

HALTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Meeting Number: 02 17
Date of Meeting: **Thursday, September 28, 2017**
Time of Meeting: 3:00 pm
Conservation Halton Admin. Office
2596 Britannia Road
Burlington ON
Telephone: 905.336.1158 x 2236

AGENDA

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1.0 Consent Items	
Roll Call & Mileage	
Approval of HRSPA Board of Directors Agenda dated September 28, 2017	
Approval of HRSPA Board of Directors Minutes dated March 23, 2017	
2.0 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest	
3.0 Action Items	
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5.0 Adjournment	

**HALTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY
CHBD 02 17 01**

REPORT TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Diane Bloomfield, Manager, Source Water Protection
905-854-9229 ext. 223

DATE: September 28, 2017

SUBJECT: **Appointment of an Agricultural Representative to the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee**

Recommendations:

THAT the Halton Region Source Protection Authority **appoint Mr. Bert Andrews to the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee to represent the agricultural sector for a period of five years.**

Summary

Aligned with the requirements of the regulations under the *Clean Water Act*, the schedule for Source Protection Committee member replacements is being followed with the first member stepping down in August 2017. Staff are recommending the appointment of Mr. Bert Andrews to fill the vacancy. He is a highly qualified candidate to represent the agricultural sector and complies with the eligibility requirements of the Act.

Background

The Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee comprises ten members representing municipal, economic and other interests. The Committee's composition is:

- A chair
- Municipal representation from three groupings:
 1. City of Hamilton, Niagara Region, Town of Grimsby
 2. Regions of Halton and Peel, Cities of Burlington and Mississauga, Towns of Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills
 3. County of Wellington, Township of Puslinch
- Two agricultural representatives
- One industrial/commercial representative
- One environmental representative
- Two members representing health or the general public

Ontario Regulation 288/07 under the *Clean Water Act* sets out the criteria for membership on a source protection committee, including notification of vacancies, and conditions and terms of appointment. The Hamilton Region and Halton Region Source Protection Authorities approved the appointment of the existing Committee membership in 2015 following the regulatory requirements. At that time, staggered expiry dates were assigned for each member position appointment to provide for knowledge transfer and consistency in approach in future years. In August 2017, the appointment of one of the agricultural representatives expired.

Report

In August 2017, one of the Source Protection Committee member positions representing agricultural was vacated in agreement with the member replacement schedule. The sitting member did not wish to be reappointed as he has served as a member for almost 10 years. As a result, staff undertook a recruitment process. To maintain a diversity of agricultural interests represented on the committee, we were hopeful that someone representing interests other than swine and cash crop could be found.

Firstly, the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture was notified of the approaching expiration of the membership of their representative on the committee and was requested to seek a replacement.

Staff then broadened the search in accordance with the regulatory requirements with notification of the vacancy and recruitment process provided through

- the source protection and Hamilton Conservation Authority websites
- local Councillor communications
- social media
- the Conservation Authorities' Agricultural Advisory Committee
- the two agricultural representatives on the Committee and through them to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture field service representative
- some of the nursery/greenhouse operators in the Source Protection Region

Although hearing that others were interested to fill the vacancy, we received one application. The applicant is Mr. Bert Andrews. The Halton Region Federation of Agriculture (attached) and the Source Protection Management Committee have endorsed the nomination of Mr. Andrews.

Mr. Andrews has a varied background primarily working in the pesticide industry and owning a market garden and winery. He has received many awards and has been recognized by the province for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence. His extensive knowledge would be an asset to the Source Protection Committee.

Prepared by and respectfully submitted:



Diane L. Bloomfield, Manager
Source Water Protection

Approved for circulation:



Hassaan Basit
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

HRFA

Halton Region Federation of Agriculture • 650 Joyce Blvd., • Milton, ON L9T 3C6
Telephone/Fax: 905-876-8026, E-Mail: speccomm@lara.on.ca

July 28, 2017

Conservation Halton
Source Water Protection
4052 Milbrough Line, RR#2
Campbellville, Ontario
L0P 1B0

Re: Vacancy on the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee –
Agriculture Sector

Attention: Diane L. Bloomfield, M.Sc., P.Geo
Manager, Source Water Protection

Dear Diane;

Please accept this correspondence as the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture's endorsement of Mr. Bert Andrews as an agricultural representative to the Halton-Hamilton Water Source Protection Committee.

