



NEWSLETTER **COVID-19 edition #15**

SOUTH LAKE SIMCOE NATURALISTS

SLSN is an incorporated not-for-profit Member of Ontario Nature.

Telephone 905-722-8021

(www.slsnc.ca)

Research Partner with The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe (www.zephyrsociety.ca)

We hope everyone had a good holiday season and winter moving through these strange weather cycles these last few months. Lake Simcoe has been mostly wide open out in the middle, and a winter with continuing warm southerly winds like this has not happened in a decade or more. It has been very difficult to plan winter outdoor outings without expectation of icy or wet muddy situations being a definite possibility. Members that cross-country ski, snowshoe and downhill ski have lamented to me about how bad it has been, but only now as March has been going out like a lion, weather reports advise are we going to be getting consistent warmish afternoons. With cool nights, accumulated snow in the forests will be soft for walking and maybe snowshoeing, and potentially more flurries forecast on the way, afternoon outings are planned.

You will see some winter/spring outing plans later in the in this newsletter. Also, some past outing/meeting reports with details of bird, mammal and plant observations are documented from our autumn 2022 events. The annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count was well attended with SLSN members and other regional birders with a good bird list and some surprises, detailed in the summary report in this newsletter.

Continuing development pressures in Southern Ontario with international immigration increasing and other things, municipal, provincial, and federal politicians have continued attacks on the Greenbelt. Our organization among many others undertook research and fought to have the Ontario Greenbelt established almost two decades ago and enshrined into legislation eventually in 2005. This Ontario government has been unravelled now, by political and bureaucratic newbies. With most politicians (our paid representatives) late in the game saying they were not wanting this, only acting in what looked like scattered, after the fact

without organized effective leadership in my observation. Often they were seemingly oblivious of what was coming – Bill 23 and the “Greenbelt land Swap (grab)”! How little changes with the politician! Information and opinion on these events that members got as four (4) SLSN Conservation Alert e-Blasts (November 7 and 25; December 5 and 18) for taking direct action with multiple links to further information, investigative journalism, direct action events/demonstrations etc. sucked the air out of many on the ground organizations like ours at the busy holiday season.

Hopefully, many of you took action in ways you were able. Debra and I wrote personal letters to provincial government politicians, we signed onto petitions etc. and I signed on behalf of SLSN many researched and well written submissions of many environmental, planning and other groups regarding stopping passing of Bill 23 and the Greenbelt Land Swap, and more. I hope many of you were able to do the same through the information and links our organization provided in our Conservation Alert e-Blasts late last year, ahead of deadlines for comment. I have provided an example of one of our (Debra and myself) letter later in the newsletter in this regard.

From my past experience with Save the Rouge, the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt battles and the establishment of the Lake Simcoe Act in past decades, well researched original written and verbal communications to government expert bureaucrats, academics and politicians is most effective. Signing onto other’s petitions, social media posts and so on are better than nothing, but their efficacy is questionable.

At the same time the federal government attacked our local Lake Simcoe Greenbelt lands in Georgina, by approving a disastrous Aerodrome project in the west Pefferlaw area through a very poor planning process very concerning. Our organization after submitting detailed comments to the initial proposal, previously in the process, was asked to address comments directly to the federal Minister of transport in early January 2023, which are also included later in this newsletter.

Our executive continued to keep on top of annual administrative organization tasks and this newsletter details business actions moving forward in this continuing global pandemic (confirmed by the W.H.O.) with new viruses, COVID concerning variants (the omicron BA.5 variant and others), influenzas surges, bird flu H5NI and animal to animal and potential to human transmission concerns among other anxieties. These are biological and ecological science topics and issues of interest to wildlife and humans, and vital for the modern naturalist to understand and knowledgeably communicate to others. Detailed below are some key investigative media and science literature resources and links for you to better appreciate the future impacts of these zoonosis disease changes in our natural world, impacting all life on earth, including us humans.

We have been busy planning future outings/meetings and continue monitoring and gathering information on a broad range of new research emerging, developing initiatives and issues at various government levels and geographic scales affecting our natural heritage and conservation. The newsletter below has much information on these inquiries for your review and follow-up and potential involvement, ranging from global to the local climate change science and action, biodiversity loss, the continuing and confounding Plastics issue, and more. **Today, March 20, 2023 the current U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report was released, and it's conclusions are indeed dire. See the Washington Post article and link later in the newsletter.**

SLSN members are fortunate, as naturalists outside activities are our strength and interest, and are the focus of our events and activities. Our September 13 outdoor meeting updating members on annual financial/administrative from club executive matters was planned and attended at De La Salle Park (Report later in Newsletter). With our local and farther afield events, as bird migration begins, forest and field plants come to life and mammals begin to stir we look forward to getting out in the field outings as naturalists (details below).

Safely, in the fresh air, we look forward to a great spring as breeding birds are arriving, some like arctic and boreal Hudson and James Bay coastal shorebirds and waterfowl are landing in South Lake Simcoe on ponds, rivers and the lake within weeks! Enjoy.

Paul Harpley

Recent COVID-19 and other virus reference articles for info and interest, with links for details

2023-03-18

The National Post

https://nationalpost.com/news/raccoon-dog-who-china-covid?utm_source=beloud.com&utm_medium=beloud.com

After raccoon dog revelations, WHO urges China to release all COVID-related data

2023-03-16

CBC News

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/avian-flu-birds-toronto-zoo-h5n1-1.6780572>

Toronto Zoo closes bird enclosures to guests after avian flu confirmed in southern Ontario

2023-03-07

Toronto Star

https://www.thestar.com/politics/provincial/2023/03/07/ontario-must-start-preparing-for-next-pandemic-top-doctor-says.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_170468

Ontario was 'largely unprepared' for COVID-19, and the risk of another pandemic is growing, top doctor says

"History tells us that, once an event like SARS, H1N1 or COVID-19 passes, complacency often sets in, funding is redirected, and readiness wanes," Moore added. "Yet the risk of serious disease outbreaks and another pandemic is real and growing. Population growth, land use practices, climate change, the growing international wildlife trade, and global travel are making it more likely." Dr. Kieran Moore

2023-02-07

Toronto Star

https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2023/02/07/vaccine-uptake-plunges-in-canada.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_165679

COVID-19 vaccine uptake plunges in Canada, Experts are concerned with how many people have had any COVID-19 vaccine, regardless if it's their first vaccine or fifth, in the past six months.

2023-02-02

CBC News

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/bird-flu-keeps-spreading-beyond-birds-scientists-worry-it-signals-a-growing-threat-to-humans-too-1.6732287>

Bird flu keeps spreading beyond birds. Scientists worry it signals a growing threat to humans, too

2023-01-18

The Conversation Canada

https://theconversation.com/faq-on-covid-19-subvariant-xbb-1-5-what-is-it-where-is-it-prevalent-how-does-it-differ-from-omicron-does-it-cause-serious-illness-how-can-i-protect-myself-why-is-it-nicknamed-kraken-197602?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2017%202023&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2017%202023+CID_327c3e29629fc64c261aab7811a1dec6&utm_source=campaign_monitor_ca&utm_term=FAQ%20on%20COVID-19%20subvariant%20XBB15%20What%20is%20it%20Where%20is%20it%20prevalent%20How%20does%20it%20differ%20from%20Omicron%20Does%20it%20cause%20serious%20illness%20How%20can%20I%20protect%20myself%20Why%20is%20it%20nicknamed%20Kraken

XBB.1.5 is rapidly spreading across the globe and will likely become the next dominant COVID-19 subvariant. (Shutterstock)

FAQ on COVID-19 subvariant XBB.1.5: What is it? Where is it prevalent? How does it differ from Omicron? Does it cause serious illness? How can I protect myself? Why is it nicknamed 'Kraken'?

2022-10-22

Toronto Star

https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2022/10/21/the-sons-of-omicron-new-covid-variants-what-researchers-are-seeing-and-what-they-worry-about.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_150301

COVID-19

Here's what you should know about the new COVID variants

Researchers say we can expect an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases as variants spread, but remain hopeful that the severity of illness will not be worse, reports Kenyon Wallace. While this might cause some to breathe a sigh of relief, experts are still worried that our health-care systems will crumble under the pressure of new cases along with the growth of other respiratory viruses, like influenza. [Here's what we can expect from the virus that has already changed our world.](#)

2022-10-11

The Conversation Canada

https://theconversation.com/flu-is-set-for-a-big-comeback-now-covid-restrictions-are-lifted-heres-what-you-need-to-know-191520?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20October%2011%202022&utm_content=Late%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20October%2011%202022+CID_79adcb2f08405a13fab557a990c17c1&utm_source=campaign_monitor_ca&utm_term=Flu%20is%20set%20for%20a%20big%20comeback%20now%20COVID%20restrictions%20are%20lifted%20heres%20what%20you%20need%20to%20know

Flu is set for a big comeback now COVID restrictions are lifted – here's what you need to know

People are strongly urged to get a flu shot and a COVID booster shot ahead of the potential 'twindemic' expected this winter.

