



March 23, 2015

City Clerk  
 Toronto City Hall, 13th floor, West  
 100 Queen St. West, Toronto, ON, M5H 2N2

**Re: Rouge National Urban Park Plan Undermines Existing Policies and Approved Plans**

**Dear Mayor John Tory and Toronto Councillors:**

Thank you for your unanimous November 29, 2012 Council motion (copy attached) which supported our request and encouraged the Federal Government to respect and strengthen the existing policies in approved Plans during the creation of Rouge National Urban Park.

On January 26, 2013, Ontario and Canada signed an Agreement for the transfer of Provincial Rouge Park lands to Parks Canada for the creation of Rouge National Urban Park. Condition 2.09 of the Agreement states:

*"Parks Canada will work with Ontario to develop written policies in respect of the creation, management and administration of the Park that **meet or exceed provincial policies ... including the policies set out in the Greenbelt Plan, the ORM Conservation Plan ...***

**Unfortunately, the draft Rouge National Urban Park legislation (Bill C-40) and management plan clearly fail to meet this required condition for the provincial land transfer.** By failing to "meet or exceed" existing policies, the Federal Government is undermining approved Plans. The draft Federal park plan completely ignores Environment Canada's own scientific recommendations for improving watershed health, biodiversity and Lake Ontario water quality.

After detailed legal and policy analyses, several of Canada's most respected environmental groups supported Ontario's decision to withhold its Rouge Park lands until Bill C-40 is strengthened to "meet or exceed" existing environmental policies and Plans (letter attached).

**In 2013, flooding damage cost Toronto almost \$1 billion.** As climate change gathers steam and urban growth creates more runoff, the risk of costly flooding damage grows. **The flawed Federal plan for Rouge National Urban Park would irresponsibly impede existing watershed improvement plans and thereby increase the risk of costly flooding damage in eastern Toronto and associated pollution of our Lake Ontario beaches and drinking water source.**

Existing Rouge Park policies prioritize the protection, improvement and restoration of ecological integrity and watershed health. Bill C-40 would merely "take into consideration the natural ecosystem", providing little, if any, real environmental protection.

The Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan relies on the implementation of Greenbelt, ORM and Watershed Plans to buffer the impacts of growth by:

- protecting and improving water quality in Lake Ontario, the water source for millions;
- mitigating growing flooding, erosion, pollution and climate change liabilities;
- improving fish and wildlife habitat, biodiversity and ecosystem health;

**FRW Patrons**

Lois James, "Save the Rouge" founding member and Order of Canada Recipient

Rathika Sitsabaiesan, MP Scarborough Rouge River

Hon. David Peterson, former Ontario Premier

Hon. Gerry Phillips, former MPP Scarborough Agincourt

Hon. Alvin Curling, former MPP Scarborough Rouge River

Derek Lee, former MP Scarborough Rouge River

Joyce Trimmer, former Mayor of Scarborough, posthumous

- protecting and enhancing green space, quality of life and public health.

Ontario controls almost all of Rouge Park's centre-piece, the Rouge Valley, and almost all of the park's publicly-accessible lands. Without Ontario's lands, the Federal Government will be creating a bogus park with virtually no Rouge Valley and no public access.

The Former York Region CAO and Rouge Alliance Chair recently wrote a letter (copy attached) to the Federal Government supporting the amendments to Bill C-40 proposed by Minister Brad Duguid and the Province of Ontario.

We trust that Toronto Council will help to protect existing policies and approved Plans (summary attached) by encouraging the Federal Government to amend Bill C-40 to:

- 1) - prioritize the protection and restoration of the park ecosystem and watershed health;
- 2) - support the implementation of Greenbelt, ORM, Rouge Park and Watershed Plans;
- 3) - support the implementation of the Greenbelt and Rouge North "main ecological corridor";
- 4) - expand the park area to include federally-owned lands in the Greenbelt and ORM in north Pickering to create a 100 km<sup>2</sup> sustainable parkland link between Lake Ontario and the ORM.

Please feel free to contact me, if you wish to further discuss the amendments necessary to achieve consistency with the environmental policies of existing approved plans.

