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January 18, 2007

Public Comment on Source Protection Committees

The Ministry of Environment (MOE) has recently posted a "discussion paper" on the formation and operation of the Clean Water Act's Source Protection Committees for public comment. This is the opportunity for people interested in the Clean Water Act to advise the Province of Ontario about how Source Protection Committees should be formed and operated. The comments MOE receives on this discussion paper will be used to draft a Source Protection Committee "regulation" which will also be posted for public comment later this winter/spring.

Under the Clean Water Act, a Source Protection Committee will be formed in each region to create locally developed source protection plans. Source Protection Committees would be made up of local stakeholders such as municipalities, agriculture, landowners, industry, business, community groups and the general public. The regulation about Source Protection Committees will outline how these committees are formed and how they will operate.

Following the Walkerton tragedy in 2000, legislation to protect source water was developed with input from many sectors. The result was the Clean Water Act (formerly Bill 43) which was introduced in December 2005 and received Royal Assent on October 19, 2006. The Clean Water Act is focussed on preventing the contamination and depletion of surface and groundwater sources that supply municipal drinking water systems with water. This Act will see municipalities, Conservation Authorities and all interested community stakeholders, collaborate to produce locally-developed, workable, effective, science-based plans to address risks to municipal drinking water.

A copy of the Source Protection Committee discussion paper can be found on the Ministry of Environment's website at: http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/er/documents/2007/Discussion%20Paper.pdf. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact your local Conservation Authority to obtain a copy. Comments must be submitted in writing (reference EBR registry number PA06E0013) on or before February 1, 2007. Submit comments to:

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For more information on source water protection, please check the Conservation Ontario website at www.conservation-ontario.on.ca. or the Ministry of the Environment website at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/cwa.htm.

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