



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 13, 2010

### **ST MARYS CEMENT FLAMBOROUGH QUARRY 'FROZEN OUT'**

#### **FORCE Applauds Provincial Government Intervention**

FORCE has learned that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMAH) has issued a Ministerial Zoning Order (MZO) effectively freezing out St Marys Cement's (SMC) plans for a proposed quarry in Northeast Flamborough, part of the City of Hamilton. Municipalities in the area, led by the City of Hamilton, have long raised concerns, and tabled specific objections as part of the aggregate license application process, for this massive open pit mine proposal. They have called on the province to act. An MZO is an instrument under the Planning Act which ensures that the current zoning is maintained – in this case, Agriculture and Conservation Management – thereby stopping the change to industrial extractive, required to obtain a quarry licence and use the properties for a quarry.

“On behalf of our communities, we applaud the McGuinty government for hearing and responding to our local municipalities with such a strong, supportive intervention,” said Graham Flint, Chair and Spokesperson of FORCE. “We also want to thank the City of Hamilton and the surrounding municipalities of Burlington, Milton, and Halton Region for their cohesive and concerted efforts to bring their very real concerns about this proposed development to the table.”

The local governments were joined by the public health departments, Conservation Halton, local schools/boards, the Halton Region and Hamilton-Wentworth Federations of Agriculture, Environmental Defence, and hundreds of residents across our communities. Even the provincial ministries of Environment and Natural Resources objected.

“Every key stakeholder has objected to this proposed quarry development, leaving St Marys Cement standing alone,” confirmed Flint. “There is 100% alignment among the stakeholders, including at the staff and elected official levels, and across all political party lines.”

In particular, FORCE recognizes the quiet, diligent efforts of our local MPP, for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale, Ted McMeekin, who has soldiered steadfastly alongside the community at the provincial level and who announced the results of his labours, the provincial government action, today. FORCE also counts among its supporters, Ted Chudleigh, MPP for Halton, who has stated his opposition to the proposed quarry and Andrea Horwath, now leader of the NDP, who raised questions in the Legislature and called on the province to step in to act.

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At the municipal level, Councillor Margaret McCarthy has strongly and persistently championed and advocated for our communities since the very beginning. Her efforts have led to unanimous motions from the City of Hamilton and to similar results from her colleagues in Milton, Burlington and Halton.

Six years ago, our small rural communities were literally and figuratively rocked when a proposal for Ontario's third largest limestone quarry became public. Since that time, residents have acted en masse to consistently participate and engage in the effort to oppose and stop the proposed development. Over 600 submissions responded to permit applications on the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) Registry, thousands of postcards were sent to our Premier petitioning the provincial government to act, and more than 1,000 objections were first filed and then reconfirmed to the aggregate license application. Our communities still attend public meetings by the hundreds, send letters and e-mails to our municipal and provincial representatives, participate in golf tournaments and galas, and regularly contribute financial investments to fund the necessary legal and technical expert work.

“On behalf of FORCE, we want to thank the members of our communities for uniting together to present a common voice, a professional and substantive case, and for stepping up to act, whenever, and however, it was needed.” Added Flint, “We never gave up and our concerns remain as valid today as when we first raised them.”

Our communities rely on plentiful, quality groundwater and the proponent's own reports document unacceptable impacts from the proposed development. A significant recharge area serving local private wells and the 2 year Time of Travel (TOT) Wellhead Protection Area for the Carlisle ground-water based municipal drinking system - serving some 3,000 residents – could have been affected. All that was offered to address these concerns was an unproven and theoretical mitigation system. The Greenbelt Plan prohibits new or extensions to lake-based water systems, leaving Hamilton with no Plan B, if something went wrong. Hundreds of private individual wells for residences, farms, businesses and an elementary school, along with the communal well for Stonebrook Estates, could also be adversely affected.

The site and its proposed development have also been of concern because the lands fall completely within the Natural Heritage System of Ontario's Greenbelt, the documented areas of highest environmental value. Provincially Significant Wetlands, significant woodlands, species at risk, significant wildlife habitat, and working agricultural lands, among other features, all exist on the proposed site. These features would be significantly affected not only by the proposed excavation and related operations, but by the proposed haul routes. The environmental setting, potential conflicts with existing road users and vehicular safety concerns have led to there being no acceptable haul routes for the thousands of truck trips that would be involved daily.

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“We have always said that no reasonable person would approve a new Greenfield quarry in this location,” noted Flint. “Today, no reasonable person has. Together, we have succeeded.”

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