

SPC MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 6TH, 2026

Meeting #90

The Source Protection Committee Acting Chair, Earl Morwood called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on MARCH 6th, 2026. The following members and staff were in attendance.

Members

Dean Edwardson
Scott Alexander
Sean Beech
Brent Clutterbuck
Jarrod Craven
Gary Eagleson
Carl Kennes
Gary Martin
George Marr
Valerie M'Garry

Earl Morwood
Karleen Sirna
Sam Smith
Matthew Stewart
John Van Dorp
Sandy Levin
Emma Young
Sam Anderson-MECP

Regrets:

Ron Elijah
Andrew Powell

Staff:

Julie Welker
Jenna Allain
Deb Kirk
Steve Clark
Olivia Orsini
Mark Peacock
Tracy Annett

1) Chair's Welcome

Acting Chair Earl Morwood welcomed the committee and noted a quorum was achieved. The territorial acknowledgement was read. Scott Alexander, the new Risk Management Official for Oxford County was introduced, and members gave round table introductions.

2) Adoption of the Agenda

March 6th, 2026, agenda was approved.

Moved by G. Marr -seconded by G. Eagleson

"RESOLVED that the March 6th, 2026, agenda be approved."

CARRIED.

3) Approval of November 14th, 2025, SPC minutes

Moved by –J. Van Dorp-seconded by B. Clutterbuck

"RESOLVED that the November 14th, 2025, meeting minutes be approved."

CARRIED.

4) Delegations- none

5) Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was identified.

6) Business arising from the minutes – none

7a) Annual Report

Julie Welker gave a presentation on the Annual Report work to date. The *Clean Water Act* outlines that the Source Protection Authority (SPA) will prepare an annual progress report and submit it to the Director and to the SPC. The report includes the measures that have been taken to implement the SPP and to the extent to which the objectives set out in the SPP are being achieved. The deadline for the submission of the 9th annual progress report for the TSR is May 1st, 2026, and covers the 2025 calendar year (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31).

After the SPC reviews the report written comments are submitted to the SPA to ensure the objectives set out in the Source Protection Plan are being achieved by the measures described in the report.

Monitoring policies require policy implementers to report to the SPA by February 1st of each year and are complied through the Electronic Annual Reporting (EAR) Portal. There are 2 reports generated by EAR: a public report and a supplemental form.

Tables were reviewed for each area that the reports cover as follows:

- TSR and Oxford policies that are complete.
- Implementation Status of Significant drinking water threats. 85% Implemented and 15% in progress.
- Implementation Status of Moderate to Low Threats for the region 50% Implemented and 50% are in progress of progress made.
- Implementation Status of Other Permitted Polices (Transport Pathways). 60% Implemented; 30% in Progress and 10% not started.
- Risk Management Plans since the SPP took effect is 118 and RMPs in effect 85.
- s.59 Notices where neither 57 nor 58 applied was 24.
- Inspection done for s 57 was a total of 163, s.58 was 205 and inspection that lead to contraventions was 2.
- Official Plans and Zoning By-laws: 17 municipalities are required to complete OP conformity exercise of which 13 have, 2 are in progress and 2 have not started. 22 municipalities are to complete for Zoning By-laws of which 6 have, 15 are in process and 1 has not started.
- Source Protection signs: Provincial roads 128, municipal roads 155 and other locations 14.
- Septic Inspections: 1 completed this year with 0 outstanding.
- The only drinking water issue is in Woodstock of nitrates; an ICA is being delineated.
- Enumerated Threats results are 94% progress has been made.
- Prescribed Instruments are receiving a higher level of details and there are gaps in the data. The MECP, MNRF, MTO, OMAFA gave information on how they incorporate Source Water Protection into their Prescribed Instrument reviews (ex. Environmental Compliance Approvals, Permit to Take Water, Drinking Water Works Permit, Municipal Drinking Water License, Fuel License Renewals, Pesticide Permits. Julie noted that most of the data provided by the MECP is not within a

significant area; not WPHAs or IPZs. The hope is that the MECP just reports on what's within a significant drinking water area. This reporting is very onerous on their end but maybe this can happen one day. The reports have a lot of data and are difficult to process. Some Source Protection Authorities are giving a satisfactory grade and J. Welker suggested and the SPC agreed to apply a *Progressing well* grade because further data has been compiled for septic inspections, RMPs and the province's information.

