



Map of Sault Ste. Marie Region Source Protection Area.

For more information on how you can participate in local water events, please visit one of the following organizations online.

- Ontario Stewardship
<http://www.ontariostewardship.org/>
- Conservation Ontario
<http://www.conservationontario.ca/>
- Ministry of Natural Resources
<http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/>
- Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup
<http://www.vanaqua.org/cleanup/>



Below: Group photo of SPC: for a complete list of SPC members please visit www.ssmrca.ca

A watershed is an area of land that is drained by a river and its tributaries into a particular body of water such as a pond or lake.

There is no new water. The amount of water on the earth has been roughly the same since the planet was formed.



A BRIEF HISTORY

The Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority (SSMRCA) was established in 1963 to help alleviate flood risks. The SSMRCA has put in place a flood control system comprised of five flood control channels and the Fort Creek dam to reduce the risk of loss of life and to minimize property damage. To supplement the flood protection provided by the physical structures, the SSMRCA also regulates development which may impact upon existing flood levels and increase potential risk in flood or erosion prone areas.

As a result of the Walkerton tragedy, the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) program was implemented as the first barrier in the multi-barrier approach to ensure safe, clean drinking water. Since 2005, the SSMRCA has been the delivery agency for DWSP under the *Clean Water Act, 2006* and its associated regulations. DWSP focuses on protecting sources of water before it enters the water treatment and distribution systems.

The Sault Ste. Marie Region Source Protection Area is comprised of Sault Ste. Marie, Prince Township and portions of the Sault North Planning area. Each source protection planning area in the province has a Source Protection Committee (SPC) to oversee the work being done to complete the scientific studies and develop an Assessment Report for each source protection area. After completion of the Assessment Report the SPC is responsible for the development of a Source Protection Plan which will develop policies to ensure existing threats are removed and that future threats are mitigated. The SPC is mandated to involve residents and stakeholders in the source protection planning process through public open houses, exhibitions and regular SPC meetings.

Members of the SPC represent a wide range of interests including: municipal, PUC, aggregate industry, environmental, landowner interests.

ONTARIO DRINKING WATER STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program (ODWSP) was established to protect local sources of drinking water and allow Ontario residents to take action to protect municipal drinking water sources. Farmers, landowners, or small to medium business owners can access funding programs that can promote good steward by providing financial assistance to ensure source water protection. Funds are available for projects including:

- Septic System Inspections and Upgrades
- Well Decommissioning
- Runoff and Erosion Protection
- Pollution Prevention Surveys for Small Businesses

Please feel free to contact us or visit our website www.ssmrca.ca for more information on local events or activities that promote municipal drinking water stewardship and the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.

Over 70% of Ontario residents get their drinking water from the Great Lakes. However, in Sault Ste. Marie 50% of the drinking water comes from Gros Cap on Lake Superior and 50% from municipal wells. That is why it is important to promote stewardship actions to protect the Great Lakes as a source of drinking water.

Conservation Authorities monitor the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies as well as promote good watershed stewardship practices to prevent contamination of groundwater sources.

THE SCIENCE OF SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

Currently Conservation Authority staff are working towards the completion of the Proposed Assessment Report. The Source Protection Committee (SPC) is responsible for ensuring that the technical requirements are completed and reviewed and that timelines are met. These technical studies include the following:

1. Watershed Characterization description of the local watershed area
2. Water Budget & Water Quantity Risk Assessment assesses the sustainability of water supply sources from a quantity perspective
3. Groundwater Vulnerability Analysis assesses the vulnerability of groundwater aquifers within the Source Protection Area
4. Surface Water Vulnerability identifies the area around surface water intakes that may be vulnerable to contamination
5. Threats and Issues – Water Quality Threat Assessment identifies drinking water issues and threats that may affect the quality of water in vulnerable areas

On November 18, 2007 our SPC had their first meeting. The Terms of Reference was approved and posted to the Environmental Registry February 5/09. The Proposed Assessment Reports are due February 5/10.

You can take action now to help slow climate change. Visit www.gogreenontario.ca and click on the Climate Change Projections for Ontario button to see how you can make a difference.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE: JANUARY 31, 2009

- Drinking Water Source Protection staff employed by the SSMRCA
- The Terms of Reference was approved by the Minister of the Environment on January 29, 2009
- Hosted 3 open houses June 10-12, 2008 for public reviewed and commented on Draft Terms of Reference
- The Watershed Characterization Report draft completed in 2007, review and final draft report completed in 2008
- The Conceptual Water Budget Report completed in 2006, the Tier 1 Report completed in 2007 and Tier 2 Report completed in 2008
- The Surface Water Vulnerability Intake Protection Zone (IPZ) 1 completed in 2007 and the IPZ 2 completed in 2008
- The Groundwater Vulnerability Report draft completed in 2008 and under peer review

New regulations were released by the MOE on November 21, 2008. Current and future work is being reviewed based on new technical rules. These technical rules can be found at www.ssmrca.ca.

While it is not possible to completely remove all risks to our drinking water, the Clean Water Act will help reduce risks by addressing threats to drinking water quantity and quality. The act is designed to promote voluntary initiatives but requires mandatory action where needed. For more information on the CWA: <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/programs/5971e01.php>

UPCOMING IN 2009

- Informational public consultations will be held across the Sault Ste. Marie Region Source Protection Area in the fall of 2009 as scientific work on the Assessment Reports is completed
- Completion of the Tier 3 Water Budget
- Application of Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship funding to qualified projects within the watershed
- Monthly SPC meetings that are open to the public
- Completion of the threats assessment



For more detailed information, please visit our website www.ssmrca.ca

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