

Upper Nappan
February 19, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In mid December 2015, prior to any coal extraction from the Springhill Coal Mines Limited (SHCML) bulk sample pit, The Municipality of Cumberland initiated a comprehensive monitoring program for the well water levels that supply the Geothermal Resource. It was this monitoring program that detected the drop in mine water levels as a result of the bulk sample test pit excavation. Due to mutual concern with the integrity of the Geothermal Resource, the Municipality requested and Springhill Coal Mines Limited agreed, to suspend operations until such time as the situation was reviewed and a plan could be developed to move forward.

The Municipality, SHCML and DNR have worked in cooperation sharing monitoring data and expertise to understand the impact the excavation of the bulk sample on the Springhill Geothermal resource.

Springhill Coal Mining Limited has agreed to continue the bulk sample excavation in a controlled manner so that the monitoring of well water levels will provide evidence and data on a timely basis to allow the Municipality to react to any well water level response. The Department of Natural Resources is supportive of this plan and moving forward with the extraction of the bulk coal sample.

The data that we are gathering is important to the future of geothermal development and any future coal mining operations, and is providing useful and factual engineering information that will assist in understanding the resource and how it reacts to surface operations.

The Municipality has completed Phase One of a study of the geothermal mine water in Springhill in partnership with the Verschuren Center for Sustainability in Energy and the Environment at Cape Breton University. The Municipality is undergoing and committed to completing further study (with the Verschuren Centre) to determine the capacity and sustainability of the Geothermal resource and plans to complete this work in 2016.

The Municipality will continue to provide updates on this matter as they become available.

Please direct inquiries to:
Shelley Hoeg, Communications
Municipality of Cumberland
(902) 667-2758
shoeg@cumberlandcounty.ns.ca