A question on pesticide permits was asked. Pesticides permits are one of the Prescribed Instrument tools. Permits are required when using over an X amount quantity and if within a vulnerable area. The Ministry is responsible for ensuring continued compliance. There are uncertainties and inconsistencies in what pesticides are restricted and over what period. J. Van Dorp noted there was a restriction on certain pesticides such as atrazine early and where you could only use it every other year. Can RMPs be used to monitor? A question was also asked whether Pesticide permits that require Nutrient Management Plans are monitored. S. Alexander reported he has reached out to MECP for Oxford County and confirmed the NMPs are being followed although there is a limited number of Ministry staff to inspect over a large area. Pesticide permits will be brought forward to the next SPC meeting in June for further discussion.

In summary,

December 31st, 2025, marked ten years since our Source Protection Plan first took effect. In that time significant progress has been made to implement the policies contained in the plan and address the activities that were identified as posing a risk to our municipal drinking water supplies. To date, 85% of the policies in the plan that address significant drinking water threats have been fully implemented, with the remaining 15% progressing well. An additional 2 Risk Management Plans were established over the reporting period, bringing the Region's total Risk Management Plans to 118. Approximately 94% of the 1058 originally identified significant drinking water threats, along with those identified after the originally approved SPPs, have been successfully managed or eliminated. While there is still a considerable amount of work to do to address the remaining threats, the Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Committee is pleased to see that policy implementation is moving steadily forward. For that reason, they believe that a ranking score of **progressing well** and **on target** is a fair assessment of our implementation progress.

For the reasons outlined above, the Source Protection Committee feels confident in their assessment that implementation of the Source Protection Plans is progressing well/on target.

THAT the TSR Source Protection Committee receive the staff report on the TSR Source Protection Plan Annual Progress Report 2025 for information.

Moved by G. Marr-seconded by J. Van Dorp

“RESOLVED that the TSR Source Protection Committee receive the staff report on the TSR Source Protection Plan Annual Progress Report 2025 for information”.

CARRIED.

Motion Amendment: S. Levin noted that in the summary it states “while there is still a considerable amount of work to do to address the remaining threats, the Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Committee is pleased to see that policy implementation is moving steadily forward. Removing the word “*considerable*” was suggested to support the idea that we're progressing well and are on target.

Moved by J. Van Dorp-seconded by G. Marr

“RESOLVED that the motion be amended to remove the word “considerable” supporting that we are progressing well and on target”.

CARRIED.

Discussion: G. Eagleson asked about the Supplemental Form. Many of the questions are redundant and inputting all the questions would be very time-consuming and a challenge. The goal should simply address changes from the last report instead of repeating answers in detail. J. Welker will take this concern to the working group who evaluate the process. The MECP is also working on simplifying reporting.

THAT the TSR Source Protection Committee, provide its assessment of the implementation of the TSR Source Protection Plan.

Moved by G. Marr-seconded by M. Stewart

“RESOLVED that TSR Source Protection Committee, provide its assessment of the implementation of the TSR Source Protection Plan”.

CARRIED.

THAT the TSR Source Protection Committee direct staff to update the 2025 Annual Progress Report and Supplementary Report with its assessment of implementation.

Moved by C. Kennes -seconded by S. Smith

“RESOLVED that TSR Source Protection Committee direct staff to update the 2025 Annual Progress Report and Supplementary Report with its assessment of implementation”.

CARRIED

AND FURTHER THAT Source Protection Authority staff be directed to present the TSR Source Protection Committee’s comments along with the Annual Progress Report 2025 to the Upper Thames River, St. Clair Region, and Lower Thames Valley Source Protection Authorities for submission to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Moved by J. Van Dorp –seconded by S. Beech

“RESOLVED that the Source Protection Authority staff be directed to present the TSR Source Protection Committee’s comments along with the Annual Progress Report 2025 to the Upper Thames River, St. Clair Region, and Lower Thames Valley Source Protection Authorities for submission to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks”.

CARRIED.

b) Pre-consultation on s.34 Petrolia Intake

Julie Welker gave an update on the Petrolia Intake. Early engagement happened in October/November 2025, Pre-Consultation January/February 2026. Council Resolution was received at the end of February 2026. The next step is public consultation at the end of March for a 30-day period. Letters to landowners/businesses will be sent, a notice put in the Lambton Independent paper and a virtual meeting will be held.

- The MECP has provided their comments on the report provided March 2, 2026, that include: 25 comments with suggested changes to 36 policies.
 - 19 comments are editorial in nature i.e. align language with proper tool - 'shall' with 'conform'; add missing policies in table.
 - The comments need to be reviewed further to determine if suggested comment changes the intent of the policy or policy tool.
 - SPA staff are asking that these comments not be included in the s.34 Petrolia amendments since they have nothing to do with that amendment.

