



Ausable Bayfield
Maitland Valley
Source Protection Region

SOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEE (SPC) MEETING MINUTES

January 31, 2024

Libro Community Hall, Clinton ON

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Ellen Foran, Dave Frayne, Paul Heffer, Doug Hocking, Rowland Howe, Philip Keightley, Alyssa Keller, Matt Pearson, Allan Rothwell, John Thompson, Jennette Walker

MEMBERS ABSENT

Bert Dykstra, John Graham

LIAISONS PRESENT

Brian Horner – Ausable Bayfield Source Protection Authority (SPA) Liaison
Phil Beard – Maitland Valley SPA Liaison

DWSP STAFF PRESENT

Donna Clarkson, Mary Lynn MacDonald, Aaron Clarke, Abigail Gutteridge

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Hannah Cann – Stewardship and Resiliency Specialist, Perth County
Derry Wallis – Climate Change and Energy Specialist, Huron County

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Matt Pearson called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

AGENDA

MOTION #SPC: 2024-01-01

“That the agenda for the October 25, 2023 meeting be approved.”

Carried by Consensus.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION #SPC: 2024-01-02

Moved by Rowland Howe

Seconded by Paul Heffer

“THAT the SPC minutes from October 25, 2023 be approved as presented.”

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

None

DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

CHAIR'S UPDATE

Chair Matt Pearson noted that the Province has been quiet for the past few months as they continue to work on Section 36 Amendments. Staff have been working on the workplan and budget for the next three years, which will be presented today. He also reminded Source Protection Committee (SPC) members and liaisons to fill in the waiver form for the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply, which will be toured at the upcoming SPC meeting in March.

PROGRAM UPATE

Mary Lynn MacDonald, Co-Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Program Supervisor, provided a program update to SPC members. MECP provided staff a three year template for the funding application for the DWSP program. The Joint Management Committee reviewed the application on January 11, 2024 and directed staff to submit to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) by the deadline. Key workplan items included legislated activities such as SPC meetings, annual reporting, and updates to Source Protection Plans. Also included are non-legislative activities such as providing advice and support to municipal staff, participating in provincial working groups, promoting best practices for private wells, technical work for

revisions and updates to source protection plans. Targeted municipal support included facilitation assistance in developing salt management plans and hiring a consultant to review municipal systems for updated technical data, Master Servicing or other plans and to report back as to where Source Protection Plan updates may be required now or in the future. Once submitted, the plans will be reviewed by MECP staff. MECP aims to have Transfer Payment Agreements in place by May 2024.

Other program updates included an update on the Stormwater Master Plan being developed for Grand Bend, which will encompass the current Intake Protection Zone (IPZ)-2. The modelling for the IPZ-2 urban footprint was done conservatively and included the presumption of storm water systems, which are currently not in place. This may mean that no changes will be required but it will depend on the Master Plan recommendations as to whether a revision to this zone is required. The Source Protection Branch will now consider funding the cost of remodeling the IPZ-2, and while it was not included in the three-year budget, there will be opportunity to open and update the Transfer Payment Agreement if needed. In addition, the project to incorporate a new reservoir and UV treatment unit to the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System is on hold while there is a reassessment of future needs for the system due to development pressure.

Mary Lynn also provided an update on the SPC video releases and the reach they have had. These videos have been viewed just under 36,000 times, so she commended the SPC on their work for these excellent outreach materials. Finally, Mary Lynn reported that the Section 36 Amendment for the Source Protection Plan that was submitted to the MECP in March 2023 is still under review, but MECP staff have indicated that approval is anticipated soon.

SECTION 34 AMENDMENT PROCESS UPDATE

Donna Clarkson, Co-DWSP Program Supervisor, reported on the progress to update the Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan to incorporate the changes to the Lucknow and Century Heights drinking water systems. In 2023, the SPC was presented with the draft updated wellhead protection areas for these two systems, as provided by Matrix Solutions Inc., and directed staff to complete the required updates to the Source Protection Plan. The key changes include a new municipal well #3 for the Century Heights wellhead Protection Area (WHPA); a revision to the Lucknow WHPA to reflect increased Permit to Take Water for the at system; updated mapping for both WHPAs;

and revisions to Chapter 4 of the Source Protection Plans for these updates. In Century Heights, it is anticipated that the only significant threats will be found in the WHPA-A. In the Lucknow System, there will be some vulnerability scored of 10 in WHPA-B, which will primarily be the wastewater treatment facility, several residential properties, and a farm.

