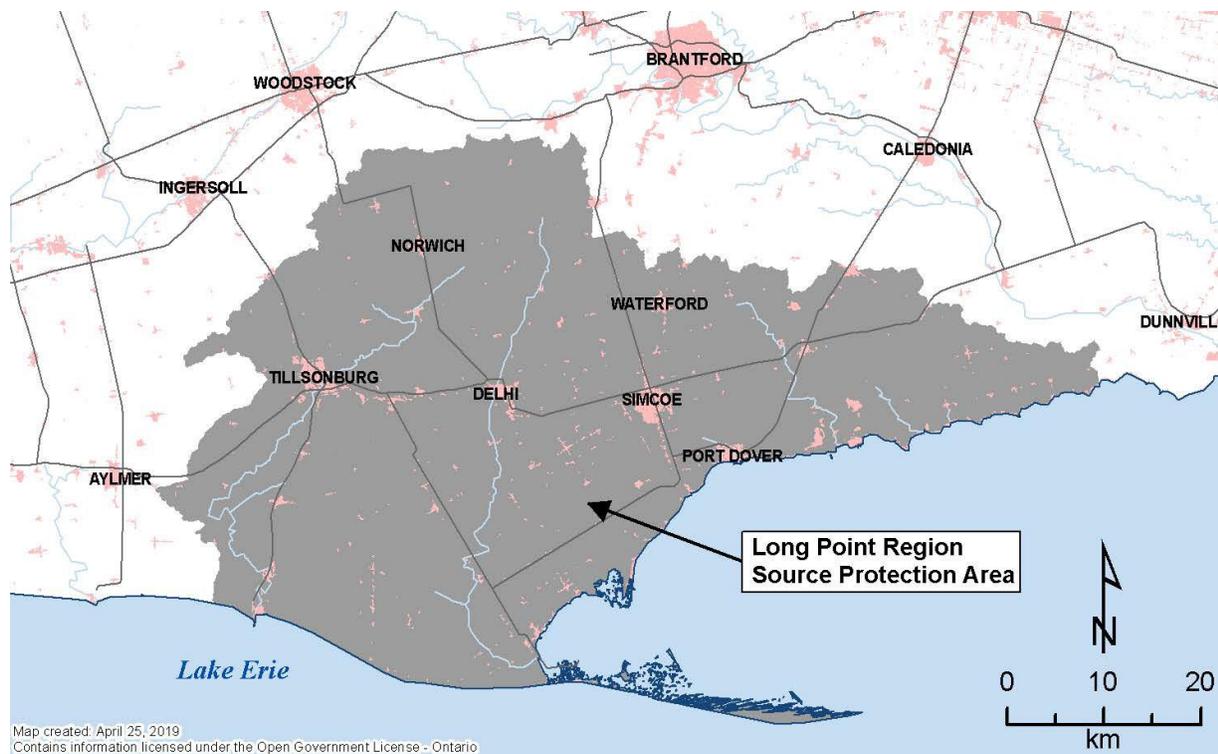


# Long Point Region Source Protection Annual Progress Report 2022

## 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 and regulations.

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



## 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.

A total of 705 significant drinking water threats have been identified in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area as of December 31, 2022. Approximately 63% of these significant drinking water threats have been addressed. This is an improvement compared to the 2021 annual reporting period (60%). Of legally-binding plan policies that address significant drinking water threats, 98% are either implemented, or in progress, or implemented because policy outcome(s) were evaluated and no further action(s) were required.

## III. Our Watershed

To learn more, please read our Long Point Region Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan.

The Long Point Region Source Protection Area (watershed) is drained by 10 major watercourses that empty into Lake Erie. They drain 2,780 square kilometres in portions of Elgin, Norfolk, Oxford, Brant and Haldimand 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 five municipal drinking water systems in the communities of Delhi, Port Dover, Port Rowan, Simcoe and Waterford. Haldimand County and Elgin County each have one municipal-residential drinking water system within the watershed. 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

The majority of legally-binding policies (98%) that address significant drinking water threats are implemented, in progress, or implemented because policy outcome(s) have been evaluated and no further action(s) are required.

