

ERO 025-0216

Letter to Ministers: Concerns with Proposed Ontario Aggregate Resources Policy Changes (ERO 025-0216)

Dear Ministers,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the proposed changes to Ontario's aggregate resource policies. While described as "modernization," these changes would weaken long-standing protections for our most vital resource: water.

The proposal would rescind 28 existing policies that currently ensure clear safety buffers, step-by-step hydrogeological studies, ministerial oversight of site changes, and guaranteed public consultation. These safeguards were designed to protect groundwater, wetlands, and community wells from irreversible harm.

Under the new approach, technical standards replace enforceable rules with flexible guidelines. There would no longer be automatic triggers when extraction is close to the water table, no tiered review process to assess risks, and no guaranteed community notification or input. Without these checks, decisions become less transparent and accountability weakens.

Ontario's water systems face growing stress from climate change: flooding, droughts, and shifting water tables. Now is not the time to reduce oversight or public involvement in how we manage aggregate operations that can affect entire watersheds.

I urge the Ministry to retain strong, enforceable safeguards and public participation requirements. Protecting water must remain non-negotiable.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Reference: Auditor General of Ontario, "Management of Aggregate Resources."