

SOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEE (SPC) MEETING MINUTES

March 29th, 2023

IN PERSON and

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

LIBRO COMMUNITY HALL, CLINTON

MEMBERS PRESENT

Matt Pearson, Doug Hocking, Paul Heffer, Jennette Walker, Bert Dykstra, Philip Keightley, John Thompson, Mary Ellen Foran

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Allan Rothwell, Rowland Howe

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dave Frayne, John Graham, Alyssa Keller

LIAISONS PRESENT

Ausable Bayfield Source Protection Authority (SPA) Liaison – Brian Horner
Maitland Valley Source Protection Authority (SPA) Liaison – Phil Beard
Huron Perth Public Health Liaison – Patrick Landry

LIAISONS PRESENT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) Liaison Officer – Beth Forrest

DWSP STAFF PRESENT

Donna Clarkson, Mary Lynn MacDonald, Tim Cumming, Elizabeth Balfour

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Kyle Davis – Wellington County, RMO, via video
Sandra Edelsward - Program Coordinator, Drinking Water Testing, Public Health Ontario

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Matt Pearson called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

AGENDA

MOTION #SPC: 2023-03B-01

“That the agenda for the March 29th, 2023 meeting be approved with correction.”

Carried by Consensus.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION #SPC: 2023-03B-02

Moved by Bert Dykstra
Seconded by Mary Ellen Foran

“That the SPC minutes from March 1st, 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 reported that he, along with Mary Lynn MacDonald, Donna Clarkson, Doug Hocking, and John Thompson, attended a Climate Change webinar presented by Conservation Ontario on March 28th, which was very interesting and informative.

PROGRAM UPATE

Mary Lynn MacDonald, Co-DWSP Program Supervisor, reported on the progress of proposed updates to Source Protection Plans (SPP). The proposed updates to the SPP was approved by the Ausable Bayfield Source Protection Authority (SPA) during a meeting held on March 16th, 2023. The SPP and associated documents was submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) on Friday, March 24th, 2023 by Source Protection staff. Staff have been meeting with each implementing municipality, in-person or via Zoom, for an annual update of the program and review of Risk Management Services. A municipal newsletter has been circulated to municipalities with updates on Source Protection Committee appointments, submission of the Proposed Updated Source Protection Plan and an introduction to the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) Best Practices. Staff working with SPC members, municipalities and businesses have created another video for distribution to the public via social media. This video titled “Be Part of the Water Team” highlights the steps and many people involved in providing residences and businesses with safe municipal drinking water. A thank you to Paul Heffer, Central Municipal Representative, for narrating the video. The municipalities, business, and organizations featured in the video were also acknowledged.

SOURCE PROTECTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Donna Clarkson, Co-DWSP Program Supervisor, provided a summary on the implementation of Source Protection Plans (SPPs) for the 2022 reporting period. For each significant threat policy in the Source Protection Plans, there is a corresponding monitoring policy. Municipalities, provincial ministries, conservation authorities and source protection authorities must submit annual progress reports relating to policy implementation. The Town of Minto delivers its risk management services through Wellington Water Risk Management Officials. Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority is delivering Part IV Risk Management services on behalf of eight municipalities. In 2022, 36 development review notices were issued under Section 59 of the *Clean Water Act*. Ten Risk Management Plans were completed (7 renewals, and 3 new plans). One RMP remains outstanding, and one was recently completed prior to this meeting. Municipalities are also required to report on policies where they are named the implementing body. Ten municipalities have updated their Official plans to incorporate SPP policies. For septic inspections, which fall under the Ontario Building Code, 154 of 204 septic systems within a vulnerability score of 10 were inspected. Fifty systems were not inspected due to COVID delays from prior years, staffing issues, and lack of landowner cooperation. MECP continues to screen for Prescribed Instruments (PI)

applications that pose a threat to drinking water. In 2022, they reviewed 10 applications for sewage related threats.

2022 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Donna Clarkson outlined the draft 2022 Annual Progress Report for comment. As per the *Clean Water Act*, SPAs are required to provide regular reports to MECP on the implementation of SPP and the overall success of the program. The SPC must provide written comment to the SPA about the extent to which the committee feels the objectives set out in the Source Protection Plan are being achieved. Progress is to be scored according to three possible grades: Progressing Well/On Target, Satisfactory, or Limited Progress.

