

# City needs second new well field: report

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- BY DAVE STEWART

It will take two new water sources — not one — to take the pressure off the Winter River watershed, says the co-ordinator of the Winter River- Tracadie Bay Watershed Association.

Bruce Smith said the City of Charlottetown will have to start looking for a second new water source after it develops the one it's hoping to start working on in 2014.

Right now, the city gets its drinking water from one source, the Winter River watershed. It has already started planning to develop a second well field in Miltonvale. Work is expected to begin in 2014 once federal infrastructure money starts flowing again.

The federal government is expected to announce new money in its next budget. However, Smith says not even a second water source will reduce the pressure on Winter River.

"That reality means that Charlottetown has to start looking in the not-very-distant-future for other well sources," Smith said Tuesday.

The association has just produced a comprehensive master plan on the future of the watershed which calls on the city to reduce what it draws from Winter River.

The current extraction level (2011 numbers) is 88.9 per cent of allowable extraction as permitted by the provincial government. Between 2000 and 2011, the combined extraction for all three pumping stations within the watershed ranged from 87 to 98 per cent of what was permitted. However, the extraction from the Brackley wellfields was above permitted values in three of the last 11 years. Union Station extraction was over the limit in four of the last 11 years.

The watershed association wants to see the percentage drop to 50 per cent.

"The city, with their very deep wells, has the ability to really extract . . . to take down the water table a long way. That's why we have to work with them to reduce (extraction)," Smith said.

The city wanted to digest the report before commenting. According to the report, the average daily extraction rate over the past 11 years has ranged between 17.5 and 19.6 million litres of water per day.

The city endorsed a policy of environmental sustainability and recognized the need to conserve water. A watershed co-ordinator was hired in 2010 to initiate

a conservation program with public education and school education being critical components.

The city has also made it mandatory for all industrial users to have water meters as well as requiring all multiunit dwellings and new homes to be equipped with meters.