

# Peace River Regional District

## Groundwater Baseline Project Community Information

### Meeting Notes of May 6, 2015

- Time:** 7:00 pm
- Place:** Cottonwood Room, Chetwynd Recreation Centre, Chetwynd, BC
- Presenters:** Gilles Wendling, GW Solutions  
Reg Whiten, Interraplan
- Staff:** Jeff Rahn, General Manager of Environmental Services  
Suzanne Garrett, Corporate Services Coordinator
- Others:** There were 15 members of the public and two members from the media in attendance.

### Background

Mr. Rahn 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 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: Industry drilling have to maintain drill logs, how much information do they keep track of?  
R: Currently reporting is being done on a voluntary basis. In 2016 it will become mandatory that Industry record all information pertaining to drilling.  
C: It was noted that for the purposes of this study, only private well information was collected.
- Q: is there a preference of where more monitoring wells should be located? Monitoring wells provide beneficial data, i.e. determining the time period before an aquifer is recharged.  
R: Should monitor use based on users, i.e. industrial, agriculture, etc.
- Q: How is the aquifer recharged?  
R: Aquifers are recharged through freshet and groundwater infiltrating through permeable soil layers.  
C: Water comes from the Rocky Mountains, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration drilled two wells on my property and hit water at 312 feet, and there are a series of streams that run through the valley.  
R: We are still interpreting the data collected to date. Your information may be of value to the GeoScience project.
- Q: Who monitors water quality/quantity where fracking is taking place?  
R: The Ministry of Environment monitors groundwater in this instance.

- Q: Shouldn't the government put in monitoring wells prior to industry moving into an area?  
R: The Ministry monitors the water table and water samples.  
C: Okanagan has developed a best practices model for the Abbotsford/Sumas area.  
C: Mapping complex models, work is being done and could be done here, research vulnerability of aquifers such as risk assessment and management. How much water can be withdrawn, need to understand how much water there is in the aquifer, what is the flow, etc.

Those in attendance were asked to place a circle on the reference maps to indicate areas where they would like to see more information being made available.

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: What impact will Site C have on area aquifers and flow?  
R: Our project will not address that. The City of Fort St. John has asked BC Hydro that question.

- Q: You said you can test how old water is?  
R: Yes, by conducting an isotopes analysis. However we will not be addressing this in our project. The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is conducting a study, there is contact link on the Regional District website.

Dr. Wendling acknowledged funding partners of the project.

Mr. Rahn thanked Dr. Wendling and Mr. Whiten for their presentations. He invited everyone 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 9:00 p.m.