

# 2025 Source Protection Annual Progress Report |

1 May 2026

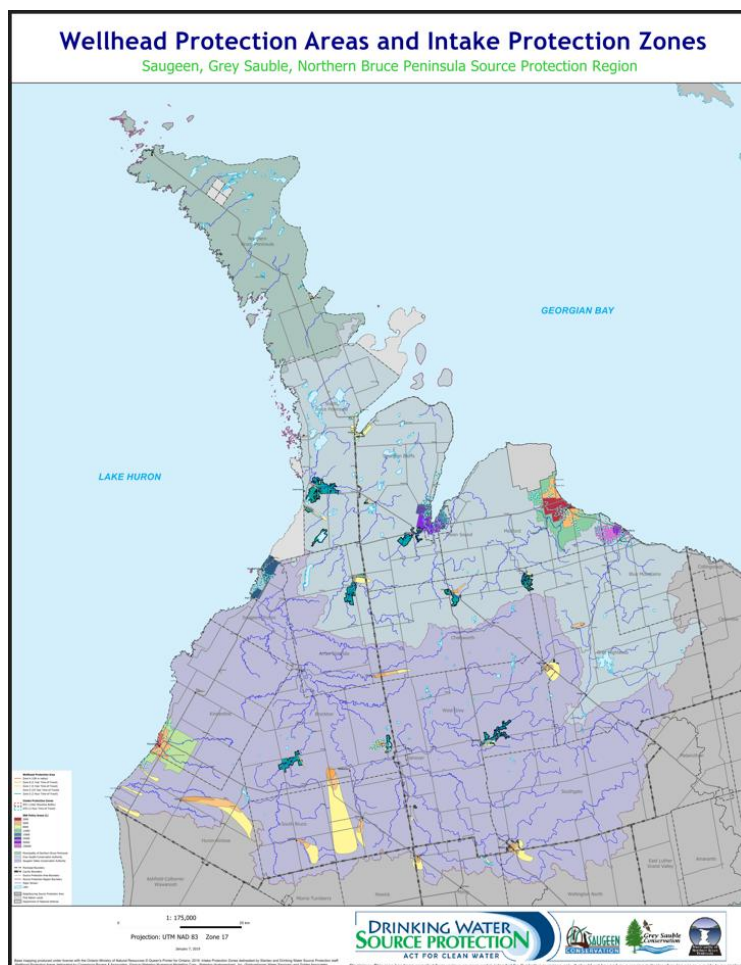
## I. Introduction

Saugeen Valley Source Protection Area

Grey Sauble Source Protection Area

Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Area

This annual progress report outlines the progress made in implementing the source protection plan for the Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region, as required by the Clean Water Act, 2006 and associated regulations. This Region’s Source Protection Plan came into effect in July of 2016; we have now completed the established 5-year timeline for implementation of our significant drinking water threat policies. Renewal and replacement of Source Protection Committee members continues with 1 member renewed in 2025 as required under the Clean Water Act, 2006. Chair Carl Kuhnke resigned his position in 2025, and Dick Hibma was elected as Acting Chair at the November SPC Meeting.



## 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.**

Over the last 25 years, protection of municipal drinking water sources in Ontario has improved dramatically. However, as the landscape and the climate changes, we must remain vigilant and continue with drinking water source protection measures to ensure that there continues to be safe water available for public consumption. Recently, the Province announced changes to boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities. This reconfiguration must align with the fundamental basis of Justice O'Connor's Walkerton Inquiry report recommendation to maintain watershed-based drinking water source protection at the local level. As a Source Protection Committee, we strongly advocate that Justice O'Connor's recommendations are respected to ensure that source protection planning and implementation remain responsive to local issues and policy approaches.

## III. Our Watershed

The Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region is comprised of three Source Protection Areas. These areas are the Saugeen Valley Source Protection Area, the Grey Sauble Source Protection Area and the Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Area. The Region represents approximately 8400 km<sup>2</sup> and has approximately 169,328 residents. Our Source Protection Region also includes the Chippewas of Saugeen, who have reserve land outside of Southampton, the Chippewas of Nawash, who have the Neyaashiinigmiing reserve in the Cape Croker area and the Métis Nation of Ontario.