In summary: We received the MECP comments just this week so there was no time for a detailed review. There were 25 comments with suggested changes to 36 of our policies and 19 comments editorial in nature. J. Welker will make the editorial changes and add the missing policies and tables. The remaining changes could not

be made because there are concerns that those changes could alter the intent of the policies: these policies have been approved since the beginning of the program and reviewed through the technical 2021 rules.

J. Welker has advised MECP of the concern of holding up the Petrolia Intake work when the other comments do not relate to this. We are waiting for directions for this, and J. Welker has met with our Risk Management Officials to discuss it. The results will be brought to the next SPC meeting. It is important to note that the SPC is the final approver of policies.

Next steps: Now that council resolutions from the City of Sarnia and Town of Petrolia have passed public consultation can occur after the MECP policy comments that are not related to the intake are clarified and can go ahead.

RECOMMENDATION

- **THAT** the Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Committee receive the Section 34 Update Report as information.

Moved by G. Eagleson -seconded by G. Marr

“RESOLVED that Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Committee receive the Section 34 Update Report as information.”

CARRIED.

- **THAT** the Committee approve the Proposed Petrolia intake Section 34 Pre-Consultation comments and responses.

This motion was not moved until the MECP policy comments are finalized when it comes to the intake not being part of the policy.

Amended Motion:

THAT the Committee receive the Proposed Petrolia intake Section 34 Pre-Consultation comments and responses report.

Moved by M. Stewart -seconded by G. Marr

“RESOLVED that THAT the Committee receive the Proposed Petrolia intake Section 34 Pre-Consultation comments and responses report.”.

CARRIED.

- **AND FURTHER THAT** the Committee recommend that Source Protection Authority (SPA) staff continue with the Section 34 amendment process and proceed to the Public Consultation phase.

This motion was not moved as MECP policy comments need to be finalized.

Amended Motion:

AND FURTHER THAT the Committee recommend that Source Protection Authority (SPA) staff continue with the Section 34 amendment process.

Moved by M. Stewart -seconded by G. Marr

“RESOLVED that the Committee recommend that Source Protection Authority (SPA) staff continue with the Section 34 amendment process.”

CARRIED.

c) Program Update

Julie Welker provided a program update.

Key points:

- The Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Plan Volume III lays out the implementation timelines for various tools used under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*. This needs to be updated to reflect current or future amendments to the plan. Suggested wording: For new vulnerable areas and new threat activities added to the plan through amendments, risk management plans must be established within five years of the Effective Date of the most recent amendment, except for those policies that apply in Oxford County. Text that will be removed: Timeframe of eight years, except for those policies that apply in Oxford County, for all existing significant threats identified at the time of the initial SPP approval by December 31st, 2023.
- Section 48 Notices were given: Petrolia required a technical report for the new intake and Perth South required an emergency well.
- Municipal Drinking Water Systems Update: Melrose is upgrading their water supply to the Lake Huron pipeline in the spring. A s.51 amendment will be made, and the well will be removed from the Assessment Report. In Mitchell, a new well will be drilled after one was comprised due to a faulty liner.

- Risk Management Plan Non-conformity: 2 properties in Dorchester in a WHPA-B (10) are being monitored and an RMP needs to be completed. There is uncertainty about what they are using the land for and attempts to contact them have been unsuccessful. O. Orsini, the RMO will follow up with the Law Society for support in contacting the lawyer involved. The question was asked of how long it takes to implement an RMP; it typically takes up to a year to implement measures of a plan.
- Stormwater EASR policy: Many privately-owned stormwater management (SWM) works—specifically on institutional, commercial, light industrial, and multi-unit residential properties were moved from the Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) process to the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR), a self-registration system.
- MECP Proposed Monitoring Policy: The Approach is to Manage and apply to SDWT: Existing and Future Threats, Legal Effect: Comply with. The Policy text will outline: Where stormwater management works are a significant drinking water threat (SDWT) and meet the criteria for registration on the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR), the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks shall: Notify the Source Protection Authority when these registrations occur and registered storm water management works have been updated by the registrant to identify a SDWT. By February 1 of each year, report on the number of inspections conducted on registered works where the activities would be an SDWT.

The question was asked whether snow is considered under Storm Water Management policies. Snow is not covered under the Storm Water Management policies. We do have separate policies for salt application and snow storage. With snow it is the grit, oils and other chemicals that are a concern, and the Risk Management Officials have discussed how to address this in the WHPAs. The question remains, if the whole parking lot is within the WHPA, where do they put the snow and how is it managed. The ministry has given some suggested comments such as huge snow melters.

