

## **Water Act, Environment Advisory Council Hearings, 2016**

### **Kensington North Watersheds Association, Recommendations to the Hearings**

- 1.. We recommend raising ALUS payments so that the current lower-than-rent value is not a barrier to applying best management practices, including soil conservation structures, tillage techniques and cover crops. Explore every means to ensure that every field on Prince Edward Island is receiving appropriate soil management.
2. We recommend that all crop rotations, regardless of length, should be designed so that keeping soil in the field is top priority.
3. We recommend that provincial unpaved roads that regularly contribute a significant silt load on watercourses be addressed by requiring the use of appropriate best management practices and higher standards of care, and in some cases road closure.
4. We recommend that private roads be required to be managed in such a way so that they do not impact watercourses and ponds with sediment.
5. We recommend that a Silt Strategy be created for Prince Edward Island that involves all the appropriate government departments, all levels of government and all major stakeholders
6. We recommend that watershed groups be encouraged and assisted in carrying out data collection and other science to better understand our watersheds, so that decisions can be made regarding water management with ample, high quality data.

7. We recommend that this Environmental Advisory Board, our provincial and national law makers and regulators, and every sector of our society use evidence and good science to make decisions regarding our watersheds, not just for water extraction policy, but for soil conservation, fish and wildlife enhancement, water safety, and more.

8. We recommend that watershed groups receive adequate and timely levels of funding to carry out fish and wildlife habitat work in the riparian zones.

9. We recommend that watersheds groups be notified by the Dept. of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, and the Department of Communities, Land and Environment when work in the riparian zones is going to occur, so that watershed work plans can be adjusted and, if possible, assistance provided by groups, in order that our riparian zones receive a higher level of care and stewardship.

10. We recommend that the Province of PEI create a position for an Ombudsman to respond to concerns, including environmental concerns from the public.

### **Town of Kensington Recommendations**

1 – That the Province of PEI move forward with the full incorporation of the Island with sustainable municipal units allowing land use planning and development control adequate to protect the environment including water resources.

2 – That the Province of PEI mandate through the Water Act that all municipalities on the Island be required to regularly track and report withdrawal rates from their well fields to allow for the effective management of water resources.

3 – That the Province of Prince Edward Island modify petroleum storage regulations to require appropriate standards and safety inspections of all existing (no “grandfathering”) and new petroleum storage tanks; and further that all petroleum storage tanks, especially those in proximity to domestic water supplies, be appropriately outfitted with leak detection systems including, but not necessarily limited to, metering mechanisms such that differences can be monitored between amounts deposited and withdrawn to allow the early detection of leaks similar to that of commercial service stations.

4 – That the Province of PEI, due to the proximity of human activity to wellfields all across the province, immediately move forward with a heightened campaign of public awareness on water conservation, water safety and responsible water management through the Department of Communities, Land and Environment and the Department of Education.

5 - That the Province of PEI mandate, through the Water Act, a requirement for schools to systematically install low flow fixtures and other water conservation measures in all schools across the Island.

6 – That the Province of PEI provide increased funding opportunities and a regulatory framework that allows municipalities to effectively deal with water management issues and facilitates greater local responsibility for clean water and sewage disposal.

### **KNWSA Nitrates Committee Recommendations**

1- We recommend that incentives be created to facilitate the introduction of nutrient management on farms. The incentives could be in the form of increased rebates for the creation of nutrient management plans, or subsidizing the cost of a qualified agronomist.

2 – We recommend that the Government of Prince Edward Island join, and perhaps lead, a coalition of groups that will promote potato varieties that will reduce the impact of nitrates and other environmental indicators, while supplying the industry with high quality product and good economic return.

3 – We recommend that a group be formed to bring together the various research being done on nitrates in groundwater and surface water on Prince Edward Island, so that the lessons being learned can be implemented in our watersheds in a timely and effective fashion.

4 – We recommend that research be examined and conducted on cropping systems as a whole, involving crop rotations, tillage techniques, nutrient management and water management, to maximize the productivity and sustainability of our soils, our ability to profitably grow safe food, and to manage our water resource. Incentives supporting efforts that increase soil organic matter should be examined.