

December 17, 2008

The Honourable John Gerretsen
Minister of the Environment
12th Floor, 135 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario
M4V 1P5

Dear Minister Gerretsen,

I am writing in my capacity as Senior Advisor on Water to the UN and Chairperson of the Council of Canadians to request that you reconsider your decision to grant permission to drain water from the aquifer at Site 41 in Simcoe County to allow for a landfill to be built in the area. Scientists have referred to the pristine artesian aquifer in the area as one of the cleanest sources of fresh water in the world, comparable to ancient arctic ice.

Several sources including Environment Canada agree that Canada is on the brink of a freshwater crisis. It is important that we make the protection of freshwater sources a priority. I am concerned not only about the impacts of draining this very important aquifer, but also about the impacts on the entire ecosystem. The draining of the aquifer at Site 41 will affect the Wye River and Wye Marsh – an important bird sanctuary in Ontario.

Citizens of Simcoe County are demanding that the County explore other options to manage waste by implementing waste reduction strategies, upgrading the 50 existing landfills and recycling refuse in older landfills.

I urge the MOE to protect this vital watershed by supporting alternatives to the planned landfill at Site 41.

Sincerely,



Maude Barlow

Senior Advisor on Water to the President
of the United Nations General Assembly
700-170 Laurier Ave. West,
Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1P 5V5
Email: mbarlow@canadians.org