

# News Release

## SOURCE WATER PROTECTION: THE TWO-MINUTE VERSION

MANOTICK, June 30, 2006 — Source Water Protection is a work in progress. The underlying draft legislation known as the *Clean Water Act* 2005 is now working its way through Queens Park and through a series of future public reviews by the Standing Committee. Knowing exactly how it's all going to work at this stage is impossible. The framework may change. All of the how-to details are still to be written. But here is what we do know so far.

The Ministry of the Environment is responsible for the proposed Act. Conservation Authorities across the province will coordinate source water protection locally. Protection will be based on watersheds not municipal boundaries. The Ministry has given seed funding to Conservation Authorities to start the technical work which may take several years. A steering group of local citizens called the Source Protection Committee will be formed following passage of the Act. They will guide the creation of local, watershed-based Source Protection Plans and ensure solid public consultation at every stage. The Act, as it is written now, deals almost exclusively with municipal drinking water systems. Municipalities will continue to implement the land use planning aspects of water protection.

Locally, Mississippi Valley Conservation and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority have been lumped together for reasons of economy of scale and similar watersheds. The Mississippi-Rideau Source Water Protection team is based in Manotick. The core technical staff is made up of six professionals, scientists and technicians working under Project Manager Brian Stratton on eight major technical studies. These studies include the gathering and analysis of all existing information on how much water we have, where it comes from, where it goes, its vulnerability to pollution or depletion, and how it travels through and replenishes itself within the watersheds of the Mississippi and Rideau rivers. This background work continues to the fall of 2008.

When all of this water information is available, it will be drawn together into a Technical Assessment Report. This water report containing the latest and best water information on our area will be used as basic information by the Source Protection Committee to design Source Protection Plans for our watersheds.

The resulting Source Protection Plans will be realistic, science-based guides to protecting municipal drinking water systems in Almonte, Carleton Place, Carp, Kemptville, Kings Park (Richmond), Merrickville, Munster, Ottawa, Perth, Smiths Falls and Westport well into the future.

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