Objection Letter Guidelines

Please remember that all letters should be submitted to Protect Mono by Nov 8th to ensure documented delivery to the named parties.

1. Pick one of the templates provided.
2. Edit the Date in the top left corner.
3. Leave the Recipient and Subject sections at the top as they are. **This info must be on the letter for it to be accepted**.
4. Write an Introduction Paragraph – a personal bit of information about yourself, your family, your connection to Mono, why you love Mono.
5. Objections – use as many paragraphs as needed to state your objections. Use the Topic Information Sheets from the web site to pick your topics and explain your reasons for each topic picked.
6. Bring two signed copies of your letter to the Oct 29th Protect Mono meeting or get them to us by other means before Nov 8th.

We encourage all letter writers to include an objection on the following topic, **please put it in your own words**.

* The access to Hwy 89 requested by the applicant has been denied by the Ministry of Transportation multiple times. If an entrance other than that recommended in the traffic studies must be used, the traffic, noise and air quality studies completely revisited.

In addition to topics selected from the Topic Information Sheets, be sure to note either of the following if they apply to you.

* If you have a business that you feel may be adversely affected (eg. B&B, studio, restaurants, home business, etc) include a reasonable discussion of your concerns.
* If you have a health issue that may be affected by the operation of this pit, (eg. respiratory issues aggravated by airborne fine particulate matter) include a detailed discussion of your concern.

Below are explanations of some of the issues that you can write objections about. Be sure to write your objections **in your own words**. These are just some of the points you may choose from and probably have others of your own. Take the time necessary to read the Topic Information Sheets and object to the topics you feel strongest about.

Write at least one reason for each objection. Here is an example of the format to you may want to use:

*I am opposed to the addition of nearly 50 trucks per hour at peak times to roads in the area. There are no safe access points from the property to hwy 89, a road used by school buses, for anywhere near this level of truck entrance/exit to a controlled access highway. The trucks are heavily loaded and unable to accelerate/decelerate safely due to the topography of the area. I consider this a direct thread to my children’s safety.*

Some Topic Discussions (See Topic Information Sheets for more ideas)

**Water**

Most of the proposed site is on top of a Significant Groundwater Recharge Area and portions are on or near Highly Vulnerable Aquifers – Groundwater recharge is an important process for [sustainable](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable) groundwater management. Clearing soil and aggregate to within meters of the water table removes ground water protection from pollution (chemicals and petroleum products) caused by leaking trucks, equipment and the extraction process, as well as unknown materials brought into the site for the purpose of **“industrial reprocessing”** and rehabilitation.

**Water/Wells**

Pits use massive amounts of water during the extraction process and for dust control. This water comes from the same groundwater supply used by hundreds of local private wells that provide water to hundreds of local residents and their farm animals. Even with a closed loop washing system, large amounts of water will be required to replenish that lost by evaporation and leaving in the material itself. Water is also used for dust control on the pit floor. A disruption to this supply, be it dried wells or contamination, would have devastating effects to the health, quality of life, affordability of clean water, and loss of property values of these same residents. Liability in the instance of loss or contamination of well water is difficult to assign, therefore most or all of the burden falls squarely on the home owner.

**Air Quality** **– Process**

The extraction of aggregate produces large amounts of dust, and worse, fine particulate matter that contributes to breathing issues in people without pre-existing respiratory issues and will drastically aggravate problems experienced by sufferers of asthma and other respiratory ailments. The breezy nature of the area in question ensures that airborne particulate matter will travel far beyond the active area of proposed pit.

This same fine particulate matter will cover buildings, vehicles, ~~animals~~ and fields. The discussed health issues will apply to animals as well, and the same fine particulates may contribute to stunted growth in nearby crops.

**Air Quality – Trucks and Equipment**

Gravel trucks, excavators and other equipment used in pits are predominately diesel fuelled contributing to poor air quality that may advance respiratory issues and could drastically aggravate symptoms experienced by suffers of asthma or other respiratory ailments.