Staff will be entering the public consultation phase for this amendment in February. Public consultation must be at least a 35-day period, meaning it will last until mid-March. This can all be done via notice and mailing to affected landowners, and no public meeting will be required. Early engagement with the MECP was in 2023, and pre-consultation with municipalities and other implementing bodies occurred from January 9 – 29. No comments were received.

MOTION #SPC: 2024-01-03

**Moved by Jennette Walker
Seconded by Allan Rothwell**

“THAT the Source Protection Committee directs staff to begin public consultation on the proposed updates to the Source Protection Plan.”

Carried

WATER WISE EVENTS UPDATE

Mary Lynn MacDonald provided an update on the Water Wise outreach events, which has been a successful means of promoting best practices for private water wells. Both staff and partner organizations have been pleased with the response to these events. To date, events have been held at:

- Mid-Huron Beach with the Ashfield Colborne Lakefront Association
- Goderich with the Goderich Lions Club
- Dublin Community Centre with the Dublin Lions Club
- Monkton Community Centre with the Monkton Lions Club
- Londesboro Lions Hall with the Londesboro Lions Club

Including the recent Londesboro event, 199 water samples were received for analysis. Working in partnership with Huron Perth Public Health and the London Public Health Lab staff were able to incorporate a tracking code on all the sample bottles distributed through these events. The number of bottles received with the tracking code indicates that some samples were delivered to the London lab outside of the events. Staff have included more similar events in the three-year workplan. Mary Lynn also noted that she

has received calls from other Source Protection Regions to find out more about organizing these events.

SPC Members were pleased with these results and had suggestions for other areas to target, such as the Wroxeter/Gorrie/Fordwich area, as well as Atwood.

POSSIBLE FUTURE OF FREE PRIVATE WATER TESTING

Mary Lynn MacDonald reported that one of the recommendations in the 2023 Auditor General's Value-for-Money Audit of Public Health Ontario includes streamlining laboratories' operations. Part of this would include closing six public health laboratories, and gradually discontinuing private drinking water testing. This is of concern, as Source Protection Regions have been directed to deliver education and outreach to private well owners under the Best Practices initiative. One of the goals of the Water Wise events is to encourage well owners to test their well water more frequently. Phasing out testing would require private well owners to pay a fee to have their water tested at a commercial laboratory, which disincentivizes testing. Staff recommend that the SPC direct a letter to Minister Thompson requesting that this phase out not proceed.

MOTION #SPC: 2024-01-04

**Moved by Philip Keightley
Seconded by Mary Ellen Foran**

“THAT the Source Protection Committee direct a letter to Minister Thompson requesting that the province not proceed with the recommended phase out of free private well testing in Ontario, and

“FURTHER, THAT area municipalities, the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, other Source Protection Committees, and local health units be forwarded the letter and asked for their support.”

Carried.

PRESENTATION – LOCAL UPDATES TO CLIMATE CHANGE INFORMATION & PROJECT INITIATIVES

Derry Wallis, Huron County Climate Change and Energy Specialist, and Hannah Cann, Perth County Stewardship and Resiliency Specialist, presented on various county initiatives that have been in place or will be implemented to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts. Initiatives include the Huron Clean Water Project, which has

been in place for 20 years, and the newly established Perth County Stewardship Project. They also highlighted the Rural Recharge program, which aims to install a network both Level 3 and Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations across 6 counties. They are looking toward implementation of this initiative in 2025. Each county also has a number of other initiatives including greenhouse gas reduction plans, conservation and demand management plan for energy usage, evaluating natural assets and looking at operations of the county and lower tier municipalities through a climate change lens, among other initiatives.

LIAISON UPDATES

There were no liaison updates at this time.

NEXT MEETING


The next meeting is planned for March 27, 2024. A tour is planned for the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System facility prior to the meeting. The meeting location is to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55a.m.



Matt Pearson
Chair



Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary