Core Ministry Team Members:

Director Lead:
Christa Zacharias-Homer
Ministry of Environment
Deputy Director, Regional Operations Branch

Technical Team Lead:
Orlando Schmidt
Ministry of Agriculture
Regional Manager, Coast and Interior

Goals of the Inter-Ministry Working Group:
* To ensure safe drinking water for the residents of Hullcar Aquifer and Steele Springs Water District
* To build public trust and demonstrate collaboration among Ministries
* To determine possible sources of nitrate in the Hullcar Aquifer
* To foster sustainable economic development for the local agrifood sector

Steele Springs Nitrate Sampling

The Ministry of Environment received the preliminary results for the October 17 sample of SSDW overflow. This sample collection was coordinated with a similar sample taken by Brian Upper, Co-Chair, SSWG. The Ministry sent its sample to ALS Laboratory, and SSWG sent its sample to CARO Analytics. The Ministry’s result is 10.8 mg/L, and Brian Upper, co-Chair advised the SSWG result is 9.6 mg/L. It is common that the results from the two laboratories will not be exactly the same; however, both the ministry and SSWG are asking for the respective laboratories to re-analyse the samples.

The Ministry also received the final results from the September 26 sampling and the result is 11 mg/L.

Interior Health Authority Update

Interior Health would like to remind those Hullcar area residents that received a Water Quality Advisory from Interior Health in July 2014 that the Water Quality Advisory remains in effect until further notice. Residents on the Steele Springs Waterworks District water system and residents drawing water from the Hullcar 103 Aquifer are reminded to review the information in the Water Quality Advisory.


Information on Groundwater Protection for Well Owners can be found at:
http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/water/water-wells/gwpr_info_for_well_owners_brochure.pdf
The Integrated Monitoring Study – Phase II includes conducting groundwater sampling and deep soil sampling. The locations for drilling the monitoring well and the deep soil boreholes were informed by the Phase I assessment. The Inter-Ministry Working Group is currently obtaining landowner approval to enter the respective properties to conduct the sampling work. Golder Associates is the contractor that will undertake this work and it is expected to be completed by mid-November.

The Post-Harvest Nitrate Study is being conducted by staff with the Ministry of Agriculture. So far, soil test results have been received for 27 of the 40 fields sampled. The soil sampling for the Post-Harvest Soil Testing phase is expected to be complete the first week of November. Benchmark soil sampling for the first of four time periods has been completed. A progress report is due to be released December 1.

Scientists are uncovering how nitrogen migrates underground with the help of sensors that continuously measure nitrate concentration and water flow.

By Susan Moran | Friday, June 21, 2013

http://discovermagazine.com/2013/julyaug/11-how-nitrogen-can-help-food-production-but-harm-drinking-water

Upcoming dates of interest:

| Nov/Dec | Environmental Impact Assessments due for three area farms |
| December 1 | Post-Harvest Nitrate Study Update |
| November 28 | Inter-Ministry Working Group Meeting |
| January (TBD) | Public Meeting (details to come) |

More info can be found at:

http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/site-permitting-compliance/hullcar-aquifer