

March 6, 2006

## ONTARIO GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS LOCAL EFFORTS TO PREVENT WATER CONTAMINATION

*Kitchener-Waterloo Area Water Quality Must Be Protected*

KITCHENER — The McGuinty government is safeguarding the health of Ontario families and communities by protecting the natural sources of our drinking water, Environment Minister Laurel Broten said today while meeting with officials from the Region of Waterloo and the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA).

“The McGuinty government believes that local communities and organizations are best positioned to protect and manage their drinking water sources,” said Broten, “This is why we are supporting research and planning efforts because local community leaders are expert custodians of our watersheds.”

In November 2005, the government committed \$67.5 million to local communities to help them be better prepared to protect their drinking water sources. Over the past two years, the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) has received over \$1.2 million to help ensure it has the staff and resources to work with communities to develop source protection plans.

“We are taking action and providing funding to keep the people of Waterloo Region and the Grand River watershed healthy and allow our communities to grow and prosper,” said John Milloy, MPP for Kitchener Centre.

“The Clean Water Act will be good news for the Grand River watershed,” said Peter Krause, Chairman of GRCA. “This funding is allowing us to undertake studies that will form the basis for a comprehensive system of water protection in our region.”

“This Region has long recognized the importance of its water supply,” said Ken Seiling, Chair of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. “We will continue our work and cooperate with the efforts of the Province and our other partners to ensure our water is protected today and into the future.”

The Clean Water Act was introduced in the Legislature in December, 2005. If passed, it would ensure that communities are able to identify potential risks to their supply of drinking water, and take action to reduce or eliminate these risks. Municipalities, conservation authorities, landowners, farmers, industry community groups and the public would all work together to meet common goals.

-30-

Contacts:

Anne O'Hagan  
Minister's Office  
(416) 325-5809

John Steele  
Communications Branch  
(416) 314-6666

*Disponible en français*