

The Talon

Vol. 33, No.3, September 2023



NEWSLETTER

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)

The summer weather of June and early July heat/drought periods were broken by regular rainy days, and into August a similar pattern continued. A rather unusual seasonal warm and humid spell into September gave us a welcome extended summer. This summer Debra and I were able to go canoeing, kayaking, and camping with family. Breeding bird research and artwork rounded out the summer. Hopefully members of SLSN had a great vacation, time with family, travel, and relaxation.

Now into September the birds are migrating through our area already and some trees have started changing colour, fungi are fruiting in forest and field; a great time to be field naturalists.

The club executive carried on important regular administration tasks and have exciting Autumn naturalist events planned, local and farther afield, detailed below in the newsletter. Norma, Treasurer for SLSN and membership secretary reminds us that this is the time of year for annual membership renewals and advised a reminder be included with membership information.

As expected,

The executive continues to keep on top of new COVID notices. the W.H.O. and others, have been following the global pandemic over much of the world. New COVID-19 concerning variants (different than past omicron based), and other

influenzas surges and RSV. The World Health Organisation (WHO) is currently tracking three variants of interest and seven variants under monitoring while continuing to call for better surveillance, sequencing, and reporting of COVID-19 as this virus continues to circulate and evolve.

Already some states in the U.S. and Canadian provinces hospitals are implementing masking mandates. Indoor meeting spaces are considered to be of risk as we enter October. Many of us are aware of friends, family and others who currently have COVID. Notably, the new “Pirola” variant has more than 30 mutations in its spike protein. The substantial number of mutations initially raised concerns among virologists, who feared this variant might partially evade earlier immunity from previous exposure, whether from natural infection or prior vaccination. CDC in the U.S. is tracking a SARS-CoV-2 variant called BA.2.86 and working to better understand its potential impact on public health. This update follows CDC's previous BA.2.86 updates on August 23 and 30th of this year. It is anticipated that the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine will be available in mid-September (CDC, 2023-09-08). Dr. Theresa Tam in Canada confirmed on C.B.C. Radio today that the omicron 1.5 subvariant is of concern.

Avian flu H5NI, animal-to-animal and potential to human transmission concerns in other parts of the world, among other anxieties continue. Impacts of serious Bird Flu infection of domestic farm fowl, and deaths of wild birds like Canada geese and mallards in York Region, reported in spring and early summer seems to have decreased when bird congregations declined in July and August. As bird migration ramps up into October we will see if avian flu reappears.

Continuing development pressures in Southern Ontario with federal politician's policy are not advancing the Lake Simcoe Clean-up Fund in almost a decade. And, specifically in Georgina, allowing the now federally approved Aerodrome in Pefferlaw area. The continuing Provincial government attacks on the Greenbelt with the land swap process, clearly a flawed and contested exercise, is concerning. The controversy has resulted in the resignation of Housing Minister Steve Clark and his chief of staff, not a regular or expected event in Ontario politics.

It is important for SLSN members to be aware of the continuing challenges of policy, legislation and actual on-the-ground natural heritage, impacting actions and spatial geographic locations of impacts. Misinformation, political spin, and

misunderstanding of science and its role/place in planning and development are important to naturalists, and indeed to nature itself.

This newsletter provides current information on developments in these matters which will allow you to probe the truth and actual human motivations of proponents on as many sides of the issues as possible.

Updates on other key South Lake Simcoe environmental issues, Ontario, Canadian and international locations are included later in the newsletter for your interest and reference.

Paul Harpley SLSN

New COVID-19 Variants appearance in U.S. and Canada – Current Human Health Research Information reference

2023-08-22

The Epoch Times

New Mask Mandates in U.S. as new COVID-19 Variants Spread

https://www.theepochtimes.com/article/covid-19-mask-mandates-on-the-rise-again-5478388?utm_source=BN_article_free&src_src=BN_article_free&utm_campaign=breaking-2023-08-22-ca&src_cmp=breaking-2023-08-22-ca&utm_medium=email&est=TVO9N4M9eNk%2FFhdYMeHZqtlbu7LrZNYkocmwVP%2FU3GEiapAyffetlZlINQ%3D%3D&utm_term=news4&utm_content=4

2023-08-23

Science

COVID-19 Boosts Risk of Health Problems 2 Years Later. Huge U.S. Veterans Study

https://www.science.org/content/article/covid-19-boosts-risks-health-problems-2-years-later-giant-study-veterans-says?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DailyLatestNews&utm_content=alert&et rid=596029256&et cid=4867057

Catherine Offord

Three-and-a-half years since SARS-CoV-2 spread around the world, scientists are still documenting the virus' myriad effects on human health. What's clear already is that those effects can continue long beyond the original infection.

Now, researchers have attempted to quantify this long-term harm using a massive database of U.S. veterans' health records. They found a dramatically increased risk of dozens of conditions including heart failure and fatigue, sometimes years post infection. Overall, the team estimates, COVID-19's public health impact is more than 50% greater than that of cancer or heart disease.

