



Melancthon Against Quarries

Ontario's Excess Aggregate

December 12, 2024

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Please Join Us

Ontario's Excess Aggregate

Now there's proof. At current rates of consumption, Ontario has a 38-year supply of aggregate already licensed for extraction. There is just no need to put our **health at risk** by licensing blast quarries in Melancthon.

Ontario's government has found the time to abolish bike lanes in Toronto. Yet, it has totally failed in its duty to develop and publish aggregate policies that are **independent, balanced and fact-based**. A good policy would include answers to some basic questions:

- is there a proven **need** for new sites?
- if aggregate is so important, should it ever be sold off to **foreign companies**?
- should **blasting** below the water table ever be permitted?
- are there alternatives to **diesel trucks** as the only mode of aggregate transport?
- how will government ensure **sustainable management practices** in this high risk industry?
- will government provide more robust **oversight** of operators of pits and quarries to protect community health and well being.
- will government require pit and quarry owners to pay **damages** to individuals and communities they harm?

Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources been slow to address the **serious problems** with the accuracy of the data they use to assess the supply and demand for aggregate in southwestern Ontario. In fact, much of the data is drawn from untested estimates provided by the aggregate industry itself.

"...better data is needed to understand the availability and distribution of high-quality aggregate required for concrete and asphalt manufacturing.

Ministry of National Resources, Aggregate Supply and Demand Study (October 2024).

Read more [here](#).

Analysing this government study, the Reform of Gravel Mining Coalition concludes:

"The report identifies aggregate reserves in the Greater Golden Horseshoe in excess of 6 billion tonnes—an amount that can, at current consumption rates, meet provincial construction needs for the next 38 years without adding any new pits or quarries. This time period could be further extended with sustainable management practices"

Reform Gravel Mining Coalition. Fact Sheet: MNRF's Study on Aggregate Supply and Demand. Read more [here](#).

Melancthon has joined a large group of municipalities seeking a **moratorium** on further licensing until the government produces an aggregate policy that is independent, balanced and fact-based.

Please send comments to melancthonfight@gmail.com

DIGGING DEEPER: Our Air! Our Health!

If you live in or near Melancthon, you are probably thinking about the health effects of **silica dust** and **air pollution** from ✨ blast quarries ✨ . Maybe you're also thinking about the traffic related air pollution (**TARP**) generated by thousands of heavy truck trips needed to transport 2,000,000 million tonnes of aggregate from the proposed Strada blast quarries.

You might be particularly concerned about **bronchitis, pregnancy, cancer, diabetes?** Maybe you're looking out for an elderly parent or a child with asthma. Or for yourself.

Your doctors are worried too. For wide-ranging studies, check out the [Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment](#). You can subscribe to their newsletter and [see their excellent video](#) on air pollution and health.

WHERE'S SYLVIA? Your MPP. Your Minister of Health!

Speaking of health, Sylvia Jones is your **Member of the Provincial Parliament**. She is also your **Minister of Health**.

She is also Doug Ford's **Deputy Premier**. **We can't find** a single word from her on **health hazards** from quarry blasts.

[Here](#) she is earlier this year with representatives from the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association. After their meeting, the Minister of Health said:

“Our province’s stone, sand and gravel suppliers play a vital role as our government continues to get shovels in the ground to build a stronger Ontario.”

Maybe they didn't talk about health hazards.

Protecting our health is also an important part of building a stronger Ontario. If you can find online any record at all of the Minister of Health/Deputy Premier expressing concern about your health as a person living near a quarry, email us at melancthonfight@gmail.com

Or, better yet, you can ask her yourself what she's doing to protect your health. Tell her about any specific concerns you have. You can contact her [here](#).

Feature Article

*Our contributor **Jim Funston** is well known to many of you. Jim has years of experience in Melancthon agriculture, as well as a professional background in*

hydrology and water management. He tells us why Strada's Wellness strategy fails to address the risks to healthy water created by its blasting quarries.

Blasting Changes Everything

In 2015, my wife and I retired to a family property that contains trout ponds and facilities to raise and sell trout throughout the surrounding community. Located on the 15th Side Road, we are a short distance from the Strada Pits on the 4th Line.

We knew that there were gravel pits nearby but always thought that pits were a low risk activity. However, Strada's [plan](#) to blast below the water table and ship 2,000,000 tonnes per year from the site changes everything. Strada's quarry blast plan poses existential threats to our quality of life and that of our neighbours, our health, our water, the value of our property and the retirement we planned.

Let's start with headwaters. Headwaters are where our rivers and streams begin. Their health is vital to downstream water quality. The **Pine River's** tributaries all start roughly between the 3rd and 4th Lines of Melancthon - sharing space with the Strada and DHL properties. The low lying, swampy areas from the 4th Line to the 5th Line collect rain water that eventually forms the tributaries that flow into Hornings Mills and start the Pine River.

Blasting 2,000,000 tonnes of limestone per year from this headwater area could lead to a change of direction in the headwaters. No one can honestly promise us otherwise. This would be disastrous for those of us who depend on the headwaters for our drinking water, our agriculture, our recreation - for our quality of life. No amount of Strada drinking water delivered to our homes could possibly remedy the widespread damage that a change in direction of these waters would cause to our communities.

To make matters worse, blasting the limestone below the water table also creates a serious risk of **contaminating the water** with **nitrates** contained in explosives as well as **diesel fuel and petroleum** by-products from mining equipment. This would degrade the well water on which our community relies.

As for **wildlife**, the headwater's tributaries are a prime location for native brook trout to hatch and thrive prior to flowing into the Pine River at Horning's Mills. Water contamination will damage the fish. The ponding of the water in the enormous blast holes left after removing the 2,000,000 tonnes of limestone every year will create a warming effect which threatens the survival of brook trout in the tributaries and in the Pine River.

In future articles, we will have a look at the other risks presented by the Strada blasting quarries. To take just one example, **silica from blasting dust** can cause serious side effects including cancer in the rural community and the residential concentration of Horning's Mills.

So, do we need this limestone enough to accept these risks? The Township is a major user of aggregates but it doesn't buy its gravel from Strada. We already have an approved limestone quarry just 26 km north on Highway 124 north of Singhampton. It is not necessary license a blast quarry that creates such serious risks for the residents of the Township of Melancthon.

For questions or comments for Jim Funston, write us at melancthonfight@gmail.com

Could You Help Us Out?

We are proud to be supported by **173 subscribers** to this newsletter. Thanks to all of you for subscribing.

How are we doing? Are we writing about what concerns you? Do you have ideas for the newsletter?

Could you help us out? Could you write a short article for the newsletter? Monitor the website. Look after the Facebook page? Research a topic. Organise a public meeting? A potluck dinner? Would you join a Zoom call to plan for 2025? Help with a mail drop? Write or call Sylvia Jones and the Premier?

If you can do anything at all - a little or a lot - please email us at melancthonfight@gmail.com

Quarry Fight 2024: The Year In Review

Join the Reform Gravel Mining Coalition (RGMC) for a short and spirited gravel fight **Webinar** this **Thursday, December 12 at 2pm**.

[Click here](#) to **RSVP** and receive a **Zoom link**.

We'll hear from community leaders on the front lines of the **Gravel Fight** about the inspiring victories of 2024 and priorities for 2025. Everyone who participated in the last webinar was encouraged to learn that this is a province-wide fight. We hear that there will be some singing of classic carols, creatively adapted to our fight against gravel mining!

Happy holidays to everyone!



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