Mr. Andrews currently sits on the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture's Board of Directors and is an active participant on the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee. We believe Mr. Andrews will provide valuable input for the agriculture sector on this committee.

Thank you for the opportunity for the agricultural sector to have a voice on this committee. Please feel free to contact the undersigned if additional information is required.

Sincerely,



Allan Ehrlick
HRFA President

HALTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY
CHBD 02 17 02

REPORT TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Diane Bloomfield, Manager, Source Water Protection
905-854-9229 ext. 223

DATE: Sept. 28, 2017

SUBJECT: **Finalization of the Greensville Municipal Well Supply Technical Studies and Update to the Source Protection Plan**

Recommendations:

THAT the Halton Region Source Protection Authority **receive for information the report entitled Finalization of the Greensville Municipal Well Supply Technical Studies and Update to the Source Protection Plan.**

AND FURTHER THAT the Halton Region Source Protection Authority **endorse the pursuit of an amendment to the source protection plan to include the results of the recent technical studies completed to understand the sustainability of the Greensville municipal well system.**

Summary

The technical studies for the City of Hamilton's Greensville municipal well supply, including the proposed new backup well, are now complete and show that the primary risk to the water supply is from the operation of nearby septic systems. The Source Protection Committee has endorsed pursuing an amendment to the Source Protection Plan to include the findings of the studies and ensure recent mapping of protection areas is used for planning decisions.

Background

The *Clean Water Act, 2006* requires that communities assess the sustainability of their drinking water sources to ensure they remain viable for future generations. The Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee has overseen the production of a plan that, when implemented, aims to protect municipal drinking water sources from contamination and overuse. However, when the plan was produced, technical studies of the Greensville municipal well supply were incomplete. These studies are now finalized.

Report

Greensville Municipal Well System Studies

The source protection plan, in effect since December 31, 2015, includes a map of a protection area where certain activities could impact the quality of the City of Hamilton's Greensville municipal well water. However, the study to assess if there will be sufficient quantity of water to supply the existing and future needs of the well and to map a protection area for water quantity had not been started when the plan was produced.

The province funded a study to assess the sustainability of the well and map the protection area. This study was complete in 2014, however, at that time the City of Hamilton had begun the process to add an additional well to the Greensville system as backup. In the following year staff approached the province for funding to undertake additional study of the new well and to update the previous work for the existing well using more advanced modelling methods. The province provided most of the funding with the City paying for the water quality assessment of the new well.

The new modelling method used is considered advanced because the software allows for groundwater and surface water interactions, for example groundwater discharge to streams or streams recharging the water table, and it was run in a transient mode, i.e. climate conditions change daily. The model was used to map the protection area for water quality through an understanding of where contaminants spilled on ground surface could flow to the wells. It was also used to model a protection area where water taking by others or a decrease in the recharge to the water table could impact the quantity of water available for the wells to draw. The resultant protection areas are shown on the attached figures.

Within the wellhead protection area for the quality of the water (Figure 1), a few threat activities may be ongoing that will have to be verified. The main activity is the operation of septic systems. The source protection plan includes policies to address the risk from septic systems but relies heavily on the on-site sewage system maintenance program required under the Ontario Building Code and administered by the City of Hamilton.

The wellhead protection area for water quantity is quite large (Figure 2). It includes the influence of all pumping wells in the vicinity of the municipal wells in addition to the influence associated with the operating quarries and their water taking. The study results show that these water takings and any additional water takings or anticipated reduction in recharge in the area will have limited effect on the ability of the Greensville municipal well system to meet its demands. The system is classed as being of low risk, which means that no policies are required for inclusion in the source protection plan to ensure the sustainability of the system.

