



## Permit Not Required

You do not require a permit from the City for some activities, although confirmation by Urban Forestry may still be required. The following are some of the more common examples:

- Removal of a dead tree, an imminently hazardous tree, or emergency work, as confirmed by the General Manager of Parks Forestry & Recreation;
- Pruning of a tree in accordance with good arboricultural practice to maintain the health of the tree; and
- Cultivating existing garden beds or maintaining existing manicured areas as long as the work does not alter the grade or create steeper slopes.

## Controlling Invasive Species

Invasive species can have serious impacts on the ecological health of our natural areas. They take over the habitats where native species should be found and can cause serious physical impacts to natural environments. For example:

- Manitoba maple trees can become top heavy and fall over, thereby destabilising the slope by pulling away the topsoil with their root systems.
- The dense canopy and extensive roots of Norway maple prevents growth of native vegetation, resulting in barren soil and erosion problems on slopes.
- Both of these species can be associated with slope failure. The loosened soil is then transported by rainwater and carried into Toronto's streams and rivers, where it can degrade aquatic habitat and obstruct storm water flow.

Invasive trees and shrubs can establish in natural areas as a result of planting or through dumping garden waste or compost containing roots, stems or seeds of these species in or adjacent to ravines and natural areas.

Dumping debris on or near slopes, which can smother ground vegetation that is important for keeping the slopes stable, is prohibited by the By-law.

## Promoting Native Species

Landowners can help reduce the impacts to ravines and natural areas from invasive species and increase habitat diversity by planting native species and encouraging natural regeneration of native species on their properties. It is also critical to have young trees present to take over and keep the forest growing as other trees mature and eventually decline. Staff with Toronto Urban Forestry, a professional forester or landscape architect can provide advice on promoting native species.

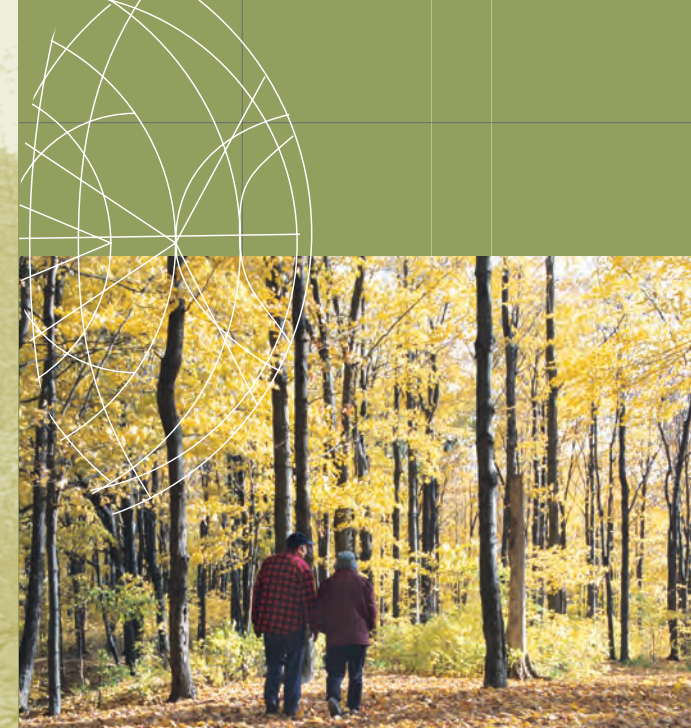
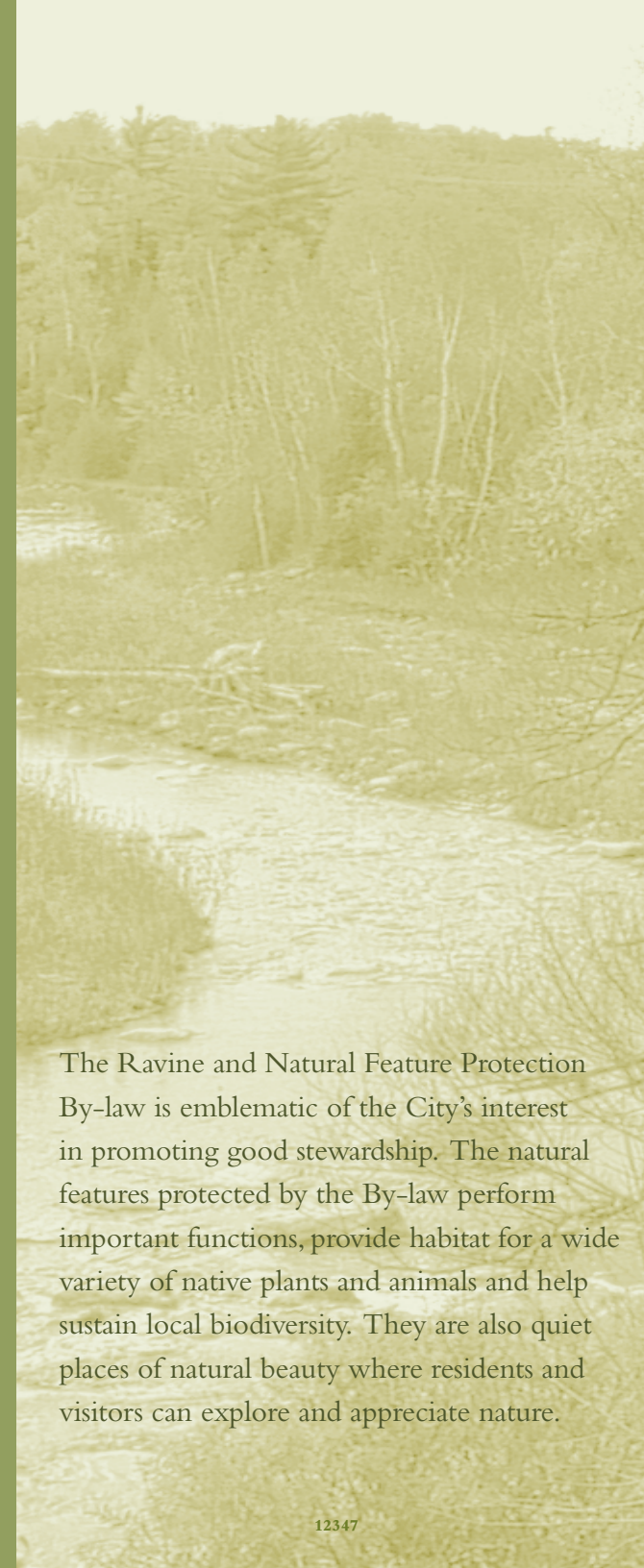
## Where to get more Information