Breaking News in Toronto Area G.T.A. Wildlife Disease and Birds found dead

2023-03-24

York Media

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/i-couldn-t-believe-what-i-was-seeing-bird-flu-causes-mass-mortality-of-geese/article_bf2a8e75-180f-5ba6-b83c-563af2097242.html



About eight geese found dead in the water and on the shore of Country Glen Pond on March 16. - Erin Alegrias photo

'I couldn't believe what I was seeing': Bird flu causes mass mortality of geese in Markham

Dead geese tested positive found in Country Glen Stormwater Pond, Toogood Pond, Monkhouse Pond and Swan Lake

By Irene Wong Markham Economist & Sun

Friday, March 24, 2023

2 min to read

In Markham, most people love heading over to the beautiful ponds to gaze at wildlife, or to get some steps on the scenic trail that loops right around the ponds. The ponds are home to many Canada geese, ducks and other birds.

Yet, it will be different this year.

Recently, dead geese have been found in Markham with suspected avian influenza, commonly known as bird flu.

Read More:

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/i-couldn-t-believe-what-i-was-seeing-bird-flu-causes-mass-mortality-of-geese/article_bf2a8e75-180f-5ba6-b83c-563af2097242.html

2023-03-23

CP24 News

Markham puts up signs after dead geese test positive for avian flu

Dead geese test positive for avian flu in Markham



Officials in Markham have put up signs at several bodies of water where several dead geese had been located.

Bryann Aguilar, CP24 Web Content Writer
@BryannAguilar

Published Thursday, March 23, 2023 7:01PM EDT
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Officials in Markham have put up signs at several bodies of water where several dead geese had been located, warning residents to avoid the areas due to suspected avian influenza.

The signs are posted at Country Glen Stormwater Pond, Toogood Pond, Monkhouse Pond and Swan Lake.

Read More:

<https://www.cp24.com/news/markham-puts-up-signs-after-dead-geese-test-positive-for-avian-flu-1.6326625#:~:text=Officials%20in%20Markham%20have%20put,Monkhouse%20Pond%20and%20Swan%20Lake.>

Other Breaking News on Wildlife and COVID-19 Link in zoonosis biological science and politics – Toronto Star

2023-03-20

Toronto Star

EXPLAINER

The raccoon dog — and why missing Chinese samples have sparked frustration among those studying COVID's origins

Data on samples taken at the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan in 2020, where the COVID-19 pandemic may have originated, were made briefly available to international researchers this year. Why is it missing now? And why had it been withheld for three years? The director-general of the World Health Organization demanded answers from Chinese officials on Friday. Steve McKinley explains why there's no smoking gun for those who managed to get ahold of the data before it disappeared and [reports on the questions that remain in finding the origin of the pandemic](#).

Current Canadian COVID-19 and Wildlife Research/Publication:

Harpley, P. J.(2022) *Zoos in Canada: Responses to COVID-19 Pandemic*, Book Chapter, 28 pages, In *COVID-19 and a World of Ad Hoc Geographies*, 2,721 pages, Springer Nature publisher, U.S.A.

Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on Canadian zoos' current and potentially future operations, form, and function as a modern western zoo. Evolving from ancient institutions that have responded over millennia to their human community interests, desires, social/cultural needs, and constraints of animal keeping and display, zoos continue to evolve.

Impacts of this major pandemic on public recreation, animal behaviour, animal health and care, conservation, and other programs in the geographic context of diverse Canadian zoos are explored. Provisional observations and analysis are presented, even as the pandemic still rages in many geographic regions of the world. A cold climate northern country, Canada's unique zoo institutional challenges are investigated, for future zoo prospects in an emerging world with zoonotic and other human disease risks, biodiversity losses, and changing climate. New perspectives with historical geography considerations are also presented including a summary of the major impacts of COVID-19 and Canada's response, resilience and institutional responses, animal behaviour change and care and repercussions on other Canadian zoos.

Link: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-94350-9_123

Current Science Research, South Lake Simcoe Region

Harpley, Paul¹, Hilton, Ian¹ and Milne, Rob², *Probing the Land/Water interface at rivers and streams: South Lake Simcoe, Sand and Clay plain landscape*, (1) The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe, Pefferlaw, ON, Canada, (2) Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON, Canada (presenter in bold).

Accepted paper, upcoming Conference: **IAGLR 66th Annual Conference on Great Lakes Research, Adapting to Climate Change**. May 8-12, 2023. Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Conference Link: <https://iaglr.org/iaglr2023/>

The 2022 Annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.) Report

The Annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count was **Tuesday December 27, 2022** with a total of 11,994 individual birds of 55 species in the count area including parts of York Region's municipalities Georgina, East Gwillimbury; Durham Region's northwest Uxbridge districts, and parts of south-east Simcoe County. A total of 33 participants were involved in observing on the day.

The observation day started as overcast at 6:30 a.m. for those "owling". The air temperature was -5 degrees Celsius. As the day progressed the temperature rose only slightly to -3 degrees by 1:15 to 2:00 p.m. when the sun came out briefly for one hour and continued cloudy to the end of the day. Winds began from the southwest at 8 km/hour, changing to 10 kph from southwest at 10 a.m. continuing the rest of the day. Lake Simcoe, and most moving rivers and streams were partially open of ice, except Cook's Bay which had mostly become ice covered with snow, from the previous 3-4 days very windy/snow-Storm Bomb that hit our area December 24, and most of Southern Ontario. The lake was fully open north of Roche's Point.

We had good geographic coverage of participant observers for the count area this year, and better than the last two COVID-19 pandemic years, as was typical of many counts. It was great to be back to past normalized annual count circumstances.

The total 55 species on the day (2 species less than the 2021 Count), and 1 count week bird species recorded, was within the typical historical range of annual species documented. With more snow on the ground before the count than usual, and seasonal temperatures it was noted by participants that some feeders were not stocked up with seed as much as in recent years, and birds were more dispersed feeding on natural forest/field food.

Highlights and notables for the count day were American Black duck (7), Redhead duck (3), Hooded merganser (1), Bufflehead (2), Trumpeter swan (36), Merlin (1), Great Black-backed gull (4), Northern harrier (2), Belted kingfisher (1), Brown creeper (3), American robin (303), White-throated sparrow (3), and Common redpoll (2).

Black-capped chickadee (290) but no Boreal chickadees a few of which have been seen in Southern Ontario this early winter. Two land birds of interest with high numbers for our count were Eastern bluebird (10) and Red-breasted nuthatch (14).

Groups of Trumpeter swans were seen swimming along the lake in the week of the count, providing exciting waterbird viewing spectacle for holiday walkers. One bird species expected on count day but not seen, though documented for count week was Ruffed grouse (1). Bald eagles (8) was good but in some years we have got more on count day.

The cold, intense wind and snowy weather before the count may have influenced results with migrants heading south moving out of our area faster than usual. The arrival of Snow buntings appearing in the area a couple of days before count day in fields and flying across roads riding in from the northwest on the storm were certainly more prominent than in some years. Winter finches, though projected to have some flights south in the eastern Canada were not strongly represented in South Lake Simcoe this year.

Three of the four expected owls were recorded on count day: Great Horned owl (3), Barred owl (4), and Snowy owl (3). Usually more Snowy owls are seen on the Sutton Count and a generally more northerly flight of Snowy owls in eastern Canada has been observed this year by some.

Thanks to all participants on the Christmas Bird Count this year as a field birders or feeder watcher/property observers. South Lake Simcoe Naturalists members' contributions, and local or 'from further afield' birders' efforts always result in documenting birds that would otherwise not be found. Your collective efforts on the day are vital to annual count success.

Paul and Debra Harpley



Trumpeter swan, Heather MacKay and Joe Seara



Bald eagle Juvenile and adult, Heather MacKay and Joe Seara

Outings/Meeting Reports

Tuesday September 13, 2022 – De La Salle Park, west Jackson's Point

An anxious group of 10 members met at De La Salle Park Chapel building area in Georgina west of Jackson's Point at 6:30 p.m. After summer vacations and stories of trips, the plan was for birding and other nature study, around the Park and lakeshore, and then have an outdoor Meeting updating members on annual financial/administrative matters from the club executive. Current executive members attended with reports and will continue in 2023 (in late December member Jeff Boylin stepped up to undertake the 2nd vice-president position (appointed position) for 2023. Concern was developing in the media about continuing COVID-19 and influenza infections growing in indoor settings moving into the autumn and members shared information on this. There had been some rain early in the day but by the outing time cloud had mostly left and intermittent sunny conditions resulted in spectacular sunset views on the lake for members (see photos). The temperature was 24 degrees C. with light N.W. winds.



