

Peace River Regional District

Groundwater Baseline Project Community Information

Meeting Notes of May 7, 2015

- Time:** 7:00 pm
- Place:** Pomeroy Sports Centre, Fort St. John, BC
- Presenters:** Gilles Wendling, GW Solutions
Reg Whiten, Interraplan
- Staff:** Bruce Simard, General Manager of Development Services
- Others:** There were 24 members of the public and one member from the media in attendance.

Background

Mr. Simard introduced Dr. Wendling as one of BC's foremost hydrologists. Dr. Wendling and his team have been engaged by the Regional District to conduct a baseline study of where groundwater is present in the subsurface, and how it moves. The study will provide a picture of the location, movement and quality of groundwater in the region. The first part of the study has primarily involved the compilation of information from the provincial water wells database, available mapping and interacting with provincial agencies and other partners regarding related groundwater studies being conducted in the region.

It was noted that the Groundwater Baseline study is one of a number of water studies currently underway. Each of these projects is important and will assist in creating an understanding of current state and quality of water in the Peace.

A Q & A session took place following Part 1 of the presentation entitled "PRRD Groundwater Baseline (Mid Project Update)". Those questions that were not answered will be referenced for a response at a later date.

- Q: What is over Groundbirch?
Q: How are aquifers recharged?
R: From surface and sub-surface water.
- Q: Will the effect of water extraction on the Peace River be measured?
R: For the purposes of our project, a water budget model will not be done.
- Q: Will Clayhurst/Goodlow be included?
R: There will be a chance for residents to identify others areas of interest.
- Q: How will data be made available?
R: Through the Regional District's website.
- C: Concern was expressed that databases are not being saved or combined, i.e. information from the Ministry of Environment / Oil and Gas Commission.
C: Oil and gas well drilling information/data should be included.
- Q: When will the information be available?
R: As soon as possible.
- Q: Are aquifer maps on line?
R: Yes, two dimensional lines.

Q: What data is being used?

A: Our project is only focussing on water wells, not oil and gas wells.

Q: Are springs included?

R: Not in this research. Other agencies, i.e. Simon Fraser University (SFU) will be looking into this. We will work with SFU to also consider other research.

C: The Water Sustainability Act will provide an opportunity for developing local governance arrangements.

Coffee break: 8:05 p.m.

Reconvene: 8:15 p.m.

A Q & A took place following Part 2 of the Presentation entitled Water Chemistry.

Q: Is research being done for fracking?

R: Our research is being done to understand the resource so that management decisions can be made.

Q: Will groundwater chemistry be included?

R: Yes, it will eventually be integrated.

Q: Would this contribute to geo-thermal understanding?

R: Water chemistry information could help with understanding the potential for geo-thermal, but the project is not focused on geo-thermal resources.

R: There are other agencies that have done geo-thermal potential mapping.

Q: Is the Peace River measured at Taylor, with respect to Spectra discharge?

R: This question can be passed onto the other research groups.

Q: Why is this baseline research?

R: Because the information has not been assembled or summarized before.

R: All of the various work is leading toward a better understanding of the water resource so that enhanced management can occur.

Dr. Wendling acknowledged funding partners of the project.

Mr. Simard thanked Dr. Wendling and Mr. Whiten for their presentations. He invited anyone wanting more information to sign up to the Aquavine RSS feed on the Regional District website. Aquavine is the website page where updates on this project can be found, with links to other water projects taking place in the region.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.