

Bulletin #24 Summer 2015



Melville Pit OMB Hearing July 13- 24, Caledon East

[CAMP, Citizens Against the Melville Pit](#), is opposing Olympia Sand and Gravel's 293 acre proposal for a licence to extract aggregate between Willoughby and Porterfield Roads south of the Orangeville bypass. OMB hearing: 10am daily Monday to Friday July 13-24 St. James Anglican Church, 6025 Old Church Road.

Is the NEC an endangered species?

On May 25, Caledon Council, with the addition of a couple of amendments, voted to adopt staff recommendations for the 2015 Coordinated Review of Provincial Plans.

One recommendation that was passed under the heading 'Niagara Escarpment Plan Issues' asked the Province to "Consider consolidating the policies of the NEP into the Greenbelt Plan and assign the approval authority to the affected municipalities, as it has done with the ORMCP* and the Greenbelt Plan." [**Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan*]

Supporters of the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) have learned that there had been discussions within the ministries of an amalgamation of the 4 provincial plans which would have shut the NEC down, but that this now has been ruled out.

In spite of these assurances, Caledon's recommendation that purports to introduce a bureaucratic efficiency, would on the face of it, minimize the role of the NEC or dispense with Commissioners altogether. As Commissioners are all elected officials from Niagara Escarpment Towns, chosen by their Town Councils to represent their communities, it's hard to imagine how Caledon's suggestion can better serve either democratic or environmental agendas. Given that the Escarpment is a World Biosphere Reserve, balkanizing the planning process that governs it hardly seems like progress in stewardship of an internationally recognized and valued ecosystem.

CVC Natural Heritage Systems Study... a pre-urbanization planning document for Caledon?

[CVC released its draft NHSS online on May 13](#), and followed with a May 28 stakeholder meeting with a Comments period ending on June 30. REDC reviewed the draft NHSS and registered its Comments. We are chiefly concerned with the reliance on the planning concept 'Centres for Biodiversity'. We believe it is more useful in an urban environment than in a largely rural area like Caledon as it gives disproportionate importance and protection to a very small percentage of the study area at the expense of other significant features such as wetland complexes. This planning tool has been adopted by only 3 of Ontario's 36 CA's - CVC, Halton Region CA and the Lake Simcoe Region CA. REDC is concerned that the majority of the study area outside of the 11 Centres, much of which is ecologically complex and diverse, will be more easily susceptible to urbanization pressure.

Other Caledon stakeholders have pointed out that the 'Centres' are largely in areas that are already publically owned land and under environmental protection; that the collective acreage being proposed for Centres is relatively small in view of extensively distributed wetlands - some of which

are already designated Provincially Significant but have not been included in the Centres. If 'Centres' are to be the determinant for protection and nurturing they need to be considerably larger and more inclusive than they are in the Draft CVC NHSS.

Hidden Lake Quarry, Rockwood... James Dick Construction applies for OMB hearing

In March 2013 James Dick Construction's proposal for the Hidden Lake Quarry was registered on the EBR. The proposal had 2 years to complete reviews and resolve objections with the expectation that in 2015 MNR would be able to render a decision on the licence application. Time has run out: the review is not completed and differences not resolved. The Guelph Eramosa Township [GET] Council was advised on May 2, 2015, by Greg Sweetnam, the company spokesperson, that continued delays are of no benefit to the parties involved and the company has referred the application to the OMB.

The site is in Rockwood, on the border of GET and Halton Region. [Concerned Residents Coalition, CRC](#), has led the opposition to the Quarry proposal and attracted widescale attention and support.

[Although the proponent has opted out of the review](#), municipal and regional authorities continue to be engaged, jointly and separately, completing professional assessments and working through the request for by-law amendments. Many agencies have completed reviews of those sections of the proposal that fall within their jurisdictions. Halton Hills, Milton, and Halton Region have registered their objections and Halton Region has allocated funds to pursue this issue at the OMB.

Mining for information... Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority withholds information

Laura Bowman, an Ecojustice lawyer, is representing South Lake Simcoe Naturalists (SLSN) a citizen group trying to protect the Paradise Beach-Island Grove wetlands. These wetlands are designated Provincially Significant by MNR. A large housing project is being proposed for the wetlands. The developer applied for a permit from Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) which manages the wetlands. The first application was withdrawn and a second replaced it.

Unfortunately under Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights, Conservation Authority permits are exempt from public notice and comment provisions and can be issued without the right of appeal.

[SLSN has had to make a Freedom of Information request to get information from the Lake Simcoe Region CA about the two permit proposals](#). Regarding the first proposal LSRCA first said there were no documents, then backtracked and said that they had been returned to the developer; however the Naturalists discovered a time discrepancy as the documents had been returned more than a week after their group had registered a freedom of information request. With the second proposal, LSRCA declared that they had no documents, then admitted they did - but denied the citizen group access to them. So the [South Lake Simcoe Naturalists, a volunteer-run nature club, launched a complaint against the Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority \(LSRCA\) with Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner](#).

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[Credit Card donations can be made online](#). Please address cheques to REDC Inc.

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Please be assured your e-mail information or mailing information will not be shared and will be used solely to update you on REDC activities. Thank you for your support of our common interest in our natural heritage and opposition to the McCormick Pit. If you wish to have your name removed from the update list please send your request to info@peopleforcaledon.com