



Concerned Residents Coalition Working to Protect Your Community and Environment

Media Release

Greenbelt Expansion?--Protection of Ontario's Moraines from Aggregate Extraction is Essential for Water Protection

Rockwood, Ontario... The Province's Minister of Municipal Affairs, Bill Mauro, has circulated the public consultation document entitled "Protecting Water for Future Generations: Growing the Greenbelt in the Outer Ring." The deadline for public response is March 7, 2018.

The Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC) has submitted its response calling for the prioritization and full protection of moraines for drinking water recharge, discharge and storage, in the existing and proposed expanded Greenbelt and beyond.

The provincial document makes strong arguments for moraine protection, identifying these natural features as one of three key building blocks including also wetlands and cold water streams in the protection of water resources, and as a justification for Greenbelt expansion. However, the same document specifically leaves moraines vulnerable to new aggregate mining operations in the Greenbelt on the basis that the sand and gravel are valuable sources of mineral aggregates close to the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area (GGHA) market, and in the absence of objective evidence that new sources of aggregate are in fact required in view of currently licensed reserves.

Greenbelt expansion will therefore not protect the moraines, nor the drinking water they filter, for the generations to come. In the Grand River Watershed alone it is predicted that the population will increase by 50% from today's tally of about 800,000, to 1.5 million in 2051. The CRC contends that the Orangeville and Paris-Galt Moraines which store, recharge and discharge clean, cold water for this population and agriculture must not be jeopardized by aggregate extraction.

"The aggregate extraction and water resource protection issues converge in these moraines" says CRC President Doug Tripp. "Now, and for many decades, the Province of Ontario has given priority to aggregate extraction, euphemistically described as an 'interim land use'. Aggregate extraction in the moraines results in permanent, fundamental change to the nature and function of these lands."

He goes on to say: "The stripping of overburden for extraction of gravel from pits removes the very filtering capacity that enables the moraines to clean groundwater as part of their recharge function.

"Further penetration into bedrock and below the water table for aggregate extraction in quarries permanently alters aquifer flow patterns that have naturally evolved since the ice age that gave rise to the moraines. It establishes a conduit between pristine groundwater and surface contamination sources."

The full CRC response to the Greenbelt Expansion Study is attached.

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Concerned Residents Coalition website: www.hiddenquarry.ca

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Concerned Residents Coalition

Working to Protect Your Community and Environment

CRC Background

CRC is a grassroots community organization dedicated to protecting community and environment from negative impacts of the 'Hidden Quarry' proposed by James Dick Construction Ltd.

The proposed quarry site is in the Paris-Galt Moraine, just 1000 metres from the growing Town of Rockwood and a new municipal well; it is surrounded by dozens of private wells and farms; it is on Provincial Highway 7 and is just kilometres from the already crowded Rockwood, Acton and Georgetown main streets which double as Highway 7; it is designated 'Greenlands' and 'Core Greenlands' in the Wellington County Official Plan featuring a provincially significant wetland, a tributary of Brydson Creek and almost 100 acres of trees; it is surrounded by wetlands and is upstream from the precious cold water Brydson Creek trout habitat and the Blue Springs Creek Area of National Scientific Interest in the Grand River Watershed.

CRC has made a serious investment in the scientific analysis of the quarry proposal, especially as it would impact water. The organization now has more than 1300 supporters and hundreds of donors. Affected communities include Halton Region (Halton Hills, Milton), and Wellington County (Guelph Eramosa Township and Rockwood).

CRC is only one of the many Southern Ontario community organizations who are working to protect valuable water resources from development and aggregate extraction.