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

P: Progressing Well/On Target

A total of eight municipalities in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area have vulnerable areas where significant drinking water threat policies apply. Five of these municipalities are required to review and update their Official Plan to ensure it conforms with the Long Point Region Source Protection Plan the next time they undertake an Official Plan review under the Planning Act. Updates for the Municipality of Bayham, and the Counties of Norfolk and Oxford have been completed. Updates for the County of Haldimand and the Township of Malahide are currently in progress.

## 3. Septic Inspections

P: Progressing Well/On Target

In the Long Point Region Source Protection Area there are 103 on-site sewage systems that require inspections every five years in accordance with the Ontario Building Code. No systems were due for inspection in the 2022 annual reporting period; However, 11 systems remained overdue for inspection from 2021. Ten of the 11 systems were inspected in 2022 and one inspection remains overdue because the landowner refused entry. Of the 10 systems inspected, only one septic system required major maintenance work (e.g. tank replacement, etc.) and no systems required minor maintenance work (e.g. lid replacement, etc.).

## 4. Risk Management Plans

PS: Progressing Well/Short of Target

The Long Point Region Source Protection Plan contains policies that require the development of Risk Management Plans to manage some drinking water threats. Screening processes are in place at municipalities to ensure applications for future development are reviewed for potential threat activities and applicability of source protection policies.

Six Risk Management Plans were established in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area in 2022. A total of 11 Risk Management Plans have been established since the Source Protection Plan came into effect in 2016.

In 2022, 25 inspections were carried out for activities prohibited under section 57 of the Clean Water Act. Thirty-six inspections were carried out for an activity requiring a risk management plan under section 58, four of which found activities taking place without a risk management plan as required by the Source Protection Plan.

Currently, there are 64 properties with existing significant drinking water threat activities that are subject to section 58 policy but are not yet managed with an established or agreed to risk management plan. Risk Management Officials continue to prioritize risk management measures as appropriate but the increasing number of threats identified through source protection plan amendments, along with limited staff resources, and COVID-19 public health measures in 2020 and 2021 have delayed the development of 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 the Long Point Region Source Protection 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 Ministries have reported 100% completion of previously issued provincial approvals in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area.

## 6. Source Protection Awareness and Change in Behaviour

Twelve Drinking Water Protection Zones signs have been installed in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area since the Source Protection Plan came into effect in 2016. The Municipality of Bayham notes that nitrate concentrations have trended downward over the 8-year monitoring period (including a downward trend over the past 2 years for well TW2-12). Oxford County has noted a change in the behaviour of people in the community, including a decrease in apprehension when discussing the Source Water Protection Program. This seems to indicate a better baseline understanding of what the Source Water Protection program is

and what the goals are. Norfolk County also finds that landowners have become more open to participating in the program, especially when they understand the reason and importance of Source Protection Plan policies.

## 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

Four drinking water systems have identified nitrate drinking water Issues in the Long Point Region Source Protection Area. Of these, nitrate concentrations are decreasing at the Oxford South system, and for well TW2-12 of the Richmond Community Water System. Concentrations are increasing for well TW3-12 of the Richmond Community Water System, and remain elevated for the Tillsonburg system. Not enough data is available for the Simcoe system to make a determination about concentrations. For all of these systems, Issue Contributing Areas have been delineated for nitrate.

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

An order was received from the Ministry on December 17, 2019 regarding the Section 36 workplan for updates to the Long Point Region Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan.

Examples of tasks in the Section 36 workplan include incorporation of:

- Growth and infrastructure changes (e.g. new drinking water supply well(s) to be brought online)
- Director's Technical Rule changes
- Transport pathway updates (e.g. consider any identified transport pathways for incorporation into the Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan.

The work will be incorporated into a future s. 36 Long Point Region Source Protection Plan update. The plan update is expected to be completed and submitted to the Ministry for review and approval in 2024.

## 10. More from the Watershed

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