

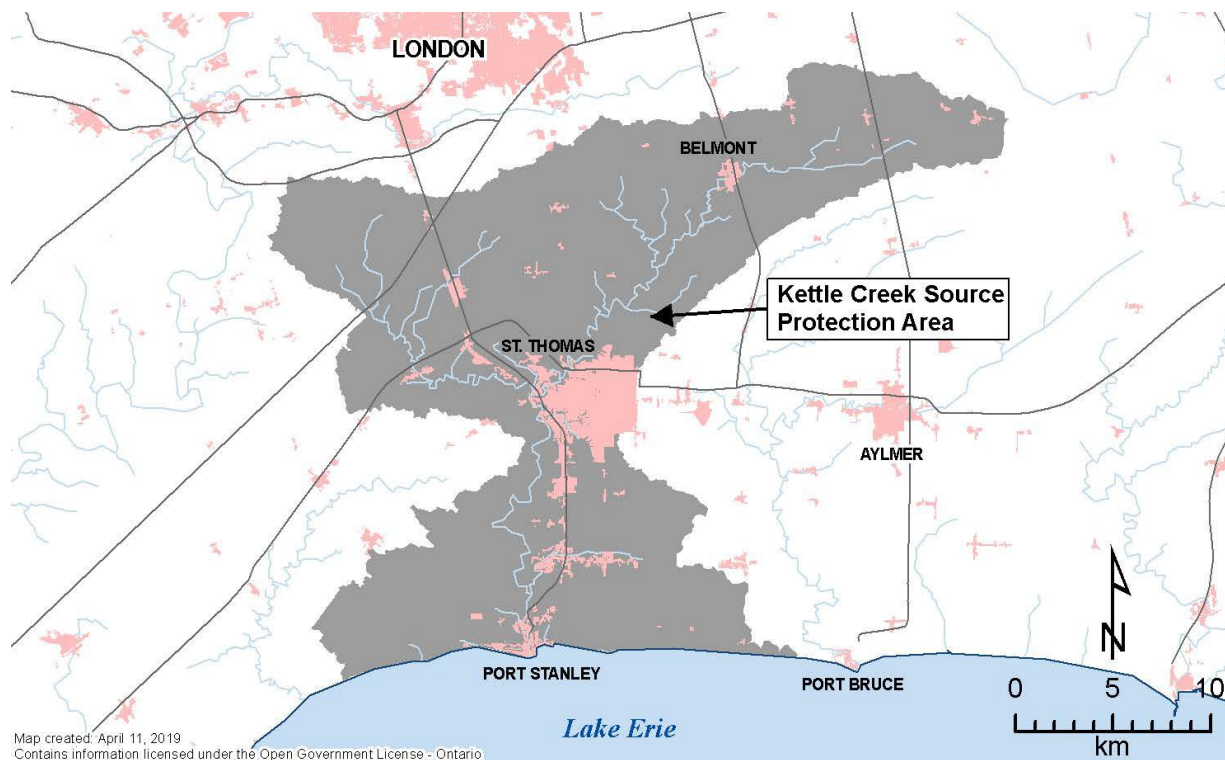
# Kettle Creek Source Protection Area Annual Progress Report 2023

## I. Introduction

This annual progress report outlines the progress made in implementing our Source Protection Plan for the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area, as required by the *Clean Water Act, 2006* and its regulations.

The Source Protection Plan is the culmination of extensive science-based assessment, research, consultation, and collaboration with local stakeholders and the provincial government. When policies in the plan are implemented it ensures that activities carried out near municipal wells and surface water intakes will not pose significant risk to the sources of our drinking water.

We acknowledge and recognize the efforts made by our local municipalities, stakeholders, and Source Protection Committee in the development and implementation of the Source Protection Plan.



## II. A message from your local Source Protection Committee

**P: Progressing Well/On Target** – The majority of the source protection plan policies have been implemented and/or are progressing.

All legally-binding plan policies (100%) that address significant drinking water threats are either implemented, in progress, or have been determined to require no further action(s).

Two Existing significant drinking water threats were identified in the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area when the Source Protection Plan came into effect in 2015. One of the threats (storage of commercial fertilizer) no longer exists on the ground, and therefore has ceased to be a threat. Negotiations are currently underway to manage the second threat (storage of fuel) through a Risk Management Plan. We are on track to address all existing significant threats to our sources of drinking water.

## III. Our Watershed

The Kettle Creek Source Protection Area (watershed) includes Kettle Creek and its tributaries. The main branch of Kettle Creek originates at Lake Whittaker, an 11 hectare spring-fed kettle lake. The watershed is comprised of three subwatersheds: Dodd Creek, Upper Kettle Creek, and Lower Kettle Creek. These watercourses drain 520 square kilometres of agricultural and urban lands before entering Lake Erie at Port Stanley.