Classic early autumn sunset landscape on Lake Simcoe

Some birds and small mammals were seen and heard in typical cut grass park habitat. Select large mature trees were studied, particularly Black locust, Sugar maple and Crack willow of the park area trees. Members dispersed along the Lake Simcoe shoreline birding on the sand beach and rock wall and groins lake edge. A highlight was Bonaparte's gulls first noticed by members Susan and Richard Weatherston and seen by others not as familiar with them, as some were in non-breeding pelage.



Large and small lake-side trees



Members walking and probing for life among rocks



Park plant landscaping autumn colours at boardwalk to the beach

Wildlife and plant species observed in the order when first species encountered, and numbers seen on the outing.

Birds: Ring-billed gull 68, Bonaparte's gull 40, Canada goose 35, Downy woodpecker 2, Yellow warbler 2, American crow 2. Mammals: Gray squirrel nest sign – in mature Black locust tree. Trees: Sugar maple, Black locust, Crack willow, Box elder, E. Red cedar (spreading v.), E.W. cedar

Friday, September 30, 2022 - Pefferlaw Tract East, York Region Forest

Members interested in hiking met at the parking lot on the west side of Lake Ridge Road in Georgina at 2:00 p.m. The weather was seasonally warm and mostly cloudy. A few trees' leaves had started turning colour especially Red maples, and also some Riverbank grape vines. The main large section of the Pefferlaw Tract of the York Region Forest provided a great location for an early autumn walk for members. The trails were not busy which was refreshing for some who had felt crowded on busy trails throughout the last two pandemic years. Participants passed through varied landscape including wetlands, upland early to mid successional forest dominated by W. ash and aspen poplar etc. through some extensive cultural coniferous various spruce regeneration plantings. It was noted that some areas had been cut long ago as fire breaks, and long-time member Mary Green noted how tight, gnarled, and dark a few remnant

areas were and that they looked like they needed to be thinned. At one time there were firebreaks in these coniferous reforestation areas that were still seen by the observant eye had mostly disappeared in the wild re-growth.

Some butterflies including summer Cabbage whites were observed and fungi like typical and expected ear, carrot, bolete, and turkey tail along trails fungus were noticed. A few relatively undisturbed mature upland maple and birch associated stands were a highlight of the trip. This was where most wildlife was seen.

Birds: Blue jay 2, American robin 1, Hairy woodpecker 1, Red-winged blackbird 8, Yellow warbler 3, Red-eyed vireo 1, Brown-headed cowbird 1, American goldfinch 1, Black-capped chickadee 3, winter wren 1.



Hawkweed in forest edge meadow



Bolete mushroom in spruce mixed forest

Saturday October 15, 2022 - Rouge National Urban Park



Lower Rouge R. Mouth looking west to Lake Ontario



Rouge River mouth Bars, rare habitat and Nuclear Station

Members arrived at the famous Lower Rouge marsh and Lake Ontario beaches area of the Rouge National Urban Park. This trip was organized as an autumn strategic nature study and trail walking outing. So, starting at Lake Ontario was important since in many ways this location in the City of Toronto in the south-east area of Scarborough was where the original

movement and organization “Save the Rouge” started over 45 years ago, that led eventually to the National Park. A very brief history of the very significant natural heritage areas here and historical rare and significant wildlife was provided to participants. Birding proceeded along the marsh and under the large railway bridge out to Lake Ontario at the beach bar area. A number of shorebirds, waterfowl and even a fly-over by a migrant Peregrine falcon was observed and recorded (species summary below). Attention was pointed out to the very low water level in the marshes (areas that also can flood severely in spring freshets) and have in recent years caused severe damage.



Members birding at Rouge River mouth at Lake Ontario



Rouge River Marshes area – very low water level



Short-billed dowitcher

The power of nature and its impact on the natural habitat and recent federal government agency Parks Canada insistence on building boardwalks and bridges up and across the Rouge here in the future has been controversial and have had many calling for stopping the initiative. This impact could be devastating to the long-term natural heritage value of the Park (below see information about this controversy – planning process rigour issues remain).

2021-04-26 **Critics fear boardwalk plans will harm Pickering and Toronto's Rouge Park – Pickering News Advertiser** <https://www.toronto.com/news-story/10370398-critics-fear-boardwalk-plans-will-harm-pickering-and-toronto-s-rouge-park/>

2022-03-23 'Major deficiencies': expert says Parks Canada plan for Rouge Marsh boardwalk should be dropped
<https://www.thestar.com/local-toronto-scarborough/news/2022/03/23/major-deficiencies-expert-says-parks-canada-plan-for-rouge-marsh-boardwalk-should-be-dropped.html>

2022-04-19 Many concerns with Rouge Beach Improvement Project, Scarborough Mirror
https://www.toronto.com/opinion/many-concerns-with-rouge-beach-improvement-project/article_687d3c63-5e2a-5c50-b56e-46ba87da83e1.html

Professional Design Comment on the controversial Rouge Marshes Boardwalk project by Paul Harpley and colleagues to Federal Government Agency, Rouge National Urban Park and their consultants was sent on May 1, 2021. In the submission we advised (with detailed narrative) that “we have been involved for over 40 years in many previous creative processes, involved in major facility projects very similar to this circumstance. We feel that there must be much more broad discussion and open consultation with diverse professionals beyond usual landscape consultants and engineering specialists now, while design is still fluid. A new solution to this old boardwalk idea and device. We would be willing to meet with a serious design team consultation looking at better design alternatives and operational arrangements to what has been presented to this point on this project”. We received no response to our comments from federal Parks Canada staff, or their consultants. Unfortunately, not unusual for federal agencies as we in Georgina are well aware, as in the case of the Pefferlaw Aerodrome disaster and federal Ministry of Transport staff and federal government politicians.

Paul Harpley



Main C.N.R. railway crossing with Go train at mouth of the Rouge River and heavy 1960's muscular steel/concrete structural infrastructure of Highway #2 at main Rouge River. The Park has lots of man-made infrastructure throughout its lands like rail, highways, hydro lines and major bridge and highway works. In spite of this, and in support of the original save the Rouge members vision so many years ago, the Park finally came to fruition in recent years.

A full day of naturalist adventures, by the early afternoon took us to the important and extensive Central Woodland Complex area of the Park just north of the Highway #2 bridge

structures, east of the old (now gone) Brigadoon Hotel and Resort of past cultural/historic interest. An original, fully natural Carolinian Canada site, most northerly in Ontario/Canada is especially important for its high biodiversity and significant botanical species like Blue beech, Black maple and further north, old Sycamore trees locations which members visited. Also visited were wooded wetlands, forests and meadows of the park with interesting birds, trees and herbaceous wildflower and other plants. A highlight was an adventurous climb to a wilder part of the park where an adult migrant Bald eagle flew by, above our member group and Rouge River. We all got a great look at this magnificent bird.

The National Park stretches north up the watershed to the Stouffville area and beyond, to the Oak Ridges Moraine. The Park, still a work in progress, once fully established, will span 79.1 square kilometres (30.5 sq mi).



Wilderness-like area of the Rouge that had a Bald eagle soaring through seen by SLSN members.

Wildlife and plant species observed in the order when first species encountered, and numbers seen on the outing.

Birds: *Lower Rouge region* – Mallard 7, N. Shoveler 15, Green-winged teal 10, Gt. Blue heron 1, G. Yellowlegs 3, Double-crested cormorant 3, Short-billed dowitcher 2, Wood duck 8, Blue-winged teal 3, Canada geese 7, Herring gull 2, Ring-billed gull 3, Song sparrow 5, Peregrine falcon 1, Rusty blackbird 1, Blue jay 1, N. Cardinal 1, House Sparrow 1. *Finch Meander area* - Bald eagle 1, Pileated woodpecker 1.

Photos: cell phone, Paul Harpley

Only paid-up members receive notice and full information regarding upcoming Outings, Meetings and Events.

SLSN Membership Information

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Phone 905-476-4747

Outings, Meetings: Any Provincial and municipal COVID-19 restrictions and safety protocols in effect. Information on the latest conditions and public health guidance can be found on the Government of Ontario [website](#).

Phone 905-722-8021 non-member inquiries, and details of **2023 Winter/Spring planned outings, including Y.R. Forest-Pefferlaw Tract, breeding birds hikes to Sutton West mixed forest and meadows, Virginia area Lake Simcoe shore.**

Virtual Internet Action Meetings, webinars, videos on Critical Natural Heritage and environmental issues

Invasive Species Centre

Webinar: Introduced Plant Pathogens Threatening North American Forests

August 16, 2023 @ 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm CDT

<https://naisma.org/event/webinar-introduced-plant-pathogens-threatening-north-american-forests/>

2023-03-15

Ecojustice

In this video, are some examples of how the Canadian Government has... and has not... followed through on its responsibilities to protect the environment. This includes approvals of oil and gas projects, the use of pesticides and environmental racism. You can [watch it on TikTok](#) — there's no need to create an account.