By consensus, the following comments from the SPC members will be included in the annual report:

We acknowledge and thank the local municipalities, stakeholders, and other implementing bodies for their contribution to this annual progress report, and for their ongoing efforts to implement the Source Protection Plan.

Following approval of the SPPs in 2015, the Committee has focused on tasks related to implementation and amendments. This includes assessing progress made by stakeholders in implementing the SPP policies, identifying areas for improvement, and overseeing technical updates and amendments.

The Source Protection Committee for the ABMV Source Protection Region reviewed the recent implementation results, noting that significant progress has been made since the SPPs came into effect in 2015. Although the Covid-19 pandemic has created daunting challenges, implementing bodies continued their efforts to ensure that municipal drinking water is well protected. The majority of the SPP policies have been implemented and 98% of significant drinking water threats have been addressed. For these reasons, the SPC feels confident in their assessment that implementation of the Source Protection Plans is progressing well or on target.

MOTION #SPC: 2023-03B-03

**Moved by Jennette Walker
Seconded by Doug Hocking**

“That the Source Protection Committee approve the SPC comments on the annual report as drafted and direct staff to submit the Annual Progress Report to the Source Protection Authorities for submission to the Province”

Carried.

BE PART OF THE WATER TEAM!

Staff along with the SPC members watched the draft video of “Be Part of the Water Team” featuring Paul Heffer. The video will be sent to all groups that participated in the footage for review and approval. Once approval is received the video will be sent to municipalities and promoted through social media.

WHAT’S IN MY WELL?

Chair Matt Pearson welcomed and introduced Sandy Edelsward, Program Coordinator Drinking Water Testing for Public Health Ontario. Sandy provided a presentation on Public Health Ontario’s role in private well water testing. For context, private well water is tested for free through Health Units for bacteria if the private landowner submits a sample. These samples are sent to Public Health Ontario’s laboratory for analysis, and Public Health Ontario collects and analyzes results for regions across the province. A review of the incidents leading up to and after the Walkerton tragedy were presented, as well as the perspective from the lab during that time. At present, bacteria data has been analyzed for different regions from 2003 to 2022 with an average bacterial contamination rate of 35% for southwestern Ontario. Bacterial contamination rates vary at different scales with some local Public Health Units having rates as low as 17%. Public Health Ontario also engaged in a spatial analysis of microbial hotspots, and five hotspots were identified. These hotspots do not always align with the highest incidence rates of microbial contamination, but they do align with karst formations (highly soluble rock with empty pockets throughout). Going forward, Public Health Ontario would like to see increased testing of private wells as testing has decreased year after year since 2002. Increased well stewardship and maintenance also remains a hope going forward.

THE WATER YOU DRINK: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO KEEPING IT SAFE

Chair Matt Pearson welcomed and introduced Patrick Landry, Health Inspector from Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH). Patrick reviewed HPPH's role which includes private well testing, but also vaccinations, food inspections, beach/lake testing, pool inspections, and more. Under HPPH's role, there are two different protocols for water: one ensure safe drinking water, and the other safe recreational water. For regulated water systems, jurisdiction either falls under MECP or Public Health. For regulated systems under Public Health, these are usually small drinking water systems such as campgrounds or communal wells. These samples are submitted to a private lab for testing and include more than bacterial analysis. Unregulated systems include private wells and Public Health protocols are related to testing of the water, not maintenance of the well system. For private wells, sampling for bacteria is free, and collected samples can be submitted to the Health Unit within 24-48 hrs of collection. For additional analysis like sodium, chloride, or nitrate, private landowners would need to submit a sample to a private lab at their own expense. HPPH is reviewing gaps and barriers that may be preventing private landowners from testing their well water for bacteria.

LIAISON UPDATES

Beth Forrest, MECP Liaison, noted that MECP liaisons have been busy attending many SPC meetings this month and that the Ministry is still working through Section 36 and Section 34 amendments.

Phil Beard, Maitland Valley SPA Liaison, and Brian Horner, Ausable Bayfield SPA Liaison, did not have an update at this time.

Patrick Landry, Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH) Liaison, had no update at this time.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be June 14th, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.



Matt Pearson
Chair

Elizabeth Balfour
Secretary