Other researchers say the conclusions broadly reflect what physicians have seen...

Post-COVID-19 illness "is going to be a lingering effect for many years," he adds. "We need to put enough work into [not only] finding treatments for it, but being able to respect the disability claims that people are going to have. Those claims are well founded."

2023-09-11

The Epoch Times

New 'Pirola' COVID Variant Emerging: Here's What We Know

https://www.theepochtimes.com/health/new-pirola-covid-variant-emerging-what-do-we-know-5485776?utm_source=HT_article_free&src_src=HT_article_free&utm_campaign=health-2023-09-11-ca&src_cmp=health-2023-09-11-ca&utm_medium=email&est=C2VB1kgMxlRomZm4DMUxHD5nVgUVjdd6hOh0jYRKjGCaBs4Q07LSPeGb5w%3D%3D

FEATURED COVID NEWS

Jessie Zhang

Sep 6 2023.

Outings: All regular outings/events – **Note:** Paid-up members in good standing may participate (for insurance compliance). 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 for more details.

2023 Late Summer/Autumn

Thursday Sept. 21: Afternoon Walk Event – Birding, wildflowers, and mushrooms!

An afternoon walk in forest, wetland and on field trails, in an ancient glacial landscape of the South Lake Simcoe area. Relatively flat terrain locations and some higher area trails for those wanting that experience.

Meet at 2:00 p.m. at the parking lot for Coffee Time south of **Baldwin** in Georgina (23721 Highway 48, Baldwin) visit <https://www.yelp.ca/biz/coffee-time-baldwin> for location details. We will proceed from here to the event site York Region Forest-Zephyr Tract, which is not far from Baldwin. Car pooling option for environmental and social principles encouraged and available. Outing will start at the field site at 2:30 p.m. a short car trip south of Coffee Time.

Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars. Any local or provincial COVID-19 health and safety guidance in effect. Plan for a minimum of 2 hours.

Sunday October 1: Members afternoon “social” picnic event, and nature hike.

The SLSN executive invite all members to this outdoor meeting event. Resurrecting an annual naturalist club affair from times past, the club will provide barbecue hot dogs, hamburgers, soft drinks; and members bring a potluck salad or dessert. Bring lawn chairs. There is an open-sided park pavilion and some park benches as well. Parking in the area, with a short walk to the site. Bring stories and nature objects etc. to talk about from your summer Adventures! Following the picnic, we will walk, birding for autumn migrants and general nature study exploring little visited forest and meadow areas, small woodlots and stream and a river location on a flat easy walk . Surprising wildlife and botanical finds are expected.

Meet at 3:00 p.m. at Brown Hill Park, parking is on Blake St. (first street south, off Ravenshoe Rd. east of Hwy. 48). Park your car along west side of Blake Street in the hamlet of Brown Hill.

Please confirm your participation by September 28th for food planning. Phone Paul 905-722-8021 or Norma 905-476-4747 by Sept. 28th.

As always, dress for the weather& bring binoculars. Any local or provincial COVID-19 health and safety guidance in effect. Plan for a minimum of 2 hours. Event to take place rain or shine!

Saturday October 14: Biking and/or Walking Exploration – Leslie Street Spit (now called Tommy Thompson Park) Toronto.

A late morning and afternoon walking adventure at the now famous man-made Toronto lakefront Park, and some years ago subject of a C.B.C. "The Nature of Things" T.V. documentary. Members have talked about going here for many years as an outing. Fortunately, the area now is a formal Toronto Park site, and is accessible and safe. In early October the annual autumn bird migration will be well underway including waterfowl and shorebirds, and trees and shrubs will be in fall colours! Those who want to bike the park to the south point will need to bring their bikes by car (there is limited T.T.C. access – check Park Website). There is a public Parking lot at the north area trail head. Check the Toronto Parks website for more info. and directions at <https://tommythompsonpark.ca/>.

For those coming directly to the Park, the outing will start at 11 a.m. We will meet at the main Parking Lot. Bring a lunch and snacks as there is limited or no food and drink amenities at the Park. Alternatively, those needing a ride from Georgina, or wanting to car pool down with other members, should meet at 10 a.m. at the parking lot for Coffee Time south of **Baldwin** in Georgina.

Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars. Any local or provincial COVID-19 health and safety guidance in effect. Plan for a minimum of 3 hours.

Thursday November 16: Wye Marsh Wildlife Area Day

A late morning and afternoon forest, meadow, and wetland boardwalk walking visit to the Wye Marsh in north central Simcoe County on the west side of Lake Simcoe. Established originally many years ago as a Federal Wildlife area, The Wye Marsh Nature Centre was opened in 1969 as a nature centre operated by Environment Canada (EC). In 1985, EC turned operations over to Friends of the Wye Marsh (FWM), and fortunately retained and restored by local community people. Now it remains a fully functional facility. Most famous for its pairs of Trumpeter swans, important breeding animals, in the Ontario species restoration project with the Toronto Zoo and other facilities since the 1980's. Typically the swans can be seen well from the boardwalk.

Also, a modern Visitor Centre is on the site, a real plus if there is some rain. Recently the Centre has upgraded key exhibit areas and new displays and information can be viewed. Trails are relatively short and accessible. Picnic and rest areas are available along the way. A biodiversity area, and Birds of Prey facility is on site.

For those coming directly to the site, the outing will start at 11 a.m. We will meet at the main Wye Marsh Parking Lot near the Visitor Centre entrance. For further information and location directions see details at, <https://www.wyemarsh.com/> . Wye Marsh Centre location address is 16160 Hwy 12 East, PO Box 100, Midland, Ontario L4R 4K6

For those needing a ride from Georgina, or wanting to car pool to the “Wye” with other members, meet at 10 a.m. at the parking lot for Coffee Time south of **Baldwin** in Georgina (23721 Highway 48, Baldwin) visit <https://www.yelp.ca/biz/coffee-time-baldwin> for location details.

Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars. Any local or provincial COVID-19 health and safety guidance in effect. Plan for a minimum of 3 hours.

Wednesday December 27: Annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.)

This is an early notice for the 2023 C.B.C. for members involved and responsible for Count area sectors, or Feeder Watchers. Other members who want to join the Count this year contact Paul at 905-722-8021.

As we approach early December more SLSN birding and related naturalist outings will be planned, preparing for the annual Sutton area Count, and will be advertised in the e-Newsletter.



Osprey in W. Pine tree at Jackson's Point Heather MacKay and Joe Seare 2023-08-22

Photos of Osprey eating a fish on the pine tree beside SLSN members Heather and Joe's house in Jackson's Point. Bald eagles were in the area earlier in the spring/summer, so we guess the Osprey, which has been up there on and off for a few days, has taken over that spot. P.H.

Digital Webinars and Virtual Meetings reference for the Naturalist – for SLSN members.

Using Plants to Control Common Buckthorn

Presented by:

Mike Schuster, University of Minnesota

Management of common buckthorn is often ineffective since buckthorn rapidly re-establishes from seeds and re-sprouts. At experimental buckthorn removal sites around Minnesota, USA, the Cover It Up! project has found that re-establishing dense native revegetation can limit invasion by buckthorn and other exotic plants by exerting strong competition for light and augmenting fuel loads for prescribed burns. Now in its eighth year, the project continues to yield new insights into the establishment rate and invasion-suppression capacity of native plants, especially in forests with denser tree canopies where herb growth has been slowest. This talk will focus on the diversity of revegetation approaches examined and comparing the outcomes of those different approaches.

Monday, September 18, 2023
2:00 p.m. EDT

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_vrgZQYSFTEmfzCLqW_m_KA#/registration

Mississauga's Invasive Species Management Plan and Implementation Strategy: Managing Invasive Species in an Urban Environment

Presented by:

Presented by Allie Abram, Invasive Species Coordinator, City of Mississauga

The City of Mississauga developed an Invasive Species Management Plan to respond to invasive plants and pests threatening the City's Urban Forest and Natural Areas. This webinar will provide an overview of how the plan and implementation strategy were developed, what considerations were made when selecting priority sites and species, as well as how the plan is being implemented.

Wednesday, October 11, 2023
11 a.m. EDT

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_vrgZQYSFTEmfzCLqW_m_KA#/registration

Keswick of the future: 40% more residents, jobs by 2051

Georgina plans for tourism, residential development and retail in the Keswick Secondary Plan

By **Amanda Persico** Georgina Advocate

Sunday, July 30, 2023

1 min to read

**Clean-Up of Lake Simcoe in last Decade continuing to Languish
under Federal and Provincial Governments: Lake area**

Municipal Governments and local First Nation call for real Action, yet again!

2023-09-11

York Media

Chippewas of Georgina Island, Georgina, Bradford West Gwillimbury leaders unite in effort to save Lake Simcoe

Bradford West Gwillimbury, Georgina and the Chippewas of Georgina Island demand action from province

By **Kim Zarzour** [YorkRegion.com](https://yorkregion.com)

Monday, September 11, 2023



Voices are uniting to protect the health of Lake Simcoe. - Kim Zarzour/Metroland

It's time for the Province of Ontario to get moving on the Lake Simcoe cleanup.

So say the municipal councils in Bradford West Gwillimbury, the Town of Georgina and the Chippewas of Georgina Island.

In 2009, the province received unanimous all-party support for the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, which contained a variety of measures to protect the watershed.

The Lake Simcoe protection plan called for phosphorus pollution to be reduced to 44 tonnes per year to protect cold-water fish and prevent excessive weed growth and algae blooms — but Jack Gibbons, chair of Lake Simcoe Watch, says that has not happened.

Instead, Gibbons said, the lake's health has gone in the opposite direction, with phosphorus pollution rising by 26 per cent between 2015 and 2020.

On Sept. 5, Bradford West Gwillimbury council unanimously passed a [resolution requesting the province](#) update the Lake Simcoe Phosphorus Reduction Strategy to reduce phosphorus pollution by 55 per cent by 2030 — and capped at no more than 44 tonnes per year — with a target date of 2030.

