

June 19, 2021

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Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Integrated Aggregate Operations Section, 4th Floor
300 Water Street, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 3C7
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Subject: Re: Application by 142059 Ontario Ltd. Lobo Sand and Gravel, 74 Nauvoo Rd, Forest Ontario NON 1J0 to operate a Category 1 Class A Pit (below the water table) on PART LOT 14, CONCESSION 2, EASTERN DIVISION and PART LOT 15, WESTERN DIVISION, GEOGRAPHIC TOWNSHIP OF COLBORNE TOWNSHIP OF ASHFIELD COLBORNE WAWANOSH COUNTY OF HURON

To whom it may Concern,

We are responding to the Application to operate a Category 1 Class A Pit (below the water table) by 1142059 Ontario Ltd. Lobo Sand and Gravel, 74 Nauvoo Rd, Forest Ontario NON 1J0. The following are our concerns and objections:

Green Goderich is a local grassroots organization advocating for the environment as well as educating the public on environmental issues, plastic pollution, and climate change. We are registering our Objection to the proposed Gravel Pit applied for by Lobo Sand and Gravel.

There are many reasons for this objection. The Ball's Bridge and Little Lakes area is very unique to Huron County and particularly to the Township of Ashfield Colborne Wawanosh. If you have ever hiked, canoed or otherwise visited the trails, bridge and river in this area you would completely understand this statement. Certainly the natural features of this area deserve to be protected and preserved from the development that will drastically alter this environment for residents, visitors and wildlife.

HERITAGE

Balls Bridge is an Award Winning Heritage Bridge. Ontario Heritage Trust notes; "The structure is an excellent – and now rare – example of a two-span Pratt design through truss, pin-connected wrought iron bridge." The application has not considered the heritage of the bridge. There will be a diminishment of the heritage experience if the bridge is damaged structurally by the mining and processing of

aggregate. There is economic value in tourism. The bridge is a tourist destination and a significant local cultural site. Little Lakes and Little Lakes Road are an important year round Recreational destination. Attractions are fall colours, winter hiking and skating and country drives through rolling hills, farmland, woodlots and lakes. This area is the main thoroughfare of the G2G Rail Trail which has growing numbers of cyclists and hikers. It is an integral part of the Maitland Trail System. The Trail uses the Little Lakes road to connect it to other more natural areas. The Menesetung (Maitland) River creates a bend in its course here which makes for a beautiful and unique landform. The river is a focus for year round recreational river activities such as kayaking, canoeing, rafting, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, skating, sport fishing, hiking, sightseeing and swimming.

WATER

Water quality forms the basis of a healthy environment. We are concerned that the twenty year plus lifetime of the extraction activities will most likely create problems with water quality due to the depth and proximity of the gravel pit relative to the river. Issues such as Aquifer / Water quality and toxicity could impact on the local wells, the water table, and groundwater. The river flows into Lake Huron and there could be river contamination and downstream effects due to the proximity to the river. The Three Little Lakes could be affected by changing water levels and contamination. Another concern is dust and debris entering the river. All of this could negatively impact recreational river activities. Kayaking, canoeing, rafting, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, skating, sport fishing, hiking and sightseeing.

ECOSYSTEM AND ENVIRONMENT

We are concerned about a degraded local environment. We know there needs to be more protected natural lands to maintain a healthy environment. Just recently the governments of Canada and Ontario have pledged to increase protection of natural landforms and ecosystems. This area should be protected, not decimated. There could be serious negative impacts to wildlife, ecosystems, and local water systems. We are concerned that upon exhaustion of the aggregate the remaining lake could be toxic for many decades. There will likely be ongoing dust and air quality issues affecting the health of humans and animals. The noise from trucks, excavators, crushers, screeners and other heavy equipment will have unknown impacts on wildlife, fish, and birds.

The wildlife, such as reptiles, frogs, and small mammals and birds that currently cross the fields will lose the interconnectedness of this space. The surrounding interconnected habitat and wildlife corridors will be impacted, causing isolated habitats. Isolated habitats typically do not do well. Frogs, turtles and other amphibians and reptiles will be impacted. Aquatic birds, terrestrial birds and possible rare and endangered plants could all suffer from disturbance especially at this location. Huron County is home to many species-at-risk, some of these populations being the only ones left in Ontario. If their habitat or corridor connections between habitats are affected, so too is their population and will decrease their likelihood of survival.

ROAD AND TRAFFIC

The Little Lakes Road is a small rural gravel road. Traffic on the road could create danger for local recreational users and wildlife. Large trucks and more traffic will reduce the recreational value of the area. Hiking, biking, skiing, snowmobile, skating, canoeing, swimming, ATV, bird watching, and nature photographers will all suffer. The G2G Trail and the Maitland Trail enjoyment will be severely affected by the noise and dust and re-routing. It would be best to leave the Trail undisturbed.

Thank-you for considering our objections. This area has been used for generations due to the abundant natural qualities and beauty of the location.

We believe Lobo Sand and Gravel would be better advised to develop aggregate mining in a less sensitive area.

Sincerely,

Dean Whalen
Co-chair of Green Goderich