

Lake Erie Source Protection Region Guelph-Guelph/Eramosa Water Quantity Policy Development



Summary of Community Liaison Group Workshop February 13, 2018

Summary Prepared by Lura Consulting

1 Introduction

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to review the mandate and role of the Community Liaison Group (CLG); provide an overview of the source protection planning process and the identified drinking water quantity threats in the Wellhead Protection Area-Quantity (WHPA-Q) and Intake Protection Zone-Quantity (IPZ-Q) in Guelph and Guelph-Eramosa; identify questions in to be included in a Frequently Asked Questions resource for the CLG; and introduce discussion questions for the next meeting.

Background Materials

Prior to the workshop, participants received a backgrounder on policy tools and approaches for protecting drinking water quantity (Appendix A), and a copy of the CLG Terms of Reference (TOR) (Appendix B). These materials were developed to provide all CLG members with a shared understanding of their role on the CLG; an understanding of existing policy tools and approaches for protecting drinking water quantity; and to assist workshop participants in evaluating existing legislation and programs in future meetings.

Meeting Format

The workshop opened with a welcome, agenda review, and introductions, facilitated by Susan Hall, of Lura Consulting. Martin Keller, Grand River Conservation Authority, provided an overview of the source protection planning process, water quantity threat activities, and existing legislation and programs, and policy tools and approaches that could be used to protect sources of municipal drinking water (Appendix C). Participants were asked what outcomes from the water quantity policy development process they hope to see as CLG members, and what additional questions they had about the process. Martin Keller provided next steps and closing remarks before the workshop adjourned.

The following section summarizes the meeting discussion. Participants were able to submit additional questions until February 20th for the project team's consideration; one additional question was received. The results of the workshop will be considered for integration into the discussion paper for consumptive water taking and recharge reduction.

2 Summary of Community Liaison Group Feedback

Discussion 1

Participants were asked to share what outcomes they hope to see as a CLG member, bearing in mind the study scope and role of the CLG. The following summarizes key themes from the discussion and does not reflect the perspectives of all participants. Participants stated they would like outcomes from this Water Quantity Policy Development study to be:

- **Balanced:** Regulations should consider the long-term sustainability of drinking water quantity while also considering the water taking needs of the current community, including residents and businesses.
- **Data Driven:** Decisions should be based on science and data, and incorporate all relevant studies that have, and are, being completed in the area.
- **Educational:** The Water Quantity Policy Development study should aim to erode misconceptions about industries which take water, and increase the general population's understanding of how water is managed, including responsible use by industry. Participants would like to better understand the policies that effect water use.
- **Transparent:** Participants want to receive information on the Water Quantity Policy Development process that can be shared with their communities to ensure others are informed throughout the study.
- **Representative:** Participants would like the Water Quantity Policy Development study, specifically the CLG, to represent the perspective and needs of people within the WHPA-Q.
- **Precautionary:** Emerging policy should take a precautionary approach and err on the side of caution and restriction when the sustainability of water resources is uncertain.
- **Considerate of both short-term and long-term needs:** Emerging policy should take a forward-thinking approach which considers water needs over the short-term (5-20 years) and the needs over the long term (the next seven generations). This will ensure sustainable water quantity for the use of many future generations.
- **Inclusive of all water quantity threats:** All threats to water quantity should be taken into consideration through the Water Quantity Policy Development study, whether or not they are identified as threats through the Clean Water Act, including climate change, development pressures, and aggregate extraction.
- **Practical:** Resulting policy tools and changes should be practical and applicable from a landowner and business perspective.

Discussion 2

Participants were asked what additional questions they have about the process and evaluation of tools. This input will inform the development of an iterative Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) resource for the CLG.

1. Other Tier 3 Water Budget and Risk Assessments have occurred, or are occurring, in nearby areas. Will policy that results from this study impact or relate to the development of province-wide policy, or will every region need to create its own policies?
2. Will the CLG discuss policy that would address changes to regulations governing private wells?
3. In recent years, provincial programs have provided funding within high-risk protection areas; will the Water Quantity Policy Development study review these types of programs and funding models?
4. Why are water quantity and quality issues addressed through separate processes?
5. Why do Permit to Take Water (PTTW) holders require monitoring and conservation programs while those taking from the same aquifers, but from private wells, do not have to operate under the same regulations?
6. This Water Quantity Policy Development study follows a Tier 3 Water Budget and Risk Assessment. Can you explain what Tier 1 and Tier 2 are?
7. Where do the low water response teams fit in to the CLG discussions? Will low water response teams exist in the future?
8. The Official Plan in Wellington impacts recharge areas and other issues related to water quantity; is the CLG reviewing Official Plans already in place to help develop new policy?
9. Why is Rockwood identified as a low risk area? Doesn't the future security of the aquifer depend on the growth of the City of Guelph, as all aquifers are linked?
10. What is the difference between a Tier 3 and a scoped Tier 3?
11. Through this process will we be discussing site specific property owners and develop policies directed at specific property owners?
12. What is the role and responsibility of the CLG in regard to providing input, reviewing policies, and developing policies?

Additional questions for the FAQ sheet, submitted through email following the meeting:

13. What are current examples of permitted water takings in the WHPA-Q?

3 Closing

Homework

In preparation for the next CLG meeting, participants were asked to consider, share and discuss with their organisations, the following four questions.

- 1) What are your desired outcomes of any legislative, program, or policy changes relating to protecting source of drinking water quantity?
- 2) What is currently working well to protect drinking water quantity sources (i.e.: legislation, programs, and policies)?
- 3) What are the current gaps or challenges to protecting sources of drinking water quantity (i.e.: gaps or challenges in existing legislation, programs, and policies that lead to inadequate protection of drinking water quantity sources)?
- 4) What do you think are the most effective tools and approaches that could be used to protect sources of drinking water quantity in the future, and why?

These questions will be discussed in more detail at the next CLG meeting, on **March 7, 2018**.

Follow-up

Participants were invited to direct any additional questions or comments to either Susan Hall (shall@lura.ca) or Martin Keller (mkeller@grandriver.ca) by **February 20, 2018**.

More information about the Guelph-Guelph/Eramosa Tier 3 Water Budget and Risk Assessment, including technical reports, presentations, executive summary, existing FAQ, a project outline for the policy development study, and a glossary, are available at www.sourcewater.ca/GGET-Tier3