NEC seeks protection for escarpment will announce controls in near future

Development control regulations restricting deveopment within the Niagara Escarpment Corridor are expected to be made public and secome law in the near fu

The regulations have been in the works for many months and are designed to preserve and protect the Ningara Escorptnent for this and fu ture generations. Controls have been approved by the 17-member commission and have been forwarded to the Cabinet Co-orlinating Committee for study

before being presented to the Ontario Cabinet for its en-The controls, unlike legislation covering the greenbelt fund, will not impose a freeze on development but will give the Ningara Escarpmen Commission a great deal of say in what will be allowed

and under what conditions it Flexibility All applicants wishing to build anything in the area under development control will make application to the commission. Once the regulations are passed they will serve as a set of general standards but will be broad enough for commissioners to deal with each

application on its own merit. Development control allows more flexibility than zoning by-laws or regulations put ir to affect by ministerial order Plans for residential, commercial and Industrial development might be modified or y the commission. The commission has a staff of 38 including professional land scape architects and plan-

NEC Manager of Information Services Walter Gowlng explained the Commission's task was to draft a master plan for the escarpment. The

of the escarpment. Depend on It In drafting regulations the commission has had to keep in mind the interests of man

groups that currently depend on the escarpment for recreation or, in many cases, a live-Prior to the commission be ing set up in the fall of 1973, a government task force deve oped an interim government policy for the escarpment. was thought then that th master plan could be developed within three years. Ac-

cording to Gowing, the

uniqueness of the control sys-

tem has required more time than anticipated. The government in a policy statement in June, 1973 indicated many land uses which could be compatible with the escarpment's natural en-"Agriculture, commercia forestry, resort and resider

ocation and character. task force reported. Covers towns, cities In a recent interview Gow ing explained the plan would not freeze development. He noted the planning area takes in 1.3 million acres and o that, 40 per cent will be under development control. For some areas entire towns and

Once development control regulations are announced zoning by-laws in those areas will be repealed and the con-

cities are covered by the

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trols will supercede previous "Things won't just stop when development controls are announced. Development will be permitted if it is in the right location, if the road pa terns are right and if i doesn't Jeopardize the plans for preservation of the

escarpment," he sald.

"The question is how much development, where and how should it be done. Everything won't come to a stop the day the controls are announced. I is necessary that our planners have input concerning crate a lot of traffic on either side of the escarpment and result in roads running back and forth on either side. "In some places development can take place if the location is right, if the road system is right and if the deenvironment. Without this input, it could be a real mess," says Gowing. the commission meets fre quently with other agencies responsible for oil and gas

areas have satisfactory zoning controls and some areas aren't as critical or as delicate as others. Some lands in the escarpment corridor will be acquir ed while others will be put un der development control.

historic and ecological uniqueness and the lands designated as a permanent route for the Bruce Trail will be acquired. In some areas an easement ed through direct purchase.

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Applicants appealing decision of the commission concerning permission for a evelopment will go before a hearing officer. The hearing officer will make a final deci sion and the only appeal to his

> have to face. Quarries needed Big sand and gravel companies have something to say and environmentalists are adamantly opposed to their development. From an economic point of view, pits and quarries are needed to support the construction in dustry, the commission acknowledges. Statistics indicate that

> > interest group of that size can't easily be overlooked. According to Gowing the Commission has simply applied the government policy as set out in June of 1973. Basically that legislation barred any new pits or quarries in a designated restricted area. If, however, a company had a licence with no conditions attached to it, expansion

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same 70,000 people biked the

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Resource areas Part of the terms of reference for the commission cal led for the commission to designate certain areas in the escarpment corridor as mineral resource areas. "New pits and quarries will be permitted in these areas under standards to be defined in the master plan for the escarp-ment," the government said in its policy for escarpment released in June of 1973.



decision will be before the provincial cabinet. The commission comments on all developments proposed for the planning area now. In some cases a change in site plan is recommended, cutting of trees is restricted or the plan modified to conform with the character of the

In other instances plans have been rejected on the advice of the commission because the proposal was considered premature or hazardous to the preservation of the escarpment. "Most developers are aware of our policies and

don't go ahead blindly, but try Manager of Plans Preparato modify plans to make them acceptable," Gowing said. The pits and quarries issue is one of the most contentious issues that NEC planners

Louis' department was fundamental in drafting regulations and a system of development control. Priddle's department will be publishing background information on chmatic conditions soils, water and plant life and in general the physical aspects of the escarpment Those studies will form the basis for some decisions the commission will make.

