

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HAMILTON MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S STAFF ISSUES RARE  
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATION**

**St Marys CBM proposed Flamborough quarry could create a public health risk**

Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE) and Environmental Defence Canada released a copy of a precedent-setting letter issued by Hamilton Public Health Services regarding the St Marys CBM proposed Flamborough quarry. The letter, dated October 26, 2007, and sent to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE), states that there is a "...reasonable and probable risk of causing a public health concern in the form of adverse groundwater quantity and quality impacts."

"Protecting our public health and drinking water is the single most important reason why government decision makers at all levels must reject the proposed quarry for the Flamborough area," said Graham Flint, Chair and Spokesperson of FORCE. Hamilton Public Services has raised concerns about the municipal groundwater based drinking water system for the 3,000 people in Carlisle, the communal well at Stonebrook Estates, the many nearby residential wells, and other groundwater users. "If the McGuinty government truly believes in all of its clean water initiatives post-Walkerton, this government has a duty to act and to act now."

St Marys CBM applied to MOE for a temporary Permit to Take Water (PTTW) during October 2006. The PTTW application is to allow the company to test its unproven and theoretical groundwater recirculation pumping system for the proposed quarry. This system is being proposed by St Marys CBM to address what their own technical reports describe as "unacceptable impact" on area groundwater resources from the proposed quarry.

Hamilton Public Health Services is a member of the Combined Aggregate Resource Team (CART). CART is reviewing the St Marys CBM proposed quarry application to the City of Hamilton for Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments in order to establish the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest limestone quarry in Ontario at 3 million tonnes per year (based on estimated annual production tonnages). The letter was issued by Hamilton Public Health Services under the authority of section 11 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*.

St Marys CBM purchased 380 acres of land in 2006 from Lowndes Holdings Corp. to develop the massive below the water table quarry. The company owns an adjacent parcel of 154 acres with the stated intention to expand. The lands are completely within the Natural Heritage System of Ontario's Greenbelt including Provincially Significant Wetlands and significant woodlands. The lands are also found within the 2 year Time of Travel (TOT) Wellhead Protection and recharge areas for the Carlisle municipal water system.

"This public health letter is a wake-up call to provincial decision makers," said Dr. Rick Smith, Executive Director of Environmental Defence. "This application challenges both the protection of Ontario's Greenbelt and implementation of the new *Clean Water Act*."

The call for action by FORCE and Environmental Defence is consistent with the recommendations of Ontario's Environment Commissioner. The Environment Commissioner's 2006-07 Annual Report was released on December 4, 2007. In it, Gordon Miller commented directly on the proposed Flamborough quarry. The Environment Commissioner called on the McGuinty government to "...reconcile its conflicting priorities between aggregate extraction and environmental protection".

"Our community has identified water as the key reason for the proposed quarry's rejection since this proposal was raised in May 2004," noted Mr. Flint. "Protect our health and drinking water. Stop the proposed St Marys Flamborough quarry."

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Enclosures

For more information, please visit our website at [www.StopTheQuarry.ca](http://www.StopTheQuarry.ca)