



Review of International Aggregate Standards Finds “No Rival” for SERA

BuildGreen Solutions Finds Draft SERA Standards the most rigorous and comprehensive of all existing equivalents for the responsible extraction of aggregates

June 23, 2011, Ottawa, Ontario: A new study by BuildGreen Solutions, one of Canada’s leading sustainable development services companies, of international aggregate standards has found nothing that came close to rivaling the *Draft* SERA Standards in terms of rigour or comprehensiveness related to aggregate extraction.

Following a thorough online review by Ottawa’s BuildGreen Solutions, SERA (Socially and Environmentally Responsible Aggregate) released the *Draft* SERA Standards on June 1, 2011, proposing that aggregate operators in Ontario adopt a voluntary, third-party audited, certification system for aggregate extraction.

“In conducting our online audit of existing aggregate standards it became clear that there existed no English language certification system for aggregate extraction that compares with the *Draft* SERA Standards,” says Rodney Wilts, JD, LEED AP, and Partner with BuildGreen Solutions. “We reviewed all international aggregate standards we could find across fifteen criteria and in all but two SERA was equal to or better than the rest.”

BuildGreen Solutions found SERA to be the only standard specific to aggregates that combines comprehensive best-practices with a proposed third-party auditing system. The arms-length assessment offered by third-party auditors provides an effective tool for companies to determine where they are doing well and where there is room for improvement. Third-party audited certification systems like the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and RainForest Alliance have all successfully improved resource management through voluntary standards that recognize industry leaders.

“BuildGreen Solutions has recognized that third-party auditing is essential to the success of any resource management system,” says Lorne Johnson, Executive Director, SERA. “FSC discovered the value of third-party certification in 1993 when they developed a certification system for the forest sector. The aggregate sector is in a similar place to where the forestry sector was ten years ago and has a lot of to gain from a similar solution.”

SERA has already found support from a wide range of stakeholders including environmental groups, construction companies, municipalities, aggregate operators and governments who recognize that SERA offers a promising approach to more responsible aggregate extraction.

About BuildGreen Solutions (www.build-green.com)

BuildGreen Solutions is a sustainable development services company that provides advice on high-performance development choices as managers, educators, and facilitators. Advice centres on green design, from materials to energy efficiency, from finance to operations, and from strategic policy to implementation.

With a focus on opportunities for deep green design, BuildGreen Solutions has been involved in some of the most socially, economically and environmentally advanced projects in North America. With a portfolio of LEED Platinum buildings and climate-neutral community-scale developments BuildGreen Solutions has demonstrated a commitment to innovative, solutions-oriented approaches.

About SERA (www.seracanada.ca)

Socially and Environmentally Responsible Aggregate (SERA) is a not-for-profit organization that aims to create, administer and promote widespread support for certification of responsibly sourced construction materials. Its initial focus is on establishing a voluntary certification system to promote responsibly sourced aggregate materials in Ontario, offering operators an innovative way to demonstrate their efforts to recognize the social and environmental expectations of the local community.

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