On Aug. 2, Georgina council unanimously approved Councillor Dave [Neeson's motion calling on the province](#) to develop a plan to reduce the lake's phosphorus pollution to 44 tonnes per year by 2030.

The Chippewas of Georgina Island chief and council are adding their voice to efforts to clean up the lake. ...

Read more: https://www.yorkregion.com/news/chippewas-of-georgina-island-georgina-bradford-west-gwillimbury-leaders-unite-in-effort-to-save-lake/article_03ea1108-9fc2-5e32-a792-886ed65c730c.html?source=newsletter

Georgina, Bradford West Gwillimbury, East Gwillimbury, Newmarket, Oro-Medonte, Innisfil, Orillia, Brock and Barrie, municipalities in the lake's watershed, have also [united to push for federal funding](#) for a Lake Simcoe Restoration Fund.

Greenbelt Land Swap Controversy: on-going messy, bungled planning process to build huge increase in housing fast in Ontario, to meet Federal Government immigration impositions in the Province.

Selected Canadian media sources for background information and updates below,

2023-08-22

Toronto Star

F O R D ' S F R I E N D S A L E R T



Ford government staffer at centre of Greenbelt controversy resigns

Read more: https://www.thestar.com/politics/provincial/ford-government-staffer-at-centre-of-greenbelt-controversy-resigns/article_e1f77e93-30ae-5e95-bf19-5c7ac31341c2.html?source=newsletter&utm_content=a01&utm_source=ts_sa&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=ford_friend_196123

2023-09-04

Toronto Star

Ontario Housing Minister Steve Clark resigns amid Greenbelt land swap controversy | CBC News Loaded

Toronto

Ontario Housing Minister Steve Clark resigns amid Greenbelt land swap controversy

Opposition parties say move is a 1st step, but Greenbelt lands need to be returned

[Vanessa Balintec](#), [Lane Harrison](#) · CBC News · Posted: Sep 04, 2023 9:29 AM EDT | Last Updated: 11 minutes ago



Ontario Housing Minister Steve Clark speaks during a news conference at Queen's Park in Toronto on Thursday. In a letter posted on Monday morning, Clark resigned his ministerial post. (Alex Lupul/CBC)

Ontario Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Steve Clark has resigned from cabinet after weeks of pushback from political opponents, First Nations leaders and residents following multiple investigations into his ministry's handling of the Greenbelt land swaps.

His resignation comes after [Ontario's integrity commissioner investigated his conduct](#) and recommended Clark be reprimanded, saying he failed to properly oversee the process that led to protected Greenbelt lands being selected for housing development.

Weeks earlier, the province's auditor general found the process for choosing which parcels of land would be open for housing development [was heavily influenced by a small group of well-connected developers](#) who stand to make billions of dollars.

Read more: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/steve-clark-resigns-greenbelt-1.6956402>

Insider Information exposed by Stop Sprawl Durham in Greenbelt Swap Scandal

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT “MR X” OF CLARINGTON?

Mysterious consultant known as 'Mr. X' in Greenbelt report ID'd as former Clarington mayor: sources



John Mutton denies he is Mr. X, telling Toronto Star he has never been hired to lobby to remove Greenbelt land



Travis Dhanraj, Ryan Patrick Jones · CBC News ·

Posted: Sep 02, 2023 12:03 AM EDT | Last Updated: September 2



Ontario's integrity commissioner raised questions on Wednesday about whether a development consultant whom he called 'Mr. X' may have engaged in unregistered lobbying and other potential violations. Former Clarington mayor John Mutton, left, seen here with Ontario Premier Doug Ford, has been identified to CBC News as Mr. X. (LinkedIn)

We also know via the [City of Pickering's Integrity Commissioner webpage](#), that John Mutton's company, Municipal Solutions, paid for the tickets for [MAYOR ASHE](#) and [COUNCILLOR ROBINSON](#) to attend the [Premier's fundraising dinner in March](#) of this year.

2023-09-07

Toronto Star

Doug Ford's new housing minister says Greenbelt protection could be lifted from more land

The Ontario government has said it's going to conduct a review of its plans to remove Greenbelt protection from large swaths of land for development. But in an unusual circumstance for a major policy shift, no press release or explanatory background briefing documents were published, Rob Ferguson reports. In the meantime, Housing Minister Paul Calandra says the review will be "public, open and accountable," promising more details soon. Pressed for answers, he revealed it could ultimately lead to more land losing environmental protections.

