

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**LAKEHEAD REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY ENCOURAGES
COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CLEAN WATER ACT**

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority is encouraging all stakeholders to make their comments and concerns known regarding Regulations related to the proposed Clean Water Act which is expected to be approved later this year. Regulations are posted on the Ontario Government Environmental Bill of Rights Registry (EBR) located at <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/026965er.htm>. Comments are due in writing to the provincial standing committee on source water protection by February 20, 2006.

In late 2005, Ontario Environment Minister Laurel Broten introduced the Clean Water Act in the Ontario Legislature. Third and final reading of the Act, along with Royal Assent, is required before regulations can be implemented. "The proposed legislation promotes a shift in social attitudes towards all Ontarians sharing responsibility for protection the integrity of local sources of public drinking water," said Bill Bartley, Chairman of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority. When passed, the legislation will be a major component in the province's water stewardship strategy, establishing a collaborative, locally-driven, science-based process to protect drinking water sources.

For the purposes of the project, the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority has put together a team in order to develop a Source Water Protection Plan in the Lakehead Region. The Clean Water Act spells out the process for developing local Source Water Protection Plans, including Water Budgets for each watershed or groups of watersheds and proposes to provide full funding to prepare the plans. For organized Municipalities without a Conservation Authority or those wishing to take on further Source Water Protection projects, other grant money will be available.

Staff members from the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority are currently meeting with representatives from member Municipalities to explain the process. In addition, public consultation opportunities are planned for the coming months, Bartley noted: "Any group wishing to have a presentation on Source Water Protection and the impact of the legislation should contact us." Further information about Source Water Protection planning and the "Clean Water Act" can be found at www.sourceprotection.net.

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