Perspectives from the Field

Nutrient Management Consultants Workshop
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Who Are You, Where Are You From and Why Are You Calling Me?

- Source Water Protection Official
- Work at the local Conservation Authority
- You are farming in a vulnerable area near a municipal water supply
- There is a Source Protection Plan for the region that we need to discuss
- *I live in the area and I farm too*
Initial Contact Conversation

• Overview of farm operations
• Possible policies that may apply for manure, fertilizer and pesticide storage and application
• Is a Nutrient Management Strategy in place?
  √ No – A Risk Management Plan (RMP) will likely be required
  √ Yes – s.61 Exemptions under the Clean Water Act may be allowed. Is a field in vulnerable area designated as part of the farm unit and a NM Plan is in place? A RMP is an alternative option.
Wellhead Example RMP

- **Farm 1** –
  - ASM/NASM Application prohibited in WHPA -A
  - RMP in WHPA- B
  - Leased land and lease holder is cash cropper
  - Owner prohibits manure application on all of field
  - RMP that includes acknowledgement of no application allowed and prohibition in WHPA -A

- **Farm 2** -
  - ASM/NASM Application prohibited in WHPA -A
  - RMP in WHPA- B
  - Leased land and lease holder has livestock but does not require NMS
  - Only 17 acres, main farm located at a distance
  - No intention of hauling manure, RMP written accordingly + prohibition
Wellhead Example s.61 Exemption

Farm 3 -

- WHPA –B
- ASM/NASM Application allowed with equivalent of NMP
- Farm has NMS
- Fields are included in farm unit
- Vulnerable area in field run through NMAN separately
- Worked with owner, NMC, manager and custom applicator

*Municipal wells are only supply and hydrologically linked*
Negotiating Risk Management Plans

**Step one**- Determine who needs to be part of the conversation:
- Property owner
- Lease holder
- Nutrient Management Consultant
- Custom applicator
- Staff
- Family members
- Local OMAFRA staff
- Agricultural Rep from the Source Protection Committee
Criteria for Developing ANY Risk Management Plan

1. Site specifics
2. Policy specifics
3. Management Assessment
What is on the Site?

• **Aerial mapping** – current and/or past
• What part of the farm or field falls in a vulnerable area?
• Is the farm in one or more watersheds or Source Protection Areas?
• What information is available?
Important Information

• What vulnerable zone is the farm or field in?
  - Wellhead Protection Area –A or B
  - Intake Protection Zone 1 or 2
  - Issue Contributing Area
  - Vulnerability scoring
Other Information Available?

- Soil type and depth, recent sampling
- Crop rotations
- Past records
- Farm improvements
- Stewardship projects
- Other wells
What does the Specific **Plan Policy** say?

- Is the activity prohibited or risk managed
- Is the policy for existing or future activities
- Policy is for a location: WHPA – A or IPZ -1
- Are there different policies for WHPA – B, IPZ – 2 or ICA’s that are vulnerable
- Are the policies general or prescriptive
- Will different Source Protection Plans affect different parts of the farm?
What does the **Management** Structure look like?

- Farmer owner, leased land or informal arrangement
- Manure spread by farmer or custom applied
- What are the intergenerational responsibilities and communication
- Is a farm manager involved
- Does the operator seem to understand Nutrient Management
- Was the operator aware of Source Water Protection and municipal water supply
- Other information that might be relevant
Final Risk Management Plan

• Negotiated agreement
• May include custom applicator
• May have renewal timelines
• Risk Management Official inspects
• Can be changed and modified as needed
• **Ultimate goal** – to protect the municipal water supply by responsible ag activities
Statements of Conformity for s.61 Exemption

• One signed by nutrient management consultant
• A notice signed by farm operator to Risk Management Official
• Option of copies to custom manure applicator service and farm owner
Example of SC Contents from NM Consultants for NM Plans

- Farm name, contact, address, phones, e-mail
- Nutrient Management Strategy #
- Field ARNs or tax roll number with common farm names
- *See map for the acreage to which this policy, Policy A.9.2–Risk Management Plan for Existing and Future ASM and NASM Application of the Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan applies*
- Nutrient Management Consultant Name & ID#
- Consultant company name, address, phones, e-mail
Attached is the Nutrient Management Strategy for Somewhere Farms. Also attached are the Nutrient Management Plans for the fields referred to as A & B for the crop years 2017-2021 that have been generated through the NMAN program. The Nutrient Management Plans will be updated annually (as needed) to include any changes to type of ASM, bedding materials, crop rotation, livestock on site, or application rates and be reflected in the record keeping and adjustments. Copies of the current Nutrient Management Plan will be forwarded to the Risk Management Officer. Any revised plans and explanations of any flags will also be provided.

Consultant Signature
Owner Section 61 Notice Example

• Date
• To: Local Risk Management Official
• This is a notice to identify the Prescribed Instrument (Nutrient Management Strategy and accompanying plans) for the following properties:
  • ARN’s and common farm names
  • Nutrient Management Strategy #:
  • Farm name, contact, address, phones, e-mail
  • Nutrient Management Planner, NM Consultant ID
  • Company name, address, phones, e-mail
  • Farm operator name and signature
Challenges

• Nutrient Management Plans collecting dust on a shelf
• Operators not well educated by NM consultants
• Minimum farm fields included in strategies for compliance
• NM Plans created and immediately changed – straw bed pack becomes liquid, different use of barns
More Challenges

• Communication between owners, lease holders and generations – Source Water Protection mail outs go to owners
• NMP inspections – MOECC responsibility but RMO inspects for fertilizer and pesticide RMPs
• Temporary manure storage allowed on vulnerable fields not included in NMS
• Statements of conformity confusion
• Intent is one thing – reality may be another
Good News

• No one says they want to contaminate the municipal water supply

• Municipal water is tested 4 times per year for nitrate levels – let farmers know!

• Communication is key so get everyone involved – NM consultants, owners, lease holders, custom operators, staff, crop consultants
Practical Help

• Put Spills Action Centre Number on your cell phone and staffs 1-800-268-6060

• Risk Management Plans with mapping can be scanned, e-mailed to phones and flipped to the last minute custom operator if needed

• Laminated field maps with measurements and spill response on reverse for cabs
Technology is Evolving

• Provincial Source Water Atlas
• GIS map layers for custom operators if compatible
• Better custom application equipment
• Precision Ag – field zones and density of soil testing, variable rate application
• Downloadable application records from equipment
• NMAN can be used for Risk Management Plans
Source Water Protection in a Nutshell

The Municipal water supply is there and what we do here could affect the water there.

Keep it clean!
Questions??