

## **Soil and Water Conservation Society Submission**

As submission has been received from the Soil and Water Conservation Society of Metro Halifax (SWCSMH) containing a host of issues regarding the protection of watercourses in terms of the proposed Regional Plan policy and HRM operations. The following sections (1-7) provides a response to those issues for which a recommendation was made regarding the Regional Plan. One additional issue concerning the SWCSMH's request to specify the CCME's guidelines on phosphorus enrichment as the method for assessing and setting standards for phosphorus loading under future watershed studies, is still under assessment and will be presented to the RPC at its subsequent meeting.

### **1. Lakes Authority**

#### Issue/Concern

The provision of in-house applied (practical) limnology resources is necessary to conduct studies, undertake monitoring, review reports, and develop lake carrying capacities. Set up a Lakes Authority with two qualified applied limnologists (Section 2 in SWCSMH submission)

#### Discussion/Options

This recommendation was brought to HRM previously and was the subject of an Information Report to Council on Oct. 9, 2001. The report indicated that decisions could be made following completion of the Water Resources Management Study, which is now complete (as of 2003). HRM staff currently includes one individual with formal limnological training (Tony Blouin, PhD, Dalhousie 1985). Following the Water Resources study recommendations, HRM intends to initiate a general water quality monitoring program which will initially be delivered through outsourcing. Lake carrying capacities have not yet been defined. The development agreement for Russell Lake West requires the developer's water quality program to provide a suggested carrying capacity in the form of a phosphorus threshold value (in progress). Such work could be done in-house with existing or new resources. Field investigations of water quality issues are conducted by the EMS Pollution Prevention staff, but this is outside and in addition to their regular duties enforcing by-law W-101. Management of freshwater is a provincial responsibility, and HRM's role is restricted to managing impacts on lakes through land use regulation or infrastructure.

#### Options:

1. Adopt recommendation if budget is available
2. Defer until budget and Council direction allow, or
3. Defer lake management to NSDEL as a provincial responsibility