



# How are Environmentally Significant Areas protected?

Environmentally Significant Areas are particularly sensitive and require protection to maintain their unique environmental qualities. Development and site alteration is not permitted in Environmentally Significant Areas and activities are limited to those that are compatible with the preservation of their natural features and ecological functions, such as managed trails and viewing areas. Environmentally Significant Areas exist within a larger connected natural system and cannot be viewed in isolation. Continued protection of this larger system is important to sustain Environmentally Significant Areas in the long-term and is an essential part of protecting biodiversity within the City of Toronto and beyond.

Virtually all Environmentally Significant Areas are protected by the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection bylaw and most are located on parkland which is owned mainly by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and managed by the City of Toronto.

### Maintenance

Natural parklands do not have lawns to be mowed or fences to be painted but they still require management to maintain and sometimes restore or enhance their ecological values. Management plans are in place for a number of Environmentally

Significant Areas, such as High Park and Glen Stewart Ravine, and habitat restoration and trail work is underway in various locations. Further work is underway to develop management plans for 57 Environmentally Significant Areas that are managed by the City.

### Invasive Species

Invasive plants threaten the integrity of many of our natural areas. Invasive plants find their way into parklands by wind, flooding, seeding by wildlife, tracking in seeds caught on pets, clothing and shoes, and the dumping of fill, garden waste and compost. Invasive species cannot be entirely eliminated from Environmentally Significant Areas but the City of Toronto Urban Forestry Services group



Photo Credit: Robert Burley, Tommy Thompson Park - October 1, 2013

is currently working to control some of the established populations of invasive plants in natural parklands.

### Encroachments

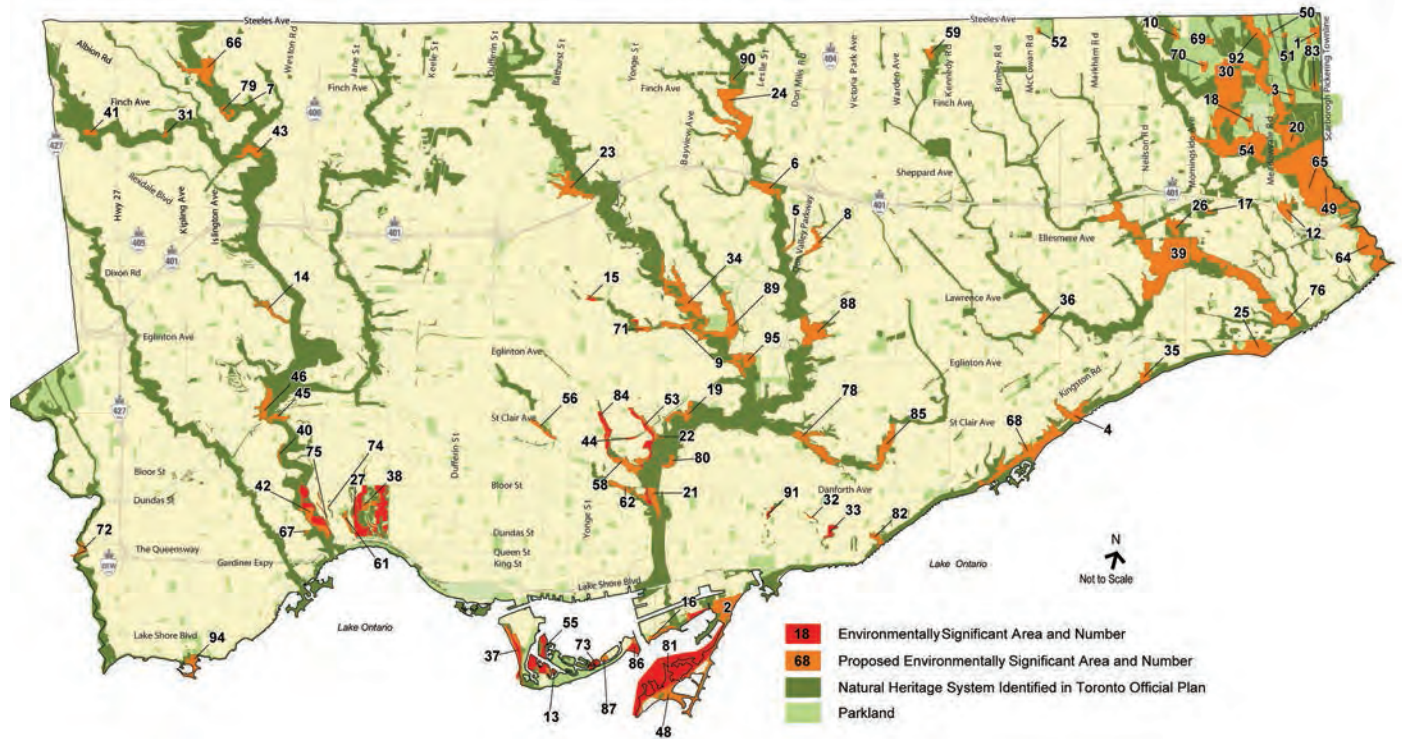
Encroachment by neighbours, dumping, mountain bikers, off-leash dogs, and the creation of ad hoc paths can degrade the quality of natural areas. The City of Toronto is working to manage the impacts of encroachments through removal, followed by restoration of natural areas, better signage, enforcement, and through the development of alternative sites for off-leash dogs and mountain bike skills parks (e.g. Sunnyside Bike Park).

