



WELLINGTON FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

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Twp of Guelph/Eramosa Council
Sent via: email

Re: 'Hidden Quarry'

The Wellington Federation of Agriculture (WFA) is the largest farm organization in the County of Wellington and works in concert with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA). Both federations work to develop consensus in a diverse agriculture industry and lobby for policies that create a sustainable and profitable environment for farming in Ontario. WFA has some concerns with the proposed 'Hidden Quarry'.

Prime agricultural land is the foundation of a secure food supply. Ontario has the greatest area of the best farmland in Canada. However, even with attempts to strengthen protections for prime farmland the loss of farmland seems unstoppable as noted by OFA:

"Every day, prime agricultural land is lost to non-agricultural uses like housing and commercial developments and aggregate extraction. Statistics Canada reports illustrate this very clearly. In the five-year period between 2006 and 2011, nearly 260,000 hectares of farmland was lost. Whatever the reason, Ontario cannot sustain this level of land loss and continue producing enough food, fiber and fuel."

This translates to about 350 acres every day - an unsustainable attrition happening across the province. If this loss rate continues, Ontario farmers will be unable to meet the growing demand for food in Canada and around the world. And as a non-renewable resource, productive farm land will be lost forever.

Ontario's soils are classified based on their ability to grow crops. While there are seven classifications, Class 1 through 7 – Classes 1 through 4 are capable of supporting crop production. While Class 1 is the most productive, Classes 2 – 4 are still capable of producing food, fibre and fuel with comparable yields to Class 1 depending on the nature of their limitations.

WFA acknowledges that the subject property does not have Class 1 farmland, but 77 % of the site (ref: Stovel and Associates) is Class 3 and 4. Our parent organization, The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) has called for the protection of Class 1, 2, **3 and 4** – the land that supports most agricultural activity. The OFA has made these recommendations clear to the Ontario government. WFA is in full support of these recommendations by OFA, and is concerned that the loss of this farmland at the proposed site will result in a loss of farmland for future generations.

The Agricultural Impact Assessment, completed by Stovel and Associates, states that a 'Complete rehabilitation to an agricultural condition is not required.' With 77% of the area in question being class 3 and 4, does this mean that 77% of the property will be rehabilitated to an agricultural state? What is meant by complete? At bare minimum, the class 3 and 4 land should ideally be rehabilitated to a state capable of growing crops. As such, WFA would like to request more details about the rehabilitation plan be provided.

The OFA has also called on government to protect a farmer's ability to farm when urban expansion and aggregate extraction are occurring on or next to a farm. WFA supports OFA's position, and is concerned about the effects that such a quarry will have on the neighbouring farm operations, ie: dust, noise, vibration, water quality and quantity, etc. Future expansion plans of these bona fide farms may be impacted as well.

Due diligence is required for all those in the position of approving this request. As more and more productive farmland is lost, rest assured that future generations will look back at the record of today's decision makers.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "G. Flewwelling".

Gordon Flewwelling

President

