

# HULLCAR AQUIFER INTER-MINISTRY ACTION PLAN

MARCH 11, 2016

**DIRECTOR LEAD:** CHRISTA ZACHARIAS-HOMER, (ENV), Deputy Director, Regional Operations Branch

**TECHNICAL TEAM LEAD:** ORLANDO SCHMIDT, (AGRI), Regional Manager, Coast and Interior

**CORE TEAM MEMBERS:**

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| David Poon (AGRI), Provincial Soil Specialist                 | Skye Thomson (FLNRO), Regional Hydrogeologist                |
| Jason Bourgeois (ENV), Section Head, Environmental Management | Rob Birtles (IHA), Team Leader, Environmental Health Officer |
| Stephanie Little (ENV), Environmental Protection Officer      | Brian Gregory (IHA), Environmental Health Officer            |

**ADDITIONAL SUPPORT**

- Mark Raymond (AGRI) – Acting Manager, Resource Management Unit
- Tom Droppo (AGRI) – Industry Specialist, Dairy
- Dennis Einarson (MoE), Environmental Impact Biologist, Regional Operations Branch

**Vision**

Public recognition that government is working as an integrative team with industry, community and First Nations to protect drinking water quality and support sustainable agriculture sector in the Hullcar Aquifer area (Township of Spallumcheen, British Columbia).

**Goals:**

- Safe Drinking water for residents of Hullcar Aquifer and Steele Springs Water District, with nitrate levels consistently below 6 mg/L.
- Build public trust by demonstrating that multiple Ministries are collaborating for the citizens of BC.
- Determine as scientifically accurately as possible the sources of nitrate in the Hullcar Aquifer.
- Sustainable economic development for the local agrifood sector.

Activities	Lead (support in brackets)	Duration (start/end dates)	Status	Budget.
1. Deliver meeting of local agrifood sector (dairy, feedlots, chicken, etc.) located over Hullcar Aquifer and Steele Springs Water District to engage in a dialogue about agrifood sector adopting environmental farm plans to improve water quality. The best management practices within EFP program support environmentally sustainable agriculture sector and supports the sector towards compliance with the requirements of the Agriculture Waste Control Regulation.	Christa Zacharias-Homer/Orlando Schmidt (All Inter-Min WG members)	March 21, 2016		

Activities	Lead (support in brackets)	Duration (start/end dates)	Status	Budget.
2. Deliver public meeting for residents of Hullcar Aquifer and Steele Springs Water District to provide information on government's water quality monitoring and to persuade community members to ensure septic systems are working correctly as failures contribution to high nitrates in aquifer.	Christa Zacharias-Homer (All Inter-Min WG members)	TBC-Week of April 11, 2016		
3. Review of Environmental Management Act, Drinking Water Protection Act, Health Act instruments to encourage collective action for improvement of water quality.	Christa Zacharias-Homer, Rob Birtles (Stephanie Little, Brian Gregory)	Week of March 14, 2016		
4. Develop a communications plan that includes sharing of the following on MoE website <a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/regions/okanagan/envman/hullcar-aquifer.html">http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/regions/okanagan/envman/hullcar-aquifer.html</a> (not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequently asked questions</li> <li>• Maps identifying known domestic wells, aquifers, farm locations</li> <li>• Copy of IHA advisory</li> <li>• Water quality sampling data</li> <li>• Inter-ministry monitoring plan</li> <li>• Inter-ministry working group minutes with key actions.</li> </ul> Sampling data currently collected monthly by MoE at Steele Springs drinking water outfall will continue to be shared with Steel Springs Water Board via email within 7 days of receipt of analysis. If sample results exceeded Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines, the sample results will also provided to Ministry of Agriculture, Interior Health, and the Town of Spallumcheen.	Orlando Schmidt/ Christa Zacharias-Homer (All Inter-Min WG members)	March 9, 2016		
5. Conduct review of all water quality data available (i.e. IHA, FLNR, MoE – including Environmental Monitoring System info).	Dennis Einarson (Brian Gregory, Skye Thomson)	Starting March 1, 2016		
6. Develop an integrated cross ministry monitoring plan including identification of sampling points, by whom, schedule of samples, etc.	Dennis Einarson, Chris Russel, Skye Thomson	Completed by March 15, 2016		
7. Explore opportunities to partner with external parties such as the Okanagan Basin Water Board and/or the University of British Columbia-Okanagan	Skye Thomson, Dennis Einarson, Rob Birtles	March 21, 2016		
8. Ensure compliance with Agricultural Waste Control Regulation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing promotional compliance activities and promotional best practices including. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BC Cattlemen's AGM, May 26-28 – Penticton</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Stephanie Little, Clayton Botkin and Tom Droppo	Ongoing		

Activities	Lead (support in brackets)	Duration (start/end dates)	Status	Budget.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BC Chicken Growers Association</li> <li>- BC Dairy Association</li> <li>• Conduct Inspections of agricultural operations in the Hullcar area.</li> <li>• Address compliance issues as defined by the <a href="#">Ministry of Environment Compliance and Enforcement Policy and Procedures (May 2013)</a>.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>				
9. Explore alternative nutrient management approaches including technology options, geographic distribution options, etc.	Orlando Schmidt, Christa Zacharias-Homer (Marg Crowley and MAg)	March 29, 2016		