Running at peak production, this pit could generate 324 diesel powered gravel truck trips per day, often at a rate of nearly one per minute, either entering/leaving the site. The emissions from this many additional trucks to a community would be noticeable and will emit pollution that is detrimental to respiratory systems. Trucks, although regulated, have lower thresholds to achieve pollution emission standards than passenger vehicles…diesel powered excavating equipment, diesel generators and other off road diesel powered equipment have to only meet emission standards when manufactured as new and are not tested after purchased

Idling trucks are a common sight at pits. Whether they are waiting to load or unload, or worse, waiting for the pit to open for business…this also means that even if pit adheres to mandated quiet times, the trucks will be emitting both air pollution and noise pollution in a residential area.

The traffic of trucks in and out of pits stir up dirt, dust and fine particulate matter creating clouds of airborne illness causing pollution. Additionally, these clouds are common on the roads at the exit points of the pits where the trucks are entering the road.

**Traffic Safety**

The application indicates that at peak operating hours there will be a slow moving diesel powered gravel truck entering or leaving the subject site every 72 SECONDS! These trucks produce significantly more damage and injury/death in the case of traffic collisions due to their massive weight, their need of excessive distance to slow/stop, and their extremely poor manoeuvrability. These trucks will share the road with our families and local school buses.

The application neglects to offer even an approximate number of loads of fill that will be required to build berms prior to extracting any aggregate. This number will easily be well into the thousands and will not be bound by the natural time restrictions caused by the extraction process. Anyone who saw the activity on Hwy 89 near the Mulmur pits this summer knows the danger and inconvenience caused by hundreds of dump trucks descending on a pit at once. This process will take many, many months and will involve hundreds and hundreds of dump trucks. These trucks will come to Mono from all different directions and will be operated by owners that are paid by the number of tons that they deliver.

Trucks of this size require massive distances to attain highway speed potentially creating emergency braking situations every time a truck exits the pit.

Gravel trucks are not sufficiently powered to maintain a safe highway speed on the hilly terrain that roads in the Headwaters area are built on. The resulting traffic behind these slow moving trucks can lead to unsafe passing on inclines and curves as these same trucks often use the declines (often safe passing areas) to accelerate to above posted limits to prepare for the next incline.

Mud and sand on the roads near the exit points of aggregate pits can create changing road conditions that go from clear and dry to slick and mud covered in a matter of seconds. A need for emergency braking can result in unexpected loss of vehicle stability and loss of control. Although it is currently mandated for pit operators to maintain a clean roadway in front of pits, it is unacceptable to assume that this can possibly be policed at all of these pits and other construction areas at once. Anybody passing by an existing operating pit after any precipitation can attest to the fact that these conditions are a reality and are accidents waiting to happen.

Trucks parked on the roadside waiting to enter the pit, either during pit operation hours or before, will create a roadside distraction and a narrowing of roadways that would lead to unsafe conditions.

In Caledon during a 2014 truck safety blitz, 50% of inspected trucks were taken out of service. We continue to see media stories of safety issues within the trucking industry due to the competitive nature of the business.

Gross vehicle weight of over loaded trucks is an ongoing issue in the aggregate industry and is not only a safety issue but also damages the road surfaces that the trucks travel on. Gravel truck operators have been asking the Ministry of Transportation to have even larger load weights permitted. If successful, larger loads would mean increased distances required for acceleration and, more importantly, increased stopping distances for these vehicles.

**Noise**

The normal operation of an aggregate pit is inherently noisy. The use of excavators, conveyors, crushers and screening plants, other pit equipment, and the trucks used to transport materials to and from the pit will create continuous disruptive and unhealthy noise. Whether it is the sound of dump truck tailgates slamming, crushers or backup safety beepers, setbacks and berms are not sufficient to temper these noises to an acceptable level for those living and working in nearby homes.

Requested hours of operation are 6am – 7pm Monday-Friday plus part of Saturday. These hours mean that even if the operator adheres to the allowed hours, residents will be enduring industrial noises from before waking hours (for many) to well into typical dinner hours. Retirees, those working from home, and stay at home parents will be subjected to this aural assault constantly during what are currently quite peaceful hours.

