

Minister extends moratorium on new permits to take water for bottling in response to public concerns

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The Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks is proposing an extension to the current moratorium on new permits to take groundwater to produce bottled water. This would extend the moratorium for up to one year to January 1, 2020.

The extension of the moratorium is a direct response to public concerns about the impact taking water for bottling is having on groundwater.

Centre Wellington Council passed a resolution in June requesting a four year extension to the initial moratorium imposed in December 2016. Centre Wellington Council passed this motion because the population on town water service is targeted to double and the local water studies and provincial policy review will not be finished.

The purpose of the extension is to give the Ministry time to further advance the Ministry's understanding of the water resources in the province, with a particular focus on groundwater takings by water bottling facilities.

"While I am glad the moratorium could be extended and urge residents to support this, I frankly am not convinced the uncertainties about groundwater can be resolved in the next year" said Jan Beveridge of Save Our Water, "I believe it will still take years to understand the impacts of conflicting water uses and climate change on our aquifers."

Wellington Water Watchers advocates for a complete phase out of permits to bottle water in Ontario in order to protect water for future generations in Wellington County.

"The Ontario government must ensure that water remains a public trust, and we can't let drinking water be in the corporate control of corporations like Nestle," states Rob Case, chairperson of Wellington Water Watchers. "The chances of drought are increasing. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report to the United Nations tells governments they must take urgent action in the next decade to protect the environment. The Ontario government must therefore end permits to take water for bottling as soon as possible".

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is asking for public comment online at <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-3974>. Wellington Water Watchers encourages people to comment and urge the Ontario government to phase out permits to bottle water in Ontario.

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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, with a focus on the Grand River watershed. WWW is committed to the protection, restoration and conservation of groundwater. WWW works to affect local water policy and protect water sources. WWW also sponsors and supports guest speakers, debates, and are actively encouraging bottled-water free community events.

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