

Letter to Minister of Environment November 5/2003

Request to Environment Minister re Red Hill Creek Expressway by Mark Mattson

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky
Minister of Environment
12th Floor, 135 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario, M4V 1P5

Re: request to fast-track s. 11.4(1) reconsideration of Red Hill Creek Expressway approval

Dear Ms. Dombrowsky,

Further to our letter of August 21, 2003, Lake Ontario Waterkeeper is calling on you, the Minister of Environment, to respond to our request for a re-evaluation of provincial approvals granted eighteen years ago for the construction of an expressway through Hamilton's Red Hill Valley.

The request was made under Section 11.4(1) of Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act which grants the Minister authority to reconsider approval for a project when circumstances have changed or new information arises.

Citing criminal charges and administrative orders against the city for polluting the Red Hill Creek, we argued that the City of Hamilton has demonstrated that it is an aggressor against the Red Hill Valley. To date, your office has yet to state whether or not it will review the project approvals and intervene on behalf of the public.

In September 2003, the City of Hamilton obtained an injunction restricting public access to the city's last significant greenspace. Several demonstrators were arrested last week trying to prevent the city from pushing ahead with construction before the upcoming municipal election. An Anglican Canon was arrested Tuesday, and police have notified Aboriginal occupants they will be removed from the valley this week

Yet the province has remained silent. Lake Ontario Waterkeeper now asks you, Minister of Environment, to exercise your discretion and review the Red Hill Creek Expressway approvals under the authority of Section 11.4(1) of Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act.

A copy of our original request is enclosed. Given the volatile nature of the situation, we look forward to your immediate response.

Yours truly,

Mark Mattson
Waterkeeper & President