Working Group (SEWG);
- the Wood Buffalo Environmental Association (WBEA);
- the CEMA Surface Water Working Group (SWWG)
- the NOx SO<sub>2</sub> Management Working Group (NSMWG);
- the Regional Aquatics Monitoring Program (RAMP);
- the Oilsands Research and Information Network (OSRIN); and
- the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI).

Chairpersons are nominated by the membership and are selected by consensus by the RWG and a vote will occur should the group fail to reach consensus. The term for a chairperson is two years. The RWG will strive to have two chairpersons at a time, with overlapping terms to ensure effective transition. The RWG will also strive to have one chairperson from industry and one chairperson from Government/First Nations/NGO at any given time.

**REPORT TO THE CEMA BOARD**

Key deliverables for RWG recommendations to be submitted to the CEMA Board are listed in Table 1. The RWG will provide a progress report at each CEMA General Meeting. This Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated every two years. This will allow for a review and confirmation of the RWG purpose and objectives by CEMA Members.

**Table 1: Key RWG deliverables and their timelines**

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Deliverable completion timeline</b>	<b>Group/Subgroup responsible</b>
Guideline for the Establishment of Wetlands on Reclaimed Oil Sands Leases	Reviewed every five years and updated as necessary. Next revision expected for Q4 2012. Versions include: 1999 & 2007.	Aquatics Sub-Group (ASG)
End Pit Lake Technical Guidance Document (for mining)	Reviewed every five years and updated as necessary. Next revision expected for Q4 2012.	Aquatics Sub-Group(ASG)
Guideline for Reclamation to Forest Vegetation in the Athabasca Oil Sands Region	Reviewed every five years and updated as necessary. Next review expected Q4 2014. Versions include: 1998, 2009.	Terrestrial Sub-Group (TSG)
Land Capability Classification System for Forest Ecosystems in the Oil Sands	Reviewed every five years and updated as necessary. Next revision expected Q4 2013	Terrestrial Sub-Group (TSG)
Management Practices for Soil Salvage and Placement	Reviewed and updated as necessary. First version expected in 2010.	Terrestrial Sub-Group (TSG)

**MEMBERSHIP**

Any member of CEMA is eligible to join the RWG. The RWG will seek to maintain broad stakeholder representation. Details of membership responsibilities and chair rotation can be found in CEMA’s policies and procedures.

An RWG member is expected to:

- be able to attend and participate on a regular, consistent basis;
- be fully informed and up to date about the subjects to be discussed at meetings;
- contribute to meetings; and
- accept and abide by CEMA’s policies and guidelines.