

FRENCH RIVER SOURCE WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the French River Source Water Protection Committee was held at the Tatamagouche Fire Hall on December 13, 2018 at 10:30 am.

Present: Councillor Mike Gregory, Chair
Mayor Christine Blair
Kim Baldwin, Citizen Rep
Doug Bastow, North Shore River Restoration Group
Perry Swan, Village Commission Rep
Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development
Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works
Michael Allen, Nova Scotia Environment (Watershed Planner)

Regrets: Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart
Greg Watson, Citizen Rep
Garth Demont, Department of Natural Resources

Approval of Agenda: The meeting was called to order at 10:40 am.

The agenda was approved.

Moved by Doug Bastow, Seconded by Perry Swan.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the meeting of November 15, 2018 were approved.

Moved by Mayor Blair, Seconded by Kim Baldwin.

Business Arising: No Business Arising.

Protected Water Area Designation: Crawford Macpherson circulated an updated draft of proposed regulations for the designation of the watershed.

The Committee reviewed the proposed regulations, with comments summarized as follows:

The draft regulations as proposed follow the same framework as Bridgewater/Hebb Lake.

M. Allen suggested that we refer to watercourse definition which already exists in the provincial Environment Act. All agreed.

All agreed that the utility should be advised of new septic field construction within the watershed area. The County would have this information as it relates to new building permits, but residents would be required to advise the County in the instance where existing systems are being replaced. The issue of setback of septic fields from watercourses was discussed at length. There is an option to require a distance greater than the existing provincial standard which is 15 metres. The Committee agreed that the existing provincial standard of 15 metres is sufficient. There was concern with extending the setback to 30 metres, in cases where existing lot sizes may not accommodate the requirement.

The Committee discussed the clause re: motorized vehicles in the river. They agreed that we should limit travel through the river and its tributaries but remove references to travel over/on.

All agreed that swimming should be allowed, however not bathing or washing.

Regulations relating to forestry could be expanded to require forestry management plans, or to include smaller parcels of land/private owners. C. Macpherson to review in greater detail, and Committee to discuss when Greg Watson is at the table. The regulations should likely refer to the forestry code of practice.

The need for agricultural setbacks was discussed. The setback is really dependant on the type of farming and the size of farm. Crawford to review provincial standards regarding existing setback requirements and to report back. Reference to setback from private wells not deemed necessary in this particular regulation document. The option to require nutrient management plans or environmental farm plans was noted by M. Allen. Recommended that fertilizers be added to Section 4.0 under substances that may not be discharged to the watercourse.

Pest control regulations should be broadened to include all herbicides/biocides/pesticides. M. Allen to provide broader definitions.

Pits and quarries have been kept separate from mining in the current draft as they are already regulated and are expected to have minimal impacts.

Stormwater management plans would be best moved to item 10, and these requirements need to be better defined. M. Newell and C. Macpherson to discuss and propose new wording.

Upon discussing the prohibition on mining, the Committee decided it would also be best to prohibit any future pits and quarries as they could have similar impacts. M. Allen to report back on any existing mechanisms or proposed wording to address existing vs proposed pits and quarries under the draft regulations.

M. Allen to provide expanded wording for final closing of the document which allows us to request any additional information deemed necessary.

Staff will work with M. Allen from NSE to revise the proposed regulations for review by the Committee members in January.

M. Newell noted that there were no updates to the proposed schedule for the provincial request for proposals for the exploration rights.

Next Meeting:

Next meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2019 at 10:30 am. If possible, the Committee would like to meet at the library.

Meeting adjourned at 11:59 am.

Moved by: Perry Swan

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Newell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Michelle Newell