ON Gov Must Reject Water-Taking Permits Threatening Waterloo Region's Water Supply

Statement from Rebecca Kolarich, Program Manager, Water

Toronto | Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat – It is appalling that large industrial water users are still seeking new Permits to Take Water in the Region of Waterloo despite the significant water capacity crisis. When the wells are running dry, it is not the time to add new taps.

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks must deny Esbaugh Sand & Gravel LTD's current application to take water in Wilmot Township and immediately put a moratorium on all new or expanded industrial and commercial water-taking permits in the region. The province has a responsibility to protect freshwater, and until a plan of action is established and effectively executed, it needs to put the brakes on runaway water-taking.

This man-made water crisis is the result of numerous, irresponsible provincial policy changes. From fast-tracking sprawl development to blindly approving over 100 water-taking permits over the last five years in Waterloo Region, the provincial government has failed to protect residents' freshwater security. Now, the region is left to clean up the mess.

Ontario's water sources, like groundwater aquifers, need to be prioritized for communities, farms and ecosystems, not industrial or commercial use.

Background Information

- The Waterloo Region announced that it would not enter into new servicing agreements or support new developments that would put additional demand on the Mannheim Service Area (most of Kitchener, Waterloo, Woolwich, Wilmot, and parts of Cambridge) because it cannot safely and sustainably meet water demand for existing residents.

- Esbaugh Sand and Gravel LTD is requesting a new Permit To Take Water for aggregate washing purposes in Wilmot Township (**ERO 026-0124**). This permit could allow 9.72 million litres of water to be drawn daily. That is about enough water to fill four Olympic-sized swimming pools per day.

ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE (**environmentaldefence.ca**):
Environmental Defence is a leading Canadian environmental advocacy organization that works with government, industry and individuals to defend clean water, a safe climate and healthy communities.

– 30 –