

For March 9, 2009 meeting with MOE

Saving Leitrim Wetland: Objectives of the Friends of Leitrim Wetland

It is essential that no further Permits to Take Water be issued until the following objectives have been achieved. With regard to the studies listed below, there needs to be agreement that the Friends of Leitrim Wetland and their scientific advisors shall be given an opportunity by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to review and comment on the Terms of Reference, including scope and proposed methodology, prior to commencement, as well as on all interim and draft final reports.

1. Receipt of all the requested studies and associated hydrogeological data by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and the Friends of Leitrim Wetland.
2. Completion of an independent hydrogeological study for the Leitrim Wetland that includes the headwaters of Findlay Creek (the federal wetland) and the Tartan-owned lands.
3. Completion of interim measures to stabilize water levels.
4. Development of a plan to establish appropriate water levels and the mechanisms to implement the plan. Prevention of both back flooding and water drawdown is essential.
5. Completion of a report that recommends mitigation measures for the damaging impact of the 1988-89 ditch that traverses the northern open fen. The recommendations should include mechanisms to establish conditions that will result in an appropriate water level in the northern fen.
6. Completion of studies on issues that have not been covered sufficiently to date:
 - a) A study of peat, including wastage, methyl mercury release, carbon sink loss and retention of contaminants; and
 - b) A study of endangered, threatened and rare species.
7. Permission for unfettered access by the Friends (including scientists and engineers) to the wetland, on both Tartan and SNCA lands.
8. Resumed and expanded monitoring of contaminants arising from the Gloucester Landfill and Special Waste Area throughout the year, under varying hydrological conditions (dry times and wet times). This includes drilling of new wells in the projected 1,4-dioxane plume, to measure the twenty identified Gloucester contaminants.

9. Development of a plan to remove invasive species from the wetland. The invasive species of concern include Glossy and Common Buckthorn, Marsh Sow Thistle, Angelica and any other potentially invasive species.
10. Development of a pre-development plant list in order to produce a baseline for rehabilitation plans.
11. Development of plans to restore Findlay Creek to its coldwater status, including but not limited to the protection of the important coldwater seeps and springs near Bank Street which cool the creek; until the hydrogeology is better understood, the area east of the 1989 OMNR-evaluated PSW boundary (from the south side of Findlay Creek to the Blais Road right-of-way) should remain undisturbed.
12. Transparency and inclusiveness of the process, by allowing community members (with technical competence) to participate on the Technical Advisory Committee.
13. Consultation with recognized wetland rehabilitation experts to draw up rehabilitation plans.

NOTES:

The Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources give courses on wetland restoration. Web sites:

<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/wildlife/wetlands/rehabtechniques-e.cfm>

http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Biodiversity/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_176753.html

As well, Ducks Unlimited in both Canada and the United States spend millions of dollars each year restoring wetlands in partnership with landowners and government agencies. Owen Steele in Ducks Unlimited is a good contact. Web site: <http://www.ducks.ca/aboutduc/how/index.html>

The Program on Ecological Restoration, jointly located at Sir Sanford Fleming College in Lindsay (Eric Sager 905-324-9144 x 3737) and Trent University in Peterborough (Tom Whillans 705-748-1011 x 7789), could be of assistance. As well, Dr. Whillans, Chair Environmental and Resource Studies at Trent University, is responsible for the professional wetland restoration course.

Additionally, Professor J.A Kusler in Oregon and K.L. Erwin in California have written extensively on the subject (books and journal articles). References:

Erwin; K.L., Wetland Evaluation for Restoration and Creation, Island Press, Covelo, California, 1990.

Kusler, J.A.; Kentula, M.E., Wetland creation and restoration: the status of the science, Corvallis Environmental Research Laboratory (USA); NSI Technology Services (USA); Association of State Wetland Managers (USA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Research and Development, Environmental Research Laboratory, EPA-600/3- (USA), 1989.