

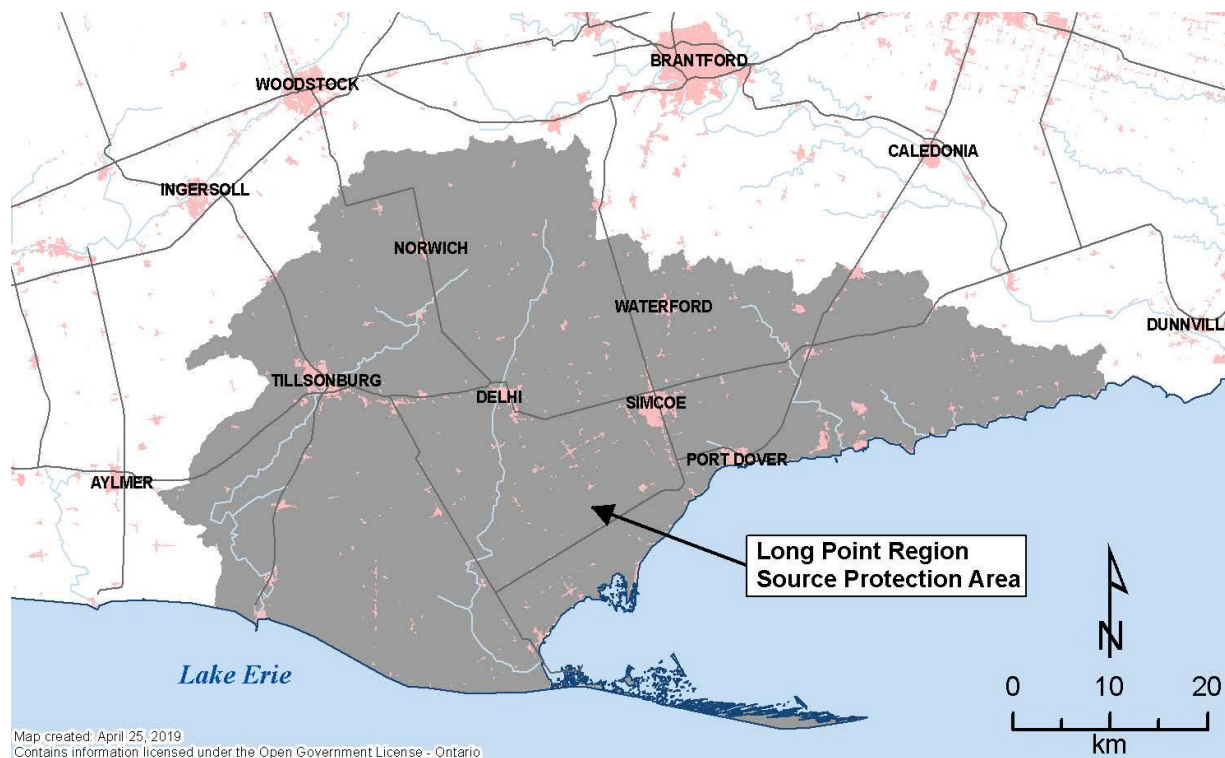
Long Point Region Source Protection Annual Progress Report 2024

I. Introduction

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

The Source Protection Plan (the 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 Plan.



Map 1 Long Point Region Source Protection Area

II. A message from your local Source Protection Committee

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

All legally binding Plan policies that address significant drinking water threats (100 percent) are implemented or in progress.

A total of 719 potential existing significant drinking water threats have been identified in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area as of December 31, 2024. Of these threats, 160 have been determined through field verification to no longer exist and 324 threats have been reported as managed and no longer pose a significant risk to municipal drinking water sources. All municipalities in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area have processes in place to ensure planning decisions conform to the Plan and are managing or prohibiting new threats as appropriate.

III. Our Watershed

The Long Point Region Source Protection Area (watershed) is drained by more than 30 creeks and tributaries. These creeks drain an area of 2,782 square kilometres in portions of Brant, Elgin, Haldimand, Norfolk, and Oxford counties.

The watershed has ten municipal drinking water systems. Three systems are located in Oxford County in the communities of Dereham Centre, Oxford South (communities of Norwich, Otterville and Springford), and the Town of Tillsonburg, all of which are groundwater systems. Norfolk County has groundwater sourced municipal drinking water systems in the communities of Delhi, Simcoe and Waterford and surface water sourced municipal drinking water systems (Lake Erie intakes) in the communities of Port Dover and Port Rowan. Haldimand County and Elgin County each have one municipal-residential drinking water system within the watershed, the former of which is a surface water system (Lake Erie Intake) and the latter of which is a groundwater system. There are also two other municipal drinking water systems serving Long Point Region residents that are sourced outside of the watershed: Mount Elgin and the Bayham Distribution System.

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

1. Source Protection Plan Policies and Addressing Significant Risks

P: Progressing Well / On Target

Of the legally binding Plan policies that address significant drinking water threats, 100 percent are implemented, in progress, or implemented because policy outcome(s) have been evaluated and it is determined that no further action(s) is required.

2. Municipal Progress: Addressing Risks on the Ground

P: Progressing Well / On Target

Within the Long Point Region Source Protection Area, eight municipalities have vulnerable areas where significant drinking water threat policies apply. Planning departments and building officials are screening applications for locations within vulnerable areas where threats to drinking water sources are possible and Plan policies may apply.

