



NWNA WEKEPEKE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Prepared by Nestlé Waters North America Inc.

Q. Why is Nestlé Waters interested in purchasing water from the Wekepeke?

A. Wekepeke refers to approximately 600 acres of undeveloped watershed land located in the Town of Sterling, but owned by the Town of Clinton. Based on published geological maps, Nestlé Waters identified the Wekepeke as an area that might be a source of clean and abundant spring water.

Q. How do you know the site is viable as a water source for Nestlé Waters?

A. The Wekepeke was a reliable source of water for the Town of Clinton for more than 70 years. With the permission of the Town of Clinton, we hired Clinton-based Northeast Geo Science, Inc. to conduct a pump test to determine the Wekepeke aquifer's safe yield. These tests were conducted in the summer and fall of 2007. Results indicate that Nestlé Waters could withdraw approximately 240,000 gallons of spring water per day without impacting the aquifer.

Q. Is Nestlé Waters proposing to buy, lease or option the land?

A. We are proposing to become a water customer of the Town of Clinton. The Town will continue to own the site.

Q. What would you build on site?

A. One pumping station will be constructed at each of the three borehole sites. The pumping station dimensions and construction can vary from a low-profile underground bunker to a single story (12 feet wide by 15 feet long) building. Nestlé Waters does not plan to build a bottling plant at the site.

Q. Why does the Town of Clinton control the use of an aquifer that is located in the Town of Sterling?

A. The Town of Clinton has owned the Wekepeke since the late 1800s. The Wekepeke was once the primary source of potable water for the Town of Clinton. Since the construction of the Wachusett Reservoir, the Wekepeke has been a back-up water supply for Clinton. It also has been an important passive recreation area for residents of Sterling.

Q. Have Nestlé Waters and the Town of Clinton already negotiated a deal for the sale of Wekepeke water?

A. At a public meeting in November, Nestlé Waters proposed to the Clinton Selectmen that Nestlé Waters become a new water customer of the Town, with the water to be sourced from the Wekepeke. The costs of constructing the infrastructure and obtaining the necessary permits would be paid solely by Nestlé Waters. The Clinton Selectmen have not formally responded to this proposal. Instead, they have indicated that they will publish a Request for Proposals to see if there are other potential users of the Wekepeke or its water.

Q. What does Nestlé Waters think of having to respond to an RFP?

A. Nestlé Waters supports the RFP process as a means to ensure that its proposal is in the best interests of the Town.

Q. How much water does Nestlé Waters propose to withdraw from the Wekepeke?

A. Nestlé Waters would never withdraw more than the aquifer's safe yield. Tests conducted to date indicate that we could safely withdraw approximately 240,000 gallons per day. In comparison, when the Wekepeke was the Town's primary source of municipal water, the Town withdrew approximately 1.2 million gallons per day. Final withdrawal limits would be set by MassDEP in a water withdrawal permit.

Q. Will the withdrawal of spring water adversely effect the aquifer underlying the Wekepeke, or cause a significant reduction in the flow of nearby brooks?

A. Nestlé Waters is committed to, and dependent upon, sustainable use of water resources. Our water withdrawal permit from MassDEP will ensure that there are no adverse effects on nearby streams. We fully expect that our analysis of these issues will be independently reviewed and confirmed by a geologist retained by the Towns of Clinton and Sterling to look out for the interests of those communities.

Q. What is the impact on private wells of abutters?

A. Our testing has shown that there will be no adverse impact on private wells in the area. We reached out to all abutters before we began testing to inform them of the test and to offer to address any questions or issues. Since then, we have personally contacted individual well owners as questions have come up.

Q. Is the Nestlé Waters proposal a good deal for the Town of Clinton?

A. The Town of Clinton and its Board of Selectmen are the decision making entities that must answer this question. At this point, they have made no decision. Nestlé Waters believes that the Town of Clinton is, and should be, receptive to the concept of having a stream of revenue to pay the costs of owning and maintaining the Wekepeke. The most significant of these costs relate to deferred dam maintenance. State inspections indicate that these dams need immediate repairs that will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. The dams also require ongoing regular maintenance. At present, the Town of Clinton has no source of revenue to pay these costs except for water fees charged to Clinton water customers.

