

# THE IMPORTANCE OF CLOSE-TO-MARKET PITS AND QUARRIES IN ONTARIO

May 2022

— a response to the Reform Gravel Mining Coalition

## ISSUES

- 1** Ontario needs a stable, close-to-market supply of stone, sand and gravel. Aggregate is an essential ingredient to our modern world. It's in the buildings where we live and work. It's in the roads and sidewalks we drive and walk on. It's used in water purification processes, and in the manufacture of everything from paper and paint to chewing gum.
- 2** The gravel industry is a clean, safe industry. No chemicals are used in the processing of aggregate. The greatest environmental impact is in the trucking of aggregate to the job site. That's why the environmentally smart answer is close-to-market pits and quarries.
- 3** Ontario's current application process for gravel mining is one of the most rigorous in the world: It...
  - ☐ Is governed by the *Aggregate Resources Act*, its regulations, standards and policies and inspections.
  - ☐ Includes the requirement to comply with 24 additional pieces of legislation.
  - ☐ Includes multiple peer reviewed studies for air, noise, hydrogeology, traffic, agriculture, cultural heritage, and more.
  - ☐ Requires the submission of detailed rehabilitation plans — for each phase of the site, as well as final rehabilitation — prior to the issuance of a licence.
  - ☐ Requires the Minister to consider whether adequate consultation with Indigenous Peoples has been carried out.
  - ☐ Includes public consultation requirements under the *ARA* as well as municipal zoning applications.
  - ☐ Requires many more permits once the licence is approved: Environmental Compliance Assessments, Permits to Take Water, permits under the *Endangered Species Act*...
  - ☐ Requires annual compliance assessment reporting and on-going monitoring.

## RECENT AGGREGATE POLICY REVIEW

- 1** Following extensive stakeholder engagement, new legislation was introduced as the *Aggregate Resources Act*, 2018. In 2020 a new round of consultation was undertaken with significant changes to the regulations under the *ARA*. In 2021, new standards were introduced. Today, policies are being updated.
- 2** The *Provincial Policy Statement 2020* was updated to provide clarity that the *ARA* is the appropriate instrument to regulate depth of extraction. The Act was updated to prescribe a new more onerous amendment process for producers who want to go from above to below water extraction. Technical reports are now required (water assessment, natural environment assessment, planning and land use considerations and source water considerations) and the same public consultation, with the ability for objectors to appeal decisions to the Ontario Land Tribunal, as a new pit or quarry application.

## FOUR FACTS ON GRAVEL MINING IN ONTARIO

### FACT #1

#### The industry does NOT consume 5,000 new acres of land per year.

- The Reform Gravel Mining Coalition has misrepresented statistics it gleaned from The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation (TOARC) production statistic reports.
- Since 1998 the areas of the province subject to the ARA has increased by more than a third. As the jurisdiction of the ARA grew the existing sites in those areas were issued licences, and these new higher numbers were reported by TOARC. The vast majority of these new licences were **existing sites** that became subject to the *Aggregate Resources Act*.
- The Coalition erroneously took an average from 1998 not understanding that these were not new sites. This is just one example of how the Coalition has misrepresented statistics.
- In the past 5 years, 77 new sites have been approved, and 300 sites have been closed and fully rehabilitated. **The reality is we are not replacing our close-to-market supply of aggregate sites.**

### FACT #2

#### To meet Ontario's future need for aggregate, the Province needs an environmentally responsible close-to-market supply.

- The industry estimates there is a 10-year supply of licenced, quality close-to-market aggregate.
- It currently takes approximately 10 years to approve a new site, that's why applications are being made today for sites that will be needed to supply the needs of future Ontarians.
- Ontario will require nearly 4 billion tonnes of aggregate over the next 20 years to meet the needs of the population growth of more than 4 million projected by the Government of Ontario. Demand of aggregate is expected to increase from 160 million to 190 tonnes per year.
- Not all aggregate is the same. To meet the needs of the construction industry we need a mix of sites, all located close-to-market.
- To reduce GHGs, the most important way to protect the environment is to locate pits and quarries as close to where the resource is needed as possible to reduce truck emissions.

### FACT #3

#### The aggregate industry pays its fair share.

- A decades-old issue with the MPAC valuation system for aggregate has seen several changes in the methodology for calculating values causing frustration for both municipalities and industry. This issue is currently before the courts. But municipalities must recognize that:
  - Each year, the aggregate industry pays, in addition to municipal taxes, \$30+ million dollars in aggregate levies in Ontario, the majority of which goes to municipalities.
  - Aggregate is the only industry to pay such a levy — despite the fact there are 200,000 trucks on the roads in Ontario every day — only 6,000 of which are aggregate trucks.
  - Producers are proud employers in their communities and support hundreds of local charities and local events across Ontario.

### FACT #4

#### We need informed public policy.

- The Reform Gravel Mining Coalition has presented a series of misleading and/or exaggerated claims that hinder an informed discussion about aggregate policy in Ontario.
- No government that supports economic growth, affordable housing or immigration should support a moratorium on the bedrock of our economy. We understand you and your constituents may have questions. We're here to help. Visit [GravelFacts.ca](http://GravelFacts.ca).



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