

May 22, 2008

### **Lakehead Conservation to Test Water Quality in Region**

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) will begin sampling the water quality of several area rivers and streams this summer. The sampling will be conducted as part of the Authority's involvement in the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN) which is a program run by the Ontario Ministry of Environment (MOE).

The Authority will select five sampling locations which will be tested for eight consecutive months each year. Samples will be sent to the MOE for analysis using a standard set of water quality indicators including chloride, nutrients, suspended solids and other contaminants. The objective is to protect human health and aquatic ecosystems by providing reliable and current information on stream water quality.

LRCA Staff have received training from the MOE to ensure proper sampling techniques are used.

Authority Chairman Bill Bartley says, "Results of the testing will provide information on the impact that land use activities are having on water quality which will be useful in our ongoing watershed studies."

Bartley pointed out that the test sites do not involve drinking water sources and that municipalities, including the City of Thunder Bay, will continue to monitor their own drinking water quality in accordance with Provincial regulations.

The PWQMN collects surface water quality information for the MOE from nearly 400 locations across Ontario.

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority is a local resource management agency working on a watershed basis. Conservation Authorities protect people and their property from natural hazards of flooding and erosion; protect natural areas and open space, restore and protect aquatic and natural habits; and provide recreational and educational opportunities to local residents.