- MECP Update: Program Managers and MECP staff met at end of February as part of their regular meetings throughout the year. Summary of updates that were received.
 - *Clean Water Act, 2006* received Royal Assent on November 3. Implementation of those changes will happen soon
 - Regulation 287/07 proposed changes have not been approved to date. The province is reviewing consultation comments. No update on when approvals will occur.
 - Transfer Payment Agreements: After reviewing the latest interim financial and workplan updates, the province has indicated the program is running smoothly. There are a few trends they are noticing (underspending with SPC and staffing). These are likely due to some SPC meetings needing to go on-line, and staffing changes.
 - Chair Appointments 2 chairs have been re-appointed 17 are still in the process.

The question was asked if there are further answers to the potential implications to this committee with the proposed consolidation of conservation authorities; there is no news at this time. J. Van Dorp commented that he attended a meeting in Guelph with 19 agriculture reps and MECP made a presentation on how they were streamlining services to make things more efficient.

RECOMMENDATION

- **THAT** the TSR Source Protection Committee receive the Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Program Update report as information.

Moved by C. Kennes-seconded by S. Beech

“RESOLVED that the TSR Source Protection Committee receive the Thames-Sydenham and Region Program Update as information.

CARRIED.

- **THAT** the TSR Source Protection Committee direct the Source Protection Authority staff to amend the timelines for Risk Management Plans in the Source Protection Plan Volume III.

Moved by J. Van Dorp-seconded by S. Smith

“RESOLVED that the TSR Source Protection Committee direct Source Protection Authority staff to amend the timelines for Risk Management Plans in the Source Protection Plan Volume III.

CARRIED.

- **THAT** the new Stormwater EASR policy be included in the SPP. Many privately owned Stormwater Management (SWM) works specifically on institutional, commercial, light industrial, and multi-unit residential properties were removed from the Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) process to the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR) and is now a self-registration system.

Moved by G. Eagleson-seconded by J. Van Dorp

“RESOLVED that the TSR Source Protection Committee approve the new Stormwater EASR policy to be included in the SPP.

CARRIED.

d) Event Based Areas Presentation

Steve Clark the RMO gave a presentation on Event Based Area that are areas when

modeling has demonstrated that a spill from a specific activity could contaminate sources of drinking water. A map was shown that outlines many EBAs along the coast and to Wallaceburg.

Key Points of the presentation:

- Technical Rules indicate that if modeling demonstrates that a contaminant could reach the intake and exceed a certain benchmark, then the activity would be considered a significant threat.
- Issue #1 outlined- the actual transportation of fuel (such as by tanker trucks) is not specifically listed as an activity in the Prescribed Threats Tables. A spill would be a potential “Event” on the landscape.
- Issue #2- large, fixed storage facilities might be overlooked. Considering the region having extensive fuel movements and storage, these activities would not normally be captured as a threat since IPZ-2 and 3 vulnerability scores are lower than 8.
- Based on results of the event-based approach undertaken, a request was made to the Director to add the transportation of fuel as ‘other’ or local threat.
- Technical Rules 68 require an IPZ-3 to be delineated if modelling demonstrates that contaminants released during an extreme event may be transported to the intake. And Rule 130 outlined that an activity may be listed as a significant threat if modeling demonstrates that a spill could result in deterioration of the water supply.
- The Extreme Events Parameters were based on a heavy period of precipitation or up to a 100-year storm event (wind), Joint probability analysis required to define combined 100-year event, Petrolia and LAWSS (Sarnia wind speed and tributary flow and Wallaceburg Lake Huron water level and Sydenham flow).
- The overall process included: Joint probability analysis to select extreme events, reverse particle tracking to define IPZ-3 boundaries, identified activities of concern such as fertilizer and fuel, contaminant transport modeling and IPZ-3 delineation and application of Rule 130.
- Considerations and limitations in the modelling:
 - Decay is due to physical and chemical processes not considered.
 - A limited number of spills were simulated.
 - It was assumed that tanker trucks, rail tankers and lakers transport fuel along the corridors used in modeling.
 - Hydrodynamics in Wallaceburg area is complex. Additional data collection and ongoing calibration are recommended.
 - It is important to recognize that modeling is a tool that can be used to improve our understanding of the vulnerability of intakes. While there are some limitations in the process, it was determined that an adequate level of safety was established through the extreme event modelling scenario. Average conditions would in most cases result in lower values at the intake.
- A map showed modelling sample sites, established spill locations and the impact on intakes based on lake flow, wind dynamic and tributary modelling. This work all determined these event-based areas.

- Processes have changed over the years and spills action plans for all the refineries upstream have been mapped and there is a notification distribution list for any spills. Both Wallaceburg and Walpole is on that list to shut down their systems until they can clarify the extent of the spill upstream and whether it is a threat.