Canadian wildlife Federation

Learn More About Pollinators!

Did you know that we wouldn't have many of the fruits and veggies we count on for food without pollinators? We'd say goodbye to tomatoes, apples, cucumbers, blueberries and even chocolate. Learn more about pollinators by watching this Hinterland Who's Who video!

[Watch video >](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geHTg_Mdh90&ab_channel=HinterlandWho%27sWho%2FFauneetfloreduypays

York Region Forest News

The 2023 timber harvest contract is underway. Cutting has begun in Clarke Tract including a bit of salvage from the wind storm. We hope the contractor will be in Porritt Tract next week and then finally Eldred King Woodland two weeks from now to finish up the contract. Please keep clear of the forest operations. Please let me know if you have any questions. However, I will be away from the office next week, but Steve is working closely with this project and could answer those questions that can't wait until I get back. Please forward this email to your members that would be interested in this update.

More Info: Colin Macdonald (he/him) | Area Forester, Natural Heritage and Forestry

1-877-464-9675 ext. 75258

Pefferlaw Aerodrome – Federal Government attack on Georgina Greenbelt Lands

Petition



Take a stand against
the Georgina aerodrome

**SIGN PETITION
e-4213 TODAY**

and tell the Liberals to start listening to the
community, close the loopholes, and protect
taxpayers & the environment by stopping
cash-crop soil dumping using aerodrome laws.

 CONSERVATIVE

PAR (Pefferlaw Area Ratepayers) Poster

If you have not already, please sign the petition.

<https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-4213>

Following the public meeting at the Pefferlaw Lions Hall on the federal approved proposed aerodrome project local organizations opposed were asked by PAR representation to write a formal letter to the federal liberal member of Parliament in Ottawa, the Minister of Transport, Omar Alghabra (see below SLSN contribution).

2023-01-04

Re: Pefferlaw Aerodrome: South Lake Simcoe Naturalists (SLSN), continuing opposition to this project

Our organization, the South Lake Simcoe Naturalists was advised in late November 2022 (refer to this letter in past [SLSN Conservation Alert e-Blasts](#)) from our local municipality community newspaper that you and your Ministry of Transport had approved the proposed Pefferlaw Aerodrome project, now apparently known as “The Sutton Airport Development’s proposal”. Approval of this concerning and disastrous proposal is environmentally, agriculturally and socially unacceptable. Our membership, and indeed the entire community in the Town of Georgina, the Region of York and beyond in Ontario are opposed to this initiative. Your Federal Government Agency, Transport Canada should be severely reprimanded for awarding approval to this development group and fill contractors.

Our organization has been active in commenting on this project, a seriously flawed, rushed and very concerning process that harkens back to what would seem to be a 1960’s proceeding. We do not see evidence of open and transparent rational science evaluation and good planning here. In our [attached 2021-12-21 \(Proposed Pefferlaw Aerodrome, SLSN comments\)](#) submission to Federal Transport Canada Public Comments Portal, we detailed our concerns, comments and recommendations. Numerous residents and other organizations also made written submissions, and local media was quick on the issue once it became clear what was going on, especially the huge fill dumping being proposed, in sensitive natural heritage and agricultural lands and landscape in the protected countryside of the Ontario Greenbelt! These important natural heritage lands including provincially significant/provincial and municipal Official Plan area wetlands, a significant groundwater recharge area and highly vulnerable aquifers and woodlands are now at risk with approval of this initiative.

Regarding planning matters, community groups like ours, and individuals have also raised the issue that although the Town of Georgina has a site alteration by-law in place which we understand bans large fill operations, this initiative is allowed to go forward? It seems incredulous that a federal agency has approved the go-ahead of these works. It has also been noted by others, we have learned that no real or comprehensive pre-consultation with York Region, the Town of Georgina, or the Local Conservation Authority, or our organization and other community resident organizations or agricultural interests or others. The Pefferlaw Area Ratepayers (PAR) have announced formerly they are opposing the Sutton Airport Development’s proposal (a.k.a. the Pefferlaw Aerodrome) to build an airport on Old Homestead Road in the Town of Georgina. PAR organized a public meeting on Tuesday, December 6, at 7 p.m. at the Pefferlaw Lions Community Hall. Executive members of SLSN attended, where we were able to elaborate on our concerns in our SLSN December 2021-12-22 comments. Still, we have not heard anything from you Ministry about rescinding approval of this initiative.

Therefore, we recommend this proposed Aerodrome project approval, be immediately rejected by Federal Agency Transport Canada, and all planned and anticipated works be stopped. It is further our SLSN recommendation that

as per our previous written submission to the Federal Transport Canada Public Comments Portal, that you as Minister of Transport immediately strike a Federal, Provincial and Municipal Committee to undertake a comprehensive Feasibility Study in the Greater Toronto Area to identify a short list of appropriate sites for a new "Buttonville Airport site" and proceed to seek professional proposals, in a rigorous fully public process to award a proponent to build the facility on an appropriate site.

In conclusion, in common sense terms, and as previously identified there must be other much better sites for this kind of facility, that should be the subject of a Provincial/Federal Feasibility study in the G.T.A. to arrive at a rigorously determined location to re-locate a closing "Buttonville Airport", the stated objective of the initiative by the current project proponents!

Paul Harpley BSc. (Hons.) M.A., Doctoral Researcher, York University
President, South Lake Simcoe Naturalists, Ontario Nature
Director, The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe

PAR Steps Up to Stop the now called Baldwin East Aerodrome

2023-01-22

Georgina Post

By Mike Anderson

Pefferlaw residents are stepping up their efforts to stop the Baldwin East aerodrome from getting off the ground.

A House of Common's petition, drafted by Pefferlaw resident Karen Wolfe, calling on Transport Minister Omar Alghabra to reverse his recent approval of the aerodrome, has attracted more than 1,200 signatures.

Wolfe, a journalist and spokesperson for the Pefferlaw Area Ratepayers (PAR), is confident that more people will sign before the petition closes on March 13.

The 350-acre aerodrome with two all-weather landing strips, a hangar and outbuildings, proposed by Sutton Airport Development Inc, is slated to be built near the intersection of Stoney Batter Rd and Old Homestead Rd in Pefferlaw, with construction beginning this year.

However, residents, environmental groups and the Town of Georgina have voiced concerns that the 1.2 million cubic metres of fill required to build the aerodrome, especially if contaminated, would significantly impact an environmentally sensitive area comprised of wetlands, groundwater aquifers, natural habitats and a creek that flows into Lake Simcoe.

"The positive thing about this petition is the guy who actually gave the green light to this project is going to have to defend his decision once this petition gets tabled in the House of Commons," Wolfe said.

"It's also going to give our MP Scot Davidson another opportunity in the House of Commons to raise the issue."

Wolfe says the petition also helps to keep residents engaged.

“People want to do something. They can’t go out there and stop it. But they can put their name on a federal petition that will be presented in the House of Commons. And I think they’re going to feel good about that,” she said...

Read more:

<https://georginapost.com/2023/01/22/petition-to-cancel-aerodrome-attracts-more-than-1300-signatures/>

2023-03-01

York Media

UPDATE: ‘Its frightening’ Georgina residents fight Sutton Airport Development's plan for an aerodrome before it takes flight

Residents fear contaminated fill would impact Lake Simcoe, call on federal government to stop project

[Amanda Persico](#)

Georgina Advocate

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Construction hasn’t start yet, but Georgina residents want to stop Sutton Airport Development in its tracks — before the tarmac becomes a permanent fixture in town.

In mid-2022, Transport Canada confirmed the report submitted by [Sutton Airport Development Inc.](#), a private development company, to build an aerodrome at [7486 and 7818 Old Homestead Rd.](#), near Pefferlaw was in compliance with federal aviation requirements regarding consultations.

The new aerodrome would offer year-round service with two paved, all-weather runways fit for small- to medium-sized single- and twin-engine aircraft.

The plan — officially opposed by York-Simcoe MP Scot Davidson, Georgina council and Georgina Island First Nation — has local residents fearing the worst: contaminated fill trucked and dumped to the 340-acre site under the guise of building an aerodrome.

“I think this is just another opportunity to dump fill,” said Pefferlaw resident David Mitton.

And with the recent push for housing in the province, there will be plenty of fill — contaminated or not.

Tracking contaminated fill is not as easy as testing each truckload, added Mitton, a retired heavy equipment operator.

And contaminated fill could take years to detect.

“Most often (the operator) scoops it, mixes it up and then dumps it,” said Mitton, who says he has seen the process first-hand.

“That’s repeated for every truckload, which would pass a dumpsite soil test. But the contaminated soil is still being dumped. It could be 10 years of dumping before anything is noticed.”

While there’s noise and truck traffic to contend with, the real concern is the impact on Lake Simcoe, he said.