Q. What if the Town of Clinton someday needs the Wekepeke water for itself?

A. If the Town of Clinton faces an emergency during the term of the agreement, our proposal includes a mechanism for the Town to utilize the water for Clinton residents. Nestlé Waters is not proposing to take all of the available Wekepeke water -- far from it. Our proposal is to withdraw some of the spring water, for a limited duration of years.

Q. What are the potential benefits for the Town of Sterling?

A. The land and the right to withdraw the water at issue are owned by the Town of Clinton. Accordingly, the revenue from a sale of that water will accrue to the Town of Clinton. However, Nestlé Waters recognizes that its proposal, if it is implemented, may have some impact on residents of Sterling. We have made sure to structure our proposal to minimize those impacts. We are also committed to being a positive, contributing member of the communities in which we operate. Nestlé Waters has a proven record as an active, contributing member of the communities in which it operates. The Town of Sterling will have access to benefits such as resource protection, preserving open space and passive recreation opportunities, as well as potential tax revenue.

Q. What kind of impact will there be on Sterling?

A. To limit impacts on the Wekepeke and abutting residences, we have proposed to pump Wekepeke water from the source to a truck load out station located somewhere on Route 12. That said, we recognize that there will be some minor addition of traffic to Sterling roadways, and we will cooperate with Sterling officials to ensure these impacts are properly mitigated. We also are committed to implementing our proposal in a manner that keeps the Wekepeke undeveloped and accessible to residents of both Towns for passive recreation.

Q. Isn't the Wekepeke subject to a Conservation Restriction that prohibits the type of water withdrawals proposed by Nestlé Waters?

A. The Wekepeke is not currently subject to a Conservation Restriction. We understand the Town of Clinton previously entered into an agreement with the State to grant one. The form of restriction currently proposed by the State, if and when it is granted, would allow the type of withdrawals Nestlé Waters has proposed. Nestlé Waters does not control whether the Conservation Restriction is granted, but we hope it is because it will help protect and preserve the aquifer recharge zone.

Q. Will state environmental agencies regulate and oversee the implementation of Nestlé Waters' proposal?

A. Yes, state environmental agencies have jurisdiction over this proposal from first step to last. In addition to the previously mentioned water withdrawal permit from MassDEP, the Nestlé Waters proposal will require a new source approval from MassDEP, and will be subject to review under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) by the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Potential impacts on local wetlands will also be reviewed by the Sterling Conservation Commission. All of those review processes provide for public notice and public involvement. Also, the bottled water industry is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Q. Are you looking for this new spring site because you have run dry at other spring sites you use?

A. We are simply always on the lookout for new sources of pure spring water to meet our customers' needs.

Q. Once you are withdrawing from the Wekepeke, how do you monitor the impact?

A. The permits from the MassDEP will include requirements for ongoing monitoring and reporting of water levels in a set of wells and in-stream instruments. The number and locations of those monitoring stations and the monitoring frequencies will be established after we submit our proposals.

Q. If Nestlé Waters were to use this site, when would that usage begin?

A. Nestlé Waters hopes to obtain all necessary approvals, complete the appropriate installation and commence by mid-2009.

Q. What brand of Nestlé Water would this source be used for?

A. It is too early to say at this stage; Nestlé Waters sells several brands of bottled water throughout the east coast.

Q. Where would the water be bottled?

A. Most likely at our existing bottling plant in Framingham.

Q. Where can I get more information about Nestlé Waters' proposal for the Wekepeke?

A. In an effort to keep citizens up to date on our proposal, we established a web site that we hope you find to be helpful: [www.nestlewatersma.com].

Q. Has it been determined whether the Town of Clinton has the right to pump water from the Wekepeke?

A. Yes, the Massachusetts Legislature gave Clinton the right to pump the water in 1882.