

REPORT TO: Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee
REPORT NO.: SPC-20-12-01
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DATE: November 27, 2020
SUBJECT: Source Protection Committee Guiding Principles Update

Recommendation

THAT the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee **endorse the Staff report Source Protection Committee Guiding Principles Update**

Executive Summary

The Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee mission statement was developed more than a decade ago. The committee has since achieved large milestones in drinking water source protection with support from the watershed-based Conservation Halton and Hamilton Conservation Authorities that form the source protection region. At a previous meeting held in 2020, the committee updated their mission statement to signify a renewed commitment in the twentieth year since the Walkerton drinking water tragedy. Draft wording for the accompanying guiding principles is provided for the committee's discussions and consideration.

Report

In 2020 while we face a pandemic that has caused a large human health tragedy across the world, we also remember the drinking water tragedy that happened in Walkerton, Ontario twenty years ago. We renew our commitment to protecting our drinking water sources.

Updated Mission Statement

In September 2020, the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee (HHSPC) endorsed the staff report SPC-2020-09-02: Source Protection Committee Mission Statement Update, as amended.

The HHSPC mission statement now reads as follows:

“To collaboratively develop and maintain a local watershed-based plan for the sustainable protection of municipal drinking water sources in the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region that is science-based and prevents, reduces or eliminates risks to Lake Ontario and groundwater sources of municipal drinking water”.

The mission statement features prominently on the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region webpage for the committee, at:

<http://www.protectingwater.ca/governance.cfm?smocid=1399>

Guiding principles for policy option evaluation process

The HHSPC developed guiding principles for use in the policy evaluation process and to assess policy options:

- Fairness: Is the policy equitable and fair in theory as well as practice to all stakeholders and the public?
- Flexibility: Does the policy provide opportunities for staggered implementation, if required? Does it encourage stakeholders and the public to share their knowledge and experience?
- Effectiveness: Will the policy be successful in reducing the risk to source water?
- Timeliness: Is the schedule for implementing the solution workable?
- Education and Stewardship: Does the policy provide options and possibilities for public involvement and understanding?
- Consistency: Is the policy consistent with approaches being used by other Source Protection Regions and municipalities?
- Cumulative Impacts: Will the policy address any cumulative impacts from threats?
- Cost: Are the financial implications for landowners and municipalities acceptable?

These are included in the Explanatory Document that accompanies the source protection plan, available at: <http://www.protectingwater.ca/docandmaps.cfm?smocid=1372>

Draft guiding principles

In general, guiding principles provide a committee or organization with a set of core values that are the building blocks to achieve the overarching goal set in the mission statement. Attached are some examples of guiding principles followed by other source protection committees in Ontario.

Draft wording is provided below in two different formats, for the discussion and consideration of the HHSPC. Several of the above HHSPC guiding principles for the development of policy directives were also considered in the draft wording below.

Draft wording - format 1 (concise):

“We value:

- Fair and reasonable solutions
- Consensus within our diverse group
- Clarity of information
- Open communication
- Respecting diversity of opinion”.

Draft wording - format 2 (detailed):

- Making decisions that are fair, reasonable and equitable through an open and transparent process
- Considering the best available watershed science including cumulative impacts and voluntarily-contributed local and traditional knowledge
- Enhancing awareness around the protection of drinking water sources through effective communication and outreach
- Ensuring that public concerns are heard and taken into consideration
- Consulting with all stakeholders including impacted landowners/businesses.

Signed & respectfully submitted:

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Attachments

Attachment 1: Other Source Protection Committee Mission Statements and Guiding Principles

Attachment 1
Other Source Protection Committee Mission Statements and Guiding Principles

Thames-Sydenham and Region SPC (2008)

Mission Statement: Protect sources of drinking water by developing a plan based on science and local cooperation.

Guiding Principles

We value:

- Fair and reasonable solutions
- Consensus within our diverse area group
- Clarity of information
- Open communication
- Respecting diversity of opinion

Quinte Source Protection Committee (2009)

Mission Statement: To develop a locally shaped comprehensive plan for the sustainable protection of public drinking water sources in the Quinte Source Protection Region that is both science based and reflective of local knowledge and experience and that will serve to enhance confidence in public drinking water sources.

Guiding Principles and Practices

To Lead:

- Preparation, presentation and promotion of the Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP)
- Involvement of the Public in the development of the SWPP
- Education of the Source Protection Committee (SPC) and the public in issues related to protecting source water
- Promotion of effective stewardship practices regarding environmental resources in areas requiring source water protection for public water supply
- Advocacy for protection of public source water and vulnerable areas

To Support:

- Long term implementation of the SWPP including the preparation of a review of the SWPP
- Science based research and monitoring activities of Quinte Conservation staff
- Quinte Source Protection Authority (QSPA) in an approval process for the SWPP
- Presentations to, and consultations with, Municipalities in the Quinte Source Protection Region

- Provision of advice to QSPA, Quinte staff, municipalities, residents, landowners and groups

To Facilitate

- Open and inclusive public consultation through promoting awareness, stimulating discussion, gathering feedback
- Utilization of a consensus approach to decision-making
- Heightened public awareness of the importance of protecting source water
- Development of confidence in public source water
- Continued improvement of all processes related to the sustainable protection of public drinking water sources in the Quinte Source Protection Region

Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Committee Commitment (2009)

The Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Committee is a multi-stakeholder committee selected to represent municipal, economic, general public and First Nations interests across the Source Protection Region. The Committee's ultimate role is to develop a Source Protection Plan that establishes policies for preventing, reducing or eliminating threats to sources of drinking water. In developing the plan, the committee members are committed to:

- Basing policies on the best available science, and where there is uncertainty, being mindful of the precautionary approach
- Considering and incorporating voluntarily contributed local and traditional knowledge
- Ensuring that public concerns are heard and taken into consideration
- Consulting with all stakeholders and in particular with impacted landowners/businesses
- Considering all economic impacts
- Making decisions that are fair and reasonable through an open and transparent process
- Advocating ongoing provincial funding to provide financial assistance to property/business owners, municipalities, agencies, and others for stewardship and other implementation measures.

Cataraqui Source Protection Committee Mission statement (2009)

The overall objective of the Cataraqui Source Protection Committee in partnership with local communities and the Ontario government, is to protect the quality and quantity of present and future sources of drinking water in the Cataraqui Source Protection Area. We will work with others to gather technical knowledge on which well-informed, consensus-based decisions can be made in an open and consultative manner. We will aim to propose policies in the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan that are appropriate, effective, and economical for local communities. We will make use of the available science to assess drinking water threats and issues and where there is uncertainty we will be mindful of the precautionary approach.

Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region

Local Source Protection Committee Mission Statement:

Providing leadership to engage the entire community in developing comprehensive, responsible solutions to protect our water resources.

Guiding Principles: We value:

- Comprehensive, science-based research
- Recognizing and engaging all members of the community as valued stakeholders
- Informed decision-making through communication, education and responsiveness to community enquiries
- Being open and transparent
- Sustainable and long-term decision making