

Infrastructure and Environment

From: Turtle Protectors <info@turtleprotectors.com>
Sent: June 11, 2025 7:40 AM
To: Infrastructure and Environment
Subject: [External Sender] My comments for 2025.IE22.15 on June 11, 2025 Infrastructure and Environment Committee

Categories: Communication

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the June 11, 2025 Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting on item 2025.IE22.15, Minimizing Salt Pollution that Poison Rivers and Streams

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

Turtle Protectors is an Indigenous and volunteer-led stewardship group that protects, advocates and supports turtles living in Toronto Parks. We started in High Park in 2022 and have expanded into seven parks (Don Valley Brick Works, Smythe, Rennie, Colonel Sam Smith, Etienne Brule and King's Mill). Our work is needed as all 8 species of turtles native to Ontario are designated "at risk" federally.

Habitat loss and road mortality are the biggest threats to turtles province and country-wide. This holds true for Toronto, which has lost 85% of its wetlands. Locally in addition to these threats, turtles are impacted by high chloride levels, blue-green algae blooms and fishing.

Chloride concentrations in Grenadier Pond (High Park) are high compared to the Canadian Water Quality Guidelines which recommend chloride concentrations are below 120 mg/L for the long-term protection of aquatic life. After a large-scale fish die-off noted by Turtle Protectors volunteers in April 2022 we advocated to the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority (TRCA) to test the water. Samples from May 2024 ranged from 420-502 mg/L which is similar to the September 2022 value of 482 mg/L and the June 2023 value of 434 mg/L.

CWQG recommends an upper threshold for chloride of 640 mg/L to protect aquatic organisms from short-term (acute) exposure events. It is possible that spring chloride concentrations in the pond exceeded the 640 mg/L value.

We suspect chloride concentrations are high in all of the parks we work in.

Parks are homes for our plant and animal relatives in addition to being places of recreation.

We implore you to create a policy to reduce road salt use to mitigate the high chloride concentrations in waters in Toronto.

Jenny Davis and Carolynne Crawley
Co-founder Turtle Protectors/Mishiikenh Gizhaasowin

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Turtle Protectors (Mishiikenh Gizhaasowin)

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