### Overuse

Most Environmentally Significant Areas are located within our parkland system, which also supports a range of recreational uses. It is important to balance access to, and the protection of natural areas, with recreational uses in order to maintain their significant qualities. The City of Toronto has been working with mountain bike user groups, such as the Toronto Off-Road Bicycling Association, and the International Mountain Biking Association, as well as Park 'Friends' groups to communicate with park users to educate and seek their support for the protection of natural areas.



**Environmentally significant areas primarily include natural areas that have been largely left undisturbed; some, such as Tommy Thompson Park, are man-made**



The general location of the 18 existing Environmentally Significant Areas and 68 proposed Environmentally Significant Areas are shown on the above map. Environmentally Significant Areas are located within the City's natural heritage system and form the core of the City's natural parkland system.

Detailed mapping for each Environmentally Significant Area and information on each site, including the significant characteristics that qualify it as an Environmentally Significant Area are available on the City's website.

[www.toronto.ca/planning/environment](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/environment)

## Sites that Meet the Environmentally Significant Areas Criteria

- |                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Barkey Woods               | 6 Black Grass Site   |
| 2 Base of Spit               | 7 Bluehaven Area     |
| 3 Beare Road Woodlot         | 8 Brookbanks Ravine  |
| 4 Bellamy Ravine/Sylvan Park | 9 Burke Brook Forest |
| 5 Bell's Woodlot             | 10 Cedarbrae Woods   |

12 Centennial Forest & Swamp  
 13 Centre Island Meadow/  
 Wildlife Sanctuary\*\*  
 14 Chapman Valley  
 15 Chatsworth Ravine\*\*  
 16 Cherry Beach\*\*  
 17 Conlin's Pond  
 18 Core Woods  
 19 Crothers Woods  
 20 Diller Woods/Pearce Woods/  
 Tabor's Horsetail Meadow  
 21 Don Valley (Central Section)  
 22 Don Valley Brickworks  
 23 Earl Bales Woodlot  
 24 East Don Valley Swamp  
 25 East Point  
 26 Ellesmere Woods  
 27 Ellis Avenue  
 30 Finch Ave. Meander/Sewells Forest  
 /Reesor Woodlot  
 31 Garland Park  
 32 Glen Davis Ravine  
 33 Glen Stewart Ravine\*  
 34 Glendon Forest  
 35 Guild Woods  
 36 Hague Park  
 37 Hanlan's Beach\*\*  
 38 High Park\*\*  
 39 Highland Forest/Morningside Park  
 Forest and Highland Creek West  
 40 Home Smith Area  
 41 Humber College Arboretum  
 42 Humber Valley\*\*  
 43 Humberforks at Thistletown  
 44 Iroquois Shoreline\*\*  
 45 Lambton Park Prairie  
 46 Lambton Woods  
 48 Leslie Street Spit  
 49 Little Rouge Forest  
 50 Meadowvale Woodlot A  
 51 Meadowvale Woodlot B  
 52 Milliken Woods  
 53 Moore Park Ravine\*\*  
 54 Morningside Creek Forest/  
 MilnesForest  
 55 Muggs Island\*