Sincerely,



General Manager (647-891-9550)  
Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW)

**Attachments:**

1. November 29, 2012 Unanimous Toronto Council Rouge National Urban Park Motion
2. Former York Region CAO and Rouge Alliance Chair Letter Supporting Province, Bill C-40
3. September 3, 2014 NGO Letter Requesting Amendments to Bill C-40 from:  
Environmental Defence, Ontario Nature, Friends of the Rouge Watershed,  
Save the Oak Ridges Moraine, Nature Canada, Sierra Club,  
David Suzuki Foundation, and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
4. FRW Summary of Provincial Policy Context and Response to Key Questions

# **Rouge National Urban Park - Official Plan Amendment - Final Report**

## **City Council Decision**

City Council on November 27, 28 and 29, 2012, adopted the following:

1. City Council amend the Official Plan, for the lands in the Rouge Park area substantially in accordance with the proposed Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment 6 to the report (October 23, 2012) from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the proposed Official Plan Amendment as may be required.
3. City Council thank Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Federal government for committing to create a National Park in the Rouge Valley area and further encourage the Federal government to:
  - i. Ensure that the concept, legislation and management plan for Rouge National Urban Park respects, strengthens and implements the vision, goals and objectives of the City approved Rouge Park Plans (1994 and 2001) and current Toronto Official Plan, the Provincial Greenbelt Plan (2005) and the Rouge Natural Heritage Action Plan (2008); including incorporating the existing park vision that:

the Rouge National Urban Park will be a special place of outstanding natural features and diverse cultural heritage in an urban-rural setting, protected and flourishing as an ecosystem in perpetuity. Human activities will exist in harmony with the natural values of the Park. The Park will be a sanctuary for nature and the human spirit;
  - ii. Respect conservation science, good planning principles and long term park ecological health and visitor potential, by including the 100+ km<sup>2</sup> public land

assembly within the Rouge and Duffins Creek watersheds as part of the Rouge National Urban Park study area;

- iii. Ensure restoration of a large mixed-wood and Carolinian forest habitat system linking Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine with public parkland and trails; and
- iv. Include First Nations and other respected conservation NGOs on the Rouge National Urban Park Advisory Board.

*Statutory - City of Toronto Act, 2006*

### **Background Information (Committee)**

(October 23, 2012) Report from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division on Rouge National Urban Park - Official Plan Amendment - Final Report  
(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-51492.pdf>)

### **Motions (City Council)**

*1 - Motion to Amend Item (Additional) moved by Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker (Carried)*

That City Council thank Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Federal government for committing to create a National Park in the Rouge Valley area and further encourage the Federal government to:

- i. Ensure that the concept, legislation and management plan for Rouge National Urban Park respects, strengthens and implements the vision, goals and objectives of the City approved Rouge Park Plans (1994 and 2001) and current Toronto Official Plan, the Provincial Greenbelt Plan (2005) and the Rouge Natural Heritage Action Plan (2008); including incorporating the existing park vision that:

The Rouge National Urban Park will be a special place of outstanding natural features and diverse cultural heritage in an urban-rural setting, protected and flourishing as an ecosystem in perpetuity. Human activities will exist in harmony with the natural values of the Park. The Park will be a sanctuary for nature

and the human spirit;

- ii. Respect conservation science, good planning principles and long term park ecological health and visitor potential, by including the 100+ km<sup>2</sup> public land assembly within the Rouge and Duffins Creek watersheds as part of the Rouge National Urban Park study area;
- iii. Ensure restoration of a large mixed-wood and Carolinian forest habitat system linking Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine with public parkland and trails; and
- iv. Include First Nations and other respected conservation NGOs on the Rouge National Urban Park Advisory Board.

**Vote** (Amend Item (Additional))

Nov-29-2012 5:01 PM

<b>Result: Carried</b>	Majority Required - PG19.3 - De Baeremaeker - motion 1
Yes: 33	Paul Ainslie, Maria Augimeri, Ana Bailão, Michelle Berardinetti, Raymond Cho, Josh Colle, Gary Crawford, Vincent Crisanti, Glenn De Baeremaeker, Frank Di Giorgio, Sarah Doucette, John Fillion, Paula Fletcher, Doug Ford, Rob Ford, Mary Fragedakis, Mark Grimes, Doug Holyday, Chin Lee, Josh Matlow, Pam McConnell, Mary-Margaret McMahon, Joe Mihevc, Peter Milczyn, Denzil Minnan-Wong, Frances Nunziata (Chair), Cesar Palacio, Anthony Perruzza, Jaye Robinson, David Shiner, Karen Stintz, Michael Thompson, Adam Vaughan
No: 0	
Absent: 12	Shelley Carroll, Janet Davis, Mike Del Grande, Norman Kelly, Mike Layton, Gloria Lindsay Luby, Giorgio Mammoliti, Ron Moeser, John Parker, James Pasternak, Gord Perks, Kristyn Wong-Tam

