

# Thorough Public Participation

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# Source Water Protection

To ensure that local considerations are fully taken into account, and to develop **goodwill** within and **acceptance** by the local communities, source protection planning should be done as much as possible at a local (watershed) level, by those who will be most directly affected... I envision the process as being completely open to public scrutiny.

- Justice O'Connor, Report of the Walkerton Inquiry. p90.

# ENGO Statement of Expectations

Thorough public participation in planning and implementing source protection is crucial to successful protection of source waters. At a minimum, public participation means:

- Any member of the public has the opportunity to participate in source protection planning committees through an **application process** that is open and transparent.
- Those who do participate on source protection steering committees and sub-committees receive some **financial support** for the costs of their participation.
- The public has **easy access**, including electronic web access, to all **information**, including policy instruments and scientific data, relevant to source protection.
- Source Protection Terms of Reference, Assessment Reports, and Source Protection Plans, are prescribed for notice and comment in the **Environmental Bill of Rights** Registry.

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“To ensure that the benefits of a variety of perspectives are brought to bear on the planning process, the Province, where appropriate, should make funding available to help public interest groups participate.”

- Justice O'Connor, Report of the Walkerton Inquiry. p109.

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“The MOE’s decisions concerning the approval of draft watershed-based source protection plans should be subject to the requirements of the Environmental Bill of Rights.”

- Justice O’Connor, Report of the Walkerton Inquiry. p109.

# Recommendations for Policy, Planning and Implementation

3.1 It is the people living in each watershed who will make or break Source Water Protection. Every person must have the **right tools and education** to participate. Therefore, multiple means of participation should be provided and encouraged. The Ontario government should ensure that there is **adequate funding and training** for members of the public who wish to participate. Making background **information** about Source Protection Planning available and reporting on ongoing progress is important to ensure public participation.

# Recommendations for Policy, Planning and Implementation

3.2 Qualified members of the public should be encouraged to apply to sit on steering committees for Source Protection Plans, and the method of selecting applicants should be open, equitable and transparent. The existence of an **application process** should be widely broadcast to community groups and stakeholders. The Province should review with Environmental Groups already involved in Source Water Protection how they might best be included in planning committees and in the development and monitoring of Source Protection Plans.

# Recommendations for Policy, Planning and Implementation

3.3 The Ministry of the Environment should put in place a **mechanism** to require review or challenge to Source Protection Plans not adequately completed or implemented.