“It’s frightening — the proximity to the lake,” Mitton said. “Any rainwater will eventually end up in the lake.”

And it's not just an issue for Georgina residents, but also Barrie and Orillia residents, he added.

“We all live on the same body of water.”

Mitton is one of 1,500 area residents who signed an online petition in the House of Commons pushing the federal government to reverse its aerodrome approval.

The Transport Canada application names Maurizio Marchioni, of March Law Barristers and Solicitors in Vaughan, as the sole proponent of Sutton Airport.

[YorkRegion.com](https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10850896-update-its-frightening-georgina-residents-fight-sutton-airport-development-s-plan-for-an-aerodrome-before-it-takes-flight/) reached out to Marchioni with specific questions: when will construction start and what assurances are there to ensure contaminated fill will not be used on the site.

Questions were forwarded to Robert Fenn of Rohmer and Fenn Barristers and Solicitors in Richmond Hill.

“We can assure you that Sutton Airport is following all of the required procedures and regulations regarding airport development,” reads Fenn’s email...

Read more:

<https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10850896-update-its-frightening-georgina-residents-fight-sutton-airport-development-s-plan-for-an-aerodrome-before-it-takes-flight/>

UPDATE – March 1, 2023: *This article has been updated from a previous version to clarify Transport Canada's involvement in the aerodrome approval process.*

Trudeau Government - Reinstate the Federal Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund!

2023-02-12

Innisfil Today

Petition calls for reinstatement of Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund

Online petition can be signed until April 1; 'We are privileged to live in such a beautiful place and have access to the unique natural resource,' says environmentalist

InnisfilToday Staff Feb 9, 2023 7:00 PM



A satellite view of Lake Simcoe. Photo courtesy the Province of Ontario

NEWS RELEASE

JOHN BRASSARD, BARRIE-INNISFIL MP

Barrie-Innisfil member of Parliament John Brassard is pleased to sponsor House of Commons Petition E-4278 to reinstate the Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund and protect the watershed for future generations.

The e-petition, open for signatures until April 1, was initiated by local advocate Zoe Bystrov, founder of Youth for Lake Simcoe. Click on [this link](#) or visit [this website](#) to sign the petition and support Lake Simcoe before April 1. Five hundred signatures are needed for Brassard to table the petition in the House of Commons for a government response.

“We are privileged to live in such a beautiful place and have access to the unique natural resource, Lake Simcoe,” Bystrov said. “The lake and its watershed are vital to our community, not only as a source of drinking water, but as a place where people come to relax, spend time with their families and friends and enjoy various water activities.

“Being on my paddleboard last summer, it broke my heart to see litter such as CDs, plastic bags, yogurt containers, and even an old tire floating in the water and accumulating along the shoreline. Litter fills our lake with microplastics and other substances which are potentially not safe.”

Petition E-4278 demands the reinstatement of the Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund, a successful initiative created by the former Conservative government. With \$59 million, Conservatives supported over 200 local grassroots projects between 2007 and 2017 and produced tangible results including phosphorus reduction, improvements in lake water quality, and increases in native fish species populations.

The Liberal government refuses to act on their 2019 election promise to reinstate funding. As Barrie-Innisfil member of Parliament, Brassard has relentlessly advocated for Lake Simcoe in the House of Commons and immediately after the 2019 election he and fellow area Conservative MPs wrote a letter to the prime minister and environment minister demanding they make good on their election promise to provide \$40 million over four years.

“It was inspiring to see the success the Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund had on the health of the Lake Simcoe watershed led by dedicated local groups and volunteers who want to maintain a healthy Lake Simcoe for generations to come.” Brassard said.

Brassard continued: “A healthy and sustainable Lake Simcoe is important to the entire region of central Ontario as a source of drinking water, economic opportunity, recreation and tourism. That’s why I encourage everyone in central Ontario and beyond to sign Zoe’s petition and pressure the Liberal government to immediately reinstate funding for programs that will restore shoreline habitats, clean up contaminated sites and reduce wastewater discharges.”

In 2021 Bystrov won the Ernie Crossland Young Conservationist Award from the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority for her work with Youth for Lake Simcoe, a strong youth voice.

“Zoe’s determination and passion for Lake Simcoe are inspiring and I am thrilled to be working with her on this tremendously important cause,” Brassard concluded...

Read more:

https://www.innisfiltoday.ca/local-news/petition-calls-for-reinstatement-of-lake-simcoe-clean-up-fund-6516491?utm_source=InnisfilToday.ca&utm_campaign=87d91a509d-DailyINN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_665c8f3720-87d91a509d-324156330

2023-02-23

York Media

Trudeau Government chastised about neglect of Clean Up of Lake Simcoe



'Put the money out in the real world': Bradford, East Gwillimbury, Georgina councils call on feds to deliver funds to help Lake Simcoe

Councillors from watershed communities call on feds to restore and protect Lake Simcoe

[Aileen Zangouei](#)

Simcoe.com

Thursday, February 23, 2023

Councillors from watershed communities in York Region, Georgina and East Gwillimbury, and Bradford West Gwillimbury are calling on the federal government to deliver on its promise to help the health of Lake Simcoe.

In late January, watershed communities passed motions calling on the federal government to restore and protect Lake Simcoe.

A similar motion was passed last year in Bradford.

In 2022, pressure from municipalities and conservation authorities throughout Ontario's watershed seemed to have an effect as the federal budget included a \$19.6-million funding commitment for the Freshwater Action Fund, which included Lake Simcoe.

"It's in the budget but as far as we are aware, it's just sitting there ... and so the money isn't actually out in the real world making a difference," said Bradford Ward 2 Coun. Jonathan Scott.

"The motion was passed by all of council, and (Mayor James Leduc) wrote a letter to Minister of Finance (Chrystia Freeland) and Minister of Environment and Climate Change (Steven Guilbeault) to say we really expect that the federal government will deliver this funding.

"That it won't just be in the budget but actually go toward more tree planting, and cleaning rivers and streams and shoreline of Lake Simcoe," Scott said.

"It's really effective and also unique to have all the municipalities in this region asking for the same thing, and this, to the best of my knowledge, has never happened before and packs a powerful punch to the government," he said.

The funding is also aimed toward cleaning up contaminated sites — cleaning up anything that pollutes the lakes.

Georgina Ward 3 Coun. Dave Neeson, said the creation of the Freshwater Action Fund by the federal government was a "welcomed and significant first step, with the inclusion of Lake Simcoe in 2022."

The Freshwater Action Fund, initiated in 2021, was embraced by local councillors because dedicated funding for Lake Simcoe had ended in 2017, with the demise of the Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund.

"Watershed resident, environmental non-governmental organizations and concerned members of council are seeking the yet-to-be released funding and criteria details so that we can all work together to ensure for the long term health and sustainability of the lake," Neeson told Yorkregion.com.

"Simply put, we need real action with demonstrable outcomes and we will continue to work with our federal partners to jointly achieve what we all desire. However, our federal partners need to recognize that time is of the essence," Neeson said.

East Gwillimbury Coun. Scott Crone said that while the government pledged funds, "there have been no details about what is coming."

"I'm irritated to say nothing has been done to date," he said. "It's really becoming urgent for the conservation authority and the health of the lake to make sure that we get this money."

With the region growing rapidly, and Lake Simcoe being the watershed environment where residents live, work, and play, there's a lot of new pressure on the lake.

"We need it to be healthy for future generations to enjoy, and fisheries, and to be sustainable. It's so linked to the health of our climate, and we know this federal Liberal government says they care about the environment and have done a number of positive things in the environmental areas, but this is one reason they seem to be pretty capable of, just pulling the trigger and getting it done," Scott said...

Read More: https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10852537--put-the-money-out-in-the-real-world-bradford-east-gwillimbury-georgina-councils-call-on-feds-to-deliver-funds-to-help-lake-simcoe/?s=n1?source=newsletter&utm_content=a07&utm_source=ml_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EAOE815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=yrha_147093

Provincial Government Continuing attack on the Greenbelt and Landuse Planning in Ontario

Letter – Paul and Debra Harpley

2022-11-28

Sent to: Premier Doug Ford, Caroline Mulroney M.P.P. York Simcoe, Minister Steve Clarke SENT e-mail

Your Government's "Bill 23" brings forward a series of unprecedented and controversial proposed Growth Plan Amendments to the previous, recently approved Growth Plan for Ontario that will have grave impacts on the approved Greenbelt and protected countryside if passed. These changes affect many complicated and interrelated Policy, detailed design natural and agricultural landuse, cultural heritage, and areas of long-term past good planning methodology. No formal substantive, meaningful and considered consultation with Ontario Regions, local Municipalities, varied Stakeholders and the general public has occurred before proposing Bill 23.