Read more: https://www.thestar.com/politics/provincial/greenbelt-protection-could-be-lifted-from-more-land-doug-ford-s-new-housing-minister-says/article_26405814-efb9-5dd6-9de3-be70fcf91147.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198248

2023-09-07

Toronto Star

Doug Ford's new housing minister says Greenbelt protection could be lifted from more land

The Ontario government has said it's going to conduct a review of its plans to remove Greenbelt protection from large swaths of land for development. But in an unusual circumstance for a major policy shift, no press release or explanatory background briefing documents were published, Rob Ferguson reports. In the meantime, Housing Minister Paul Calandra says the review will be "public, open and accountable," promising more details soon. Pressed for answers, he revealed it could ultimately lead to more land losing environmental protections. [Here's what we know — and what we don't.](#)

- **Word from the Green Party:** The review, plus the fact that more farmland could be opened to housing construction, has sent a signal that will create a bigger "bonanza" for developers to buy and flip protected land for profits, Green Leader Mike Schreiner said.

- **Word from the Liberals:** The lack of available details suggests the Tories are cobbling together the review on the fly and in crisis mode amid scandal, said interim Liberal Leader John Fraser.
- **Martin Regg Cohn's take:** [Rather than return land to the Greenbelt, as urged by the auditor general, Ford is reaching rock bottom.](#)
- **The Star's take:** The damning details in two watchdog reports highlight [why Ford's fatally flawed Greenbelt plan must be stopped in its tracks.](#)
- **Another angle:** [Prioritizing people over profit is the way forward on the housing crisis.](#)

Greenbelt protection could be lifted from more land, Doug Ford's new housing minister says

Ontario's pending review of all Greenbelt lands will be "public, open and accountable" but new Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Paul Calandra won't rule out removing more properties from the protected zone to build homes.

By Rob Ferguson Queen's Park Bureau

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

3 min to read

Article was updated Sep 6, 2023

JOIN THE CONVERSATION (563)



Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Paul Calandra holds a news conference at Queen's Park on Sept. 6, 2023.
Richard Lautens / Toronto Star

Ontario's [pending review](#) of all Greenbelt lands will be "public, open and accountable" but new Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Paul Calandra won't rule out pulling more properties from the protected zone.

"I will not be stopped on our mission to build 1.5-million homes," Calandra told a news conference Wednesday, his first since replacing Steve Clark, who [resigned](#) over the \$8.28-billion Greenbelt land swap scandal.

Developers with local approvals to build will be given "use it or lose it" orders to help Premier Doug Ford's Progressive Conservative government reach its target by 2031 to ease a housing "crisis" that has resulted in soaring prices, Calandra added, promising details on the review's parameters soon.

Asked if the review unveiled by Ford on Tuesday could result in more land being removed from the Greenbelt, the minister said that depends on the findings.

“There may be lands that need to be added to the Greenbelt and maybe some lands that are removed, but it will be a fair and open process,” said Calandra, who told reporters he was “very supportive” of removing the properties at the centre of the land swap scandal to build 50,000 homes.

Green Leader Mike Schreiner warned the review — and Calandra’s comment that more farmland in the Greenbelt could be opened to housing construction — has sent a signal that will create a bigger “bonanza” for speculators eager to buy and flip protected land for profits.

The Ford government is “more than doubling down, they’re tripling down,” Schreiner said. “I’m sure there’s more that want to cash in.”

Critics of reopening the Greenbelt note that experts say there is enough land already zoned for housing to meet the government’s target, much of it serviced and ready for building.

Interim Liberal Leader John Fraser said the lack of details about the review suggests it is being cobbled together on the fly by a government in crisis mode over the scandal, which forced a rare Labour Day cabinet shuffle.

In an unusual circumstance for a major policy shift, no press releases or explanatory background briefing documents have been released by the government to flesh out the review announcements by Ford and Calandra in the last two days.

“The Conservatives are continuing to make it up as they go along,” Fraser charged as a new [Abacus Data poll](#) suggested the Greenbelt scandal is eating into their support.

Calandra briefly mentioned other measures under consideration, including restrictions on sale or transfer of properties for which ministerial zoning orders have been granted and an increase in the non-resident land speculation tax.

The land swap saw 15 properties removed from Greenbelt protection in an insider-driven process that auditor general Bonnie Lysyk found [“favoured certain developers”](#) in her damning Aug. 9 report.

All but one of the 15 parcels were personally selected by Clark’s chief of staff Ryan Amato, who resigned last month, bypassing input from civil servants and other land use planning experts after developers handed packages of information to him. ...

[Rob Ferguson](#) is a Toronto-based reporter covering Ontario politics for the Star. Follow him on Twitter: [@robferguson1](#).

Read more: https://www.thestar.com/politics/provincial/greenbelt-protection-could-be-lifted-from-more-land-doug-ford-s-new-housing-minister-says/article_26405814-efb9-5dd6-9de3-

[be70fcf91147.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198248](https://www.thestar.com/news/ontario/2023/09/06/doug-ford-vows-to-re-evaluate-greenbelt-development-as-critics-dismiss-sham-review/article-ca13c0f6-9f64-5413-97ac-be70fcf91147.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198248)

2023-09-06

Toronto Star

THE GREENBELT

Doug Ford is vowing to “re-evaluate” his Greenbelt plans — while development goes ahead

