

**Wellington Water Watchers Calls on Province to  
Grow the Greenbelt,  
Protect Water Supplies**

*Urban sprawl threatens 1.5 million acres of critical water resources*

**For immediate release**

**November 4, 2015**

Toronto – Over 100 community groups, including Wellington Water Watchers, the Moraine Partnership and Ontario Greenbelt Alliance, are requesting that the provincial government grow the Greenbelt to protect 1.5 million acres of land containing vital water resources.

Locally, the Greenbelt Plan review represents a unique opportunity to permanently protect Wellington County (portions of Townships of North Wellington, Centre Wellington, Erin, Guelph/Eramosa including the City of Guelph, and North Dumfries) - important moraine headwater areas including Orangeville Moraine and Galt-Paris Moraine that supply clean drinking water directly to 171, 889 people.

A recent report completed by the Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition titled [2015 Report on the Environmental Health of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Adjacent Greenbelt Lands](#), concluded the Greenbelt Plan is effective in protecting watershed health.

*“The Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Plans have been successful at maintaining watershed conditions, including forest condition and surface/groundwater quality,” says Mike Nagy, Chair of WWW. “We believe that landscape connections through Wellington County, including our River Corridors, Orangeville Moraine and Galt-Paris Moraine will provide for a more comprehensive and regional protection of potable water resources, working lands and natural heritage systems.”*

Under increasing pressure from urban sprawl and agricultural intensification, these local landscapes features filter and recharge local aquifers and mitigate the risk to downstream communities from flooding and extreme weather.

The approximately 2700 acres for Greenbelt expansion, identified by Wellington Water Watchers, lie outside land already designated for urban development needed to accommodate population growth until 2041 and beyond.

*“Recently the City of Guelph implemented a Natural Heritage System,” commented Arlene Slocombe, Executive Director of WWW, “and although we applaud this initiative, we also need to keep our eye on the larger watershed perspective. Polling data consistently shows that Ontarians value the clean water benefits of the Greenbelt higher than any other benefit.”*

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About Wellington Water Watchers Founded in 2007, Wellington Water Watchers (WWW) is a volunteer-run, non-profit organization based in Guelph, Ontario. Committed to the protection of water resources and public education, WWW works to affect local water policy and protect water sources. WWW also sponsors and supports guest speakers, debates, and are active at bottled-water free community events.

**For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:**

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