As this omnibus Bill 23, "More Homes Built Faster Act", which we have searched through pages and pages of proposed changes to municipalities, conservation authorities, provincial ministries, public boards and commissions, responsibilities and value of decision capability, environmental policy and regulation, and planning minutia. This Bill has obviously been rushed and put together without consideration of the complexity of the undertaking and understanding of disastrous impact of your proposed plans!

Incredibly, a week later your government has proposed a "Greenbelt Land Swap" with the same disregard for the people of Ontario. An incredible majority of experts, from Regions, Municipalities other agencies, and the general public, have predicted the tremendous destruction to the academically defensible Greenbelt agricultural and natural heritage lands by your government's draconian actions and sloppy attempt at building more homes in Southern Ontario. Our extended family members, friends and wide professional and community contacts in the South Lake Simcoe area have expressed this same sentiment at your government's deplorable behaviour.

One of many examples of the folly of your Greenbelt Swap plans to 'open up' 7,400 acres of currently protected Greenbelt land for developers to build 50,000 homes on environmentally sensitive and agriculturally important land we know very well. It is where you propose the destruction of the natural heritage and agricultural areas between/connecting the Rouge River and Duffin's Creek watersheds in the protected countryside draining off the Oak Ridges Moraine. This being only one example of many enforced political decisions imposed by your actions! The well documented ploy of your government's flawed endeavours of all political striped Ontario and Canadian media of this sham of paying off wealthy developers' supporters, indeed controlling your government, is despicable and completely intolerable!

We demand your government immediately rescind this legislation, start from scratch in a rigorous planning consultation with all Ontarians to properly plan the settlement of coming immigrants to Canada (and specifically to Ontario) that you and your colleagues have advised the federal government is going to be dropping at our borders in the next few years!

Paul and Debra Harpley, Georgina

Ford Provincial Government Bill 23, Greenbelt Land Swap (a.k.a. Provincial Government “Land Grab”)

Greenbelt cuts updates: Breaking news! Thankfully Ontario's Auditor General and Integrity

Commissioner are going to look into the super sketchy way Ontario government is managing the Greenbelt cuts. In the joint request for an investigation, "Ontario NDP Leader Marit Stiles, interim Liberal Party Leader John Fraser, and Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner, argued that the removal of those parcels of land, as well as the repeal of the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, will shift wealth to property owners and have “detrimental impact on park lands and the local ecosystem.”” Read more [here](#).

WHAT’S NEXT WEBINAR by Environmental Defence

The fight to repeal Bill 23 and save the Greenbelt isn’t slowing down!

- Get updates on our request for an OPP investigation and Ecojustice’s Judicial Review of the Hamilton Official Plan.
 - Learn how federal & municipal governments can take action.
 - Hear about new ways to get involved - including upcoming rallies and a new grassroots group called the Greenbelt Guardians.
-

Greenbelt actions anyone can take

1. Send a letter to your MPP demanding action to find out who leaked insider information about the Greenbelt.
2. Get your local Council to adopt a motion to resist the Provincial sprawl agenda that harms the Greenbelt. This document outlines steps you can take to make this happen. Please read it and share it with your community and Council allies.
3. Order your "Hands off the Greenbelt" lawn sign [here](#) and let your neighbours know you love the Greenbelt!
4. Join a growing list of unusual stakeholders opposing the provincial sprawl agenda and promoting sustainable communities (and Greenbelt protection). The Alliance for a Liveable Ontario (ALO) is a new space where hundreds

of people and groups representing hundreds of thousands of Ontarians are coming together to collaborate. You can also register for the first meeting on January 24 here.

Emerging Environmental issues in South Lake Simcoe

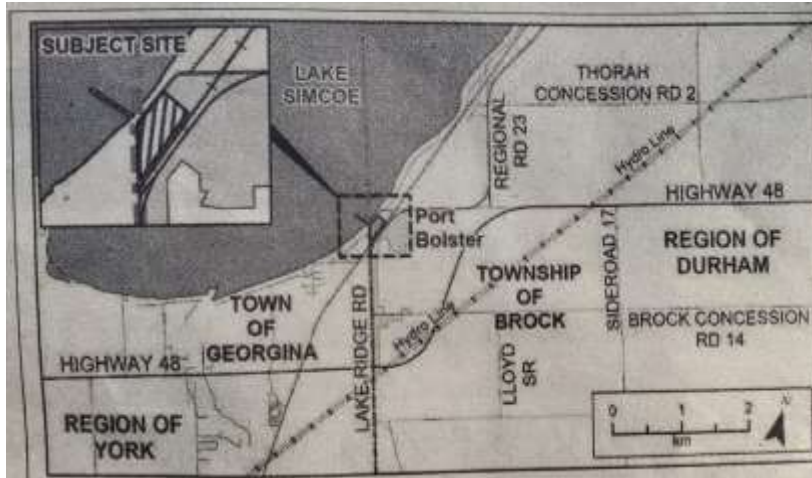
Proposed development of a large Resort Development at lake Simcoe, Port Bolster

SLSN have researched community reports of a Notice of a complete Application to amend the Durham Regional Official Plan to expedite the development of a resort development comprised of a three storey building with 42 suites and four single storey “villas” for a total of 46 suites.

The Subject Sites is located at 23801 Thorah Park Boulevard, in the Hamlet of Port Bolster. We understand a Durham Region Council meeting was held in February and a public meeting was to be held at a later date, but no information has been found regarding that. The development is located at the north end of the small hamlet of Port Bolster at the York/Durham boundary line and would appear to significantly change the scale and character of the hamlet. From an environmental perspective initial scan of current landuse would appear to entail the destruction of a significant area of natural heritage lands and extend to the Lake Simcoe shoreline area around the major key Ontario rail land infrastructure at the location. It would seem this development is yet another attack on the Ontario Greenbelt. With all the other provincial and federal government attacks of the Greenbelt reviewed and detailed for members in this Newsletter, our organization with other commitments would have difficulty responding in detail. However, if there are members in the Port Bolster community area who could take the lead on this issue, having a definite impact on north-east Port Bolster and Lake Simcoe, our organization could help support conservation actions.

For more information contact Lori Riviere-Doersam at lori.riviere-doersam@durham@durham.ca (905-668-4113 ext. 2572) with regard to the application.

For community follow-up quote Region of Durham File: OPA 2022-005. No information has been received from Georgina Council of this development to our knowledge at the municipal boundary.

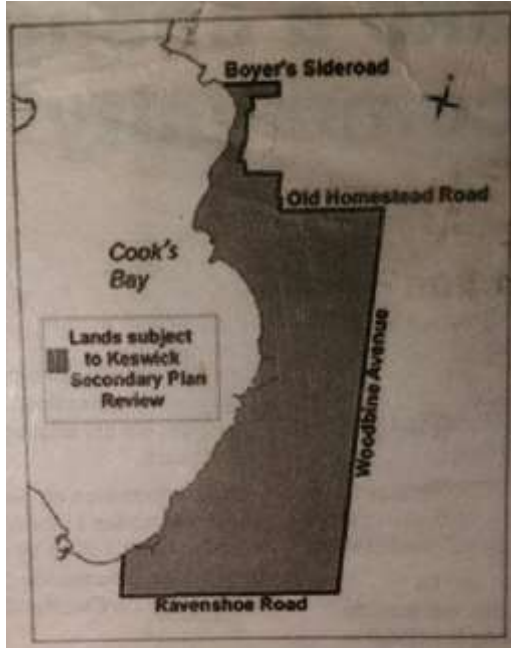


Map: Georgina Advocate, Thursday
November 10, 2022, Durham Region
Notice in York Region Newspaper

P.H.

Notice of Second Public Meeting (March 28, 7 p.m.) Respecting a proposed Keswick Secondary plan (February 2023).

Over the last two decades the SLSN have participated in upgrading Town Official and Secondary Plans in workshops and written and verbal comment especially on natural and cultural heritage and landuse planning matters. Over these past reviews comprehensive natural bio/physical Schedules and Maps have been developed to support and manage development in Official Plan and Secondary Plan areas. Some Keswick SLSN members attended initial and meeting/workshop design and comment sessions including myself, hosted by the Town and later Zoom platform events for the planning process and monitoring the process over a long 2 year plus time frame (much of it through the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging). SLSN members have regularly been advised in past e-newsletters of meetings, workshops for members to connect with, over the planning time frame. The urban landuse of Lands subject to the Keswick Secondary Plan Review have not changed in this process and are detailed on the map below.



This planning process supports and updates landuse policy foundation into the future and builds conformity with Regional and Provincial Policy for on-the-ground landuse.

SLSN members and the general public can review details on the Town of Georgina Website www.georgina.ca and provide comments at clerks@georgina.ca. A copy of the Proposed Keswick Secondary Plan is posted online viewing for at georgina.ca/KSPR.

I encouraged all members to become involved in details if they could and advise the Town accordingly.

