

FRENCH RIVER SOURCE WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the French River Source Water Protection Committee was held at the Tatamagouche Library on July 18, 2017 at 10:00 am.

Present: Councillor Mike Gregory, Chair
Deputy Mayor Bill Masters
Greg Watson, Citizen Rep
Perry Swan, Village Commission Rep
Doug Bastow, North Shore River Restoration Group

Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works

Garth Demont, Department of Natural Resources

Regrets: Kim Baldwin, Citizen Rep
Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development
Carrie Miller/Dawn MacNeill, Nova Scotia Environment

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved by the Committee with motion by Bill Masters, seconded by Doug Bastow.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the meeting of October 26, 2016, were approved by the Committee with the following change: spruce budworm spray program changed from 'likely' to 'a possibility'.

Business Arising from Minutes:

Water Royalties: Michelle Newell provided an update on the issue of water royalties which was discussed at the last meeting. The Municipality has no jurisdiction or authority to implement any kind of water withdrawal fees. The province already charges a nominal fee to those with withdrawal permits. Some municipalities in other provinces have recently gained authority to charge such fees, however this is not an option in Nova Scotia. The province monitors annual water withdrawal quantities from permitted companies/municipalities, and so far, there are no concerns with resource capacity. County staff will be ensuring that properties containing commercial wells are also taxed based on a commercial rate, and staff and Council will be working with large water users/companies going forward to encourage them to donate to local organizations as a potential way to support the County's not-for-profit grant program.

Mattatal Lake: Work is currently underway to improve the lake outlet by replacing some existing culverts with a bridge structure. The lake outlet currently discharges downstream from the water treatment plant. For information.

Mineral Exploration:

Garth Demont provided an update on the mineral closure area within the watershed. The province plans to promote this closure area at the Prospectors and Developers Conference in March of 2018, and will subsequently issue a request for proposals for interested parties. The province has been researching companies who have similar mining operations and who may be interested in this closure area. They are also seeking companies with secure financial backing. The Source Water Protection Committee will need to develop terms and conditions to be included within the Request for Proposals which will guide mining and exploration within the watershed. Garth to research existing terms and conditions in other jurisdictions and forward to the committee for information. Ongoing monitoring and best work practices will be important, along with processing and waste management (to be outside of the watershed area), and a stakeholder committee. These terms and conditions/best practices should be finalized by the committee by March of 2018. DNR Staff continue to collect sediment and till samples within the closure area and are processing at their on-site lab. All data still looks promising. Will likely be there into September. Collected data will be placed online for review by prospective bidders for the RFP. A particular company in Nevada has a similar mining site and may be interested in Tatamagouche. The province will be sending staff to visit the Nevada operation in October and Garth will report back on findings at the next meeting. There are two small claims within the closure area – status of these has not changed.

Signage:

Signage has been ordered and received, to be installed within the next few weeks. Councillor Gregory gave maps and signs to the ATV club, however the committee requested that a watershed sign be posted at the ATV Club, outside.

Spray Programs:

Nova Scotia Environment has not received any applications for spraying within the watershed area this year. The committee requested additional information on spray buffers within/outside the watershed and any upcoming plans to spray for spruce budworm.

Source Water Protection Monitoring Program:

The latest document was provided for information.

Emergency Response Plan:

The Committee discussed specific response plans which should be developed, including:

- Drought: possibly keep a list of resources such as portable tanks, portable showers/bathrooms, options for laundry, bottled water. Michelle to discuss with EMO Nova Scotia as there may be existing resource lists/processes. Michelle to speak with South Shore Municipalities who handled the droughts 2 years ago.
- Major/Long Term Power Outage: we have back up

- generator, would need supply of fuel.
- Contamination
 - Water Treatment Plant building compromised
- Michelle to draft Emergency Response Plans for review by Committee.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be on October 24, 2017 at 10:00am

Meeting adjourned at 11:18pm.

Moved by: Perry Swan
Seconded by: Doug Bastow



Michelle Newell