Municipalities are also required to review and update their Official Plan to ensure it conforms with the Source Protection Plan the next time they undertake an Official Plan review under the *Planning Act, 1990*. As of December 31, 2024, the Municipality of Bayham, Norfolk County, Oxford County, Haldimand County and the Township of Malahide have completed their Official Plan amendments.

3. Septic Inspections

P: Progressing Well / On Target

In the Long Point Region Source Protection Area there are 101 on-site sewage systems that require inspections every five years in accordance with the Ontario Building Code. None of the systems were due to be inspected in 2024.

4. Risk Management Plans

P: Progressing Well / On Target

The Long Point Region Source Protection Plan contains policies that require the development of Risk Management Plans to manage certain drinking water threats. All Plan policies that require a Risk Management Plan have been reported as implemented or in progress.

A total of 19 Risk Management Plans are in place in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area. In 2024, one Risk Management Plan was agreed to in Norfolk County to manage two significant drinking water threat activities related to the handling and storage of dense non-aqueous phase liquids and organic solvents. Risk Management Officials in the Municipality of Bayham, Oxford County and Norfolk County reported 13 Risk Management Plans currently in progress for 2024.

Risk Management Officials also reported completing inspections to achieve compliance or to verify threats for activities designated under Section 58 of the *Clean Water Act, 2006*. A total of 56 inspections were carried out for activities requiring a Risk Management Plan. Six of these inspections found activities taking place without a Risk Management Plan as required by the Source Protection Plan. An additional 20 inspections were carried out in the Municipality of Bayham and Oxford County for activities prohibited under Section 57 of the *Clean Water Act, 2006*. To manage future threat activities, municipalities have screening processes in place to ensure development applications are reviewed for potential threat activities and applicability of Plan policies.

There is no timeline for establishing Risk Management Plans in the Lake Erie Source Protection Region. Municipalities continue to prioritize areas and properties that pose the highest risk when establishing Risk Management Plans. This is reflected in incremental improvements across all threat categories, rather than a significant improvement for certain threats. Risk Management Plan negotiations are complex and take time to complete. The Municipality of Bayham reported lengthy negotiations as an ongoing barrier to establishing Risk Management Plans.

5. Provincial Progress: Addressing Risks on the Ground

P: Progressing Well / On Target

Ontario Provincial ministries including Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) implement source protection policies that use prescribed instruments to manage significant threat activities.

Ontario ministries review applications for new or amended provincial approvals (i.e. prescribed instruments, such as 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.

The Plan sets a timeline of 3 years to complete the review and make any necessary changes to previously issued approvals. Ministries have completed review of previously issued Provincial approvals in the Long Point Region Source

Protection Area. MECP Waste Disposal Sites (Landfilling and Storage) and MECP Wastewater/Sewage Works reported that a preliminary list of previously issued Environmental Compliance Approvals for waste disposal sites and sewage works has been identified for review for source protection. The review of these newly identified existing instruments will be undertaken in 2025 and the results will be reported in 2026.

In 2024, MECP Waste Disposal Sites (Hauled Sewage) reported one new application for an Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) that underwent a detailed review for source protection. The application was determined not to be a significant drinking water threat or did not have any source protection implementation requirements.

6. Source Protection Awareness and Change in Behaviour

To raise awareness about the protection of local drinking water sources, municipalities across the Long Point Region Source Protection Area have installed a total of 12 drinking water protection signs on municipal roads and trails surrounding vulnerable areas. In addition, five signs have been installed on Provincial highways since the Plan came into effect in 2016.

Municipalities across the Lake Erie Source Protection Region have established education and outreach programs, which contribute to enhancing awareness of source water protection. Municipalities in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area have reported a change in the behaviour of community residents since the Plan first came into effect in 2016, noting that landowners have become more open to participating in the source protection program.

7. Source Protection Plan Policies: Summary of Delays

Not applicable to the Long Point Region Source Protection Area.

8. Source Water Quality: Monitoring and Actions

Drinking water quality Issues have been identified for nitrate at the Richmond Community Water System, Simcoe Well Supply, Oxford South Water System, and Tillsonburg Well Supply. In 2024, most of these systems have reported either an increasing concentration/trend or no change; however a decreasing concentration/trend was reported at well TW2-12 for the Richmond Community Water System. Issue Contributing Areas (WHPA-ICAs) have been delineated for all nitrate Issues in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area.

Municipalities continue to implement risk management strategies to address threat activities associated with an Issue/WHPA-ICA. All municipalities have monitoring and treatments systems in place to ensure that municipal drinking

water meets the requirements of the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*. Municipalities have used the results of ongoing monitoring to determine where further investigation is needed and to conduct assessments to identify sources and/or explain concentration variability. Over time, appropriate monitoring will help determine if implementation of Plan policies and other actions are improving raw water quality for these systems.

9. Science-based Assessment Reports: Work Plans

An order was received from the Ministry in June 2020 providing for a comprehensive review and update to the Long Point Region Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan under Section 36 of the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.

Examples of tasks in the workplan include incorporation of:

- Growth and infrastructure changes (e.g. new drinking water supply wells)
- Technical Rule changes
- Transport pathway updates
- Results of environmental monitoring programs (e.g. review of monitoring data to evaluate existing or the potential for Issues identified at municipal drinking water wells)

The Section 36 update is currently underway and is expected to be submitted to the Ministry for approval in 2026.

10. More from the Watershed

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