Source Protection Plan Update

The *Clean Water Act* allows for the source protection authorities to propose updates to the source protection plan when in their opinion and the opinion of the source protection committee that the amendment is advisable. The Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee passed a resolution at their June 20, 2017 meeting directing staff to proceed with the amendment, to consult with the public on the study findings, and to bring the proposed plan update to their September meeting for review. Preliminary discussions with the Committee show that amendment of the current source protection policies is unlikely.

The Source Protection Plan update under Section 34 of the Act will primarily consist of the inclusion of a summary of the results of the studies in the Assessment Report for the Hamilton Region Source Protection Area and the replacement of the figure showing the wellhead protection area for water quality in the Source Protection Plan. Staff will also use this opportunity to make small typographical and formatting edits to the documents.

Staff collaborated with the City of Hamilton and participated in the public information centre held July 11, 2017 for the Greensville municipal backup well Class Environmental Assessment. Letters and the attached figures were sent to property owners within the wellhead protection areas notifying them of the release of the technical study reports and welcoming their review and comments. Staff will again participate in the City's public information centre in the fall and consult on the proposed Source Protection Plan amendment. Notification of the proposed amendment will be sent to the City of Hamilton for their review and Council endorsement.

In previous reports we mentioned that a water quantity wellhead protection area for some of the City of Guelph municipal wells extends into the Source Protection Area within the Township of Puslinch. Their study and policy discussions are still ongoing so the findings will be included in an update to the Source Protection Plan in a future year.

Prepared by and respectfully submitted:

Approved for circulation:



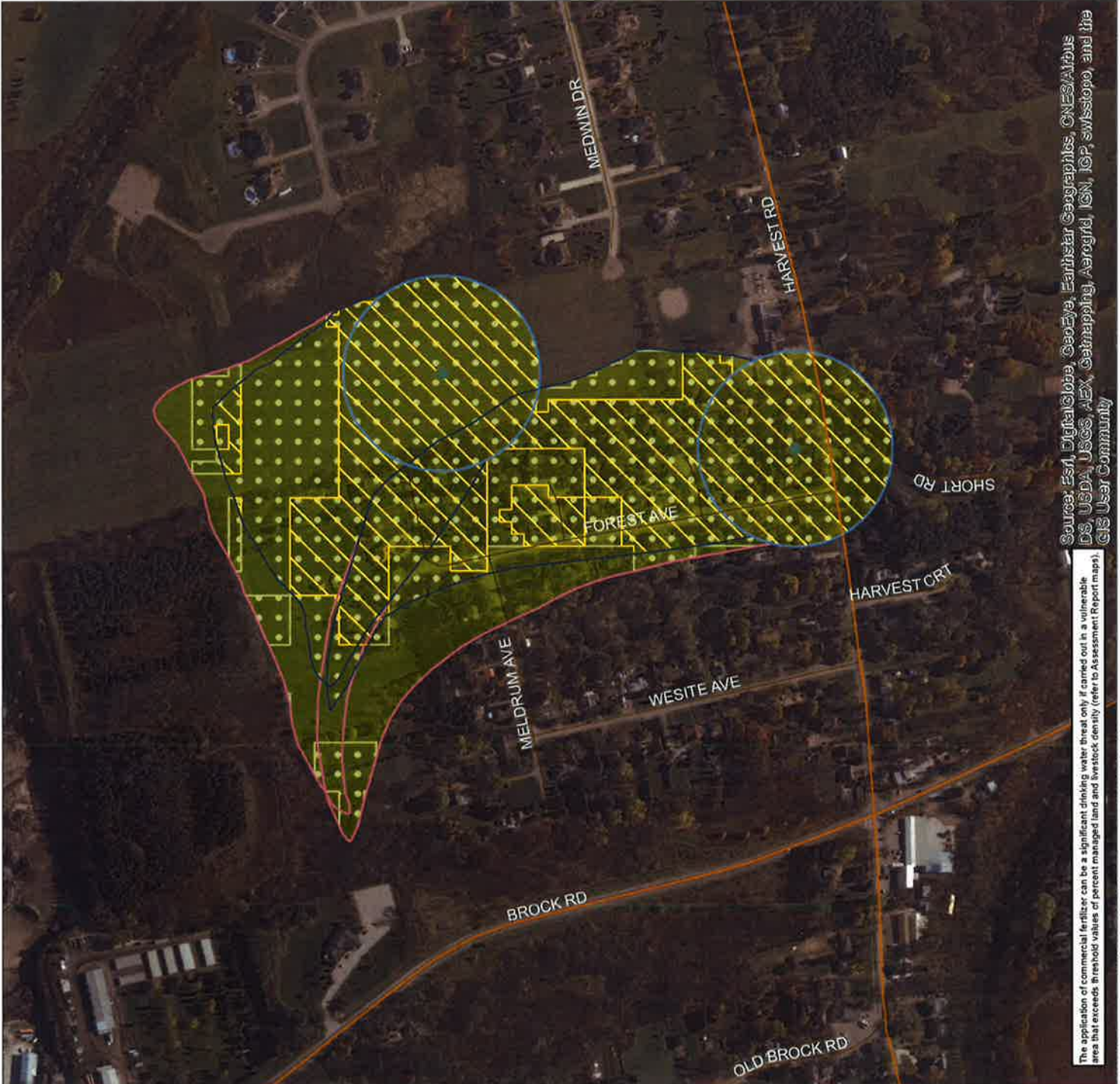
Diane L. Bloomfield, Manager
Source Water Protection



