

April 26, 2007

For Immediate Release

Achievement of the Greenbelt Celebrated by Environmental Commissioner

(TORONTO, April 26, 2007) A cross-ministerial task force that established the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt is being celebrated today in a ceremony held at Queen's Park by Gord Miller, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO).

Commissioner Miller presented a Special ECO Recognition Award for 2005/06 to staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, along with staff from nine other ministries and the Niagara Escarpment Commission, for their contributions to the establishment of the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt.

"Most Ontario residents appreciate that the Greenbelt protects a great band of agricultural land and natural features from inappropriate development," said Commissioner Miller, "but few Ontarians are aware of the diligence and effort on the part of the dedicated staff who had to pull this complicated plan together, in a tight time frame, and make it work."

The Greenbelt consists of a ribbon of 1.8 million acres of land running from the Niagara Region to Peterborough, around one of the fastest growing regions in North America. The *Greenbelt Act* and the Greenbelt Plan contain strong policies to protect agricultural lands from urban sprawl, providing permanent protection to the agricultural lands surrounding the Greater Golden Horseshoe and enhanced protection for natural features and functions within the Greenbelt.

The ECO recognizes and applauds the inter-ministerial efforts that were necessary to establish the Greenbelt and looks forward to seeing the benefits from the full implementation of the Greenbelt Act and Plan.

"I applaud these ongoing provincial efforts to curb sprawl development in the area that will protect our agricultural lands and natural heritage, and support future sustainable land use," said Commissioner Miller.

For more information, please contact our Communications Coordinator at (416) 325-3371 or by e-mail at media@eco.on.ca.

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