*Motion to Adopt Item as Amended (Carried)*

**Vote** (Adopt Item as Amended)

Nov-29-2012 5:02 PM

<b>Result: Carried</b>	Majority Required - PG19.3 - Adopt the item as amended
Yes: 33	Paul Ainslie, Maria Augimeri, Ana Bailão, Michelle Berardinetti, Raymond Cho, Josh Colle, Gary Crawford, Vincent Crisanti, Glenn De Baeremaeker, Frank Di Giorgio, Sarah Doucette, John Fillion, Paula Fletcher, Doug Ford, Rob Ford, Mary Fragedakis, Mark Grimes, Doug Holyday,

	Chin Lee, Josh Matlow, Pam McConnell, Mary-Margaret McMahon, Joe Mihevc, Peter Milczyn, Denzil Minnan-Wong, Frances Nunziata (Chair), Cesar Palacio, Anthony Perruzza, Jaye Robinson, David Shiner, Karen Stintz, Michael Thompson, Adam Vaughan
No: 0	
Absent: 12	Shelley Carroll, Janet Davis, Mike Del Grande, Norman Kelly, Mike Layton, Gloria Lindsay Luby, Giorgio Mammoliti, Ron Moeser, John Parker, James Pasternak, Gord Perks, Kristyn Wong-Tam

Wednesday, March 11, 2015

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq  
Minister of the Environment and  
Minister Responsible for Parks Canada  
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario

The Honourable Brad Duguid  
Minister of Economic Development  
and Infrastructure  
Government of Ontario

The Honourable Senator Richard Neufeld  
Chair, the Standing Senate Committee on Energy,  
The Environment and Natural Resources  
Senate of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario

Honourable Parliamentarians:

I was very pleased to read the letter from the Honourable Brad Duguid to the Honourable Leona Auglukkaq received on March 10, 2015 by the Senate of Canada. The proposed amendments to Sections 4, 6 and 8 add strength to Bill C40: the Amendments to Sections 6 and Section 8 are very similar to the proposed Amendments I recommended to the Standing Committee of the House of Commons.

Minister Duguid's proposed amendments reflect the main concerns of supporters of Rouge National Urban Park, the many stakeholders with whom he met, and the individuals and groups who addressed both the House of Commons Committee and the Senate Committee.

As Past Chair of the Rouge Park Alliance, I urge all Members of all Parties of both the Parliament of Canada and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to work together to pass an Amended Bill C 40 within this Session of Parliament which will carry on the work of thousands of citizens who created Rouge Park.

Yours truly,

(original signed)

Alan Wells, Past Chair, Rouge Park Alliance  
810 Ganton Road  
Uxbridge, Ontario, L9P 1R3

September 2, 2014

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq  
Minister of Environment  
Environment Canada  
Minister's Office (TLC)  
10, rue Wellington  
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0H3  
Canada  
Via email [Minister@ec.gc.ca](mailto:Minister@ec.gc.ca)

Dear Minister Aglukkaq,

**Re: Request to amend Bill C-40, draft federal legislation for the proposed Rouge National Urban Park**

We are writing to express our serious concern that the draft federal legislation to create and manage the proposed Rouge National Urban Park, Bill C-40, does not provide adequate protection for the remarkable ecological values of Rouge Park. In fact, the standard of protection in the Rouge would be lowered from its current status if the Rouge National Urban Park is established under this Bill. As a result we are requesting that the Bill be amended.

A detailed legal review by Ecojustice, concluded that Bill C-40 affords significantly weaker natural environment protection than either the *Canada National Parks Act* or *Ontario's Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*.

The biggest problem with Bill C-40 is that it does not clearly prioritize nature conservation as the primary purpose of the park, or the top priority for park management. It only requires that the Minister "**take into consideration the protection of its natural ecosystems and cultural landscapes and the maintenance of its native wildlife and of the health of those ecosystems**" (bold added) in the management of the park.

