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Wastewater petition wants to ‘cut the crap’

Phil Gravelle (<https://www.wellingtonadvertiser.com/author/phil-gravelle/>) | June 6, 2019 @ 11:52 am | [News](#)
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ERIN – A Belfountain-based petition opposing the construction of a wastewater treatment plant in the Town of Erin has been signed by more than 4,500 people – but the mayor does not think it will make a difference.

Using the slogan “Cut the crap, keep the Credit,” the petition urges the provincial government to stop Erin from developing a sewer system, forcing urban residents in Hillsburgh and Erin village to continue using private septic systems.

“We need to protect this beautiful river from Erin and Hillsburgh’s effluent,” states the petition.

The effluent will enter the river at the border where it leaves Erin, enters the Town of Caledon and flows through Belfountain.

“We’ve proved that the water going back into the river is better than the water now. It won’t affect the trout,” said Erin Mayor Allan Alls.

Yet opponents say downstream communities were not sufficiently consulted.

“The West Credit is one of the very few remaining cold water rivers in southern Ontario; its spring-fed waters are unique,” states the petition.

“The release of treated sewage effluent into this pristine section of the West Credit River will result in irreversible damage and the permanent collapse of our treasured native brook trout and Atlantic salmon fishery.

“Over time, fish and other aquatics will not tolerate the toxic content of this waste water. This planned wastewater treatment plant cannot effectively remove life altering and damaging substances such as endocrine disruptors, salt, medications, micro-plastics, etc. The technology is simply not there.

“The Headwaters of the Greenbelt has to be a priority. Don’t allow the West Credit River to become an urban growth casualty.”

Alls said the planning of the wastewater system is at the end of a 15-year process that has had much public attention, with constant supervision by the Ministry of the Environment and Credit Valley Conservation, and he does not think the petition will have any effect.

“They can sign all the petitions they want – I can’t control that,” said Alls.

“Most of them are from Toronto and have no idea what’s going on. They don’t pay taxes in Erin and have nothing to do with me. But it’s upsetting in a way. They think we’re going to put poop in the river – we’re not.”

Last year the town completed a wastewater environmental assessment, but three “Part 2” appeals were made to the minister of the environment to block or change the plan.

Appeals were made by the Belfountain Community Organization (BCO); Ann Seymour of Belfountain, who has the river running through her property; and Erin environmental activist Liz Armstrong.

“We are trying to save our river from significant upstream contamination and development that will wipe out the native fishery,” said Seymour, who is promoting the petition.

The town has been waiting for a year for approval by the minister, and has been promised an answer this month.

The town will need major financial support from senior governments to build the system, and Alls said he is “reasonably convinced that we have the money”.

Alls said Caledon council and Peel Region have been “fully informed about what’s going on, and basically supported what we’re trying to do.”



Phil Gravelle

(<https://www.wellingtonadvertiser.com/author/phil-gravelle/>)

Reporter

There are 2 comments.



Protect the West Credit River on

June 10th, 2019 - 1:27pm (<https://www.wellingtonadvertiser.com/wastewater-petition-wants-to-cut-the-crap/#comment-17>)

Support your Belfountain neighbours; sign and share The Cut the Crap, Keep the Credit Petition to protect the West Credit River from Erin’s Waste Water Treatment Plant effluent, and from the accompanying urban drainage due to tripling the size of Erin-Hillsburgh, including a planned 14+ acre storm-water management pond that will be linked via pipe into a tributary of the WCR.

There was zero consultation with downstream communities from Erin and Caledon town councils.

Go to Belfountain.ca for further information and petition.

There is another solution to Erin's growth plans. We/I am asking for further environmental protection.

Thank you for your help.

[Log in to Reply](#)

https://www.wellingtonadvertiser.com/wp-login.php?redirect_to=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wellingtonadvertiser.com/petition-wants-to-cut-the-crap%2F

Protect the West Credit River on

June 10th, 2019 - 2:24pm (<https://www.wellingtonadvertiser.com/wastewater-petition-wants-to-cut-the-crap/#comment-18>).

Dear Mayor Alls,

The Waste water treatment plant and the effluent being discharged into the West Credit River is highly problematic, bad planning and potentially an existential threat to the cold water Credit River system. You can spin this anyway you choose. It is very clear to us as your down stream neighbour, that the concerns of 6000 + and growing residents of Caledon, Erin, Wellington, Peel Region and yes, some from Toronto are of no interest to you. We would like you to know that a significant number of your 4,500 Erin residents have also been signing the Keep the Credit petition.

We are aware that you contacted Mayor Thompson for his assistance to secure provincial funding for your WWTP. Mayors helping mayors, that is the way of the future. Minimizing public involvement to reduce red tape, leaving residents the last to know, I think the phrase is "until the bulldozers break ground," our new legislation at work!

If you recall the Erin Advocate published an article March 21, 2019, "Ministry Warns Erin About Impacts on Brook Trout with Wastewater Plans" where the MNRF states serious concerns about the potential impact of wastewater-run-off on brook trout populations in the West Credit River. The MNRF office was quoted saying "Erin should look at alternate sites for the effluent", perhaps using the pits located on Hwy 52. The pits were included as proposed options for the location of the effluent.

Belfountain is not saying NO WWTP. Belfountain has said, to protect the brook trout habitat, NO EFFLUENT in the West Credit River.

We live in Belfountain by choice. Don't threaten our environmental rights!