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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HIDDEN FACTS CONCERNING HIDDEN VALLEY AND JEFFERSON SALAMANDER

A Proposed 4 Lane Highway Will Destroy Habitat for An Endangered Species

- Environmental Assessment studies were conducted in 2004 with the conclusion, “No Jefferson salamanders or hybrids were documented by LGL Ltd in 2004, despite intensive investigative efforts.”
- A citizen challenged the integrity of a Natural Heritage Study (LGL) regarding data that was observed to be incomplete and inaccurate.
- Further investigations proved that the dates cited to investigate the presence of Jefferson Salamander were unscientific and were challenged.
The Region of Waterloo conducted further studies. In the 2007, the following conclusions were cited:
 1. **“No areas of salamander breeding habitat were identified within the north forest or wetland units adjacent to Hidden Valley Road (confirming the 2004 findings); and**
 2. **The need to determine the source populations of breeding adults (south forest vs. north forest) through further field work, including drift fence studies.”**
- That no salamander breeding habitat was identified within the north forest area does not prove it does not exist. In 2007, a single *A. maculatum* (Yellow-spotted Salamander) was found in the north forest. In fact, 171 Jefferson salamander species were found.
- In a March 7, 2007, LGL Memorandum, Dr. James Bogart(U of G) was quoted as follows: **"Dr. Bogart stated that based on these findings, there is likely no Jefferson's salamanders in the study area."**
- In 2008, more studies were conducted resulting in a single Jefferson polyploidy found in the north forest (upland forest). In total, 195 Jefferson salamander species were found in 2008. (See note at the end of this release.)
- From 2004 to 2008, the Jefferson population went from 0 to 506.
- Documents regarding the studies have regularly been withheld from a citizen and required the successful intervention of the Office of Freedom of Information and the Privacy Commissioner's Office.
- Jefferson Salamanders have been listed as Endangered by COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada)
- Regulated habitat for Jefferson Salamander must be established to protect wetlands, pools and ponds that are being used by Jefferson Salamanders or those that were used in the past 5 years.
- Areas within 300 metres of these wetlands, pools and ponds that provide suitable conditions for foraging, dispersal, migration or hibernation are also protected as habitat.
- Areas that provide suitable conditions for dispersal to other suitable breeding areas, as well as the suitable breeding areas to which Jefferson Salamanders may disperse, up to 1 kilometre away from protected breeding ponds are protected.

- The proposed River Road Extension in the city of Kitchener will damage known habitat areas within Hidden Valley where Jefferson Salamanders were confirmed during years of EA studies.
- Populations of confirmed Jefferson Salamanders, found within the 300 meters of their breeding pond, are currently being excluded from the regulated habitat delineation in maps currently provided by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources regarding the River Road Extension.
- Citizens are challenging the methodology and decision regarding the regulated area and even the veracity of distances cited in data.
- Citizens will petition the Minister of Natural resources to mandate a new environmental assessment to review and identify all potential Jefferson Salamanders, their breeding ponds, habitats, and expansion areas in Hidden Valley in Kitchener, Ontario in order to secure reasonable regulated habitat delineation to protect and preserve this endangered species in compliance with existing legislation and international commitments.

NOTE:

2.6 RESULTS

2.6.1 Capture - Ambystomid Salamanders

During the 2008 detailed drift fence investigations a total of 335 salamanders of the *A. jeffersonianum-laterale* complex and 157 *A. maculatum* were trapped in either pitfall or minnow traps. The totals do include re-captures of Spotted, Jefferson-laterale and polyploids, however, in the case of *A. maculatum* no attempt was made to document recaptures. Whereas the *A. jeffersonianum-laterale* complex was deemed to be recapture if a toe clip or tail clip was noted. A total of 195 individual tail/toe clips were conducted and sent for genetic analysis, which represents 195 individual *A. jeffersonianum-laterale* complex specimens. It is also assumed that recaptures of all species included more than one recapture of a single individual as individuals with unique markings were encountered on several occasions.