

## Workshops on "Valued Ecological Components"

**PORT GRANBY**  
October 2, 2002; 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.  
Call 905-885-0291 to register

**PORT HOPE**  
October 3, 2002; 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.  
Call 905-885-0291 to register

## Workshops on "Alternative Means"

**PORT GRANBY**  
October 23, 2002; 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.  
Call 905-885-0291 to register

**PORT HOPE**  
October 24, 2002; 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.  
Call 905-885-0291 to register

## "Low-Level Radioactive Waste" Expo '02

**PORT HOPE and  
PORT GRANBY PROJECTS**  
November 1, 2002: 6:00 - 9:30 p.m.  
November 2, 2002: 10 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.  
Port Hope Legion. Call 905-885-0291  
to reserve your free booth

## We bring the presentation to you!

Would your community group like to learn more about the Port Hope Area Initiative? Give us a call at 905-885-0291. Presentations can focus on the proposed cleanup and development of long-term low-level radioactive waste management sites or about Property Value Protection – a program every land and homeowner in the municipalities of Port Hope and southeastern Clarington should be aware of.

### Here's how to reach us:



**PROJECT INFORMATION EXCHANGE**  
110 Walton Street, Port Hope  
Open 10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m.  
Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays  
**Telephone: 905-885-0291**  
**Toll-free: 1-866-255-2755**  
**Fax: 905-855-0273**  
**email: info@llrwmo.org**  
**Website: www.llrwmo.org**

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PORT HOPE AREA  
INITIATIVE

# News

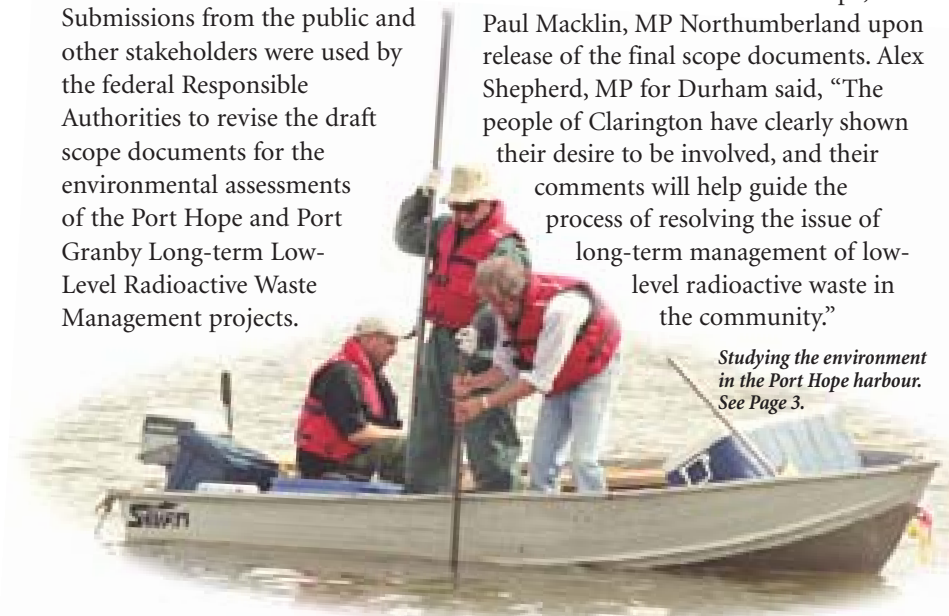
Summer 2002

## Consulting you and your neighbours

Listening to the public is already producing valuable results for the Port Hope Area Initiative.

Submissions from the public and other stakeholders were used by the federal Responsible Authorities to revise the draft scope documents for the environmental assessments of the Port Hope and Port Granby Long-term Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management projects.

"Participation like this is crucial in helping us find a community-based solution to the issue of long-term low-level radioactive waste in Port Hope," said Paul Macklin, MP Northumberland upon release of the final scope documents. Alex Shepherd, MP for Durham said, "The people of Clarington have clearly shown their desire to be involved, and their comments will help guide the process of resolving the issue of long-term management of low-level radioactive waste in the community."