Prioritizing the protection and restoration of ecological health and integrity, through a science-based approach, is an absolute necessity if future generations are going to be able to appreciate and enjoy the park. Prioritizing nature conservation is consistent with existing federal and Ontario parks legislation, and with the definition of a protected area according to international standards.

Based on the legal review, we identified five priority areas where we recommend amendments to Bill C-40:

1. Our highest priority amendment is that ecological integrity and health must be clearly stated as the first priority of the Minister in park management (section 6);
2. Imperative language is needed in the purpose section to signify the duty to preserve the parkland for future generations, and to dedicate the park to the people of Canada for their benefit (section 4);
3. Definitions are needed in the legislation for ecological integrity and health and science-based management (section 2);



4. In the management plan section of the Bill, ecological protection and restoration language should be included in the vision and objectives (section 9); and
5. The public consultation requirements should be broadened to include the development of parks policy and regulations (section 8).

The Memorandum of Agreement signed between Parks Canada and the Ontario government for the Rouge National Urban Park requires written policies that “*meet or exceed provincial policies regarding the transferred lands...*” Bill C-40 does not meet this test. The protection and restoration of ecological integrity is the stated priority for land use and resource management within existing Rouge Park, Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, Rouge Watershed and Great Lakes Water Quality improvement plans, and this is not the case for Bill C-40.

Given the significant shortcomings of the proposed Rouge National Urban Park legislation, we ask that you ensure amendments are put forward to address these weaknesses and "meet or exceed" the existing provincial policy framework. We would be pleased to share our suggestions for draft amendments with you in the coming weeks.

Please contact Leigh Paulseth, Friends of the Rouge Watershed at 416-208-0252 if you would like to meet to discuss our concerns.

Sincerely,



Tim Gray  
Executive Director, Environmental Defence



Carolyn Schultz  
Executive Director, Ontario Nature





Faisal Moola

Director General, Ontario and Northern Canada, David Suzuki Foundation



Janet Sumner

Executive Director, Canada Park and Wilderness Society Wildlands League



Jim Robb

General Manager, Friends of the Rouge Watershed

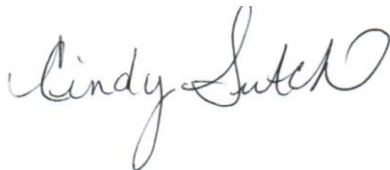




Stephen Hazell  
Executive Director (interim), Nature Canada



Kristina Jackson  
National Operations Director, Sierra Club Canada Foundation



Cindy Sutch  
Board Chair, Save the Oak Ridges Moraine Coalition



**Save The Oak Ridges Moraine**

- Cc. Colin Carrie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment  
Alan Latourelle, CEO, Parks Canada Agency  
Honourable Lisa Raitt, Minister of Transport  
Honourable Chris Alexander, MP Ajax Pickering

## Provincial Policies and "Ecological Integrity" Context

### 2013 Rouge Park Land Transfer Memorandum of Agreement between Ontario and Canada

"Parks Canada will work with Ontario to develop written policies in respect of the creation, management and administration of the Park that **meet or exceed provincial policies** ....."

### 2007 Rouge Watershed Plan - to control growing flooding, erosion, pollution and climate change liabilities

**Goal:** "To work towards a healthy and sustainable Rouge watershed by **protecting, restoring and enhancing its ecological and cultural integrity** within the context of a regional natural heritage system."

Overall Policy Direction: "**protect and restore** natural cover ... to at least 31% of the land base."

### 2005 Provincial Greenbelt Plan (Section 3.2 and 3.2.6)

"The Natural System policies .... **collectively support biodiversity and overall ecological integrity**". (s. 3.2)

"This Plan identifies a **600 metre wide corridor for the Little Rouge River as the main ecological corridor, between Lake Ontario and the southerly boundary of Oak Ridges Moraine Area ... ."**

"Land use planning and resource management ... **shall comply** with the provisions of both this Plan and the Rouge North Management Plan." ... "**In the case of a conflict** between this Plan and the Rouge North Management Plan, **the more restrictive policies apply.**"

### 2005 Markham Official Plan Amendment 140 (Section 2.16.9f)

" The Little Rouge Creek Management Plan will reflect **the priority to establish a functional and sustainable 600 metre corridor with interior forest habitat** conditions and will generally comprise:

- i) - a 400 metre wide forested area, generally centred on the main branch of the Little Rouge Creek;
- ii) ... 100 metres adjacent to each edge of the 400 metre forested corridor" ..... in compatible uses

### 2001 Rouge North Management Plan

**Goal:** "**protect, restore and enhance** the natural, scenic and cultural values of the park in an ecosystem context"

**Land Use Objective:** "To ensure protection of the **ecological integrity and cultural values** of the park"

"The **overriding goal** in creating the Little Rouge Creek Corridor is to establish a viable terrestrial corridor with interior forest habitat conditions. .... **A continuous forest corridor of at least 400 metres in width must be maintained**" (s. 4.1.1.2) ... The corridor has an **average width of 600 metres**". (s 4.1.1.5)

"The [Federal lands] ... park corridor should be designed to function as a viable terrestrial corridor with interior forest conditions, and consequently, should be established with a width of approximately 600m" (s. 4.1.1.6)

### 2001 Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act and Plan:

(a) "**protecting the ecological and hydrological integrity** of the Oak Ridges Moraine Area";

(b) "ensuring that only land and resource uses that **maintain, improve or restore** the ecological and hydrological functions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Area are permitted."

### 1994 Rouge Park Management Plan

"Integrity of the Park Environment: Uses and/or activities ... **must ensure that the park's ecological integrity, scenic and cultural values are protected, restored and enhanced.**"

## **Rouge National Urban Park**

### **Responses to Questions about "Meet or Exceed", Ecological Integrity, Farming and GLWQA**

On January 26, 2013, the Federal Government signed a "Memorandum of Agreement" with the Ontario Government, requiring written Rouge NU Park policies that "meet or exceed" existing provincial policies. However, the draft federal legislation and plan for Rouge NU Park are **critically inconsistent** with the last twenty four years of provincial leadership, public consultation and scientific study, which led to the priority goal of "**ecological integrity**" within existing Rouge Park, Greenbelt, Rouge Watershed and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plans.

**The Federal Government will need to significantly strengthen the legislation and management plan for Rouge NU Park to honour its commitment to "meet or exceed" the policies and goals within existing Rouge Park, Greenbelt, Rouge Watershed, ORM and Great Lakes Water Quality Improvement Plans.**

**1. Should a Park next to Canada's biggest city continue to strive for Ecological Integrity?**

**YES.** Ecological integrity is the goal for environmental protection within existing Rouge Park, Greenbelt, Rouge Watershed and ORM Plans, as well as provincial and national park legislation and policies. The federal government agreed to "meet or exceed" existing provincial policies, therefore, ecological integrity must continue to be the priority for the scientifically planned and zoned natural habitat systems of Rouge NU Park. A different standard such as "net gain in watershed and ecosystem health" could be utilized for areas zoned for agriculture, infrastructure, hamlets, campgrounds, etc. Many national and provincial parks have highways, towns, railways and other infrastructure within them, and they still prioritize the goal of "ecological integrity".

**2. Will a goal of Ecological Integrity require that all leased farmlands in Rouge Park will need to be re-naturalized?**

**NO.** Existing Rouge Park Plans, and a 2003 Federal Green Space Preserve Master Plan for federal lands in the park expansion area, identify areas for continued farming and areas for nature and public enjoyment. These plans are the product of decades of public and stakeholder consultation, and science-based planning to protect the public's interest in beautiful, biologically diverse, accessible and sustainable public park lands which also reduce flooding, erosion and pollution risks, and improve the health of our communities, ecosystems, watersheds and Lake Ontario drinking water source.

**3. Are the Federal Park proposals consistent with Plans to Improve Great Lakes Water Quality and Health?**

**NO.** To improve the health of Great Lakes "Area of Concern" watersheds like Toronto's Rouge River, Environment Canada recommends increasing forest cover to more than 30% of the watershed and wetland cover to more than 10%. Currently, the Rouge Watershed has only 13% forest cover and 1% wetland cover, leading to a "D" grade in the 2013 Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Rouge Watershed Report Card. The draft Rouge NU Park legislation and plan ignore the science-based habitat and watershed health goals of existing Rouge Park, Rouge Watershed and Great Lakes Water Quality Improvement Plans and the science-based recommendations of Environment Canada in the 2013 Federal Report "How Much Habitat is Enough".