Hassaan Basit
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer



Figure 1
Greensville Significant groundwater threat area for water quality



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aergrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

The application of commercial fertilizer can be a significant drinking water threat only if carried out in a vulnerable area that exceeds threshold values of percent managed land and livestock density (refer to Assessment Report maps).

This mapping is produced by Conservation Halton and should be used for information purposes only. Data on this map is used under license with Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Copyright 2017.

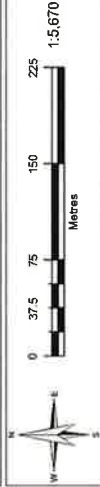


Figure 2
Greenville Significant groundwater threat area for water quantity

Legend

Roads

- Highway
- Regional

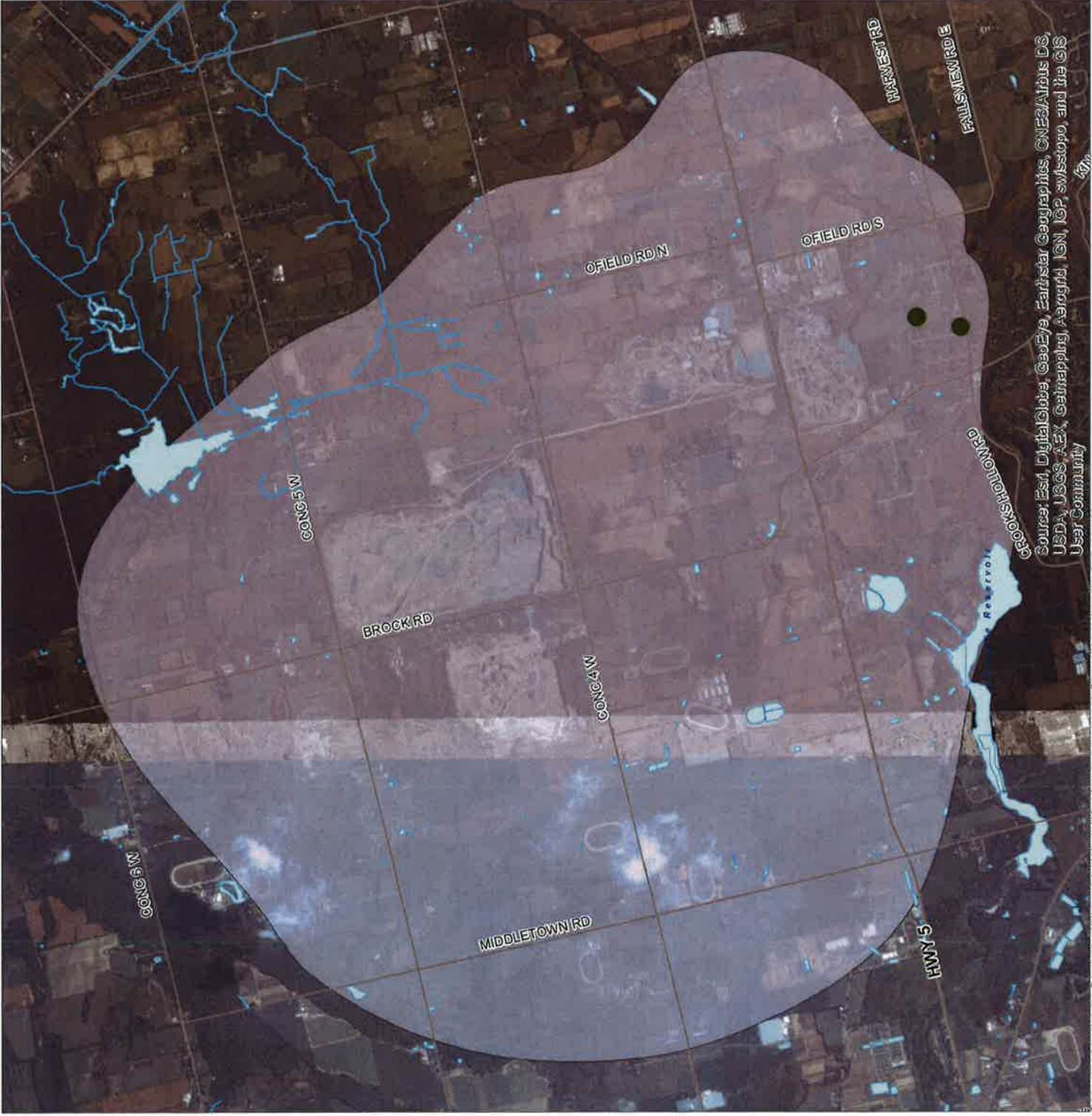
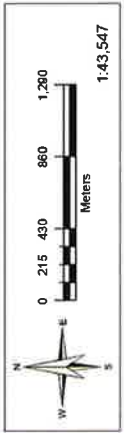
Hydrography

- Waterbody
- Municipal Well

Greenville WHPA-Q1 and Q2

Note: Studies have shown that the Greenville well water source is sustainable and at low risk for water quantity issues. Therefore, there are no significant threats to this water source and no policies will apply.

Source : Earthx Groundwater Model (2017)
Projection : UTM NAD 83 Zone 17
Date : June 2017



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

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**HALTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY
HRSPA 02 17 03**

REPORT TO: Halton Region Source Protection Authority

FROM: Barbara Veale, Director Planning and Regulations
905-336-1158 x 2273

DATE: September 28, 2017

**SUBJECT: Source Water Protection
Memorandum of Agreement – Conservation Halton/Hamilton CA**

Recommendation

THAT the Halton Region Source Protection Authority **renew the attached Memorandum of Agreement, respecting the joint advancement of drinking water source protection within the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region, with the Hamilton Region Source Protection Authority as per Section 6(3) of the *Clean Water Act* effective from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2020.**

Report

In 2004, Conservation Halton and the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority were grouped into one source water protection region known as the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region. The two CA's have worked together on the source water protection program and this working partnership was confirmed through a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the two CA's was effective from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2009.

With the passage and proclamation of the *Clean Water Act*, on July 3, 2007, source protection regions had 90 days from proclamation of the Act to enter into a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). A new MOA was executed between the two authorities for a term 5 years running from October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2012. As per Section 6(3) of the *Clean Water Act*, the agreement dealt with the following:

- a) The exercise and performance of the lead protection authority's powers and duties, and
- b) Other matters related to the relationship between the lead source protection authority and the other source protection authorities in the source protection region.

