

**AVON PENINSULA**  
**WATERSHED PRESERVATION**  
**SOCIETY**

March 29, 2007

Mike Bishop, Plant Manager  
c/o Fundy Gypsum Company  
PO Box 400  
Windsor, NS  
B0N 2T0

Dear Mr Bishop:

It's been over a year since our community's residents initiated public meetings and the issues of the Avon Peninsula watershed are still not being addressed. USG continues to cover up the real destruction it stands to make millions from at the expense of our communities and the good people of Avondale, Poplar Grove, Belmont, and Mantua on the Avon Peninsula.

One has only to look at a map or an aerial photograph to see that what is proposed is located in the heart of our area and destroys valuable, ecologically sensitive land that supports, among many things, the agricultural industry, because it is a watershed. Destruction of the watershed impacts private homes, biodiversity, and wildlife habitat farmers around here need.

The Municipality zoned the peninsula Agricultural Priority One for a reason. The 2003 Windsor-West Hants Mining Profile, quoting the Department of Natural Resources, rates Avondale the poorest for gypsum mining of many West Hants areas because "the immediate vicinity is used for agriculture." No matter how you spin it, the phrase "immediate vicinity" tells its own story.

Long-time residents have had to accommodate their own business dreams to this zoning for years, but now USG thinks they can just erase the zoning because of their business plans that will destroy the land forever? Is it any wonder that residents are upset? Mr Bishop, our families want to live and do business on the Avon Peninsula, period. Your workers have excellent trade skills needed in Nova Scotia and like us, they may have to make the necessary sacrifices we've had to. Maybe you'd like to see AP residents move away so USG can mine the whole peninsula, because they won't have a community here to call home. But maybe they won't be able to move because they won't be able to sell their home. This doesn't seem hardly fair either. Residents are our greatest natural resource—not gypsum we sell to USG at 16 cents a tonne.

The sinkholes, wetlands, and uneven terrain you refer to are unique formations known as Karst. Anyone can source information on Karst—from us, from our team of experts, on the Internet. What they will discover is that these landforms and associated features have many values, and any disturbance has effects far beyond their apparent geographic boundary. Any amount of industrial development and pollution not only negates these values but also negatively impacts the surrounding communities in numerous ways. Many karst areas are protected on the World Heritage list. We invite government and USG to consider protecting this area as well.

The Avon Peninsula is a gem that should not be destroyed at the behest of an American company that accounts for less than 2% employment in West Hants and

which causes investment to stay away. Smart money is not attracted to a region where a long established planning framework can be subverted in favour of such destructive activity.

We have a more positive vision for the future, one which builds on the considerable assets this area is blessed with, including the green aspirations and initiatives of many local residents and businesses, as articulated by our government's new Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act: a vision of economic prosperity and quality of life based on a mixture of traditional knowledge, innovation, entrepreneurship, local value-added production and respect for our landscapes and the human and natural communities that live in them.

As you know the APWPS is committed to working with you, our many community partners and all interested parties to help realize this vision. It is unfortunate that USG declined to meet with the numerous stakeholders impacted by your proposed strip mine, including the APWPS, in the forum proposed by the Hants Regional Development Authority, where this discussion might have begun.

We look forward to a thorough public review process, Mr Bishop, because we know that science, the environment, good economic judgement and a lot of public support is on our side—regardless of what USG is paying “experts” to say on April 3 and 4. Over 2,500 Nova Scotians, and more day by day, agree with us.

Raymond Parker  
President, APWPS  
President, Roseway Farm Limited

CC: West Hants Municipal Council  
Town of Windsor  
Town of Hantsport  
MLA Chuck Porter  
Minister Mark Parent  
Minister Brooke Taylor  
Premier of Nova Scotia  
Paul LaFleche (DM – Agriculture)  
Peter Underwood (DM – DNR)  
William Lahey (DM –DEL)  
Greg Keefe (DM – SNSMR)  
Lloyd Bloise (Hants Federation of Agriculture)

Dave Chalk, AVR  
Gordon Delaney, Chronicle Herald  
Fred Lawrence, Hants Journal  
Ralph Surette, Chronicle Herald  
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