56 Nordheimer Ravine  
 58 Park Drive Ravine/  
 DonValley (West Side)\*\*  
 59 Passmore Forest  
 61 Rennie Park  
 62 Rosedale Valley\*\*  
 64 Rouge Marsh Area  
 65 Rouge River Whitby Formation Section  
 66 Rowntree Mill Swamp  
 67 Sassafras Site  
 68 Scarborough Bluff Sequence  
 69 Sewells Forest North  
 70 Sewells Forest West  
 71 Sherwood Park\*\*  
 72 Silverthorn Area  
 73 Snake Island Area\*\*  
 74 South Kingsway (East Flank)  
 75 South Kingsway (West Flank)  
 76 Stephenson's Swamp/  
 Highland Creek East  
 78 Taylor Creek  
 79 Thistletown Oxbow  
 80 Todmorden Mills  
 81 Tommy Thompson Park\*  
 82 Toronto Hunt Club  
 83 Townline Swamp  
 84 Vale of Avoca\*\*  
 85 Warden Woods  
 86 Ward's Island\*\*  
 87 West Algonquin Island  
 88 Wigmore Park Ravine  
 89 Wilket Creek Forest  
 90 Williams Area  
 91 Williamson Park\*  
 92 Woodlands on Little Rouge Creek  
 94 Colonel Sam Smith Park  
 95 E.T. Seton Park

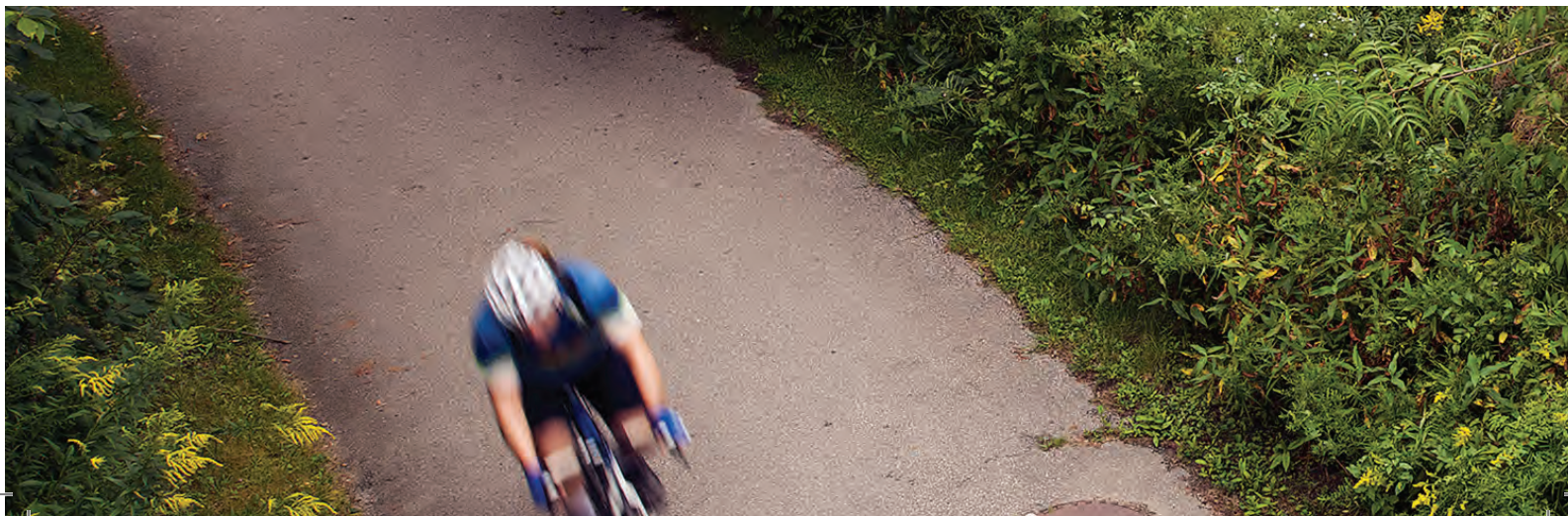
\* indicates existing ESA

\*\* indicates existing ESA where boundary  
is being amended

**Notes: Numbers may not be continuous because some of the sites which were investigated did not qualify as ESAs and some sites which qualify have been merged.**

