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<http://www.durhamregion.com/news-story/4237220-fill-project-makes-financial-sense-for-scugog-resident/>

November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013

## Fill project makes financial sense for Scugog: resident

**Townline Road property owner hopes to get OK for 16,500 loads of dirt**



### **Farmland fill site on Scugog Townline Road**

Celia Klemenz / Metroland

*SCUGOG -- Gregg Bird stood at the end of a 1,000-foot laneway into a fill site on his farmland. Mr. Bird is seeking permission to bring in fill to level a 20-acre area of valley on his property.*

*November 18, 2013*

Port Perry Star

By [Chris Hall](#)

SCUGOG -- Gregg Bird has a plan to help fill Scugog's coffers. He just needs the Township to buy into his idea.

In a perfect world, Mr. Bird would already be welcoming trucks to his Townline Road farm, where they'd dumped loads and loads of dirt to fill the steep valleys of his farmland and help boost the Township's bottom line.

It's an idea that Mr. Bird thinks makes sense for both sides.

"The end result will be decent farmland for me that I can use and more money for the Township, that can be spread across the community," said Mr. Bird recently while sitting at his kitchen table.

**If you think we're going to drive out the gate with money falling out of our pockets, you're wrong. The Township is going to make their money, we're going to make some money and the farmland will be improved. Dwayne Freeman**

On Nov. 4, he pitched his plan to Scugog councillors, outlining his idea that would see an estimated 16,500 truckloads of fill delivered to the southern edge of the township over the next two to three years and used to flatten out sloping farmlands.

That 165,000 cubic metres of fill delivered to 926 Townline Rd. would be used to level out about 20 acres currently not suitable for farming. Mr. Bird has just over 100 acres and rents out 70 acres to a cash-cropping farmer.

If everything goes well, Mr. Bird would like to truck in an additional 200,000 cubic metres of fill -- or 20,000 more truckloads -- in the second phase of the farmland improvements to fill in an old gravel pit. That work would stretch the total project to an estimated five years.

Mr. Bird's application is in the hands of Scugog staff, who is reviewing the request and is expected to pen a report for council in the coming weeks.

On Friday, Ian Roger, Scugog's director of public works and parks, said he is working on the application and hopes to receive comments from involved agencies and organizations by Dec. 1. Scugog councillors meet again Dec. 2.

If his project is approved, Mr. Bird has pledged to only accept fill on weekdays and stop his operation in inclement weather in order to reduce mud on the roadways. His application will be for a maximum of 200 trucks per day, but he only expects to average 100.

He expects the trucks to slow to a crawl in the winter months when there's not so much digging and says that his operation will essentially be shuttered in the early spring when half-load restrictions are in place on area roadways.

The bulk of the dirt deliveries are expected to come from small subdivisions and contractors in south Durham. Those trucks would travel north on Hwy. 12 through Myrtle before turning west onto Townline Road, said Mr. Bird.

“We simply want to improve our farmland, so we can use more of it, and put some money into the community and provide a service to some contractors,” explained Mr. Bird.

It’s expected that fill coming from larger projects will be tested at the source site. Dirt from smaller operations will be trucked to Mr. Bird’s land and when 300 or 400 piles are dumped, they will then be tested and spread when approved.

“We don’t want (contaminated fill), we can’t afford to have it and if it does end up here, it will be found and removed,” said Mr. Bird. “I live here, I don’t want it here.”

Mr. Bird says he will receive \$65 for each truckload of dirt delivered to his property. Of that, \$10 will be sent to Scugog and another \$10 will be forwarded to the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority.

He estimates his project could see Scugog net between \$350,000 and \$400,000.

“If you think we’re going to drive out the gate with money falling out of our pockets, you’re wrong,” said Dwayne Freeman, Mr. Bird’s business partner. “The Township is going to make their money, we’re going to make some money and the farmland will be improved.”

Mr. Bird also envisions his plan as a pilot project of sorts that could show small-scale fill operations can be used to add and improve farmland in Scugog.

“It’s an industry that is very short-term that could go farm-to-farm and bring money into the Township and show that this isn’t a big deal,” said Mr. Bird. “We can do it and we can do it properly. That’s not a bad thing for the Township.”

For those curious about the fill project, Mr. Bird will host an open house from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 30 at his property, 926 Townline Rd.