

Dufferin Aggregates: Milton Quarry Timeline

1962: Dufferin Aggregates blasts a large gap out of the Niagara Escarpment cliff face at the site of the existing quarry near Milton, igniting public concern about protecting the Escarpment. "The Gap" was the single most important event prompting a series of provincial government actions that led to Escarpment protection legislation and formation of the Niagara Escarpment Commission in 1973, then passage of the Niagara Escarpment Plan in 1985.

1985: Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) is approved by Ontario Cabinet, with new or expanded aggregate pits and quarries restricted to the Escarpment Rural Area designation and subject to approval of a Niagara Escarpment Plan amendment to change the designation to Mineral Resource Extraction Area.

1990: UNESCO designates Ontario's Niagara Escarpment a World Biosphere Reserve.

1994: New Niagara Escarpment Plan approved by Cabinet after five-year review with same provisions for pits and quarries in Escarpment Rural Area.

January 2001: Dufferin Aggregates files applications for a number of approvals related to an 83-hectare (205-acre) expansion to their 468-hectare (1,156-acre) Milton Quarry, of which 69 hectares (170 acres) is located within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area (Escarpment Rural Area designation). In addition to a Niagara Escarpment Plan amendment, they are also seeking Halton Hills and Milton official plan amendments, a Halton Region official plan amendment and an *Aggregate Resources Act* quarry license for the proposed expansion.

September 2002: After months of technical review of Dufferin's applications by a Joint Agency Review Team – Halton Region, Halton Hills, Milton, Conservation Halton, Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC), Ministry of Natural Resources – NEC planning staff recommend that the NEC oppose the proposed NEP amendment on a number of grounds. NEC planning staff then ordered by their staff director to add an alternate recommendation of support with conditions.

October 2002: NEC (dominated by P.C. government appointees) votes to support the quarry expansion with conditions.

January 2004: Consolidated Hearings Board (Joint Board) hearing into Dufferin Aggregates' many applications for the quarry expansion begins in Milton. The three parties at the hearing are Dufferin, Halton Region together with Conservation Halton (the conservation authority), and the Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment (CONE) joined with Protect Our Water & Environmental Resources (POWER) as a combined party.

November 2004: Joint Board hearing concludes after 82 hearing days – one of the longest and most expensive environmental hearings in Ontario history. CONE/POWER has mounted a strong case with several expert witnesses, causing Dufferin to call additional witnesses to address CONE/POWER's concerns. CONE/POWER case focuses on proposed destruction of the Escarpment's continuous natural corridor and on need for engineering works to operate in perpetuity to maintain natural water levels in the quarry area.

June 8, 2005: Joint Board releases its decision, approving the quarry expansion with 44 conditions.

June 29, 2005: CONE/POWER exercise their right under the *Consolidated Hearings Act* to appeal the Joint Board decision to Cabinet. The CONE/POWER lawyer files a 59-page appeal citing the reasons that the Board's decision runs contrary to the public interest and public policy.

August 10, 2005: Dufferin Aggregates and Halton Region file responses to the CONE/POWER appeal with Cabinet.

September 8, 2005: CONE/POWER files with Cabinet its 40-page reply to the Dufferin Aggregates and Halton Region submissions.

November 29, 2006: Cabinet confirms approval of the quarry expansion subject to changes in some of the conditions and accompanied by a two-page “Statement of Cabinet” which attempts to justify the approval.