The Saugeen Source Protection Area (Saugeen SPA) is comprised of the watershed that represents the jurisdiction of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. Each municipality is comprised of settlement areas surrounded by extensive rural areas. Between the 15 municipalities located in this SPA, there are a total of 21 municipal drinking water systems. These systems include the Arran-Elderslie Drinking Water System (DWS), Walkerton DWS, Chepstow DWS, Lake Rosalind DWS, Markdale Well Supply, Hanover Water Treatment Plant, Lakeshore DWS, Village of Ripley Well Supply, Scott Point DWS, Underwood DWS, Tiverton DWS, Armow DWS, Kincardine DWS, Minto Pines Subdivision DWS, Clifford Well Supply, Southampton Water Treatment Plant, Mildmay Well Supply, Teeswater Well Supply, Mount Forest DWS, Durham Well Supply and the Neustadt Well Supply.

The Grey Sauble Source Protection Area (Grey Sauble SPA) is comprised of the watershed that represents the jurisdiction of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. Between the 8 municipalities located in this SPA, there are a total of 15 municipal drinking water systems.

These systems include the Tara Drinking Water System (DWS), Thornbury DWS, Chatsworth DWS, Walters Falls DWS, Pottawatomi Village Water Treatment Plant, Shallow Lake Water Treatment Plant, East Linton Water Treatment Plant, Kimberly-Amik-Talisman Well Supply, Meaford PUC Water Treatment Plant, R.H. Neath Water Treatment Plant, Amabel-Sauble DWS, Foreman Water Works, Huron Woods Water Supply Works, Oliphant Water System and the Wiarton Water Treatment Plant.

The Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Area (NBP SPA) is comprised of the area that falls under the jurisdiction of the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula, with the exception of some small areas along the bottom portion of the municipality that are covered under the Grey Sauble SPA. There are extensive rural areas and cottage developments on the Lake Huron and Georgian Bay shorelines and some inland lakes. Within this SPA, there are two drinking water systems, these are the Tobermory Community Centre/ Fire Hall/ Municipal Concession Stand, and the Lion's Head Water Treatment Plant.

## 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 the source protection plan policies have been implemented and/or are progressing. The Source Protection Plan is comprised of 66 policies that address significant drinking water threats directly, and 57 policies that address other areas such as the general, transport pathways and monitoring policies. 94% of the policies that address significant drinking water threats are implemented or progressing well and 6% have been evaluated and determined that no further action is required. 86% of the policies have been fully implemented, while 8% are in-progress, which are salt related activities that were recently amended in the Source Protection Plan due to 2021 Technical Rule changes. There has been good interest and participation so far on recently amended salt related policies, with the completion of 4 additional Municipal Salt Management Plans in 2025.

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

#### **P – Progressing Well/On Target**

The majority of the source protection plan policies have been implemented and/or are progressing. Of the 21 municipalities required to complete the Official Plan conformity exercise, 100% have amended or are in the process of amending their Official Plans (20 fully implemented and 1 in-progress). Of the 17 municipalities required to complete the Zoning by-law conformity exercise, 100% have amended or are in the process of amending their Zoning by-laws.

### 3. Septic Inspections

#### **P – Progressing Well/On Target**

All municipalities within our source protection region are aware of the requirements to implement a mandatory on-site sewage maintenance inspection program within vulnerable source protection areas as specified under the Building Code (Ontario Regulation 332/12 under the Building Code Act). Septics are required to be inspected once every 5 years within vulnerable source protection areas. 100% of septic inspections have been completed as required under the Clean Water Act and Building Code Act within vulnerable source protection areas. In 2025, 67 septic systems were inspected, 20 of which required minor maintenance and 2 replaced. Staff have connected with municipalities to ensure ongoing mandatory septic inspections are completed as required. An increased number of inspections scheduled for 2026 as part of the second round.