A day after his housing minister resigned amid scandal, Premier Doug Ford promised to “re-evaluate” all lands in the Greenbelt. But he’s not planning to pause development on the 14 parcels at the centre of the \$8.28 billion controversy facing his government — nor is he ruling out the possibility of removing more land from Greenbelt protection, Rob Ferguson and Kristin Rushowy report. NDP Leader Marit Stiles called Ford’s plan a “sham” and “a step in the wrong direction.” [Here’s what we know about the review.](#)

- **Ford’s words:** “If I don’t see movement, you’re going back into the Greenbelt,” Ford said to the owners and developers of the 14 parcels, urging them to begin building homes.
- **Edward Keenan’s take:** [There’s no “better late than never” for Ford and the City of Toronto.](#)
- **The aftermath:** Support for the Progressive Conservatives is sliding as the Greenbelt fallout continues. [Take a look at this new polling.](#)

Premier Doug Ford says the province will “re-evaluate” all lands in the [Greenbelt](#), but is not pausing development on the 14 parcels at the centre of the \$8.28-billion land swap scandal dogging his government.

Ford touted the change in tack a day after the sudden resignation of Steve Clark as municipal affairs and housing minister and a subsequent cabinet shuffle, promising “a complete review, from top to bottom,” for up to 800 pieces

Read more: [https://www.thestar.com/politics/provincial/doug-ford-vows-to-re-evaluate-greenbelt-development-as-critics-dismiss-sham-review/article-ca13c0f6-9f64-5413-97ac-](https://www.thestar.com/politics/provincial/doug-ford-vows-to-re-evaluate-greenbelt-development-as-critics-dismiss-sham-review/article-ca13c0f6-9f64-5413-97ac-be70fcf91147.html)

[33eb9ef14d0e.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198108](https://www.33eb9ef14d0e.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198108)

2023-08-24

Georgina Advocate

Keswick of the Future: 40% more residents, jobs by 2051



The Keswick population is expected to grow by more than 40 per cent by 2051. - Metroland file photo

Live in Keswick and want to know what the community will look like in the next 30 years?

After years of planning, the town has approved the Keswick Secondary Plan — a long-range plan guiding future growth and development for the area.

Keswick, which encompasses about 4,250 acres, is the largest urban centre in Georgina, and its population and the number of jobs are expected to grow by more than 40 per cent over the next three decades.

“This is one of the most important plans for Georgina and the community of Keswick,” said Mayor Margaret Quirk.

“Keswick is the largest urban community in the town, and it is where the majority of future growth and development will be directed.”

The guiding principals behind the Keswick Secondary Plan include developing a complete community; ensuring a mix of housing types and options and development types to meet the town’s growth targets; strengthening community identity through community nodes,

corridors and a public realm; and connecting Lake Simcoe's natural heritage features through public parks and open spaces.

About a third of all new development in Keswick is slated between just north of Old Homestead Road to the north, Ravenshoe Road to the south, Woodbine to the east and Lake Simcoe to the west — the Delineated Built-up Area.

Within the Delineated Built-up Area, there are three urban areas planned as destinations for future residents, tourists and businesses: Glenwoods Urban Area, Maskinonge Urban Area and Uptown Keswick.

You might be interested in



[news](#)

[Laundry drying on suburban streets, families living in unsafe apartments: York Region's housing crisis worsens](#)

Glenwoods Urban Area and Uptown Keswick are pinned for future residential and specialized office, boutique retail and restaurants, respectively. And the Maskinonge Urban Area is pinned for tourism-related businesses such as restaurants, hotels, marinas, boat rentals and other recreational business along the shores of Lake Simcoe.

Woodbine Avenue and the Queensway are to become major mixed-use corridors, with plans for the Queensway to intensify over time into a mixed-use, mid-rise area. Meanwhile, Woodbine will be home to retail, office buildings and public facilities.

While the Keswick Business Park lands are not included in the Keswick secondary plan, the two are intrinsically linked as the Keswick Business Park is expected accommodate 7,500 to 9,000 jobs at full build-out.

Read more: For more information or to read more about the Keswick Secondary Plan, visit georgina.ca.

Invasive Species in Ontario – Serious Concern in Canadian National Parks – What is being Done?

Parks Canada



Invasive species: aquatic ecosystems under stress at Parks Canada

Invasive species are one of the biggest threats to biodiversity in the world. This is especially true in aquatic environments. Parks Canada and partners are using innovative ways to tackle aquatic invasive species. Text transcript [A diver wearing a wetsuit leans backwards off of a dock and falls into a lake.]

<https://parks.canada.ca/nature/science/especes-species/aquatique-envahissante-aquatic-invasive>

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada



The aquatic restoration team at Riding Mountain National Park onboard an electrofishing vessel

Invasive species: aquatic ecosystems under stress at Parks Canada

Invasive species are one of the biggest threats to biodiversity in the world. This is especially true in aquatic environments. Parks Canada and partners are using innovative ways to tackle aquatic invasive species.

