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For Immediate Release

MEDIA RELEASE

IMPORTANT NEXT STEP TO BE TAKEN IN PROTECTING DRINKING WATER SOURCES

The Clean Water Act and its first set of regulations were officially proclaimed into law on July 3, 2007. As a result, formation of a Source Protection Committee can now begin for the newly created Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region.

The Source Protection Committee (SPC) will guide the development of a plan to protect the sources of drinking water in the local Source Protection Region, which extends from Tobermory to Mount Forest and Kincardine to The Blue Mountains. Saugeen Conservation, Grey Sauble Conservation and the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula were each designated as Source Protection Areas under the new regulations, with Saugeen Conservation being the lead in this Source Protection Region.

The Committee will be made up of a chair and 15 representatives. There will also be two additional seats available to First Nations. Calls will be going out shortly for people to apply for positions on the Source Protection Committee. According to the regulations, representatives will be drawn from three sectors: one-third of the representatives will be municipal; one third will be from agricultural, industrial or commercial sectors; and one-third will reflect other interests, such environmental, health and other interests of the general public.

The appointment process will conclude by late fall and the Committee will begin work on a Source Protection Plan that is expected to take up to five years to develop. The Committee will be working with municipalities, technical experts, landowners, water users and the public to identify drinking water sources and the threats to the quality and quantity of water in those water supplies. The plan will then outline the necessary measures to protect drinking water sources from contamination or shortages.

Protecting the sources of drinking water provides an added layer of protection for municipal water systems and was an important recommendation from the Walkerton Inquiry.

More information on the local drinking water source protection program, as well as links to the Clean Water Act and regulations, are available www.waterprotection.ca.

- 30 -

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