In June 2014, the MOA was reviewed and renewed by the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Authorities retroactively from October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2017. It is now time to renew the agreement again. Conservation Halton staff have reviewed the agreement and are satisfied that it is working well. No substantive changes are recommended. The period for renewal is from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2020.

Prepared and respectfully submitted:



Barbara J. Veale
Director, Planning and Regulations

Approved for circulation:



Hassaan Basit,
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

HALTON -HAMILTON
SOURCE PROTECTION REGION

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN:

**THE HALTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY
(HRSPA)**

AND

**HAMILTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY
(HSPA)**

Hereinafter called the "Parties"

Background

- A. Whereas the *Clean Water Act, 2006, S.O. 2006, c.22* as amended (*CWA*), establishes a drinking water source protection area as the area over which a conservation authority has jurisdiction under the *Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.27, as amended (CAA)* and directs the conservation authority to exercise and perform the powers and duties of a drinking water source protection authority, as further set out in the *CWA*;
- B. Whereas the *CWA* provides for the Minister of the Environment to make a regulation consolidating two or more source protection areas into a drinking water source protection region and designating a lead source protection authority, Ontario Regulation 284/07 establishes the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region comprised of the Halton Region Source Protection Authority and, the Hamilton Region Source Protection Authority as one source protection region, herein after referred to the 'Halton-Hamilton Region';
- C. Whereas the *CWA* states that the lead source protection authority and the other source protection authorities in the source protection region shall, within 90 days after the establishment of the region, enter into an agreement that deals with,
 - a) the exercise and performance of the lead source protection authority's powers and duties; and
 - b) other matters related to the relationship between the lead source protection authority and the other source protection authorities in the source protection region;
- D. Whereas the *CWA* authorizes that if no agreement is entered into within 90 days of the establishment of the region, the Minister of the Environment may make an order directed to the source protection authorities in the source protection region governing any matter pertaining to the exercise and performance of the lead source protection authority's powers and duties and/or other matters related to the relationship between the lead and other source protection authorities in the source protection region;

Therefore the two source protection authorities named above are entering into this Agreement.

1.0 Definitions

In this Agreement,

Lead source protection authority - means the source protection authority within the source protection region designated by the Minister of the Environment under section 6 of the CWA and regulations to carry out the duties discussed in Section 7.0 of this agreement. See also "source protection authority" and "source protection region".

Management committee - refers to the committee comprised of the chairs, vice-chairs, chief administrative officers and a senior staff representative from each source protection authority with its responsibilities identified in Section 4.0. The chair of the source protection committee will be an ex officio member of the management committee.

Source protection area - means the area referred to in section 1(2) of Ontario Regulation 284/07 under the Clean Water Act (CWA).

Source protection authority (SPA) - means a conservation authority that is required under subsection 4(2) of the CWA to exercise and perform the powers and duties of a drinking water source protection authority under the CWA.

Source protection committee (SPC) - means the multi-stakeholder committee established under section 7 of the CWA for the source protection region, to carry out the functions set out in the CWA and regulations to provide recommendations to the Minister of the Environment on source protection matters.

Source protection region - refers to the consolidation of two or more source protection areas into a source protection region. This Agreement pertains to the source protection region comprised of the HRSPA and HSPA jurisdictions as modified in O.Reg. 284/07, herein referred to as the 'Halton-Hamilton Region'.

'The CWA' - refers to the *Clean Water Act, 2006, S. O. 2006 c. 22, as amended.*

'The CAA' - refers to the *Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C. 27 as amended.*

Trust account - refers to a segregated account in the name of the Halton Region Conservation Authority in Trust established with a Canadian chartered bank or other financial institution acceptable to the Crown and Conservation Ontario, into which the lead source protection authority shall deposit all funds advanced by Conservation Ontario under their Memorandum of Agreement and which is subject to the conditions set out in this Agreement.

