



**Canadian Environmental  
Law Association**

**C W C**

**Concerned Walkerton Citizens**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Immediate Release

December 14, 2004

### **Ontario Moving Closer to Better Water Protection – but New Reports Examine What Still Needs to be Done ... and How to do it**

Toronto - Ontario is moving closer to protection of drinking water at its source, but Ontarians must speak out now to ensure that “source water protection” becomes a reality. The Ontario government has released two separate committee reports for comment today, which make recommendations on how to best protect water now and in the future. Links to the two reports are listed at the end of this press release. Both reports provide a great deal of direction for the Honourable Minister Leona Dombrowsky and the Ministry of the Environment as they amend the draft Drinking Water Source Protection Act, a new law to be introduced in 2005.

This new law will provide the province with the framework for managing water on a watershed basis. Watershed-based drinking water source protection was one of the fundamental recommendations of Justice O’Connor arising out of the Walkerton Inquiry. Source protection is essential to keep pathogens and other contaminants out of Ontario’s sources of drinking water.

“Watershed-based source water protection in Ontario will be a bold new step with huge ramifications for the way we have done business in the past,” stated Theresa McClenaghan, counsel with the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA).

“The committee reports represent the collaborative efforts of some of the most knowledgeable water specialists working in academia, provincial and municipal governments, industry, and non-profit sectors.” Source protection to safeguard water from contamination or depletion is the critical first barrier in protecting people’s health in a multi-barrier approach to safety. “The next important step for our government is to pass strong legislation that protects source water,” McClenaghan concluded.

Theresa McClenaghan has participated on the province’s Implementation Committee as an advocate for water protection, and along with CELA colleagues represented the Concerned Walkerton Citizens (CWC) during both phases of the Walkerton Inquiry. CELA has also collaborated with over 30 environmental groups in Ontario to prepare “Protecting Ontario's Water Now and Forever,” a document that outlines expectations from environmental groups about new drinking water source protection legislation. Links to this document can be found below.

Bruce Davidson of Concerned Walkerton Citizens calls inadequate source protection “the cost of getting it wrong.” He encourages everyone in the province to tell the government that a law that

<http://www.cela.ca>

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strongly protects our water is needed as soon as possible. “Every citizen in the this province is a stakeholder in protecting water,” stated Davidson, “and it is up to each one of us to be aware of our own watershed and understand that what we put into our water affects our environment and future.”

To learn about which watershed planning regions that your community falls in, see the attached list of proposed watershed planning regions. CELA welcomes inquiries and encourages citizens to learn more about the future of protecting water in the province.

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**For further information:**

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<p><b>2 newly-released advisory committee reports on source protection:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Technical Experts Committee Report, which outlines steps that are technically feasible and necessary for Ontario to safeguard water, can be found at <a href="http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/024326ex.htm">http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/024326ex.htm</a></li> <li>2. The Implementation Committee Report, which identifies ways in which source protection can be implemented and yield results that make a difference to Ontarians demanding better water protection, can be found at <a href="http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/024324ex.htm">http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/024324ex.htm</a></li> </ol> <p>Comments for each of the reports will be accepted by the government of Ontario until <b>February 14, 2005</b>. To find out how to make comments, please see <a href="http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ebr/english/ebr_info/Right_to_comment.htm">http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ebr/english/ebr_info/Right_to_comment.htm</a> or call CELA at 416-960-2284 x224 or email <a href="mailto:water@cela.ca">water (at) cela.ca</a>.</p> <p><b>Protecting Ontario's Water Now and Forever: A Statement of Expectations for Watershed-Based Source Protection from Ontario's Non Governmental Organizations.</b> Theresa McClenaghan and Darryl Finnigan, CELA, November 11, 2004 <a href="http://cela.ca/publications/card_file.shtml?x=2052">http://cela.ca/publications/card_file.shtml?x=2052</a></p> <p><b>Water Source Protection</b> <a href="http://www.cela.ca/coreprograms/detail.shtml?x=1437">http://www.cela.ca/coreprograms/detail.shtml?x=1437</a> CELA’s collection of materials about protecting drinking water sources.</p> <p><b>Ministry of Environment map of proposed Watershed Planning Regions (these are currently under review)</b> <a href="http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/programs/pdf_images/3585e01-5.gif">http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/programs/pdf_images/3585e01-5.gif</a></p>	

## Proposed Watershed Planning Regions

	Planning Region	Key Municipalities
1	Essex Region	Windsor, Essex, Leamington
2	Lower Thames, Upper Thames, Catfish Creek, Kettle Creek	London, St. Thomas, Aylmer, Chatham, Glencoe
3	St. Clair	Strathroy, Sarnia, Wallaceburg
4	Long Point, Grand River	Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Guelph, Brantford. Simcoe, Tilsonburg
5	Ausable-Bayfield, Maitland	Exeter, Grand Bend, Seaforth, Goderich, Listowel, Wingham
6	Saugeen, Grey Sauble	Walkerton, Kincardine, Port Elgin, Owen Sound
7	Nottawasaga, Lake Simcoe	Wasaga Beach, Shelburne, Barrie, Newmarket, Orillia
8	Niagara, Hamilton	Hamilton, Haldimand, Welland, Niagara Falls
9	Halton, Credit	Campbellville, Oakville, Burlington, Caledon, Brampton, Mississauga, Orangeville
10	Toronto	Toronto, York, Durham, Peel
11	Central Lake Ontario, Ganaraska	Oshawa, Whitby, Port Hope, Cobourg
12	Otonabee, Kawartha, Crowe Valley, Lower Trent	Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes, Marmora, Lindsay, Fenelon Falls, Trenton
13	Quinte, Cataraqui	Belleville, Prince Edward County, Kingston, Brockville
14	Mississippi, Rideau	Ottawa, Perth, Smith Falls
15	South Nation, Raison	Greely, Casselman Cornwall
16	North Bay, Mattawa	North Bay, Powasson
17	Nickel District	Sudbury
18	Sault Ste Marie	Sault Ste Marie
19	Mattagami	Timmons
20	Lakehead	Thunder Bay