



April 13, 2006

New Environmental Funding Announced for Farmers on Oak Ridges Moraine

Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation provides \$1.4 million for Farm Environmental Projects

Port Perry, Ontario - Farmers on the Oak Ridges Moraine, part of Ontario's Greenbelt, are now eligible for significant additional funding support for management practices that help protect soil, water and habitat resources. The initiative is an innovative partnership between the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF), farm organizations, the federal and provincial government and conservation groups.

The ORMF today presented a \$1.4 million grant to the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA), at an event near Port Perry, Ontario. The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, a member of Conservation Ontario, will partner with the OSCIA in administering this grant.

This funding will be delivered through existing procedures established for the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan program and its associated cost share programs, currently provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs under the Agriculture Policy Framework, an agreement among federal, provincial and territorial governments.

"We are committed to working with private landowners, who own over 90% of the moraine," explained Russ Powell, Chair of the ORMF. "This grant today, and our announcement last week of the 'Caring for the Moraine Program', demonstrate the importance of working in partnerships to deliver technical and financial assistance to farm and rural communities on the Moraine, one of the prominent features of Ontario's Greenbelt."

OSCIA President Keith Black thanked all of the program partners in attendance. "We have created a unique and unprecedented partnership today," he said. "We have brought together the working farm community, the federal and provincial governments, and leading conservation organizations on the Moraine, in a program that benefits farmers, and helps them enhance the environmental importance of their land."

"The Environmental Farm Plan program was developed by farmers for farmers. We are pleased that the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation has recognized this highly successful program as an effective way to invest in farm stewardship practices on the Moraine," stated Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition Steering Committee member and AGCare Chair, Brian Besley (Agricultural Groups Concerned about Resources and the Environment).

More

With this new funding, farmers on the Moraine are now eligible to recover up to 90% of their costs for implementing beneficial management practices from a list of eligible projects, such as installing alternative watering systems for managing livestock and fencing to manage grazing. In the coming weeks, representatives of farm and conservation organizations will be working to ensure all farmers on the Moraine are aware of these new funding opportunities, and the one-stop application process now being administered by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

The announcement today was attended by representatives of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition, numerous farm organizations, Conservation Authorities and other conservation groups across the Moraine.

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For more information contact:

Michael Scott, ORMF Executive Director @ 905-833-5733 or m.g.scott@ormf.com

For ORM Environmental Enhancement Program details contact:

Andy Graham, Program Manager, Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association @ 519-826-4216

The ORMF website is **www.ormf.com**.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation was created in 2002 to help protect, preserve and restore the Oak Ridges Moraine, part of Ontario's Greenbelt and one of the province's most prominent geological landforms, extending 160 kilometers across southern Ontario, from the Trent River to the Niagara Escarpment.