*Studying the environment in the Port Hope harbour. See Page 3.*

### In This Issue

- Alternative Means workshops continue
- Studying the ecosystem
- Answers to your questions
- Final scopes are released
- How to get involved

Public workshops this fall will focus on environmental studies and further development of alternative means ideas. See page 8 for details.

# Next step: evaluating the ideas

## ALTERNATIVE MEANS

*Alternative Means are various ways of carrying out the Port Hope and Port Granby waste management projects. A range of technically and economically feasible alternative means will be considered, including alternative methods of implementation, impact reduction, alternative transportation routes and alternative local sites.*

This past June, close to 75 residents took the opportunity to voice a range of ideas about how to carry out the Port Hope and Port Granby projects. The Alternative Means Workshops, held by the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office on June 24 at the Newtonville Community Hall, and June 25 at the Health Unit in Port Hope, offered an opportunity for local residents to exchange comments and ideas. This fall, follow-up workshops will review these ideas and develop criteria to evaluate them.

The first set of workshops generated a number of alternative means ideas and brought to the forefront key community concerns and values.

Since the workshops, the technical project team has been assessing comments and ideas. Everyone registered at the workshop received a complete list of ideas, comments and concerns recorded by the workshop facilitators. Late this summer, responses by the project team to questions raised during the workshops were sent out.

A key issue raised at the Port Granby workshop was whether the waste should be moved to a location away from Lake Ontario or be kept in place. The need to keep the waste dry, protected from surface and groundwater and visibly monitored was at the heart of many people's concerns. At the Port Hope workshop, alternative means ideas

ranged from different approaches for cleaning up the harbour to alternative designs for groundwater protection. The facility locations and a long-term monitoring system in which the public has confidence also emerged as important issues.

*Municipality of Clarington  
Manager of Community  
Planning Bin Newell and  
Clarington resident Mavis  
Carlton at the Port Granby  
Alternative Means Workshop.*



## Studying the environment serves an important role

This fall, area residents will be invited to help identify Valued Ecological Components (VECs). Gathering scientific data and community opinion about VECs is an important part of the Environmental Assessment Process for the Port Hope and Port Granby Long-Term Low-Level Waste Management projects.

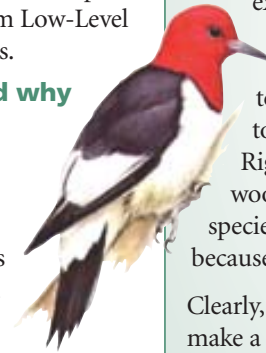
### But what are VECs and why study them?

VECs are parts of the local environment that we, as a society and community, value. They're specific items or areas chosen for detailed study because of what they can tell us about the health of our environment. They could be rare birds, the endangered mammal, or the prairie grass recovery plot. Studying VECs is key to understanding and protecting our natural environment. But VECs can also be important to our economy, such as the value to local tourism of a healthy Ganaraska fishery. Some valued environmental components affect our culture or quality of life, such as our heritage main street buildings or recreation facilities.

### Ecological studies moving ahead

Over the next year, technical studies will focus on four main areas that, together, form the area's ecosystem:

- Terrestrial (birds, animals, plant life);
- Aquatic (rivers, lakes, water/sediment quality, plants and animals);
- Atmospheric (climate, air quality, noise levels);



### How valuable is public input?

Community involvement can contribute local knowledge that even the most expert consultants can't duplicate, says Sue Stickley, Communications Officer with the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office. Recently the executive of the Willow Beach Field Naturalists shared a list of references to historical data and offered to review study findings. Right away, the red-headed woodpecker was suggested as a species that might be studied because of its local rarity.

Clearly, public involvement will make a difference in the quality and thoroughness of information that is gathered.

- Geophysical (soil, geology, groundwater).

The purpose will be to gather information about the existing natural environment in order to assess and develop ways to minimize potential effects during the cleanup and construction phases of the long-term low-level radioactive waste management facilities.

The Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office is overseeing the work. The consultants carrying out the studies have already started to walk roads, fields and watercourses as they fill information gaps and monitor the environment over the changing seasons.

