



Media Advisory

Ontario's Environmental Commissioner asked to review protection and management of Oak Ridges Moraine

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (Foundation) has requested an immediate review of the existing policies, legislation, regulation and technical guidance relating to the protection and management of the Oak Ridges Moraine pursuant to section 61 of the Environmental Bill of Rights.

Currently, a review is scheduled for 2015, but the Foundation feels immediate review is needed on pressing Moraine issues.

As identified by the Foundation's recent report, *Measuring Success on the Oak Ridges Moraine* (<http://www.moraineforallife.org/resources/measuringsuccess.php>), certain areas of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) need immediate attention. There are weaknesses in the current policies and regulations of the ORMCP that seriously hamper the ability of the Province and its partners to protect the unique and sensitive ecological and hydrological features and functions of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The key areas of concern are:

- Uncoordinated and ineffective management of water resources
- Lack of control of fill importation, site alteration and tree cutting
- Lack of strong direction in the control and management of transportation, utilities and other infrastructure
- The need to accommodate sustainable lifestyles or livelihoods on the Moraine
- Lack of effective monitoring and audit process to assess compliance to the ORMCP
- The need to institute a sunset deadline for the transitional provisions of the ORMCP
- The need for ongoing stewardship, land securement, education and research programs

“Waiting for the formal provincial review scheduled for 2015 will mean further ecological damage at the expense of the well-being of communities on and adjacent to the Moraine,” stated Kim Gavine, Executive Director of the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. “We have made this request to the Environmental Commissioner to ensure the health of the Oak Ridges Moraine is properly protected by the ORMCP and that the right support services are in place for the municipalities and other stakeholders that support protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine.”

To view the full text of the EBR application, visit:

<http://www.moraineforallife.org/projects/documents/RequestforaReviewoftheOakRidgesMoraineConservationPlanandRelatedInitiatives.pdf>

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The Oak Ridges Moraine is an 186,000 hectare ridge, stretching 160 km across South Central Ontario (including the GTA). This extremely important concentration of forested land has over 60 headwater areas and is one of the most essential groundwater recharge zones in the Province.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF) is a non-profit organization mandated to preserve, protect and restore the ecological and hydrological health of the Oak Ridges Moraine (Moraine). Since 2002, the ORMF has allocated more than \$14.1 million and leveraged more than \$35.8 million to 177 projects in support of stewardship, education, research, trail and land securement projects. With further investment by the Province, the ORMF can build on its success by addressing the challenges with renewed vigour, in order that the Moraine's value to Ontarians remains secure. www.ormf.com