



March 14, 2017

Deborah Schulte, Member of Parliament  
Chair of Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

**Re: Fort Air Partnership and Alberta Airsheds Council input to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development review of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act**

Dear Ms. Schulte, M.P.,

The Fort Air Partnership was invited, in partnership with Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association, to present as a witness to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development on December 1, 2016.

As part of this presentation, FAP communicated that it is an independent, multi-stakeholder air monitoring organization, or *Airshed*, who monitors air quality in and around Alberta's Industrial Heartland. This organization is a collaborative effort between provincial, federal and municipal governments, industry and communities. Fort Air Partnership collects the air quality data required to calculate the Air Quality Health Index, and to compare to provincial and federal air quality standards, including the recently implemented Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards. Fort Air Partnership works with the provincial government and other Airsheds in Alberta to implement regional monitoring to inform cumulative effects management of air quality.

We understand that air monitoring is a key aspect of informing and implementing the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, and as such have decided to collaboratively provide this briefing as part of the provincial body which is the representative of the nine Airsheds in Alberta, the Alberta Airsheds Council. Airsheds in Alberta collaborate with both the provincial and federal government to implement successful air monitoring, reporting, and education within Alberta. Timely execution of environmental monitoring, and the provision of scientifically credible monitoring data to the public and policy makers for informed decision making are critical functions provided by Airsheds.

Airsheds operate more than 70 air monitoring stations across the Province in compliance with all provincial and federal standards, including Alberta's Air Monitoring Directive. Data collected by Airsheds also contributes to the calculation of the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI), which is reported in over 25 communities. The credibility of Airsheds' data and programs relies on the multi-stakeholder,

consensus-based governance of each Airshed. More than 50 municipalities, eight First Nations and Métis groups, 200 community members, numerous Alberta Government Environment and Health representatives, municipal government representatives, Environment Canada representatives and 200 industry representatives contribute to the success of Airsheds. Each of these direct participants represents a vast network of thousands of individuals and stakeholders interested in, and affected by the monitoring and resources Airsheds provide. Airsheds are a key partner with established regional networks for responding to local air matters, and participate in dozens of community education and outreach events each year. The multi-stakeholder Airshed model is a proven successful approach that has also been emulated in other provinces and territories.

The Alberta Airsheds Council and Airsheds are integral to the monitoring and reporting of the new Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particulate matter and ozone in the province. Airsheds have been working on a number of initiatives over the past several years to improve our knowledge of fine particulate matter, including updating our particulate matter analyzers to the newest federal equivalency method approved technology, and conducting comparison studies between the old and new technologies being used throughout the province. Airsheds in the Edmonton and Calgary regions of Alberta have been actively involved in the development of Air Management Frameworks and Particulate Matter Response Plans as required under the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards. They continue to be involved in the implementation of these plans.

Airsheds have spent the past several years developing monitoring plans to align our monitoring networks with the current provincial and federal direction of cumulative effects management, and increasing interest in the impacts of both point and non-point sources on regional air quality. These monitoring plans have been approved by the Alberta Government, and many of the improvements proposed in these plans have been implemented.

There are several Airshed led projects being implemented in Alberta that can provide data on substances referred to in the Canadian Environmental Protection Act:

**Calgary Region Airshed Zone**

- Volatile Organic Compounds Speciation

**Fort Air Partnership:**

- Volatile Organic Compounds Speciation
- Fine Particulate Matter Speciation

**Lakeland Industrial Community Association**

- Volatile Organic Compound Speciation
- Integrated PAH monitoring

**Wood Buffalo Environmental Association**

- Volatile Organic Compound Speciation
- Fine Particulate Matter Speciation
- Integrated Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon monitoring

In addition to the above, we believe that the Alberta Airshed model is very successful because:

**1. Airsheds are multi-stakeholder, not-for-profit organizations**

One of the most important values of current Airsheds is their multi-stakeholder composition with representation from industry, provincial government departments and agencies, municipal governments, non-governmental organizations, First Nations, Métis and the public. The consensus-based model used by Airsheds ensures conversations are collaborative, since all sectors are involved in the decision making process. This inclusive and integrated effort provides more efficient mutual leveraging of available resources and enables Airsheds' members to make implementable and efficient decisions which may not be possible by any one individual sector.

**2. Airsheds are regional**

Airsheds are regionally focused; many began as grass-roots initiatives which foster a sense of community ownership. Since Airsheds are place based, they are well positioned to address community needs and concerns. Airsheds consider multiple monitoring objectives in the development of monitoring plans, which meet the needs of both provincial and federal governments while best servicing local community needs.

**3. Airsheds have credibility**

Airsheds operate in an independent, unbiased and transparent manner. This enables them to meet increasing public demand for open, credible air quality information. Airsheds' data is known to be scientifically credible as it is collected per provincial, federal and international standards. Continuously engaging the community through communications and outreach also increases the awareness and credibility of Airsheds in the public eye. Airsheds have also developed live data feeds on their websites to make data available to the public on a real time basis.

**4. Airsheds are crucial to the AQHI (Air Quality Health Index)**

Airsheds are crucial to the calculation of the AQHI throughout Alberta. Airsheds collect relevant data required to calculate the index and strive to add additional monitoring within Airsheds to support robust AQHI reporting. Airsheds also work to promote the use of the AQHI in communities, schools and media publications.

**5. Airsheds do more than just monitor**

Airsheds also have a role in education and outreach, including direct involvement with local communities at meetings and local events. Another integral role for Airsheds is the facilitation of multi-stakeholder dialogue around air quality issues, since all sectors are represented at the respective Airshed tables. In addition, Airsheds actively participate in the provincial air policy initiatives lead by the Clean Air Strategic Alliance.

The Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development had requested on December 1, 2016 that the Fort Air Partnership provide input under cover of this follow-up brief into what revisions we thought were necessary to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Fort Air Partnership and the Alberta Airsheds Council do not see this as our primary role. Our role is focused on conducting the monitoring that is required to inform policy and air quality management decisions, and as monitoring organizations we are open to taking on additional resourced monitoring that may be required. The Airsheds look to Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Health Services, and several of the comprehensive suite of Airshed members that were listed in the beginning of this brief to provide feedback as to required revisions to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

Please let us know if you would like any additional information on how Airsheds inform both provincial and federal air quality initiatives and policies.

Sincerely,



Nadine Blaney  
Fort Air Partnership Executive Director  
Alberta Airsheds Council Co-Chair



Gary Redmond  
Alberta Capital Airshed Executive Director  
Alberta Airsheds Council Co-Chair

- cc. Jim Eglinski, M.P. Yellowhead; Member of Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development
- Martin Shields, M.P. Bow River; Member of Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development
- Linda Duncan, M.P. Edmonton-Strathcona; Member of Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development
- Keith Purves, Fort Air Partnership
- Jill Bloor, Calgary Region Airshed Zone
- Michael Bisaga, Lakeland Industry and Community Association
- Ken Perl, Palliser Airshed Society
- Kevin Warren, Parkland Airshed Management Zone
- Elizabeth Bell, Peace Airshed Zone Association
- Patrick Andersen, West Central Airshed Society
- Sanjay Prasad, Wood Buffalo Environmental Association
- Karla Reesor, Alberta Airsheds Council
- Alberta Members of Legislative Assembly
- Alberta Members of Parliament