Timing as always is important sooner than later for your review. Agency comment (eg. LSRCA, MNRF, MECP etc.) has not yet happened, and public and others as well has yet to be developed, at this stage. It is expected according to Town staff, with all the comprehensive review to come that the process will extend into the term of the new Council.

Climate Change News

2023-01-16

New Scientist

Strong El Niño could make 2024 the first year we pass 1.5°C of warming

Early modelling suggests the world's climate could shift to an El Niño pattern towards the end of 2023, which is likely to increase the global average temperature

This article has been viewed 8963 times in the last 24 hours.

ENVIRONMENT 13 January 2023

By [Madeleine Cuff](#)



A field of dead maize plants in Malawi during a drought caused by El Niño in 2016

Guido Dingemans/Alamy

A global shift to an El Niño climate pattern later this year could pave the way for the world to breach 1.5°C of warming for the first time in 2024, according to the UK Met Office.

New modelling from the agency suggests the current [three-year La Niña phase](#) will end in March and this looks likely to be followed by an El Niño pattern later this year.

“At the ...

Read More:

https://www.newscientist.com/article/2354672-strong-el-nino-could-make-2024-the-first-year-we-pass-1-5c-of-warming/?utm_source=nsday&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nsday_160123&utm_term=Newsletter%20NSDAY_Daily

2023-03-20

Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2023/03/20/climate-change-ipcc-report-15/>

World is on brink of catastrophic warming, U.N. climate change report says

A dangerous climate threshold is near, but ‘it does not mean we are doomed’ if swift action is taken, scientists say

By [Sarah Kaplan](#)

Updated March 20, 2023 at 5:33 p.m. EDT | Published March 20, 2023 at 9:01 a.m. EDT

The world is likely to pass a dangerous temperature threshold within the next 10 years, pushing the planet past the point of catastrophic warming — unless nations drastically transform their economies and immediately transition away from fossil fuels, according to one of the most definitive reports ever published about climate change.

Want to know how your actions can help make a difference for our planet? Sign up for the Climate Coach newsletter, in your inbox every Tuesday and Thursday.

The report released Monday by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that the world is likely to surpass its [most ambitious climate target](#) — limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above preindustrial temperatures — by the early 2030s.

Beyond that threshold, scientists have found, climate disasters will become so extreme that people will not be able to adapt. Basic components of the Earth system will be fundamentally, irrevocably altered. Heat waves, famines and infectious diseases could claim millions of additional lives by century's end.

Global warming

At our current global pace of carbon emissions, the world will [burn through its remaining "carbon budget" by 2030](#). Doing so would put the long-term goal of keeping global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) irrevocably out of reach.

Why the goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius?

Keeping warming below this threshold would [help save the world's coral reefs and preserve the Arctic's protective sea ice layer](#). It could also stave off [dramatic sea level rise](#) by avoiding further destabilization in Antarctica and Greenland.

So where do we stand now?

The world has already warmed more than 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit) above preindustrial temperatures. [We charted over 1,200 different scenarios for climate change](#) over the coming century; of those, 230 pathways achieve the warming goal — although only 112 may be realistic...

The IPCC report shows humanity has reached a "critical moment in history," IPCC Chair Hoesung Lee said. The world has all the knowledge, tools and financial resources needed to achieve its climate goals, but after decades of disregarding scientific warnings and delaying climate efforts, the window for action is rapidly closing. Calling the report a "how-to guide to defuse the climate time-bomb," Guterres announced on Monday an "acceleration agenda" that would speed up global actions on climate. Emerging economies including China and India — which plan to reach net zero in 2060 and 2070, respectively — must hasten their emissions-cutting efforts alongside developed nations, Guterres said...

Read More:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2023/03/20/climate-change-ipcc-report-15/>

COP 27 Update article on Negotiations and Complications of issues

2022-11-12

The Guardian

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/nov/12/cop27-first-week-roundup-powerful-dispatches-muted-protest-little-cash?utm_term=636f91e082c03252bc2f9a22cbd17f41&utm_campaign=GuardianTodayUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=GTUS_email

Cop27

Cop27 first week roundup: powerful dispatches, muted protest, little cash

Despite 'loss and damage' focus there have been more oil and gas lobbyists than delegates from the most vulnerable countries



A woman poses in front of the congress centre staging Cop27 at the end of the first week of the summit in Sharm el-Sheikh. Photograph: Sedat Suna/EPA

Fiona Harvey, Nina Lakhani, Patrick Greenfield, Damian Carrington and Oliver Milman

Sat 12 Nov 2022 07.00 GMT

Humanity is on a [highway to hell](#), with our foot on the accelerator. The message from the UN secretary general to more than 110 world leaders at the [Cop27 UN climate summit in Egypt](#) could not have been clearer: change course now, or face “collective suicide”.

Greenhouse gas emissions have continued to rise this year, research published this week has shown, despite stark warnings from climate scientists in the past year. The prospects of sticking to the 1.5C limit above pre-industrial levels that scientists tell us is necessary have receded to a “narrow window”.

Many of the heads of state and government gathered in Egypt for the [first days of the UN Cop27 climate summit](#), where 45,000 people from 196 countries are halfway through their two weeks of talks on the climate crisis, had their own dispatches to add from the frontline of the global emergency.

That from Pakistan’s prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, was among the most powerful. “The catastrophic floods impacted 33 million people, more than half our women and children, [covering] the size of three European countries. Despite seven times the average of extreme rain in the south, we struggled on as raging torrents ripped out over 8,000km of metal roads, damaged more than 3,000km of railway track and washed away standing crops on 4m acres and ravaged all of the four corners of Pakistan,” he told a hall shocked into silence.

Plastic Issue in Canada and Beyond

Time for Federal Minister Guilbeault to Act!

“Recently we have seen all manner of **musings** and **talking about doing** all kinds of things in Ontario and the rest of Canada, usually after the fact, but still really apparently consistently doing rather little!” SLSN has been a long-term advocate of cutting use of plastics wherever possible for many years. Gord Zwaigenbaum and I have studied and lobbied various levels of government to take substantive action to reduce its use. We remind that we can all take small daily actions, especially picking it up in natural locations that when we are out in the field.

P. Harpley

2023-01-25

Environmental Defence

Canada Plastic Ban a Sham!

Call on Minister Guilbeault to Expand the Ban! [Click here](#) to view in your browser



The first phase of Canada's ban on six single-use items came into force in December, but we can't stop there. Throwaway plastics continue to fill our garbage bins, streets, parks, and oceans. They also threaten wildlife and our health.

Please join us today by [sending a tweet](#) to Environment Minister Stephen Guilbeault, calling on him to expand the ban to other harmful and unnecessary single-use plastics, including takeout coffee cups, condiment packets, produce bags and wrap. These items can be replaced with safer alternatives, including reusable containers and packaging.



Minister Guilbeault and the cabinet are meeting today in Hamilton before Parliament returns next week. The government will be setting the priorities for this busy session and we need to make sure that they keep plastic pollution on the agenda.

The items on our updated ban list have been identified by governments as problematic for waste and recycling systems and are often found littered in the environment. These plastics are hazardous for animals and create microplastic pollution, which ends up in our local food chains and even in our bodies.

Banning harmful single-use plastics is the surest way to keep them out of the environment. That's why we hope that you'll join us today by [sending a strong message to Minister Guilbeault](#) to expand the ban on single-use plastics.

Not on twitter? No problem!

Help us to spread the word by forwarding this email to your family and friends.

Together, for an end to plastic pollution,

Karen Wirsig

Senior Program Manager, Plastics

GREENPEACE

2023-03-13

Expanding the Plastic Ban in Canada NOW

Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault quit talking and ACT

Recent research shows a disturbing trend: **plastic production rose globally between 2019-2021**. [1]
Worse still, plastic consumption is set to double by 2050! [2]

To turn off the plastic tap, policy makers must strike at the heart of plastic production. And current bans do not strike hard enough. **Where to start? By expanding the ban!**


This is the message we are sending today in our letter signed by **70+ groups** that want Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault and Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos to **add seven more categories** to the plastic ban to truly put a dent in the long list of problem plastics and substances. [3] And accelerate the shift to the plastic-free, zero waste future we need. [Will you help amplify our message on delivery day?](#)

SEND AN EMAIL: EXPAND THE BAN LIST 

The current ban fails to target the extent of plastic waste commonly collected in Canada. [4] **It also overlooks problematic polymers and chemical additives, such as toxic polyvinyl chloride (PVC)** – recently in the spotlight after vinyl chloride, an ingredient in PVC, was released into the air following the derailed train in Ohio last month. [5]

Chemicals found in plastics are leaching into the environment, accumulating in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife and are being connected to serious negative health outcomes. From production through to disposal, plastic pollutes and threatens the health of people living close to plastic production and waste facilities. **The plastic crisis is on its way to becoming a public health crisis.**

As we send off our **#ExpandTheBan letter** to federal MPs today, you have an opportunity to ensure Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos hears this loud and clear, along with Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault. [Will you help ramp up our petition to 10,000 signatures strong so our message can't be ignored?](#)

Yes! I want Canada to #ExpandTheBan! 

