



July 4, 2014

Via: Email

Kimberly Wingrove, CAO
Township of Guelph/Eramosa
P.O. Box 700,
8348 Wellington Road 124
Rockwood ON N0B 2K0

Dear Ms Wingrove:

**Re: Peer Review - Tri City Lands Ltd. - Spencer Pit
Project No.: 300035544.0000**

1.0 Introduction

The following letter has been compiled to provide comments in the form of a Peer Review of the Tri City Lands Ltd. Spencer Pit Summary Report and Appendix B-Natural Environment Technical Report: Level 1 and 2 (the Report) by Stantec Consulting Limited. In conjunction with the review of the NETR, the Site plans (Harrington McAven) were also reviewed.

2.0 Comments

We would like to provide the following comments for the Report:

- In Section 2.1 regarding literature reviewed for this Report, reference is made to a NHIC database search dated 2010. If this is a typographical error it should be changed. If not, it would be more accurate to have completed an NHIC in 2014 for this report in order to include the most recent available information and to address any species whose status has changed between 2010 and 2014.
- In Section 2.3.1 Vegetation, a reference is made to the 2008 revised version of the ELC manual for Southern Ontario. The most recent version of this document is actually dated October 2013 and can be found here:
http://www.conservationontario.ca/events_workshops/ELC_portal/
- In Section 2.3.3 Amphibians, we would suggest that a late April call count survey should have been completed regardless of the interpretation that it was a "late spring", as per the MMP protocol. We do not agree that a May survey is sufficient to detect any early spring calling species.
- In Section 3.2 it would be helpful to have a reference to a figure illustrating the locations of OP natural heritage features.
- In Section 4.4 Vegetation Communities, there should be consistent reference to the ELC community type that was mapped (e.g., vegetation type, ecosite, etc.).

- In Section 4.4 the scientific names for species are missing. Standard protocol is to include the scientific name the first time a species is referenced in a report.
- In Section 4.4 a reference to the percent cover of woody canopy, understory and shrub and sapling layer should be included for every community that meets forest, swamp or woodland criteria under the ELC.
- In Section 4.4 some of the community descriptions refer to soil type and texture and some do not. This should be revised for consistency.
- In Section 4.4.1 Vascular Plant Species, there is reference to a butternut within the study area. The distance from the proposed license area should be provided here.
- In Section 4.5.1 there is reference to the rail line. Please provide a figure reference for this feature, especially as it provides habitat for a species regulated under the ESA (2007).
- Section 4.5.2 Amphibians, does not provide a description of why the author has summarized that "No amphibian breeding habitat was encountered in the proposed license area". Please provide an explanation for this conclusion along with an appropriate figure reference.
- Section 4.5.3 Mammals states that "no bats were observed during the course of the field investigations". An explanation as to why none were documented is required here. Was it due to the timing of the surveys (daytime vs. evening?).
- Section 4.5.4 concludes that fish habitat was not present in the proposed license area, however no explanation of how this conclusion was derived is provided. Please provide an explanation.
- In Section 5.1 a number of SAR that had the potential to occur on the Site are dismissed due to a lack of habitat on the Site. An explanation of this exclusion process should be provided (SAR screening table including habitat preferences or requirements would be suggested).
- In Section 5.1 the number of Barn Swallow nests documented in the barn is discussed. Please provide the timing of the survey and an explanation as to why the nests were not surveyed during the breeding season. Discussion on the potential for the Site to provide foraging habitat for this species is not adequately addressed. The proposed activities may require permitting under the ESA. This has not been addressed in a satisfactory manner within the report.
- In Section 5.3 Fish Habitat, there should be some discussion regarding how the water balance within aquatic and wetland features will be maintained.
- In Section 5.4.1 Seasonal Concentration Area, requires additional discussion as to why deer movement into the proposed license area is not occurring.
- In Section 5.4.2 Rare Vegetation Communities and Specialized Habitats for Wildlife, requires discussion as to how the water balance will be maintained within the pond and wetland communities for amphibian breeding.
- In Section 5.4.3 under Reptiles please provide an explanation as to why no species specific surveys for snakes were completed on the Site. Under Insects discuss if any toothwort (food source for West Virginia White) was documented in this community.
- In Section 5.5.2 Ecological Functions (of the woodland) we do not agree that the rail line poses a barrier to animal movement, especially for birds.
- In Section 5.8 Summary of Natural Heritage Features (of the woodland) there is not adequate assessment of potential Barn swallow habitat with respect to foraging opportunities.
- In Section 7.1 there should be a description as to whether a Butternut Health Assessment was/was not completed with an explanation.

- In Section 7.3 Fish Habitat the potential indirect effects need to be addressed and mitigation measures recommended.
- In Section 7.4 Amphibian Breeding Habitat, (Woodland) there needs to be an explanation of the potential indirect effects and recommended mitigation measures.
- The Site Plans provided do not provide adequate mitigation recommendations for the types of habitat and the potential direct and indirect effects associated with the proposed aggregate extraction. Potential for indirect effects associated with transfer of sediment, disturbance to wildlife, changes to surface and ground water and protection of the seed bank should be addressed. In addition, the mitigation measures should be provided within the body of the Report.

3.0 Summary

The Tri City Lands Ltd. Spencer Pit Summary Report and Appendix B-Natural Environment Technical Report: Level 1 and 2 was well written and thorough. The appendices were very helpful and more extensive than what would be "typical" of these reports. We do not feel that any of the above issues should be difficult to address or that any additional field data collection is required to meet the reporting protocol for this application under the Aggregate Resources Act. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours truly,

R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited



Nicholle Smith
Senior Terrestrial Ecologist
NJS:sd

cc: Mr. Bernie Hermsen, MHBC (Via: Email)
Mr. Neal Deruyter, MHBC (Via: Email)
Ms. Meaghen Reid, Township of Guelph/Eramosa (Via: Email)