

**Ontario must halt new gravel mining approvals  
to address crisis revealed in Auditor General's report**

The Reform Gravel Mining Coalition (RGMC) calls on the Ontario government to safeguard lives and the environment by introducing an immediate moratorium on all new aggregate approvals, with the aim of implementing the urgent recommendations and action items presented by the Auditor General in the Value-for-Money Audit of the Management of Aggregate Resources, published on December 6, 2023.

In its report, the Auditor General exposes an alarming truth: that the management of aggregate resources is in crisis, and the province is failing to protect the public from the negative impacts of gravel mining. The Ontario government must pull the emergency brake and halt new approvals until it can guarantee public safety by enforcing the Auditor General's commonsense proposals.

The Auditor General concludes that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) is "falling short" in its duty to "minimiz[e] the impacts of aggregate operations, particularly through its role in regulating the industry to ensure approval holders comply with all necessary requirements." Shockingly low rates of inspection and enforcement demonstrate a pattern of regulatory failure that has enabled widespread violations in the aggregate industry to persist unchecked. For example, the Auditor found that three quarters of aggregate inspectors checked less than 5% of the operations in their district. Contrary to the aggregate industry's long-standing claim that it is heavily regulated, up to 64% of aggregate companies are violating regulations. Yet less than 1% of non-compliant companies were even referred for an investigation that could lead to a charge.

The Auditor General confirms what many impacted communities have long reported: that aggregate extraction can cause significant "negative impacts" to lives and the environment. The Auditor states that gravel mining can "alter or destroy woodlands, grasslands, wetlands or farmland"; "pose a risk to local groundwater resources"; and cause serious health impacts from air pollution and heavy truck traffic. Moreover, sand, gravel, stone and rock are non-renewable resources that provide vital ecosystem services.

The Ontario government's failure to regulate this public asset jeopardizes the fundamental resources—water, food, and air—that sustain life in Ontario. What is more, this risk is entirely unnecessary, since existing aggregate reserves in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region are sufficient to meet demand for the coming decades, according to the Ministry's most recent supply and demand study cited by the Auditor General.

For too long, municipalities, First Nations and taxpayers have borne the economic, social and environmental costs of gravel mining. The Auditor General's exposé of the crisis in aggregate management empowers local decision-makers and constituents across Ontario to say no to new pits and quarries in their communities. We invite municipalities to join our demand for a moratorium by rejecting new gravel mining applications and passing a resolution to demand a provincial moratorium on all new gravel mining approvals.

The Auditor General's report confirms that the current system for managing aggregate resources in Ontario is broken; it is putting lives and the environment at risk without any proven need to do so. It is time to pull the emergency brake, impose an immediate moratorium on all new aggregate approvals and implement the Auditor General's recommendations in order to protect our shared home, now and for generations to come.

For more information about how to support the demand for a moratorium, please visit: <https://www.reformgravelmining.ca/damn-campaign>.

For more information or media requests, please contact the Reform Gravel Mining Coalition at: [campaign@reformgravelmining.ca](mailto:campaign@reformgravelmining.ca).