

LETTER: Options still available regarding Erin wastewater plant

EloraFergusToday Staff Oct 20, 2022 7:00 PM

Coalition for the West Credit River say the potential environmental impacts of the Erin WWTP are NOT a done deal

EloraFergusToday received the following Letter to the Editor from reader Judy Mabee, in regards to the Erin Wastewater Treatment Plant:

I had an Erin resident ask me, "Is it true that the Erin Wastewater Treatment Plant is a done deal? Is there something I can do about this?"

My response to these questions is both YES and NO.

YES, the Erin Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) will be built, but NO, the environmental impacts and scope of the project are not a done deal.

The Town of Erin has gone through steps to get the necessary approvals, they have most of the permits in place and construction has begun. There is no doubt that the plant will be built. However, the potential environmental impacts of the Erin WWTP are NOT a done deal.

Although the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) has included a requirement for a cooling system in the Environmental Compliance Approval several questions remain to be answered:

- Will the effluent from the plant be cooled sufficiently to protect the coldwater ecosystem and native brook trout population?
- What type of effluent monitoring and river monitoring plan will be put in place to protect the west Credit River?
- Will the public get to see real time effluent data from the WWTP?
- What corrective actions will be taken should the effluent exceed permit limits?
- Will the Town be willing to make major changes if there is harm to the river ecosystem?
- How many homes will be connected to the plant?
- How fast will the plant's population capacity be filled?

These Important decisions are largely in the hands of the Town of Erin. The town should:

- Instruct its consultants to develop a leading-edge, effective and efficient effluent cooling system;
- Implement a world class environmental monitoring strategy;
- Bring the WWTP online in a slow phased approach to watch for environmental impacts;
- Commit to infiltration of effluent into the ground if harm is done to the riverine ecosystem; and
- Initiate best practice stormwater management for developments connected to the WWTP.

These actions can help protect the west Credit River ecosystem and make the WWTP a project that Erin's community would be proud of. Since construction has begun on the plant, the Town and their consultants have no desire to address these concerns. Doing nothing is not for lack of direction but is rather a conscious strategy.

So, what can you do as a resident of Erin? Your best chance to make a difference is to educate

yourself on what the candidates are offering, and then vote in the upcoming municipal election.

Sincerely,

Judy Mabee
Chair, Coalition for the West Credit River