8) Information

8i. Sarnia to see expanded water protection zones for new Petrolia intake

<https://www.thesarniajournal.ca/news/sarnia-to-see-expanded-water-protection-zones-for-new-petrolia-intake-11863268>

8ii. Chiefs of Ontario call for urgent implementation of 2021 water settlement and legislation

<https://chiefs-of-ontario.org/chiefs-of-ontario-call-for-urgent-implementation-of-2021-water-settlement-and-legislation-as-a-third-of-ontario-first-nations-face-drinking-water-advisories/>

8iii. Road Salt

<https://www.am800cklw.com/news/lakeshore-cuts-back-on-road-salting-as-supplies-tighten-essex-county-says-service-unaffected.html>

8iv. Unlicensed snow dump shut down in Wilmot

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/kitchener/article/unlicensed-snow-dump-shut-down-in-township-of-wilmot/>

9) In Camera Session

None.

10) Other Business

None.

11) MECP Program Analyst Update – Sam Anderson presented the MECP Provincial Progress Report included in the member's package.

Key points:

- Since 2017, 22 plans have been in place protecting 450 municipal drinking water systems. 19,917 risks have been addressed and 95% of SPP Policies are being implemented or are in progress.
- Prescribed instruments are instruments to ensure activities conform with Source Protection requirements. New activity applications are screened for vulnerable areas

and significant drinking water threats. 3256 applications were reviewed and 1128 risk activities were regulated.

- Risk Management Plans: there are approximately 125 RMOs across the province and they enforce 2113 RMP's. There was 98% compliance rate with 672 RMP inspections in 2024. There are now 2113 RMP's on approximately 2637 properties.
- Prohibited activities in highly vulnerable areas: There are 449 high risk activities prohibited in Ontario, for example salt application.
- Interactive Mapping Tool: is a web-based interactive mapping tool with real time data and users can determine properties in a vulnerable area. Users can identify if they need to take action to protect a nearby drinking water source.
- Other Actions: 94% of municipalities are incorporating source water protection into their official land use plans. 2233 source protection signs have been installed on roadway signs for Ontario. 18 approximately 18313 septic systems were inspected in 2017 and 1046 in 2024.
- Good news story: in 2023, the City of Stratford piloted a new unit unidirectional flushing program method for cleaning the interior of water remains within the distribution system to improve and maintain water quality. And the system also completed a systemwide leak detection survey and carried out repairs to reduce water loss and enhanced conservation officer efforts.

12) Members Report

John Van Dorp- attended a meeting in Guelph with Egg Farmers of Ontario. He raised his question of the location of new wells on farms and why the rules changed for farms that have been operating for centuries. In the past the water would slowly percolate down into the groundwater area, the nitrogen would naturally disperse into the iron molecules. He noted it is easy for them to remove but because of the accelerated draw created by these wells, it prohibits natural farming.

Gary Eagleson - noted his concerns of articles regarding microplastics and drinking water, and how it relates to prostate cancer. He asked if someone could speak to the committee on this topic at a future meeting.

He also noted recent news in Chatham, Kent whereby council approved \$160 million waste to Energy Partnership. This involves an industrial anaerobic digester that will convert industrial, commercial, and institutional organic waste into renewable natural gas. He noted an example of a farm in Michigan that was recently quarantined because organic waste was deposited on the soil, contaminating it; the farm was quarantined and the farmer could not sell his cattle. He asked Mark Peacock if the municipality contacted the Lower Thames about this project. Mark indicated they have not, but that LTVCA will most likely deal with stormwater management for the site. G. Eagleson noted how the waste is stored and how it spreads should be considered and the RMO should ask the municipality

about it to get an understanding of what that processing means. This will be discussed again at the next SPC meeting.

Dean Edwardson- thanked Earl Morwood for stepping in as Acting Chair and Juile Welker for being so organized.

Jarrod Craven- reported there will be a new drilled well for Dorchester and in production this year. The well is inside the wellhead protection area on municipal land.

Scott Alexander- a new well will be drilled in Tavistock but timelines are uncertain, maybe early next year.

Julie Welker- the UTRCA staff has been doing Indigenous training with local communities. Two elders from Oneida spoke and it included drinking water issues they experience; often the First Nations people being afraid to drink their water. Stats were given of cancers being on the rise and the average lifespan of a First Nations male is 54 and for women 65. They cannot say exactly if it's water or air pollution. The training brought light again on the importance of clean drinking water for everyone.

13) Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at **12:10 p.m.**

Moved by J. Van Dorp

“RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned.”

CARRIED.

PLEASE NOTE: The next SPC meeting is to be held virtually on June 12, 2026.