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Hullcar Aquifer Inter-Ministry Working Group Updates

Upcoming Public Information Sessions

Core Ministry Team Members:

Director Lead:

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Ministry of Environment
Deputy Director, Regional
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Technical Team Lead:

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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

The inter-ministry working group is preparing to host upcoming public information sessions. Over the last few months, a significant number of scientific studies and analysis has been conducted to better understand the source, movement and persistence of nitrates in the Hullcar Aquifer. This preparation includes assessing the studies and providing feedback. Once the studies have been accepted by the Ministry of Environment, public information sessions will be scheduled. This preparation includes assessing the reports and providing feedback to the representatives conducting the studies. These results will be presented in an interactive format in the Hullcar Valley in the new year. Dates and location will be determined soon.



Post - Harvest Nitrate Study Released

The Post-Harvest Nitrate Study Progress Report has been released on the Ministry website. The progress report can be found at this link:

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/agricultural-land-and-environment/soil-nutrients/nutrient-management/technical-reports/soil-nutrient-studies>

Highlights of the report:

- In the fall of 2016, 40 agricultural fields over or near the 'Hullcar Aquifer 103' were sampled
- Post-harvest nitrate test (PHNT) values were high or very high in 38% of the fields sampled, medium in 43% of the fields, and low in 20% of the fields
- Average PHNT was 113 kg N/ha among annual crops (mostly corn), 54 kg N/ha among perennial crops (mostly alfalfa)
- Next steps will help determine how much post-harvest nitrate leaches between growing seasons



Environmental Impact Assessments

Environmental Impact Study Reports have been received for Grace-Mar Farm, H.S. Jansen & Sons Farm and Ken Regehr Feedlot. Information sessions will be scheduled. Representatives from the Inter-Ministry are currently reviewing and providing feedback on each of the Reports.

Steele Springs Nitrate Sampling

The Ministry of Environment sampled the SSDW overflow on December 12, 2016. The Ministry's result was 12.3 mg/L which is up from the November result (11.0 mg/L)

Upcoming dates of interest:

January	Environmental Impact Assessments being reviewed by Inter-Ministry Working Group
January TBD	Technical Communications Working Group Meeting
February (Tentative)	Public Information Sessions

More info can be found at:

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



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