

June 23, 2006

Media Advisory

**Environmental Commissioner to Meet with Sault Ste. Marie
Environmental and Industry Groups**

Gord Miller, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO), will be in Sault Ste. Marie on Monday and Tuesday, June 26 and 27, 2006, to meet with representatives from government, industry and environmental groups. Members of the ECO's Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee will also be in the city for their biannual meeting with Commissioner Miller, and will accompany him on a tour of the area.

“As Environmental Commissioner, I think it’s important that I become familiar with environmental challenges in every area of Ontario, and I know that in Sault Ste. Marie and the surrounding area, forestry, air and water issues are very important,” said Commissioner Miller, who reports annually to the Legislative Assembly on compliance of Ontario provincial ministries with the *Environmental Bill of Rights*. “My Advisory Committee and I came to this area so that we could understand firsthand these challenges – as well as the solutions that industry, government, and environmental groups are proposing to meet them.”

On Monday afternoon, June 26, the Commissioner will meet with provincial and federal researchers from the Ontario Forest Research Institute and the Great Lakes Forestry Centre, who will present overviews of their work on forest productivity and forest health, as well as their research on the impacts of climate change. In the evening, Miller and his committee will tour the St. Mary’s River, where they will hear about sites on the river with contaminated sediment and the efforts being made to clean them up. The next day the group will tour the Algoma Steel facility and meet with company officials. Tuesday evening, they will meet with local environmental groups, including Clean North and the Binational Public Advisory Council, whose members are working on both sides of the border to clean up the St. Mary’s River. Members of the Lake Superior Conservancy and Watershed Council plan to talk to the Commissioner and the ECO Advisory Committee about their efforts to protect and restore natural resources in the Lake Superior area.

“I’m looking forward to hearing firsthand about the improvements and remediation projects already undertaken in the Sault Ste. Marie area,” said Commissioner Miller. “I am aware that these projects are going forward because of the substantial contributions of funding, time and effort from local industry, from agencies at every level of government, and from people who live in the communities on both sides of the U.S-Canada border.”

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For more information, contact:

Liz Guccione, Communications

Tel: (416) 325-3371

E-mail: media@eco.on.ca

Or call our toll-free public inquiry line at 1-800-701-6454.