# Types of Environmentally Significant Areas in the City of Toronto

Type of Area	#of Sites	% of Sites
<b>PLANT AND ANIMAL DIVERSITY</b>		
Sites with rare species/rare communities	85	99
Sites with habitats of large size and/or high diversity	51	59
Sites with significant landforms	28	33
Sites with significant ecological function(s)	52	60
Notable stopover locations for migrating song birds	17	20
Significant area for amphibian species (breeding/foraging)	14	16
<b>LAYERS OF PROTECTION</b>		
Designated as ESA	18	21
Proposed to be Designated as ESA	68	79
Official Plan Natural Heritage System or designated Natural Area	86	100
Ravine and Natural Feature Protection bylaw	81	94



Type of Area	#of Sites	% of Sites
<b>WATERSHED</b>		
Etobicoke	1	1
Mimico	0	0
Humber	15	17
Don	25	29
Highland	6	7
Rouge	18	21
Waterfront	21	24

Type of Area	Hectares	% of Area
<b>MAJOR HABITAT TYPES</b>		
Forest	1604	64
Meadow	265	11
Wetland	176	7
Swamp	164	7
Beach/Bar	75	3
Bluff	67	3
Tallgrass Prairie/Savannah	44	2
<b>OWNERSHIP</b>		
Public	2536	94
Private	162	6

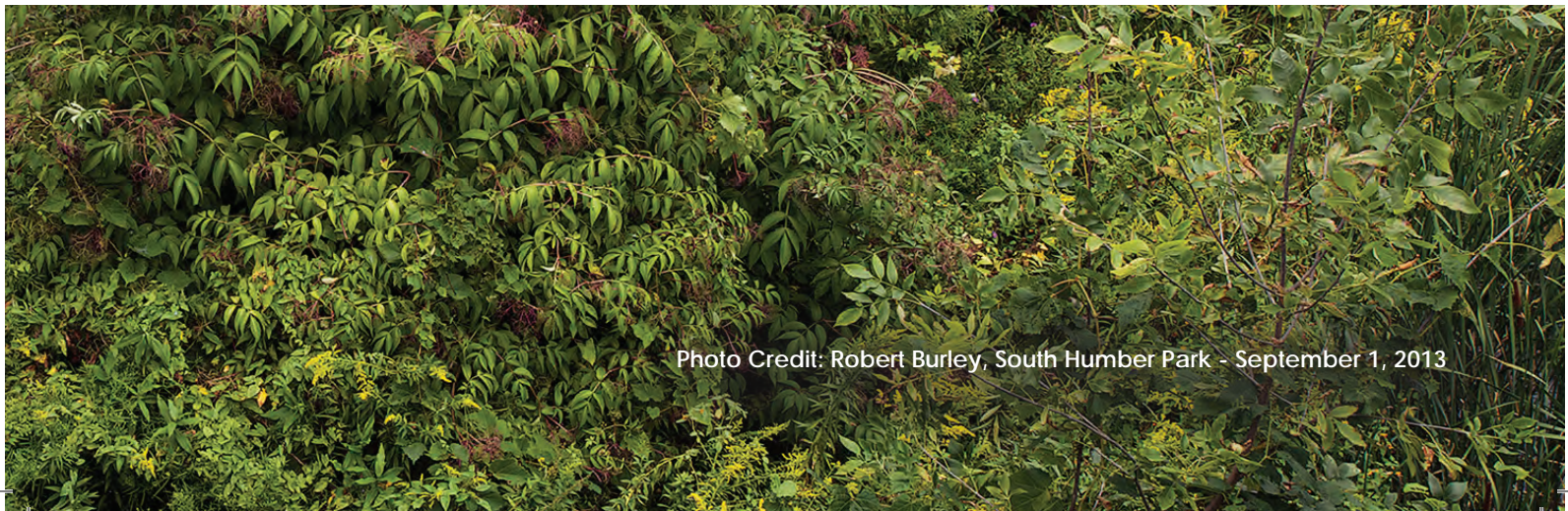


Photo Credit: Robert Burley, South Humber Park - September 1, 2013

[www.toronto.ca/planning/environment](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/environment)

✉ [sustainablecity@toronto.ca](mailto:sustainablecity@toronto.ca)

☎ 416-392-0191



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