The Kettle Creek Source Protection Area includes the City of St. Thomas, the southern portions of Middlesex County (Township of Thames Centre and Townships of Middlesex Centre) and the City of London, and the central portion of Elgin County (Township of Southwold, Township of Malahide and Municipality of Central Elgin).

The watershed has two municipal drinking water systems: two wells in Belmont and the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply System (EAPWSS) in Port Stanley.

## IV. At a Glance: Progress on Source Protection Plan Implementation

### 1. Source Protection Plan Policies and Addressing Significant Risks

#### **P: Progressing Well/On Target**

The Kettle Creek Source Protection Plan came into effect in 2015. A lot has been accomplished since that time. As of 2022, 100% of the legally-binding policies that address significant drinking water threat activities have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented.

As of December 31, 2023, 92% of the legally-binding policies have been fully implemented, including two policies that have been evaluated and determined that no further action is needed. One legally-binding policy is currently in progress and is expected to be fully implemented by 2024.

### 2. Municipal Progress: Addressing Risks on the Ground

#### **P: Progressing Well/On Target**

Three municipalities in the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area have vulnerable areas where significant drinking water threat policies apply: Township of Malahide, Municipality of Thames Centre, and Municipality of Central Elgin.

Planning departments and building officials are screening applications for locations within vulnerable areas where threats to drinking water sources are possible and source protection plan policies may apply.

These municipalities are also required to review and update their Official Plan to ensure it conforms with the Kettle Creek Source Protection Plan the next time they undertake an Official Plan review under the Planning Act. The Municipality of Thames Centre has completed their Official Plan update; the Municipality of Central Elgin and Township of Malahide Official Plan updates are currently in progress.

### 3. Septic Inspections

Not applicable.

There are no on-site sewage systems requiring inspection in the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area.

## 4. Risk Management Plans

### **P: Progressing Well/On Target**

One Risk Management Plan (RMP) has been agreed to in the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area since the Source Protection Plan came into effect in 2015. This RMP for commercial fertilizer was later cancelled because the threat no longer exists on the landscape.

There is currently one RMP pending within the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area to address the handling and storage of fuel, where this activity is a significant drinking water threat as per the threshold determined by the modeling in the Municipality of Central Elgin in the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply Intake Protection Zone. Negotiations are currently underway with the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply Board for this RMP.

No inspections were carried out or planned by a Risk Management Official/Inspector for prohibited or regulated activities in the 2023 annual reporting period.

## 5. Provincial Progress: Addressing Risks on the Ground

### **P: Progressing Well/On Target**

Within the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area, there are no Existing significant drinking water threats that require provincial approvals. Ontario ministries are reviewing applications for New provincial approvals (e.g. Environmental Compliance Approvals issued under the Environmental Protection Act) where they have been identified as a tool in our plan to address activities that pose a significant risk to source water.

The Province has established Standard Operating Policies to ensure that approvals take into account the science generated through the Drinking Water Source Protection Program and policies in the Source Protection Plan. Provincial approvals are issued, denied, amended, or revoked to conform to plan policies. Where necessary, conditions are added to approvals to ensure that the activity does not pose a significant threat to sources of drinking water.

## 6. Source Protection Awareness and Change in Behaviour

There have been no measurable or quantifiable outcomes reported for the 2023 annual reporting period.

## 7. Source Protection Plan Policies: Summary of Delays

Negotiations are currently underway for a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to address the handling and storage of fuel at the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply Plant, as required by policy PS-CW-7.1. A draft RMP has been in place since the policy was adopted, but was never finalized. The draft RMP reflects best management practices, which are currently in place to manage the risk to sources of drinking water, including:

- Consideration for site drainage;
- Procedures and policies for handling and storage;
- Regular inspection of storage tanks;
- Reporting protocols; and
- Containment contingencies for failures.

Policy PS-NB-8.1 (non-legally binding) has not been fully implemented because of communication challenges among the implementing bodies. Revisions to this policy have been proposed as part of an update to the Kettle Creek Source Protection Plan under Section 36 of the Clean Water Act that was submitted for approval to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks in September 2023.

## 8. Source Water Quality: Monitoring and Actions

No issues have been identified in the local science-based assessment report regarding the quality of the sources of municipal drinking water in the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area.

## 9. Science-based Assessment Reports: Work Plans

An order was received from the Ministry on July 22, 2019 providing for a comprehensive review and update to the Kettle Creek Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan under Section 36 of the Clean Water Act. The tasks identified in the order were incorporated into an update that was submitted for approval to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks in September 2023.

## 10. More from the Watershed

To learn more about the Kettle Creek Source Protection Area, visit the [Lake Erie Source Protection website](#).