# Scopes will guide environmental assessments



The final scopes for the environmental assessments for the Port Hope and Port Granby projects, released July 30, 2002, give clear guidance to the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office for conducting the environmental assessments for the Port Hope Area Initiative.

The documents define the extent and types of investigations that must take place during the environmental assessments that began this past November and will continue over the next few years. The scopes were finalized by the three federal Responsible Authorities for the assessments, Natural Resources Canada, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

## What the scopes require

Among the major factors the scopes require consideration of are:

- The environmental effects of the projects (including the effects of possible malfunctions and the cumulative effects of the projects with other projects or activities);

- The need for each of the projects;
- The purpose of the projects;
- Technically and economically feasible “alternatives means” of carrying out the projects and the environmental effects of these alternative means.

As well as considering these factors, the scopes define three preliminary geographical study areas (site, local and regional) for the environmental assessments (illustrated on the map), the range of the environmental studies needed, the time frames for assessing the potential environmental effects of the projects (including ongoing long-term monitoring) and the process for consulting the public.

## Public consultation made a difference

The draft scopes were released for public comment in February of this year under the terms of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. By the close of the public consultation period in April, 16 submissions had been received on the draft scope for the Port Granby Project environmental assessment and

31 submissions and 10 form letters were received from the public and other stakeholders on the Port Hope Project. The Responsible Authorities considered all the comments submitted before finalizing the scope documents.



**Scope: The extent or range... of mental activity, observation or outlook.**  
(The Canadian Oxford Dictionary)

- Specifics on transportation methods;
- Consideration of land use once the facilities are completed;
- Emergency/contingency planning.

## Changes will improve the environmental assessments

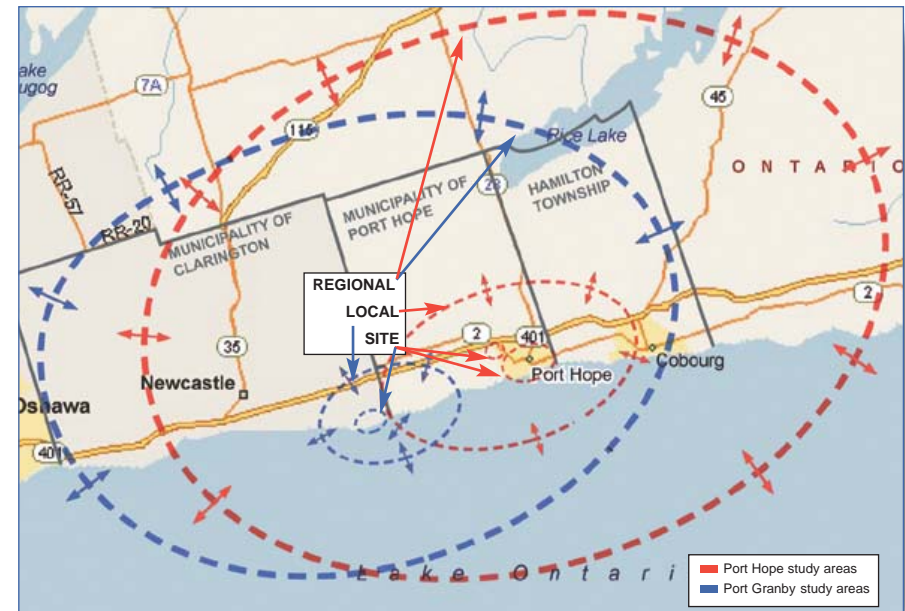
Significant changes were made to the scope documents for both the Port Hope and Port Granby projects in response to these public comments. Additions and clarifications were made in many areas including:

- Alternative means;
- Defining the need for the project;
- Public, municipal, local and aboriginal consultation;

The Responsible Authorities grouped the comments into issue categories and gave 33

responses to issues raised regarding the Port Hope Project. On the Port Granby Project, 29 responses were provided.

