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## Federal government approves Erin wastewater treatment plant

Minister states fish concerns will be alleviated by standard mitigation measures

By **Joshua Santos** Orangeville Banner

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

The federal government has given Erin's wastewater treatment plant the green light.

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act on Wednesday, May 26.

“This is a key infrastructure project for the sustainable growth of our community,” reads a Town of Erin statement, welcoming the response from the minister. “We would like to reiterate that council is committed to ensuring that we create a prosperous, healthy, environmentally progressive, livable, and inviting town of Erin.”

As proposed, **treated effluent would be discharged to the West Credit River** at Winston Churchill Boulevard, upstream of the community of Belfountain.

A coalition of the Belfountain Community Organization (BCO), West Credit River Watch (WCRW), Izaak Walton Fly Fishing Club (IWFFC), Trout Unlimited Canada - Greg Clark Chapter (TUC), Ontario Streams (OS), and Ontario Rivers Alliance (ORA) submitted the request for federal review on Feb. 26. The minister had 90 days to make his decision after the conservation groups submitted a 28-page request.

They are concerned the temperature of the proposed effluent being pumped into the West Credit River will warm up the waters, harming spawning grounds for Brook Trout fish and their future survival.

The minister considered the potential for the project to cause adverse direct or incidental effects within federal jurisdiction, public concern, and the impacts on treaty rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada.

Potential adverse effects within federal jurisdiction would be limited through project design and the application of standard mitigation measures, he said.

“The protection of our environment will remain at the forefront of our discussions as this project moves forward, and our advocacy with the higher levels of government is focused on making this project a viable and sustainable solution for Erin and our residents who call it home,” reads the statement.

Further, the regulatory processes that currently apply to the project and consultations provide a framework to address the potential adverse effects, public concerns raised about those effects, and potential impacts to Indigenous and treaty rights.

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He also considered the analysis of the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada.

Researchers determined that it was not necessary to reduce the effluent temperature at the time. The town says it will monitor the effluent's temperature after construction to ensure it meets the required environmental requirements. If it is deemed necessary to reduce the effluent temperature in the future, staff will incorporate suitable mitigating actions at that time.

**Joshua Santos** is a reporter for the Orangeville Banner, covering municipal affairs.

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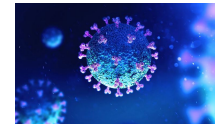
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