

Postcard campaign to send message to Queen's Park

Dianne Cornish

Published on Feb 08, 2008

About 3,500 postcards were sent this week to residents in Carlisle, Freelon, Campbellville, Kilbride and other parts of rural Milton. But they didn't carry the usual "wish you were here" message. Rather they invited residents to add their names to the postcards and slip them back into the mail for delivery to Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty.



North Flamborough residents will receive a copy of FORCE's postcard this week.

The postcard campaign, the latest effort in a community-driven plan to stop the proposed St. Marys Flamborough quarry, was launched last week by the anti-quarry citizen's group, FORCE (Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment). The group ran a full-page ad in local weeklies and the Hamilton daily last month urging Premier McGuinty to adopt a 2008 New Year's resolution to protect safe drinking water and quash the quarry application. The postcard campaign, a follow-up to the advertisements, encourages area residents to add their voice to the cause.

"Now, it's important to provide an opportunity for the community itself to register their concerns by sending in the postcards," FORCE vice-chair Mark Rudolph said this week.

"We felt we were at the point right now where we really needed to step up the volume to show the province what widespread support this issue has," the group's chair, Graham Flint, added.

Community residents have often asked what they can do to help the cause, Flint explained, adding that the campaign is an effective way to make their concerns known.

The postcard calls for the government to act on its commitment to the Clean Water Act by protecting drinking water at its source. It also mentions the issuance of a rare public health notification last fall by Hamilton's Public Health Services, warning the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) about potential groundwater shortages or contamination in the area near the quarry site, on 11th Concession Road East near Milborough Line, Flamborough's border with Milton.

St. Marys is currently seeking a temporary Permit to Take Water (PTTW) from the MOE so it can test a groundwater recirculation pumping system it says will mitigate impacts on water in the area if the quarry plan is approved.

Water source protection has become the overriding concern of residents near the site.

With the quarry being "in the middle of an aquifer, in the middle of the greenbelt," Flint said, "It's time for the McGuinty government to actually take action and show their priorities."

Recent hits to FORCE's website at www.stopthequarry.ca indicate that concern for source water protection in Ontario transcends boundaries, Flint noted. A virtual postcard, providing room for individual comments, is available on the website and has drawn response from close to 250 people between last Friday and Tuesday of this week. Many of them are concerned citizens from parts of the Greater Toronto Area and southern Ontario.

"This is an issue that resonates at such a simple level," the FORCE chair observed. The government cannot support the location of quarries in areas holding local water supplies and remain true to its pledge to protect drinking water sources, he stressed. "It's time to take a public stand on this."

The postcard campaign is supported by FORCE and Environmental Defence, an organization that works with government, groups and individuals to protect the environment and human health.



<http://www.flamboroughreview.com/news/article/153035>



© Copyright 2008 Metroland Media Group Ltd. All rights reserved. The reproduction, modification, distribution, transmission or republication of any material from this Metroland West Media Group website is strictly prohibited without the prior written permission of Metroland Media Group Ltd.