Learn how Parks Canada and partners are using a creative twist on spearfishing to remove invasive fish at Riding Mountain National Park in Manitoba:

Text transcript

The stress of it all

Aquatic invasive species [cause harm](#) to freshwater and marine ecosystems and the native species that live in them. For instance, aquatic invasive species put stress and pressure on the ecosystem in many ways.

They can [outcompete native species](#) for resources and can mate with native fish [causing interbreeding](#). In addition, through intense predation, aquatic invaders can change the natural structure of the food chain.

The European Green Crab is one of the most invasive aquatic species in the world. They often destroy eelgrass habitat and harm the environment. Parks Canada found European Green Crabs in parts of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. **Watch how Parks Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation is monitoring and removing this invasive predator.**

Controlling Invasive European Green Crabs at Gwaii Haanas in British Columbia

Text transcript

Eelgrass is an [ecologically significant species](#) and an important habitat for fish and other marine life. Eelgrass even mitigates climate change by storing “[blue carbon](#)”. That is why Parks Canada works to protect eelgrass beds and [restore eelgrass](#) after it's been degraded by aquatic invasive species.

Learn more about what Parks Canada has done to prevent European Green Crabs at **Kejimikujik National Park Seaside** in Nova Scotia.



The invasive European Green Crab destroys eelgrass as it searches for soft shell clams. Eelgrass provides important nursery habitat for many culturally and economically valuable species, like lobster.

These actions help the marine environment recover.

Unwanted guests

Aquatic invasive species often arrive in new environments by accident. For instance, the [Zebra Mussel](#) and the [European Green Crab](#) can “hitchhike” on boats to a new waterbody.

Text transcript



Parks Canada staff examine veliger samplers as part of a zebra mussel detection program in Waterton Lakes National Park

Some species, like the Brook Trout in the Rocky Mountain national parks, were introduced for recreational fishing. This was at a time when the [impacts of Brook trout](#) on the ecosystem were less known.

Aquatic invasive species can be parasites, like [Whirling Disease](#), which can seriously harm fish. Aquatic invasive species can also be plants, like non-native [Eurasian Watermilfoil](#), [Phragmites](#), and [Cattails](#).

Restoring the marsh at Point Pelee National Park





High costs

It's not just environments that suffer. Aquatic invasive species can negatively impact human social and cultural values. This includes access to water for boating, Indigenous harvesting, and recreational fishing. Fisheries are harmed when invasive species prey on native fish that people like to catch.

Some invaders can even force a closure of a beach, lake, or boat launch, preventing its use and enjoyment.



Invasive Zebra Mussels can damage infrastructure, like boats, propellers, wharfs, and underwater pipes



A Parks Canada staff member checks a boat for aquatic invasive species before it can enter the protected waters of a national park

Preventing the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species is expensive. Yet prevention is far less expensive than controlling, managing and monitoring once the invading species is established. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Read on for 3 short stories about this work

Riding Mountain National Park

- Time to get creative at Riding Mountain

Manitoba

- **Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site**

A world's first at Kejimikujik

Nova Scotia

- **Environmental DNA**

We know you're in there

eDNA

Water world

Invasive species are very hard to manage in aquatic ecosystems. Many water environments are connected. For this reason, it's hard to control the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Sometimes aquatic invasive species enter from headwaters that flow into a national park. Launching a boat that came from other waters can bring in small aquatic invaders or fragments of plants.

Unlike on land, we don't always see aquatic invasive species. This is one reason that eDNA is such an effective tool for detecting aquatic invasive species.

Your role in protecting aquatic ecosystems

Visitors to Parks Canada administered places play a **key role** in preventing aquatic invasive species and protecting species.

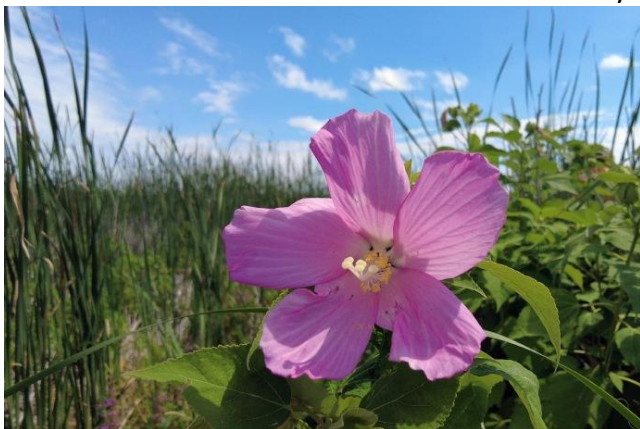
Here are a few ways that you can help:

- **Stop aquatic hitchhikers.** Clean, drain, and dry your watercraft, paddle board, canoe, toys, and all gear before and after use:
 - **Clean** mud, sand, plant or animal parts from all items before leaving the shore
 - **Drain** all water from watercrafts, trailers, and gear. Invert or tilt items. Open all compartments. Pull drain plugs
 - **Dry** items completely before entering any river, pond, lake or stream

- **Don't let it loose!** For the safety of our waters and the health of local ecosystems, it is illegal to release plants and animals into any Parks Canada administered site



Threatened baby Least Bittern at Point Pelee National Park



Swamp Rose-mallow is an endangered flower that Parks Canada is working to protect in Point Pelee National Park

2023-08-03

Canadian Geographic

ENVIRONMENT

Canada officially recognizes the right to a healthy environment

The Canadian federal law regulating toxic substances has been updated for the first time in more than two decades

BY LUKE FAULKS



Canada joins 156 other countries with some form of right to a healthy environment. (Photo: Colin Larmour/Can Geo Photo Club)

FacebookTwitterEmail

For the first time in the country's history, the federal government is recognizing Canadians' right to a healthy environment.