### 4. Risk Management Plans

#### **P – Progressing Well/On Target**

222 Risk Management Plans have been established in the Region, with 6 new Plans negotiated and 3 renewed in 2025. 50 Inspections for regulated activities were conducted in 2025, with 2 classified as non-compliance inspections. There is a 100% compliance rate with the risk management plans established in the source protection region.

### 5. Provincial Progress: Addressing Risks on the Ground

#### **S - Satisfactory**

The majority of the source protection plan policies have been implemented and/or are progressing.

MECP – MRDWS – Fuel Handling & Storage - One application was received in 2025 for The Shallow Lake DWS, to amend the drinking water works permit (DWWP) to add a new 910 L above grade fuel storage tank. The tank was screened based on the 2021 technical rules and it was determined the tank was not a significant drinking water threat.

MECP - Wastewater/Sewage Works - In 2025, 1 application required a detailed review, screening outcome was that this is NOT a significant threat.

MECP – WDS – Hauled Sewage 3 in 2025, a total of 3 applications underwent Source Protection screening. The screening determined that 2 ECAs did not require a source protection implementation and 1 ECA will apply a low drinking water threat policy and 1 ECA will apply a medium drinking water threat policy.

OMAFRA – 1 NASM Plan and 3 Nutrient Management Strategies managed through conditions.

### 6. Source Protection Awareness and Change in Behaviour

There are 152 Road Signs in total in the region.

Project Manager and Program Supervisor attended a Pasture Meeting in September 2025, hosted by the Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association. It was a well-attended evening with good interactions. During social time before meeting, we fielded questions about wells, water testing, karst and how groundwater flows. Staff also participated on a private drinking water & karst Best Management Practices (BMPs) project with Agricultural sector representatives targeting private wells in karst areas. The BMPs from this program link well with the non-municipal drinking water system Best Management Practices that have been distributed by the Ministry. Together we hope to create some useful collateral materials and provide education/outreach to increase awareness of karst, impacts on groundwater systems in karst areas, farming/land stewardship in these areas. The Grey Bruce Health Unit is also partnering on this project and will bring valuable expertise, and a network of resources.

## 7. Source Protection Plan Policies: Summary of Delay

Not applicable to our source protection region/area.

## 8. Source Water Quality: Monitoring and Actions

In our source protection region/area, no issues have been identified in our local science-based assessment reports regarding the quality of the sources of municipal drinking water. Under monitoring policy M-29 the municipality of Brockton continues to monitor nitrate levels for wells 7 and 9. Results continue to be monitored, the Maximum Allowable Concentration of 10 mg/L as per O. Reg. 169/03: Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standards (ODWQS). Nitrate Issues are being monitored in Brockton:

2025 Averages Well #7 = 1.43 mg/L Well #9 = 2.24 mg/l (2024 Averages Well #7=1.54mg/L; Well #9=2.24mg/L)

2025 Lake Rosalind #1 = 5.45 mg/L (2024=5.26 mg/L)

Well #7 - decreasing concentration; Walkerton #9, slightly increasing concentration; Lake Rosalind#1 slightly increasing concentration

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

Staff continue to support the study for the Kimberley and Shallow Lake areas to review existing Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPA) due to highly vulnerable karst features, resulting in significant surface water/groundwater connections (e.g. sinking streams). The aim of this study is to collect improved water quality and flow data from the field, that can then be incorporated into updated groundwater models and potential changes to the WHPA delineations for these areas. In 2025, staff engaged a consulting service contract to update groundwater modelling for these areas.

## 10. More from the Watershed

Website: [home.waterprotection.ca](http://home.waterprotection.ca) Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region

In 2025, staff continue to engage with municipal staff, councils and landowners across the Region. Through council meetings, site visits, risk management related activities and public events, there were opportunities to assess source protection plan implementation successes and challenges including policy effectiveness. Support materials supplied by Conservation Ontario have resulted in increased engagement on social media platforms. Visit the link to learn more: <https://conservationontario.ca/conservationauthorities/source-water-protection>

To learn more about our source protection region/area, visit our homepage: <https://home.waterprotection.ca/>