2.0 Purpose of Agreement

- 2.1 The purpose of this Agreement is to jointly advance drinking water source protection within the watershed region, premised upon mutual consent and agreement between the parties, while respecting the individual needs and priorities of drinking water source protection that are unique to each watershed.
- 2.2 This Agreement sets out the terms for the administration of the source protection program, the roles and responsibilities of the parties, the roles and responsibilities of the lead source protection authority and the means by which the parties will fulfil the requirements of the CWA.

3.0 Amendments

- 3.1 This Agreement shall come into effect upon approval of each source protection authority board.
- 3.2 Changes to the scope or terms of this Agreement may be requested by either of the parties to this Agreement and made by exchange of letters, indicating agreement by both parties to the new terms. Any such letters shall be considered as forming part of this Agreement when approved by the parties.
- 3.3 HRSPA as the lead source protection authority shall engage both parties in undertaking a review of this Agreement after a three year period from its date of signing.

4.0 Principles

- 4.1 The parties agree to cooperate on delivery of their respective legislated and regulated obligations and other responsibilities as assigned by the Halton-Hamilton SPC for drinking water source protection in accordance with the following principles:
 - a) Contribute to the protection of groundwater and lake-based drinking water sources;
 - b) Consult with upper and lower tier municipalities and other watershed partners;
 - c) Build on work already completed and avoid duplication;
 - d) Commit to continually advancing the science of watershed management;
 - e) Integrate source protection plans and policies within watershed plans;
 - f) Strive for consistency across the Halton-Hamilton Region, while recognizing local circumstances;
 - g) Share resources and staff as appropriate;
 - h) Consider any new data and information arising from this joint source protection program to be publicly owned and available, subject to the requirements and restrictions under the *Freedom of Information and Privacy Act* of Ontario and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56*; and
 - i) Respect data or assessment products End User Licence Agreements (EULAs) for existing data and data ownership and distribution policies of municipalities within the Halton-Hamilton Region.

5.0 Watershed Region Governance

- 5.1 The parties agree to establish a watershed region management committee, which will be responsible for the overall administration and coordination of the activities of both source protection authorities.
- 5.2 Each source protection authority will have equal representation on this committee. Composition of the committee will include the Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Chief Administration Officers and a senior staff representative of each source protection authority in the region. The chair of the lead conservation authority shall serve as the chair of this committee. The chair of the source protection committee will also be an ex officio member of the management committee.

5.3 Responsibilities of the management committee include:

- a) hiring the source protection planning project manager;
 - b) setting priorities, establishing annual work plans and budgets;
 - c) establishing reporting procedures for the project manager and the technical team;
 - d) liaising with the municipalities in the source protection region;
 - e) participating in the selection of the chair for appointment by the Minister of the Environment as directed by the Ministry;
 - f) establishing the composition and membership of the source protection committee for the Halton-Hamilton Region in accordance with the *CWA* and its regulations;
 - g) coordinating reports to the source protection committee;
 - h) ensuring the directions of the source protection committee are carried out.
- 5.4 The management committee will make decisions by consensus to the extent possible. Otherwise decisions will be made by majority vote. Meetings will be conducted in accordance with accepted standards and procedures and the applicable by-laws of each party. In the event of a dispute that cannot be resolved, the dispute resolution mechanism identified in Section 7 will be followed.