For information on the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection visit <http://www.toronto.ca/trees/ravines.htm> or email [rnfp@toronto.ca](mailto:rnfp@toronto.ca) or call 311.

You can find out if your property is within a Ravine and Natural Feature Protection area through our website or by visiting City Planning service counters in Etobicoke, North York, or Scarborough civic centres and Toronto City Hall.

Information on other tree related topics such as the Private Tree By-law, tips on choosing species appropriate for your property and pest management can be found on the main Urban Forestry website at [www.toronto.ca/trees](http://www.toronto.ca/trees) or call 311.

For information on TRCA's requirements visit their website at [trca.on.ca](http://trca.on.ca) or call 416-661-6600.



# RAVINE AND NATURAL FEATURE PROTECTION By-Law

The Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law is emblematic of the City's interest in promoting good stewardship. The natural features protected by the By-law perform important functions, provide habitat for a wide variety of native plants and animals and help sustain local biodiversity. They are also quiet places of natural beauty where residents and visitors can explore and appreciate nature.

*"The ravines are to Toronto what the canals are to Venice, hills are to San Francisco and the Thames River is to London. They are the heart of the City's emotional geography, and understanding Toronto requires an understanding of the ravines."*

**Accidental City, Robert Fulford, (1995)**







## The Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law is a tool

to protect important natural features that are vulnerable to degradation due to removal of trees, changes in grade or lack of management. The Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law was adopted by City Council on May 27, 2008. It builds upon previous ravine protection By-laws by expanding the area of protection beyond the ravine system to include tableland forests and forested portions of the Lake Iroquois shoreline.

Toronto's network of ravines is the foundation of our City's natural heritage system. The Lake Iroquois shoreline is a prominent slope feature that runs across the City. Tableland forests are remnants of the wooded landscape that once covered this area and serve as "stepping stones" between other natural areas for local and migratory birds. Collectively, these areas provide important ecological, geological and hydrological functions.

Ravine and Natural Feature Protection areas include:

- Ravines, treed portions of the Lake Iroquois shoreline and contiguous canopy;
- Buffer areas beyond the edges of slope features;
- Tableland forests (>0.5 ha);
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas;
- Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest; and
- Public golf courses near ravines.

## Permit Required

If your property is located within or partially within a protected area you are required to apply



Some trees in Toronto's natural areas are 150 years old or more.

to the City for a permit prior to undertaking any work that may injure or destroy a tree, or involve placing or dumping fill or refuse, or altering the grade of land. This includes any activity relating to construction, demolition, or renovation of structures (including houses, garages, gazebos), swimming pools, decks, fences, terraces, and retaining walls, and drainage and landscaping works.

If you do not obtain a permit from the City, you could be convicted of an offence and potentially fined up to a maximum of \$100,000 for the injury or destruction of any tree in a protected area or for any other offence in the By-law, or \$10,000 per day for any continuing offence.

Trees located outside of Ravine and Natural Feature Protection areas may be protected by either the City's Private Tree By-law, the Street Tree By-law, or the Parks By-law.

Portions of Ravine and Natural Feature Protection areas are also regulated by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) under Ontario Regulation 166/06. If your property is located in an area regulated by TRCA, you may need to obtain a permit from TRCA for development or for alteration of a watercourse or wetland. TRCA's permit process is separate and in addition to the permit required from the City for the injury or destruction of any trees.

The Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law does not alter Official Plan designations or zoning permissions. Urban Forestry staff work with landowners to identify natural features that need protection and, if appropriate, suggest alternative approaches.



## How do I apply for a Permit?

1. Download the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection Information Sheet and Permit Application package from our website. This package outlines the application requirements.
2. Complete the application form and send it, along with the required supporting information, to:

Supervisor  
Ravine & Natural Feature Protection,  
Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry & Recreation  
355 Lesmill Road,  
Toronto, ON M3B 2W8.



## Ravine and Natural Feature Protection Area