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Bruce Trail is one of the goals

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Currently the Trail goes

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Branch handles the overall administration matters for the commission. Gowing's Job is to get the story of the com-He has developed audio visal presentations and arranged T.V. and radio interviews for the chairman and some commissioners in addition to

> circulating information to the "We've had good co-opera tion from the media. The preservation of the Escarpnest is something everyone wants. The public and the press want to see a good job done," he notes Commission Chariman George McCague summed up: "The task of the commission is clear--to prepare a

THE PLANNING from Niagara to taking in parts of volves 1.3 million

MIDDLESEX

plan for the Niagara Escarpment Area that will preserve these unique lands as a wilderness and recreation resource, maintaining it as a continuous natural environment while accommodating other land uses that are compatible with such preserva-

GEORGE McCAGUE

"The commission members, representing municipalities and various public interests are striving to fulfil the goal set before them. It will indeed require the input, co-operation and support of the general public in bringing about a plan that will achieve success in saving the escarp ment for present and future generations," Chairman Me-

Escarpment mosiac of natural delights

The Niagara Escarpment is one of Ontario's most precious and widely used natural resources.

It is a unique environmental corridor stretching for 465 miles from

Queenston, near Niagara Falls, across the rich agricultural lands and expanding urban belt of Southern Ontario, and reaching the tip of the Bruce Peninsula near Tobermory.

It is a mosaic of natural delights with forests, cliffs, hills, waterfalls, streams, scenic viewpoints, unusual rock formations, and interesting plant and animal life.

It is an attribute that attracts the naturalist . . . the hiker . . . the skier ... the angler ... the camper ... the artist ... the ecologist . . . the urbanite who wants to get away from it all. In its southern sections, the Escarpment is the source of a multimillion dollar extractive industry - sand and gravel, clay and shale,

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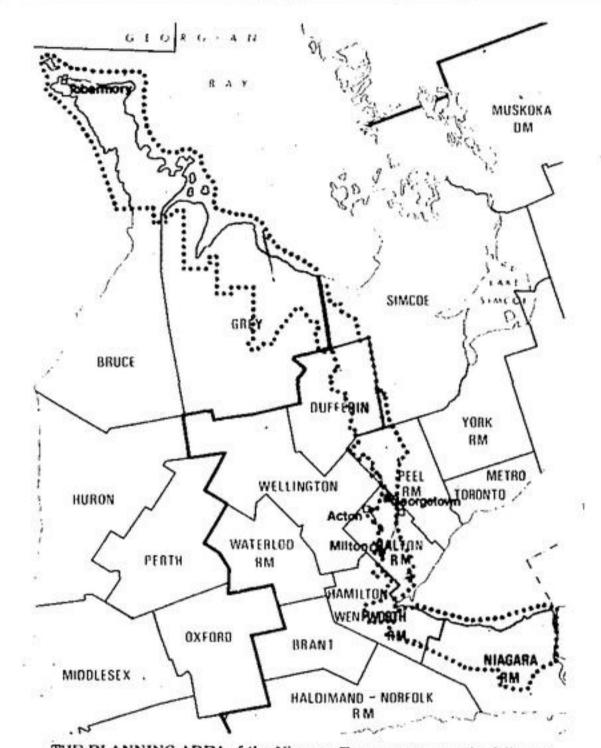
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THE PLANNING AREA of the Niagara Escarpment runs the full route from Niagara to Tobermory and sweeps through the middle of Halton taking in parts of Acton, Georgetown and Milton. The planning area involves 1.3 million acres of land.





Niagara Escarpment provide scenic beauty for residents and passers-by all year round.

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