*Are you interested in reading the final scope documents and the responses to comments submitted? Copies of the Port Hope and Port Granby Environmental Assessment scopes are available at the Project Information Exchange, 110 Walton Street, Port Hope, the public libraries in Port Hope and Clarington or on the web at [nuclear.nrcan.gc.ca](http://nuclear.nrcan.gc.ca).*



Shown are the general geographical study areas for each of the projects: site (immediately around the proposed new waste management facilities), local (broader area) and regional (broadest area) in which potential environmental effects will be assessed. The areas may be expanded to examine an environmental effect.

# You asked?

Walking down the street, in the grocery store, at the Project Information Exchange, during workshops and open houses and on the phone, area residents have asked us questions about the proposed cleanup and long-term management of low-level radioactive waste. Below, in this regular newsletter column, **You asked?**, we respond to your frequently asked questions.

## People have been talking about cleaning up the waste for years. Why is it taking so long?

It's true that the need to complete the cleanup and develop long-term, safe management facilities has been talked about for years. When an eight-year search for a host community for the waste by the federal Siting Task Force

ended in 1996 without an agreement to proceed, the local communities took up the challenge. Led by the former Township of Hope, they developed local community concepts for long-term waste management. These efforts resulted in the proposed project — the Port Hope Area Initiative — which got underway just over a year ago, in June 2001.

Now that the project is underway, it must meet stringent requirements for environmental and public safety. Detailed environmental and technical studies will be carried out by the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office and reviewed by the federal authorities responsible for the project, and extensive public consultation will take place. All of this takes time. In the meantime, since 1982, ongoing interim waste management activities have managed the waste safely.

## Why did the federal government buy a property on Toronto Road and another on Baulch Road in Ward 2, Port Hope?

The federal government purchased the properties in 2002 for construction access to the proposed new long-term low-level radioactive waste facility near Welcome. A new access road would divert construction traffic away from Marsh Road. It is estimated that over 20,000 truckloads of sand, gravel and clay would be needed to build the new facility.

## What if after all the studies are done, the preferred concept for long-term storage sites results in the waste being moved into one or two sites instead of three?

Moving the waste across municipal boundaries as they existed in 2000 would be a change in the terms of the Legal Agreement signed by the former Town of Port Hope, the former Township of Hope, the Municipality of Clarington and the Government of

Canada. In order to change the long-term low-level waste management facility sites, the parties to the agreement would have to give written consent and the Legal Agreement would have to be amended.

## I'm not sure what historic low-level radioactive waste really is. What is it?

In Port Hope (Ward One), low-level radioactive waste consists of soil mixed with small amounts of historic refinery waste, left over from uranium and radium refining operations in the town during the 1930s to 1970s. This contaminated soil contains slightly elevated levels of natural radioactive materials. The Welcome and Port Granby Waste Management Facilities contain residues generated at the refinery from the 1940s to 1988. Low-level radioactive waste in our community *does not* come from nuclear power reactors.

## Applying her environmental education in the field

You may have spotted her wading through streams or peering down boreholes. Few people know Port Hope as well as Susanne Williams who, since 1993, has made monitoring the town's soil, air and water her business.

As one of two technical analysts with the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office (LLRWMO), Susanne delivers a range of programs



from the John Street Field Services Office that includes environmental and construction monitoring, property compliance (radon gas monitoring) and soil analysis – all part of the safe, interim management of historic, low-level radioactive waste. Susanne holds an honours BSc from Trent University, specializing in environmental science and biology. Over the years, she's worked on clean-up projects with the LLRWMO in Scarborough, and as far away as Surrey, B.C., and Fort McMurray, Alberta.

## Checking construction projects benefits everyone

Environmental monitoring runs 12 months of the year, but there's no time busier than summer for the Construction Monitoring Program (CMP). The program is offered in order to identify contaminated soil that may be encountered during excavation and provide a licensed site for its safe storage. For Susanne Williams and other staff at the Field Services Office, that means a personal house



call to take surface gamma radiation readings and possibly soil samples. In the vast majority of cases, readings are normal. If contaminated soil is present, the LLRWMO will oversee its removal.

So if you're considering an outdoor building project, such as an addition, deck, driveway or in-ground pool in Ward 1, give us a call at 905-885-9488, or pick up a CMP application form at the Project Office at 5 Mill Street South, Port Hope.