



File: 3028
By: Email & Mail

September 6, 2013

County of Wellington
Planning & Development Department
74 Woolwich Street
Guelph, ON
N1H 3T9

Attention: Mr. Aldo Salis
Planner

Dear: Mr. Salis

Re: Hidden Quarry

We have reviewed Mr. Peter Williams comments on our Level II Natural Environment Technical Report for the Proposed Hidden Quarry.

We appreciate and concur with Mr. Williams' opinion that the proposed project would have limited negative impacts on woodland functions. Although these functions would be temporarily affected by the project, the basic linkages can be maintained by the vegetative corridors on the north and east side of the property and stream channel as proposed. We agree that the affects on connectivity can be further mitigated through other operational considerations such as retaining the current vegetation until just prior to extraction, expeditious restoration back to natural cover and enhancing tree/natural vegetation along the 6th Line.

Mr. Williams indicated a concern for a more detailed discussion about the importance of woodlands on the subject property and their linkage to the nearby Eramosa River and Blue Springs Creek Corridors which are located to the north, west and south respectively. In our report we state, on page 17, "The subject property is well connected to natural areas to the north and west but is weakly linked to lands to the east and south because of Highway #7, existing residential and commercial developments and a lack of large well connected natural features." These land uses are clearly shown on Figures 1, 7 and 8. On page 60 we conclude that "The James Dick woodlands lie in close proximity to other woodlands and wetlands located to the north and west of the site. As such they provide an important linkage to these natural features."

We are therefore in agreement with Mr. Williams regarding the importance of linkages to the north and west but feel the connection to the Blue Springs Creek corridor is not as strong. The right-of-way for Highway #7 is 30 to 40m wide and this provincial highway gets a large volume of traffic well into the evening. This was quite apparent during evening surveys for bats, owls and calling amphibians. Although some mammals, reptiles and amphibians may venture across this highway they are clearly at risk of becoming a road kill. Although common birds that typically nest in a meadows and forest edges may cross the highway for foraging purposes this forest opening is sufficiently wide to adversely affect woodland utilization by area sensitive birds. Existing residential

and commercial land uses located on the south side of the highway further impair wildlife movements in a north-south direction.

With respect to Mr. Williams concerns for mitigating potential impacts to connectivity through operational modifications, we confirm that existing vegetation will be retained until just prior to extraction in accordance with the Phasing shown on the Operations Plan. Once extraction is completed in a Phase the area will be promptly restored to the ecological after-use specified in the Progressive Rehabilitation Plan. We also agree there is merit in enhancing tree cover along the 6th Line, particularly within the cultural thicket and meadow communities (CUT1-7 and CUM1-1). The Rehabilitation Plan will therefore be revised to show some tree planting in open areas within these communities. We recommend that coniferous and deciduous trees should be planted in this area with a minimum spacing of 3m to ensure an appropriate forest density for effective corridor establishment. This planting should take place immediately upon the establishment of any berms in this area, prior to aggregate extraction in proximity to the 6th line.

We trust this information adequately addresses the County's concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further clarification on these matters.

Yours truly,

GWS Ecological & Forestry Services Inc.



Greg W. Scheifele, M. A., R.P.F.
Principal Ecologist/Forester

cc: Greg Sweetnam, James Dick Construction Limited
Leigh Mugford, James Dick Construction Limited
Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates