

Ministry of Economic  
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and Infrastructure

Office of the Minister

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SEP 02 2014

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq  
Minister of the Environment and  
Minister Responsible for Parks Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Ministère du Développement  
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Dear Minister Aglukkaq,

I am writing regarding Bill C-40, *An Act Respecting the Rouge National Urban Park*. As you know, our government has been very supportive of the establishment of the Rouge National Urban Park.

Over the past generation, Ontario has built policies that seek to improve the ecological integrity of the Rouge Valley and the surrounding areas. These policy directions are the result of extensive consultations with Ontarians undertaken by all political parties, beginning with the creation of Rouge Park, through the protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine, and the creation of the Greenbelt Plan and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

From the outset, we have been clear that it is important that the Government of Canada ensure that the park meets or exceeds the standards and policies that the province has put in place to protect green space and environmentally sensitive land. Further, we signed an agreement with the federal government dated January 26, 2013 on the basis of this commitment.

I have heard from many stakeholders in Ontario including Friends of the Rouge Watershed, Environmental Defence and Ontario Nature regarding both Bill C-40 and the draft park management plan that the federal government has released for public consultation. The legislation as it stands is silent on the Memorandum of Agreement requirement to meet or exceed provincial standards for ecological integrity.

After considering this issue carefully, I have decided that I am unable to recommend to Cabinet that it should release, extinguish or transfer any of its interests in the Rouge Park lands unless Bill C-40 is amended. In short, if these amendments are not made, I cannot support recommending steps to enable the contribution of 5,400 acres for the simple reason that I feel this land will be better protected if it remains with the province of Ontario.

Those amendments to Bill C-40 should explicitly state that Ontario's existing provincial policies and plans that enhance ecological integrity of the proposed Rouge National Urban Park will be met or exceeded. The amendments should also include a commitment that the federal government will conform to provincial policies such as the Greenbelt Plan (2005), the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and the Big Move.

This is a position that I have arrived at after discussions with stakeholders, local citizen groups, and staff. They agree that these amendments are very important to ensure that the ecological integrity of the Rouge National Urban Park will continue so that future generations will be able to enjoy this unique and beautiful park.

Stakeholders have suggested a number of additional policies that they have requested the government consider. I have attached the list of additional policies requested by Environmental Defence, Ontario Nature and Friends of the Rouge Watershed for your consideration.

Ontario has worked hard to safeguard the Rouge Park lands for future generations. I look forward to working productively with you to see Bill C-40 amended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Duguid', written in a cursive style.

Brad Duguid  
Minister

- c. The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario  
Drew Fagan, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure, Ministry of Economic Development,  
Employment and Infrastructure  
Alan Latourelle, CEO, Parks Canada  
Joe Dickson, MPP, Ajax—Pickering  
Tracy MacCharles, MPP Pickering—Scarborough East  
Helena Jaczek, MPP, Oak Ridges—Markham  
Bas Balkissoon, MPP, Scarborough—Rouge River



environmental  
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### **Request for Supplementary Agreement Conditions and Policies Prior to Final Land Transfer:**

We respectfully ask the Provincial Government to utilize its large Rouge Park land contribution and the MOA and supplementary agreements to require that the legislation, strategic plan and written policies for the national Rouge Park:

1. Incorporate, strengthen and implement the vision, goal and objectives of approved Rouge Park Plans (1994 and 2001), the provincial Greenbelt Plan (2005), the Little Rouge Corridor Management Plan (2007), the Rouge Natural Heritage Action Plan (2008), the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2002), the Toronto Remedial Action Plan and Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, and associated watershed plans;
2. Protect and restore the ecological corridors and areas outlined in the Greenbelt Plan (s.3.2.6), Rouge Park Plans (1994 and 2001), the Little Rouge Corridor Management Plan (2007), the Rouge Watershed Plan (2007), and the Rouge Natural Heritage Action Plan (2008), to create a sustainable Carolinian and mixed woodland natural habitat system which links Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine with public parkland;
3. Expand the current 57 km<sup>2</sup> study area to at least 100 km<sup>2</sup> to ensure the federal government protects its lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt and creates a sustainable Rouge Park link from Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine. The expanded park area should include:
  - 17+ km<sup>2</sup> of the federal lands in the Oak Ridges Moraine and Provincial Greenbelt in Pickering which were declared part of a Federal Green Space Preserve in 2002;
  - 20+ km<sup>2</sup> of the federal lands in Pickering which are designated Greenbelt "natural heritage system" and are beyond any reasonable future Airport footprint;
  - 3+ km<sup>2</sup> of Rouge lands which the City of Markham has asked the federal government to include to connect Rouge Park and Milne Park;
  - 3+ km<sup>2</sup> of environmentally significant Rouge Valley lands in the City of Toronto which are part of the existing Rouge Park.
4. Establish the Park Advisory Board without further delay and include affected First Nations and the Friends of the Rouge Watershed to ensure that the deep community roots of Rouge Park continue to inform and influence Park planning and protection.
5. Ensure that agricultural operations in the park transition towards ecologically sound farming practices and local food production, to protect water quality and biological diversity and benefit local farmers, park visitors and surrounding residents.

Before you finalize the transfer of the priceless Greenbelt lands to the Federal Government, please ensure that Rouge Park land transfer supplementary agreements and discussions incorporate the above policies.

We are counting on your government to protect the Province's Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine and

Rouge Park legacies and deliver on Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy.

We look forward to your favourable response.

Yours truly,



Tim Gray  
Executive Director  
Environmental Defence



Caroline Schultz  
Executive Director  
Ontario Nature



Jim Robb  
General Manager  
Friends of the Rouge  
Watershed