6.0 Responsibilities of Each Source Protection Authority

- 6.1 As per the *CWA* and regulations, each conservation authority board constitutes a source protection authority for its source protection area.
- 6.2 Each source protection authority agrees to fulfill the following responsibilities for its source protection area:
- a) Provide scientific and technical support and resources to the source protection committee as necessary;
 - b) Complete the work assigned to them for the preparation of the terms of reference, assessment reports, source protection plans, and associated consultation plans for their source protection area, in accordance with requirements set out in the *CWA* and regulations under the direction of the source protection committee;
 - c) Supervise staff or consultants, as necessary in undertaking (b), and ensure all legislated and appropriate health and safety requirements are met;
 - d) In cooperation with the source protection committee, ensure adequate local public consultation processes in all source protection planning initiatives within their source protection area;
 - e) In cooperation with the source protection committee, seek input and endorsement by all watershed municipalities within their source protection area on the terms of reference, assessment reports and source protection plan;
 - f) Review the terms of reference, assessment report and source protection plan for their source protection area as recommended for approval by the source protection committee giving consideration to (1) whether the source protection committee has completed the required work as outlined in the *CWA* and regulations and in other guidance issued by the Province; and (2) the anticipated impact on existing or planned watershed management objectives within the source protection area;

- g) Submit, through the lead source protection authority, the terms of reference, assessment report, and source protection plan prepared for their source protection area to the Minister of the Environment for approval;
- h) Prepare and submit to the Minister, through the lead source protection authority, annual progress reports that document the measures that *have* been taken to implement the source protection plan that applies in their source protection area and describes the extent to which the objectives set out in the plans are being achieved; and
- i) Make the annual progress reports publicly available.

7.0 Responsibilities of the Lead Source Protection Authority

- 7.1 The lead source protection authority will coordinate and administer the source protection planning process under the *overall* direction of the management committee.
- 7.2 The Halton Region Source Protection Authority has been designated as the lead source authority for the purposes of the CWA and this agreement. In addition to the responsibilities set out above for each source protection authority, the lead source authority shall *have* the following additional responsibilities:
 - a) assist the Hamilton Region Source Protection Authority in exercising and performing its powers and duties under CWA;
 - b) establish the Trust Account with funds provided by the Province in order to carry out its duties and responsibilities in accordance with CWA and its regulations;
 - c) co-ordinate the development of an overall work program for the preparation of the terms of reference, assessment reports and source protection plans for the watersheds within the watershed region to ensure consistency and efficient sharing of resources;
 - d) co-ordinate the work of the technical staff team including coordination of staff hiring and retaining consultants as required; share scientific and technical support and resources with the Hamilton Region Source Protection Authority as may be necessary to undertake an agreed upon work program for the Halton-Hamilton Region;
 - e) serve as a liaison between the Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Ontario and the Hamilton Region Source Protection Authority in regard to funding and administration;
 - f) provide scientific, technical and administrative support and resources to the source protection committee including serving as committee secretariat;
 - g) assist the source protection committee in exercising and performing the committee's powers and duties under the CWA for each of the source protection areas in the Halton-Hamilton Region;

8.0 Dispute Resolution

- 8.1 In the event of a disagreement between the parties, it is agreed that a mediator, acceptable mutually to each party, will be appointed for the purpose of resolving the dispute.

9.0 Duration

9.1 Subject to Section 3.0, this Agreement shall extend for a period of three years, commencing October 1, 2017 and ending September 30, 2020, and may be renewed by mutual consent.

10.0 General

10.1 The parties hereto agree to adhere to the terms, conditions, and guidelines contained in this Agreement.

10.2 Changes to the scope or terms of this Agreement may be made by mutual consent of the parties.

10.3 The parties hereto agree that any notice required to be given pursuant to this Agreement shall be sufficiently given if personally delivered or mailed by prepaid registered mail addressed as follows:

Chairman
The Halton Region Source Protection Authority
2596 Britannia Road West
Burlington ON L7P 0G3

Chairman
Hamilton Region Source Protection Authority
P.O. Box 81067
838 Mineral Springs Road
Ancaster ON L9G 4X1

IN WITNESS WHEREOF each party has hereunto affixed its Corporate Seal attested to by the signatures of its duly authorized Officers in that behalf;

DATED at _____, this _____ day of _____ 2017:

THE HALTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY:

Per: _____
Chairman

Per: _____
Chief Administrative Officer

HAMILTON REGION SOURCE PROTECTION AUTHORITY:

Per: _____
Chairman

Per: _____
Chief Administrative Officer