

Backgrounder - Nashwaak Watershed Association Water Classification Activities

The Nashwaak Watershed Association Inc. (NWA) has been involved in the water classification program since 2001. The assessment of water quality conditions in streams and tributaries of the watershed and the identification of any problem areas requiring improvement were undertaken in 2001 and 2002.

In November and December 2003, the NWA hosted a series of five open houses in communities throughout the watershed. These highly publicized events enabled residents to learn about the water classification program, examine suggested goals, and submit opinions and suggestions on what they believed water quality on various sections of the Nashwaak River should be.

River Section	Existing Water Quality	Main Water Quality Issues	Suggested Classification
All of River Above Stanley	A	Forestry/roads, gravel mining, farming	A
Stanley	A except B mixing zone	Stanley sewage treatment, farming, forestry/roads, residential development	A except B mixing zone below Stanley
Stanley to Taymouth	A	Farming, gravel mining, forestry/roads, residential development, manure	A
Tay River	A except B mixing zone	Fish hatchery at Tay Falls, farming/manure, forestry/roads	A except B mixing zone below hatchery
Taymouth to Penniac	A	flood plain, residential development, top soil mining, farming/manure, forestry/roads	A
Penniac Stream	C	farming/manure, flood plain, residential/sewage, forestry/roads, gravel mining	B
Penniac to Marysville	B	flood plain, residential development/sewage, forestry/roads, gravel mining	B
Marysville to mouth of River	C	urban development, runoff, farming/manure, commercial development, gravel mining	C

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With community consensus reached for the classes of water described in the table above, the water quality goals were presented to the Department of Environment and Local Government (DELG) in a report submitted at the end of the 2003-2004 fiscal year.

It was anticipated the DELG would proceed with the final step of holding public meetings to assure that these goals met the requirements of the residents of the Nashwaak watershed. Once confirmed, the classification would be submitted for approval to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and enacted through an Order of the Minister. Through this legislative process, maintenance of the water quality standards would be enforceable by provincial law.

In a meeting with officials from the Department of Environment and Local Government in October 2009, the NWA was informed that the final steps towards classification would begin in the 2010-11 fiscal year. No action has been initiated by the government to date with no satisfactory explanation provided for the delay in completing the process.

The Nashwaak Watershed Association continues to undertake activities to maintain or improve water quality and to promote responsible use including: volunteer monitoring and investigation of problems; promoting fencing to limit cattle access to the river; riverbank stabilization by planting trees and shrubs; community engagement and information sessions on issues related to watershed management; advocating for enforcement of regulations related to topsoil mining, and the development of a tree nursery of native plants for future riparian/riverbank planting.