On June 13, a series of amendments to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) became law when Bill S-5, the [Strengthening Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada Act](#), received royal assent. It's the first update to CEPA since the Act's passage in 1999, and a step forward on protecting Canada's environment, according to advocates.

"It's a big deal," said Ecojustice program manager Elaine MacDonald. "It kind of catches Canada up to 160 UN states or countries around the world that have already recognized the right to [a] healthy environment."

What does the right mean for Canadians?

The right to a healthy environment is one of a series of provisions proposed to CEPA — Canada's primary means of regulating toxic substances — by Patrick Weiler, MP for West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country.

As a result of Bill S-5, CEPA's preamble now "recognizes that every individual in Canada has a right to a healthy environment."

Weiler is quick to specify that the language in the bill isn't just restricted to a "healthy" environment — instead, the amendment defines the new right as being to a "clean, healthy, sustainable" environment.

"We purposely didn't define clean, healthy, and sustainable — or rather, my amendment didn't specifically define that — because it is something that I think will continue to evolve over time," said Weiler.

Weiler expects that definition will become more "ambitious" in protecting the right to a healthy environment, in part due to the inclusion of a non-regression clause in the legislation.

"What it says is, is what if you're going to alter [CEPA], you can only increase the stringency of the environmental protections," said Weiler. "And that's important too, just to make sure that we're continuing to make progress on this, and really to insulate it from future governments not taking it seriously."

How long has the amendment been in the works?

CEPA's right to a healthy environment isn't something that appeared overnight. It's been the result of concentrated efforts from a wide range of environmental activist groups and members of government.

“Folks have been working on this for decades,” said MP Weiler. “So when something like this happens, it’s something you really get to celebrate — all the work that’s gone in for such a long time.”

In 2014, the David Suzuki Foundation [launched](#) the Blue Dot Movement, aimed at getting the right to a healthy environment enshrined in Section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. MacDonald says that enshrining the right in the Charter or the Constitution would have been a big ask.

“There was never really a door open to constitutional change,” said MacDonald. “There were discussions in the early days about what that would look like to try and run a campaign like that, and I think it was pretty quickly determined that that would be pretty difficult for small environmental groups.”

The Blue Dot campaign was followed by a 2017 [parliamentary review](#) of CEPA that recommended 87 changes to strengthen the 1999 act, including the right to a healthy environment.

In April 2021, Bill C-28, [An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999](#), was introduced. It didn’t have a chance to pass into law before the legislative session was ended in the run-up to the 2022 federal election.

A new version of the CEPA amendment was introduced in the senate in November 2022. Now, the right to a healthy environment has been passed into law.

What’s missing from the updated CEPA?

Despite the right to a healthy environment being a step in the right direction, there’s still work to be done, according to Weiler and a [number of advocate groups](#).

For J. Kevin Barlow, at Sierra Club B.C., the “reasonable limits” to which Canadians’ right to a healthy environment is subject, including “social, health, scientific and economic factors” is worrying.

“So basically, that gives them a way out to say, ‘well, you know, this is for the good of the greater society,’” said Barlow. “So we’re going to ignore your rights.”

“And a lot of times that happened to the Indigenous community, who were in remote areas where mining and that type of thing would sometimes cause pollution, and then people would start getting cancer.”

That’s not the only missing piece. Since 1999, CEPA has allowed citizens to seek remedies against the dumping of toxic substances into their environments through the pursuit of

Environmental Protection Actions. But advocates say there are still too many barriers to citizens successfully filing an Action against the government — and MP Weiler agrees.

“Section 22 [of CEPA] allows for a member of the public to basically hold the government accountable for doing its job with this legislation,” said Weiler. “But because of the way that it’s written, it hasn’t been workable, and it’s never been used.”

MacDonald lists requisite government investigations and the threshold of “significant harm” as being prohibitive to timely remedies to Canadians’ toxic exposures.

“So those were some of the barriers we’re wanting to see amended or removed, in order to make it easier for people to be able to go to court,” said MacDonald.

Read more: <https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/canada-officially-recognizes-the-right-to-a-healthy-environment/>

2023-09-30

National Geographic

COVID-19 Cases are rising Again...

More Info:

https://www.nationalgeographic.com/premium/article/sick-covid-refresher-tests-masking-isolation-medicine?rid=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&cmpid=org=ngp::mc=crm-email::src=ngp::cmp=editorial::add=Compass_20230930