

January 31, 2011

Tija Dirks  
Director  
Ministry of Energy  
Ontario Growth Secretariat  
Growth Policy, Planning and Analysis  
Planning and Analysis  
777 Bay Street, Floor 4  
Toronto Ontario M5G 2E5

Dear Tija Dirks,

**Re: EBR Registry Number 011-1528 Proposed Amendment to the Simcoe Growth Plan**

We are making this submission from our perspective as members of the Ontario's Agreement Advisory Panel (AAP) [formerly called Ontario Annex Advisory Panel] of the Ministries of the Environment and Natural Resources. Ontario's Annex Advisory Panel was established in December 2004, to ensure that key stakeholders and experts are fully engaged during development of the *Great Lakes St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement* (the Sustainable Water Resources Agreement). The Sustainable Water Resources Agreement was signed by all Great Lakes Governors and Premier McGuinty and the Premier of Quebec in December 2005. The panel was then renamed the Agreement Advisory Panel to ensure that stakeholders are fully engaged in the implementation of the Sustainable Water Resources Agreement.

Some members of the AAP of over fifty stakeholders have been involved in Great Lakes withdrawal, diversion and sustainability issues since 1985. During this time Ontario has shown exceptional leadership in opposing harmful diversions from the region, was one of the first jurisdictions to implement a strong permitting system for water use and was instrumental in achieving the basin-wide ban on diversions contained in the precedent-setting Sustainable Water Resources Agreement.

**This Simcoe Growth Plan Amendment is premature and should be withdrawn until new protections obligated by the Sustainable Water Resources Agreement are in place.**

We will be limiting our comments here to the unexplored water supply and wastewater implications of this Growth Plan Amendment, rather than the merits of the specific development and growth plan details.

Our concerns are that a Growth Plan change at this time could result in a commitment to harmful Intra-Basin transfers between Great Lakes watersheds before Ontario has worked out its approach, in consultation with the AAP and the public, regarding the exceptions provisions from the diversion prohibitions in the Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. This would weaken Ontario's ability to set strong domestic implementation provisions of the international Sustainable Water Resources Agreement and set bad precedents for Ontario and the other jurisdictions in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence

Amendment places Ontario in an extremely weak position to argue against them. This is the first time in three decades that Ontario has been on such weak ground to oppose irresponsible withdrawals of Great Lakes water. For these reasons we ask that this proposed Growth Plan Amendment be withdrawn at this time.

Yours truly,

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