Lines of idling trucks are a common sight at or near pits before operating hours as operators try to get an early start to their work day. The noise created by these waiting trucks is unlikely to be policed constantly and thrust upon anyone living in the immediate vicinity.

Engine brakes on gravel trucks cause the deep **loud** sound often heard when trucks are decelerating on hills or preparing to stop. Drivers will use this braking technique rather than the typical brakes to reduce wear (expense) on the truck braking system. The regulations surrounding the use of engine brakes go unenforced and drivers will often use this method of slowing for the sole purpose of preventing the expense of wear and tear on the vehicle.

Studies indicate that both wildlife and farm animals near the source of industrial noise can be adversely effected. Be it reproduction, milk production or simple agitation, noise pollution can produce a negative impact on farm animals and wildlife alike.

**Environment / Agriculture**

Industrializing this area could eliminate a potential breeding and feeding area for rare species indigenous to the area. There are 3 categories of significant habitat from least to most sensitive for Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks in the cultural meadows on west side of the site and on lands within 120 m of the site.

The process of cleaning aggregate consumes copious amounts of life giving water that would otherwise be supporting woodlands, wetland, marshes and wildlife on and off of the proposed operating area.

Pollution caused by the leakage of oil, diesel, antifreeze, rust from operation vehicles and equipment and materials trucked in for “industrial reprocessing” can permanently hinder future rehabilitation of the area as well as potentially leach into neighbouring properties, underground streams or into food sources for plant and wildlife species. Trucks and machinery refueled on site present a strong possibility of accidental spills. The distance that fuel can travel after spilling into porous ground is staggering, as is the expense to “remediate” the contaminated soil. The cost is often so prohibitive that is cheaper for operators to hold “dirty” property than it is to attempt to rehabilitate the land for future use.

The allowable hours of operation that extend from predawn morning to dusk or pre-dusk evening will introduce increased truck traffic during high-risk times of animal movement.

“Loss of enjoyment of one’s property” will be prevalent amongst a large proportion of the community that has been drawn to the area because of the environmental benefits it provides. Whether it is hiking, cycling, or simply sitting on the deck watching the wildlife - the proposed pit will drastically alter the lifestyle that local residents embrace.

While rehabilitation is a component of every license issued, aggregate operations that have started as farmland are seldom returned to farmland.

* It is not uncommon for operators to convert to an “industrial reprocessing site, where unknown, uncertified materials are dumped on the pit floor mere meters above the water table to be reprocessed for other uses. These materials are often highly contaminated fill removed from building sites, contaminated concrete and other aggregates from the demolition of old construction that **predate the regulations on asbestos and other carcinogenic building products**. It is also common to see asphalt grindings that are loaded with carcinogens in towering piles on pit floors.
* Some aggregate operations have applied for land fill licences at the end of the pits working life.

Ontario loses thousands of acres of farmland to developments annually. 74% of the greenwood property, or approximately 300 acres, was used for crops as recently as the growing season of 2014.

It is a challenge to locate more than a few token examples of aggregate operations that have been returned to farmland of the level destroyed during operation. They are often left as large pits of water or weed filled craters.

**Costs and Stresses on Existing Provincial and Municipal Resources**

Additional truck traffic will not likely have a monetary effect in respect to Police and MTO, or MNR resources. It will, however, place an increased workload on the existing over-burdened personnel that are tasked with enforcing our laws, maintaining transportation safety, or ensuring that our natural resources are being protected.

Additional costs arise when road and highway costs are factored in. The additional daily tonnage being transported on our roads is likely to lead to costly repairs between premature resurfacing.

In the unfortunate event of well contamination or water loss, or in the event of pollutants in the soil of the neighbouring public or private property, costs to correct the issue would likely be assumed by the property owners or the municipality unless it can be proven that the operator of the pit was responsible. Proving the source of contaminants in well water is an expensive and often inconclusive venture.