

Media Release

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HUDAK, MILLER JOIN FORCES TO CHAMPION PRESERVATION OF ERAMOSA KARST AND ITS FEEDER LANDS

QUEEN'S PARK – Tim Hudak, PC MPP for Niagara West-Glanbrook, and Paul Miller, NDP MPP for Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, joined forces in the Legislature today to demand that the McGuinty government preserve 92 acres of environmentally sensitive feeder lands essential to the survival of the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area in Stoney Creek.

The property in question is owned by the provincial government and managed by the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) – an arm's length agency of the Ontario Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal. Stoney Creek residents, neighbours and others who care about preserving the karst have expressed concerns to Miller and Hudak that the ORC is planning to sell of significant parcels of the environmentally sensitive property to meet a McGuinty government requirement for them to contribute \$701 million in sales to the 2008-09 budget.

"My colleague Mr. Miller and I have both toured the karst and we share those concerns," Hudak said. "You have the authority to direct the ORC... Why don't you build upon the good work that has involved (all) of our parties and dedicate the remaining lands to be permanently protected as part of the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area?"

The 185-acre Eramosa Karst Conservation Area is already protected from development; however, its preservation is dependant on the protection of the surrounding lands, which contain streams and other features that feed the karst. Experts who have studied the karst and surrounding areas have expressed concern that any type of development on these "feeder" lands will alter water flows and erosion patterns in the karst.

"These feeder lands are essential to the life of the Eramosa Karst," Miller said during today's question period. "Any development would cause the feeder water system to dry up, causing the death of the Eramosa caves."

Karsts are geological formations including underground streams, caves and passages caused by water dissolving rock. It naturally contains many sinking streams, caves and passages that are unique to a karst landscape.

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