

Conservation Ontario Source
Protection Planning Session

December 14, 2004

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Public Expectations of Initial Source Protection Efforts

- ✓ Presentation to Conservation Ontario
Source Protection Planning Session
- ✓ December 14, 2004

Transparency from the beginning

- ✓ Right now, as CA's and municipalities develop work plans for initial information and capacity building, involve the public
- ✓ Don't want technical work to leave public behind
- ✓ Essential to carry whole community forward as a collective source protection building exercise

Whole Public

- ✓ Need to include public broadly defined
- ✓ Target business and industrial sectors, land-owners, woodlot owners, farmers, politicians, municipal staff, educators, professionals, residents, rate-payer groups, stewardship and other conservation organizations, those involved in existing initiatives

Access to all information

- ✓ Information access needs to be easy and non-intimidating
- ✓ Needs to be multi-faceted - web based as well as walk-in availability
- ✓ Needs to be available on an as-we-go basis, without worrying about whether it's final or "signed off" - can give qualifications - theme of continuous improvement

Ownership and Buy-in

- ✓ Source protection plan has to be the watershed public's plan
- ✓ Recognition essential - maybe a watershed region logo for the plan in development from the very beginning
- ✓ Give people things to do right away to start source protection where they are - and ask for reports back to show plan taking effect even before there's an approved plan!

Formation of source protection planning committees

- ✓ Right away need to give thought to how committee members will be selected
- ✓ Prior to legislation, at least start reaching out to and building appreciation of source protection planning, and capacity to participate in likely sectors and among interested public

Types of Participation

- ✓ Right from the beginning, establish varied methods of participating in source protection planning as it is getting underway:
- ✓ To know about / read about
- ✓ To comment on
- ✓ To hear discussions on
- ✓ To have input into decisions

Education and Outreach to community

- ✓ Needs to be targeted
- ✓ Reach specific audiences
- ✓ What is this going to mean for us?
- ✓ What is the vision for source protection in the watershed?
- ✓ What are the long term implications? Will it really work? How will the negatives be overcome? (Cost, time, complexity)

Getting community's professionals on board

- ✓ Source protection planning as a concept must become ingrained among several key professional groups
- ✓ Land use planners, hydrogeologists, engineers, water suppliers, developers, lawyers, real estate agents, academics, health professionals - all including private and public
- ✓ Public health involvement key from outset

Reaching interested public

- ✓ Potentially huge population
- ✓ Need to use a variety of mechanisms to reach people
- ✓ Flyers may be very effective and inexpensive - make the message direct and specific to the watershed and the topic; not too generic

Reaching Interested Public cont'd

- ✓ Make the message useful and in a handy format that people will keep
- ✓ Fridge magnet for watershed source protection's web site
- ✓ Email sign up list for announcements of developments and new material
- ✓ Calendar of upcoming steps
- ✓ Continual record of achievement

NGO involvement

- ✓ How does this pertain to the issues we already work on?
- ✓ May be over-stretched OR may fear exclusion
- ✓ Will our input truly matter? How will we be included?
- ✓ Can groups and organizations be networked?
- ✓ Funding for certain positions on committees

No time to waste

- ✓ Walkerton tragedy was May 2000
- ✓ Source protection is first barrier
- ✓ Justice O'Connor thought six months from date of his report could establish a framework - we're two years beyond that now
- ✓ These are health issues

Interim Protection

- ✓ Right away the watershed entities (CA's, municipalities, First Nations and other governments, in particular) should develop a plan for interim protection
- ✓ How to identify need for interim protection
 - what criteria
- ✓ What kinds of steps will be taken
- ✓ If new tools are needed, plan to flag to province

Scope of the plan - building terms of reference

- ✓ While waiting for legislation from the province, build groundwork with above noted audiences about scope of source protection planning and implementation
- ✓ Ensure there is community appreciation of ground / surface waters; municipal / non-municipal systems and supplies; point / non-point threats

Scope of the plan cont'd

- ✓ Start issuing descriptive work right away as it is developed
- ✓ “Here are our municipal systems; here is the number of people on private supplies; here is the variety of sources of drinking water”
- ✓ Ensure historical uses and future uses are clearly within the scope

A plan for sustained momentum

- ✓ Plan and look for source protection benefits from the very start
- ✓ Build excitement and sense of community
- ✓ This is about where we each live and work
- ✓ This is about the legacy we are leaving our children
- ✓ This is our community's plan for a healthy vibrant future

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