

## Source Protection Report

*By Janet Stavinga, Chair*

It is a pleasure to provide you with a monthly update on the Source Protection efforts underway in the Mississippi Valley and Rideau Valley area of Eastern Ontario. This vast two-watershed region is home to over 865,000 people.

Source protection is a provincial program delivered through the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and managed locally by the Conservation Authorities in cooperation with the 31 municipalities in the area.

To provide guidance, and ensure public consultation at every stage of the process, a 16-member Source Protection Committee (SPC) was formed in late 2007. The SPC is now starting on the long journey towards producing Source Protection Plans for the two watersheds. The goal is to ensure that all 12 municipal drinking water systems will continue to provide abundant, clean drinking water for years to come. More details on these systems next month.

Your Source Protection Committee is an excellent group of engaged, community-based people with an interest in the long term health of our water supplies. Discussions so far have demonstrated a capacity for broad examination of topics from many points of view. The Committee is drawn from the municipal sector, agriculture, quarry and golf course operations, small business, environmental non-governmental organizations, the Algonquin people and the general public.

We meet the first Thursday of every month and we welcome public attendance and delegations. Starting with our next meeting on May 1 and continuing until October 2, we will be touring the two watersheds and holding meetings in various communities. The May 1 meeting is at 7 pm in Almonte's Old Town Hall; there is also a "meet and greet" hour from 6 pm giving people a chance to talk directly with their Committee representatives one-on-one. Committee agendas, minutes, meeting times and locations are on the Source Water Protection website at [www.mrsourcewater.ca](http://www.mrsourcewater.ca). You can also join our mailing list.

The Committee's current work is mainly about plotting the roadmap to get those Source Protection Plans in place by 2012 at the latest. We have spent the last three months getting up to speed on the Clean Water Act, developing Governing Policies, approving a public engagement strategy, planning the Terms of Reference and becoming familiar with the ongoing technical work.

In the months ahead, details about how much water is used, how fast it is replenished, where the replenishing water comes from, and the potential risks or threats to maintaining the source waters for our municipal systems will become available. Throughout the process, residents will have many opportunities to discuss their thoughts on how best to protect our municipal water supplies against any identified risks. Also, watch for the release of our draft Terms of Reference.

We look forward to meeting many of you as we embark on the vital community mission of source water protection. You can reach me anytime at [janet.stavinga@mrsourcewater.ca](mailto:janet.stavinga@mrsourcewater.ca).

### **Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Region**

3889 Rideau Valley Drive, Manotick ON K4M 1A5

613-692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504 ext. 1147

[janet.stavinga@mrsourcewater.ca](mailto:janet.stavinga@mrsourcewater.ca)

[www.mrsourcewater.ca](http://www.mrsourcewater.ca)