

Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Source Protection Planning Begins

Another major step forward is underway for drinking water source protection within the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region. The Source Protection Committee (SPC) for the region has announced it is beginning the process of preparing source protection plan policies.

"This is an important time for the protection of drinking water in this region as the Committee begins to tackle the challenge of creating policies to reduce risk to drinking water," says Jennifer Stephens, Project Manager for the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region.

The local committee recently sent notification that work has started on the preparation of source protection planning policies to municipal administrators, First Nations, and to owners of properties where potential significant drinking water threats exist.

Fifty-six percent of the people with the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region depend on safe, reliable municipal drinking water. This water comes from surface water sources like Lake Ontario and inland lakes/streams, or from groundwater sources.

Fifty-three municipal drinking water sources have been studied over the past few years with a view of protecting them. The technical assessment was primarily completed last fall but a number of amendments have been made recently. A new version of the Trent and Ganaraska Assessment Reports is now available at www.trentsourceprotection.on.ca and at local Conservation Authority offices. The public is invited to review the revised reports and can submit comments to the Source Protection Committee no later than June 3, 2011.

Landowners can take positive action now to protect drinking water and may receive grants to cover the majority of the cost of their voluntary projects, through the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Early Response Program. Eligible projects may include well decommissioning and upgrades, septic system upgrades, handling/storage of fuel, and runoff and erosion protection for agricultural operations.

The Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Committee will be preparing policies to address potential threats to municipal drinking water sources over the next year involving municipal officials and other experts. Residents and landowners will have several opportunities to be involved through a public consultation process taking place through 2011 and early 2012.

The Source Protection Plans must be complete by 2012. This initiative is directed and funded by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and managed by the local conservation authorities.

Further information can be found at www.trentsourceprotection.on.ca.

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