

September 15, 2021

Re: Halton Regional Official Plan Amendment Statutory Public Meeting for the Proposed Expansion to the Burlington Quarry (Nelson Aggregate Co.), File No. RQ61A

Good afternoon Chair Carr , Members of Council, JART staff & everyone on the call,

Thank you for this opportunity.

BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association is opposed to the Nelson Aggregates quarry expansion application and fully supports the protection of irreplaceable wetlands, woodlands and farmlands on the Niagara Escarpment.

Since 2007, our environmental charity has worked with other organizations, local youth and residents, with an aim to protect nature, mitigate climate change and to create a healthier, more environmentally responsible city. To date we have advocated on more than 114 issues including those of proposed quarry expansions in our municipality. More recently, in 2019 and again in 2020 we prepared comprehensive submissions to the Province contending that the Aggregate Resource Act must be amended such that the aggregate sector operates within the parameters of responsible environmental stewardship.

Our submissions pointed out that the contention that more aggregate material must be extracted to support demand rings hollow.

We referenced the evidence-based work of [Gravel Watch Ontario](#) which identified that to date *'...no crisis of aggregate supply has occurred in Ontario, .....that broad estimates are typically used in the studies leading to best guess conclusions,... and that the behaviour of the aggregate marketplace is certainly not indicating that any widespread shortage of supply exists'*.

We also highlighted that there are already numerous licensed quarries in the ecologically sensitive backbone of the Niagara Escarpment. [Halton Region alone has 22 active pits](#) and is one of the largest aggregate mining regions in Ontario.

Another relevant point pertains to the significant under-utilization of recycled aggregate material. Ramping up the conversion of recovered aggregate into usable material for new building and paving projects must be considered an essential part of a timely post Covid green economic recovery plan, versus approving further quarry expansions.

And respectful of everyone's time today, I won't repeat the wide range of important potential environmental and health implications associated with continued quarry operations in the community, and instead would like to offer comment on a point of reflection.

Over a decade ago, BurlingtonGreen supported PERL (Protecting Escarpment Rural Lands) during its lengthy journey opposing Nelson Aggregates' earlier application. We attended court hearings, listened to the facts, reviewed the research, provided submissions and did a lot of listening to community concerns about this issue, of which there were many.

I remember attending a superb PERL event in the fall of 2009 listening to special guest Dr. David Suzuki speak about this specific issue. He reviewed the research and understood what was at stake. I was impressed and inspired to hear his views not only as a globally recognized icon, but more so as a well-respected scientist. He profoundly articulated that any further extraction on these rich, biodiverse lands was without question a bad idea. A "no-brainer" was my take-away. Claims of post quarry operation restoration efforts should not be considered a solution. No restoration process can restore a natural environment to its original state and such claims fail to address the realities of ecological destruction, habitat and wildlife loss that occur **during** the years of quarry activity.

Fast forward to 2021, and it's even more of a bad idea and the stakes are much higher now. Based on irrefutable science, we now face an escalating climate and ecological crises. We, as a global community and the community in Halton can no longer proceed with business as usual thinking, planning and decision-making. We must ACT consistently and effectively as if there is no planet B - because there isn't.

Surely together we can find a better way to build our community than digging up yet more of the escarpment lands. It is incumbent upon all of us fortunate to live in Halton today, to respect and prioritize the protection of lands, waters and life that has been entrusted to us.

We ask that you please provide a united position to the deciding authority on this, that Halton leaders do not support this proposed quarry expansion and that you are committed to do all you can to ensure a sustainable, resilient, equitable future for all.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Schnurr". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Amy Schnurr  
Executive Director  
BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association