



THE HILLS OF
HEADWATERS
TOURISM ASSOCIATION

30 June 2011

SENT VIA COURIER

Honourable John Wilkinson
Minister of the Environment
77 Wellesley Street West
11th floor, Ferguson Block
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2T5

Re: Highland Quarry, Township of Melancthon

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association, the recognized regional destination marketing organization representing our tourism industry and municipal partners from the Town of Caledon, Town of Erin, and the County of Dufferin, we are writing to express our concerns about the application by the Highland Companies for a 2,316 acre limestone quarry in the Township of Melancthon (part of Dufferin County), and **are requesting that the Ministry of the Environment designate the proposed Highland mega quarry as a major commercial or business enterprise or activity pursuant to ss.3(b) of the Environmental Assessment Act.**

The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association, working in partnership with our municipal governments, has identified tourism as an integral part of our regional economic development strategy, supporting the long term viability of our rural communities. The Tourism Association's mandate is paramount in our strategy for the development of tourism within our region:

The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association, working on behalf of and in conjunction with our partners and regional tourism operators is the primary agent for regional tourism that is consistent with the region's rural heritage, respectful of its extraordinary natural environment and that promotes its spirit of community.

It is this very mandate and philosophy which causes us to be concerned about the development of the limestone quarry in our region by the Highland Companies.

Not only will the mega-quarry threaten natural habitat for fish and endangered birds, but blasting operations (which the Highland Companies says will take place 6 hours/day, 6 days/week), are clearly not conducive to promoting our region as a premier tourism destination for visitors not only from Ontario, but around the world. The estimated 300 trucks per hour, seven days/ week, that the Highland Companies is suggesting will be a result of the proposed mega-quarry, will also have a severe impact on regional tourism, and in fact may put an end to the very fabric of tourism in the Hills of Headwaters. **(Tourism in the Hills of Headwaters is estimated to have a \$100 million annual impact, creating approximately 1400 jobs.)** The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association actively promotes tourism experiences which are intrinsic to our regional and rural fabric, including among others, agri-tourism, culinary tourism, equestrian tourism, and arts and culture, all which would be in jeopardy if the proposed mega quarry were approved.

On behalf of our tourism industry stakeholders and municipal partners, the Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association's Board of Directors is **requesting that the Ministry of the Environment subject the proposed mega quarry to an environmental assessment**, and furthermore that this environmental assessment **also include a tourism impact study.**

Sincerely,

Ron Munro
Chair, Board of Directors

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cc:

Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario
Honourable Linda Jeffrey, Ontario Minister of Natural Resources
Honourable Michael Chan, Ontario Minister of Tourism & Culture
David Tilson, MP Caledon-Dufferin
Sylvia Jones, MPP Dufferin-Caledon
Craig Laing, Ministry of Natural Resources
Highland Companies
Mayor Marolyn Morrison, Town of Caledon
Mayor Lou Maieron, Town of Erin
Warden Warren Maycock, County of Dufferin
Mayor Don MacIver, Township of Amaranth
Mayor Allen Taylor, Township of East Garafraxa
Mayor John Oosterhof, Township of East Luther/Grand Valley
Mayor Bill Hill, Township of Melancthon
Mayor Laura Ryan, Town of Mono
Mayor Paul Mills, Township of Mulmur
Mayor Rob Adams, Town of Orangeville
Mayor Ed Crewson, Town of Shelburne
Carl Cosack, North Dufferin Agricultural and Community Taskforce (NDACT)
Harvey Kolodny, Citizens' Alliance for a Sustainable Alliance (CAUSE)
Hills of Headwaters Board of Directors