

Covehead Bay on last legs

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Editor: As far as the ocean goes, deep- water wells have a global effect; the bays, estuaries, barrier ponds, inshore and offshore ocean are impacted; nothing is immune from these wells. These wells have extracted a heavy cost on the P. E. I. marine ecosystem; indeed, the decade long summer battle with anoxia continues. The economic cost to our commercial fisheries must be staggering.

What has been lacking is an understanding of the underground water flows, that is, submarine groundwater discharge (SDG), and how SGD flushes our marine ecosystem. There are estuaries on Chesapeake Bay which receive 75 per cent flushing by SDG and 25 per cent surface discharge.

I was talking to friends in Covehead and someone said: "Covehead Bay is on its last legs. They are dumping lime in the bay to counteract the nitrates. It will soon be dead. If the land is not being flushed, then how does the nitrate get in the bay? You tell me." We now realize that Brackley Bay, Covehead Bay, Rustico Bay and Winter Bay SGD have been expropriated by the Winter River well fields as a source of water for Charlottetown. Building more well fields will only make anoxic matters worse.

The anoxia events around the Southwest River and Stanley River off of New London Bay must be related via SGD to the high density of deep water wells in western Queens and eastern Prince county. I have been told that the well monitoring devices are not tamper proof, some are in disrepair and government oversight is lax to non- existent. A few 'bandit wells' operating 24- 7 in the wrong location would be catastrophic to New London Bay. Man should not be drilling into the confined aquifer and withdrawing its water.
Tony Lloyd, Mount Stewart