Canada has key climate, biodiversity restoration and pollution reduction targets to meet. Because plastic pollutes across its entire lifespan – from its inception as fossil fuels to its deception as recycling – *a strong plastic ban helps tackle all of these issues.*

You've been with us on our journey to secure a strong Global Oceans Treaty, a campaign that has recently been won! [6] But we know plastic pollution does not respect borders – **the ocean sanctuaries we've fought hard for and won together will be more powerful when we stop plastic in its tracks.**

An expanded ban list is where we need to start. [Thanks for adding your name!](#)

In plastic-free solidarity,

Sarah
Head of Oceans and Plastic, Greenpeace Canada

Notes:

- [1] [Single-use plastic production rose between 2019 and 2021 despite pledges](#)
- [2] [Plastic consumption on course to nearly double by 2050 - research](#)
- [3] [Dozens of groups join our call to #ExpandTheBan on single-use plastics. Will you?](#)
- [4] [Canada's single-use plastic ban lacks proof: Report](#)
- [5] [Derailed Ohio Train Carried Toxic Ingredient for “Worst” Kind of Plastic](#)
- [6] [Historic UN Ocean Treaty agreed: Greenpeace statement](#)

2023-02-07

Plastic is everywhere – It’s impact extends far and wide – International Perspective **Only One**

Try to go through your day without plastic. You likely can't. Plastic is everywhere. But while we clearly see where it ends up, we rarely, if ever, have the chance to see where it begins.

To fully understand its impact, we’re bringing you to ground zero in Louisiana, where plastic and so many other large-scale industrial products come into this world

In this four-part podcast series, **hosted by Emmy award-winning journalist Gloria Riviera**, we discover how our plastic world came to be from the people who are up against its worst consequences. The main voices featured, including Sharon Lavigne, the founder of Rise St. James and an environmental leader fighting industrial pollution in Cancer Alley, are living out the crisis each day, and give us an unparalleled viewpoint.

Whether you’re on your nightly walk, folding laundry, or eating a quick lunch, we invite you to take a few minutes, and dive into Discarded with us.

Listen to the first episode of Discarded on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), and [all other major streaming platforms](#).

We hope that these stories will inspire action. The systemic racism and lack of corporate accountability underlying the plastics crisis must be addressed, no matter where in the world we live.

Can you take one minute of action with us to support communities facing challenges like those outlined in the series? We've recently launched two local campaigns with partners taking on the petrochemical industry that you can support with your signature right now:

1. [Sign the petition: No more toxic plastic plants in Cancer Alley](#)
2. [Sign the petition: Hold Shell accountable in Pennsylvania](#)

We are so thankful that you're taking time to learn about these issues with us. Education and action lay the path for a healthier, brighter future.

In power,

The Only One Team

2023-02-08

Greenpeace Canada

Canada's ban on six types of single-use plastic items, will cover 3% of the country's plastic waste!

GREENPEACE

Canada's ban on six types of single-use plastic items has begun rolling out, but ... it will cover all of ... **3% of the country's plastic waste** 🗑️. Furthermore, the plastic items targeted are only a handful of the most prevalent ones choking our waterways and contaminating our ecosystems. [1]

Everything wrong with the plastic ban is everything that has been left out. If Canada really wants to meet its 'Zero Plastic Waste by 2030' target, the ban must be expanded to include a more comprehensive list of polluting and toxic plastics. And because plastics don't respect borders, **ocean protection efforts won't be complete unless we turn off the plastic tap** that's dumping a never-ending stream of waste into the seas.

That's why we're calling on Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault and Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos to **add seven more categories** to the ban list. [Will you add your voice and send them a direct](#)

[email now? They need to hear it from you: #ExpandTheBan to reduce pollution and protect our health!](#)

Yes! I want to see more toxic plastics added to the ban! 

Research increasingly shows links between chemical additives found in some plastics – Phthalates, Bisphenols, Chlorinated paraffins and others – and certain types of cancers, developmental delays in children and other negative health outcomes. [2] **These plastics are in our kitchens and our homes – but they are not included in Canada’s ban, despite being banned in other countries.** [3]

This is why we are also addressing Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos [in our message](#) – because this isn’t just about the environment, it’s about the health and safety of you and me, our friends and families. Plastic has been found throughout our bodies, and plastic threatens our health at each stage of its lifecycle. [Will you help us build momentum by sending an email now to Minister Duclos and Minister Guilbeault asking them to please add these toxic plastics to the ban list?](#)

Send an email now 

Don’t get me wrong – the current ban is a start, and proof positive that when people raise their voices together, elected representatives listen. This ban exists because thousands of people like you across the country became a formidable movement demanding an end to planet plastic. **That’s why our elected representatives need to keep hearing this from us: [#ExpandTheBan to put a stronger regulatory framework in between us – and the overwhelming toxic plastic tidal wave!](#)**

In plastic-free solidarity,

Sarah
Head of Oceans and Plastics, Greenpeace Canada

Notes:

[1] [Canada's single-use plastic ban lacks proof: Report](#)

[2] [Study Finds Exposure to Phthalates May Increase Children's Cancer Risk, Uterine fibroid growth activated by chemicals found in everyday products](#)

[3] [EU declares blanket ban on harmful packaging chemicals but braces for petrochemical fightback](#)

Greenpeace, 33 Cecil Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1N1

Toxics in Canadian Food!

2023-02-07

Environmental Defence



One more chance to push for mandatory labelling of harmful ingredients - TOXICS

We have a few more days to push for strong, mandatory product labelling in Canada's cornerstone environmental law. If you'd like to add your voice to the call for a strengthened *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (CEPA) to better protect people and the environment from harmful toxic exposures - now's the time.

Bill S-5 to reform CEPA is being debated this week at the House Environment committee. So far, the federal government has missed the mark on mandatory product labelling, backtracking on its election promises.

The consumer products industry wants ingredient lists to remain hidden. If they get their way, we will not see any meaningful action to disclose hazardous substances. There's been enough delay! Now's the time to push for strong and transparent labelling of harmful ingredients on consumer products people use every day.

Tell Parliament's Environment and Sustainable Development committee members you want to see action now on Bill S-5, and they need to include hazardous ingredient labelling in CEPA.

Bill S-5 represents a once-in-decades chance to strengthen laws that protect our health and environment from harmful exposure to toxics and establish our right to a healthy environment. It's critical that our elected officials act on their promises.

Cassie Barker
Senior Program Manager, Toxics

2022-11-01

Energy Policy in Ontario

2022-10-21

Opinion

Doug Ford Government is Doing everything wrong about our Energy Future!

See the facts from the Ontario Green Party



Dear Paul,

This week, a [brand new report](#) from the International Energy Agency (IEA) confirmed that virtually everything Doug Ford has done on energy policy is taking us in the wrong direction.

This is a big deal.

You know the tide is turning when mainstream energy organizations, like the IEA, long dominated by oil and gas, are calling on governments to stop investments in oil and gas.

But will Ford listen?

The path to net zero, to give the world a chance to keep global heating below 1.5°C, “requires immediate and massive deployment of all available clean and efficient energy technologies” and stopping new investments in fossil fuels. Doug Ford's Conservatives have done exactly the opposite.

[Tell Doug Ford to listen to the IEA and stop spending our money on fossil fuels](#)

It's shameful that Doug Ford is spending our money on dead-end, dirty sources of electricity, while doing nothing to get ready for the clean electricity future that we need. Ramping up gas power plants

instead will increase climate pollution by 300%. And worsen air pollution. And invest in the past instead of the future.

Greens would never do that, because we listen to the science.

Renewable energy is cheaper, more feasible and more accessible than ever before. The net zero transition will create millions of good jobs and improve air quality and human health.

But, because of Doug Ford and his Conservatives, Ontario is going in the wrong direction.

We're missing out on a huge economic opportunity and the chance for good, clean jobs that will benefit the future of Ontarians and the planet.

ACT NOW!

[Call on Doug Ford](#) to stop spending on fossil fuels and embrace the green economy.

Sincerely,

Dianne Saxe
Deputy Leader
Green Party of Ontario

What we need	What Ford's Conservatives have done instead
Rapid scaling up of solar and wind power	Cancelled 752 clean power projects, mostly solar and wind, driving solar and wind companies out of the province
Limiting the burning of fossil gas	Poured public money into making more dirty electricity from fossil gas
Energy efficiency	Slashed energy efficiency programs
Carbon pricing	Spent \$30 million in a losing fight against carbon pricing
60% of all new vehicles electric by 2030	Cancelled incentives to buy electric vehicles, tore out EV charging stations at Metrolinx stations
Major investments in new clean technologies	Cancelled much of Ontario's funding for new clean technologies

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