



## Severn Sound Environmental Association

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October 31, 2012

Mr. Shawn Persaud, BA, MCIP, RPP  
Manager of Planning & Development  
Corporation of the Township of Tiny  
130 Balm Beach Road West  
Tiny ON L0L 2J0

Dear Shawn,

**RE: Comments concerning *Response to the Peer Review of the EIS and Natural Environment Level 1 & 2 Technical Report for the Sibthorpe Pit, Township of Tiny, County of Simcoe***

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Severn Sound Environmental Association (SSEA) offers the following comments in response to Mr. David Bell's letter dated October 10, 2012.

### Forest Cover & How Much Habitat Is Enough

As indicated in our letter dated June 25, 2012, the *How Much Habitat is Enough* guidelines are not minimums in the sense that loss of habitat to 'only' 30% forest cover in a watershed should be permitted or be seen as having no impact. In fact, *How Much Habitat is Enough* (2004) states that "...municipalities or other land units that contain higher amounts of habitat than outlined here (e.g., 35 percent forest cover, 15 percent wetlands) should maintain or improve that habitat." Thus, the loss of forest cover and interior forest on the property would impact the Significant Woodland patch, as well as the watershed, despite the fact that it would continue to have more than 30 percent forest cover.

The SSEA did not participate in the review of Sarjeant's Waverley Pits 1 & 2, and cannot comment on the review/approval process. The analysis of forest cover that SSEA conducted for our June 2012 comments included the Sarjeant's pits, and the same approach was used to provide Craig with background forest cover information for

his report. The SSEA was not responsible for, or involved in, the conclusions Craig reported.

### Phase 3 & North Buffer

In SSEA's June 25, 2012 letter, we recommended excluding Phase 3 from extraction as an approach for minimizing impacts to Significant Woodland and interior forest habitat while allowing the pit to proceed. Mr. Bell's response to this suggestion was that "The proponent is not prepared to exclude the Phase 3 as this will significantly reduce the amount of material available for extraction." No alternative mitigation approaches are suggested that would satisfy the objectives of the Township of Tiny Official Plan to "minimize the loss or fragmentation of significant woodland features and the habitats and ecological functions they provide" (Section B2, Environmental Protection Two) or to "ensure that new extractive activities are carried out with minimal environmental and social costs" (Section B14, Mineral Aggregate Resources Two). As per the Official Plan, part of the purpose of an EIS is to make an informed decision as to whether or not a proposed use will have a negative impact on the critical natural features and ecological functions of the Township (Section C6.1, Purpose of an EIS).

SSEA also recommended in our June 25, 2012 letter that forest cover should be maintained on the north boundary as part of the 15 m buffer. Mr. Bell's response was that "... maintaining the 15 m buffer along the north boundary will have a major impact on the functioning of the pit as this area is required for a noise mitigation berm to be constructed with top soil along most of the northern boundary. Part of the 15 m buffer is presently a forest access road and not forested." Buffers do not necessarily need to be forested, but if this forest access road is no longer being used, then planting it with native trees would enhance the 15 m buffer. Buffers should be treated as no-touch zones and must be determined and rationalized on the basis of their ability to protect natural features and their associated functions.

### Breeding season for birds

Mr. Bell's response indicates that a note will be added to the site plan that tree cutting will not occur from the beginning of April to the end of July. However, some birds nest earlier or later than these time frames. Ideally, clearing activities should be undertaken between September and February, and if any clearing is to occur between January 1 and April 1, screening for active nests of early breeding species (e.g., owls) should be conducted first.

### Timing of site visits

Mr. Bell maintains that site visit dates were appropriate for Species At Risk (SAR), however the EIS/Natural Environment Report did not provide detailed information on the

conditions during visits. Please provide the following information to assist the SSEA in confirming that the typical requirements for SAR surveys (e.g., whip-poor-will) were met:

- time of day (or night) surveys were conducted, and the duration of surveys
- temperature and weather conditions (wind, precipitation)
- phase of moon (relevant for whip-poor-will surveys only)
- locations of point counts.

Please contact us with any questions.

Yours truly,



Keith Sherman,  
Executive Director



Michelle Hudolin,  
Wetlands and Habitat Biologist

CC: Sandra Mattson