

Recommended Addition to the Rouge National Urban Park

Green Durham Association (GDA) is a registered charity whose members have been deeply involved with the Federal and Provincial lands ever since their expropriation in 1972. The GDA is primarily focused on protecting and enhancing the lands directly northeast of Toronto in Uxbridge, North Pickering and adjacent Greenbelt lands. For more information visit our website – www.greendurham.ca .

The RNUP: A Gateway to Communities in Durham

We understand the rationale for why the Federal Government wishes to retain the option to build a major airport in Pickering, if needed in the future. We are grateful that 5,200 acres of the original expropriated lands in the west of Durham are being transferred to the Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) as part of *Bill C-18: An Act to amend the Rouge National Urban Park Act, the Parks Canada Agency Act and the Canada National Parks Act*.

However, unlike the situation with the RNUP in York, the 5,200 acre RNUP extension into Durham does not connect the RNUP directly with any population centers. As Bill C-18 is being discussed, we want to take advantage of this window of opportunity to recommend for your consideration the addition of two small parcels of land to connect Seaton and Clarendon to the RNUP which would be a major social, economic, and tourism stimulus to these communities.

Our Recommendations

1. Gateway to Seaton

Of greatest importance is the connection to Seaton. A small southern addition to the 5,200 acres of 551 acres would create a gateway between the RNUP and Seaton and to conservation lands within Seaton. Please refer to the map in Appendix 1, area A.

Seaton is being built as a model community of up to 70,000 residents and 35,000 jobs, and an essential element in its compact urban design is to interweave thousands of acres of green space within the compact urban areas. Connecting it directly to the RNUP would greatly enhance this critical “green” element, and add significantly to the quality of life, the value and attractiveness of the real estate, and the economic vitality of Seaton.

Once a green gateway between Seaton and the RNUP is established, it would be possible to explore with the Province of Ontario extending the RNUP further into Seaton on the provincial conservation lands. This would have an even greater positive impact, and also resolve serious and yet to be resolved issues related to funding and maintaining these lands.

Such a connection within Seaton would greatly benefit Pickering and Durham as well as Seaton itself while protecting the Reesor Creek.

2. Gateway to Claremont and Beyond

As identified in the attached map, if another small parcel (358 acres) of Federal land west and south of Claremont (as identified in the map in Appendix 1, area *B*) was added to the RNUP, the Park would be linked directly east to Claremont.

Claremont, its residents, and the broader area would benefit significantly from being directly connected to the RNUP. The lands recommended for addition would not utilize any lands necessary for a possible future airport, and would provide the community with access to the RNUP, provide a narrow buffer from the airport lands themselves, as well as open up nature and trail linkages between the RNUP and conservation lands and trails including the Trans Canada Trail to the east of Claremont, as well as through the Michel Creek corridor to thousands of acres of conservation lands within Seaton, and to existing and possible future urban areas and communities in south Pickering as well as Ajax.

3. Flexible Zoning for Altona

The small hamlet of Altona falls within the 5,200 acre Durham parcel soon to be part of the RNUP. It is important to ensure that C-18 does not limit the RNUP's ability to pursue more flexible zoning in Altona to accommodate certain uses that would support the values in the RNUP but which may not be allowed in other areas of the Park.

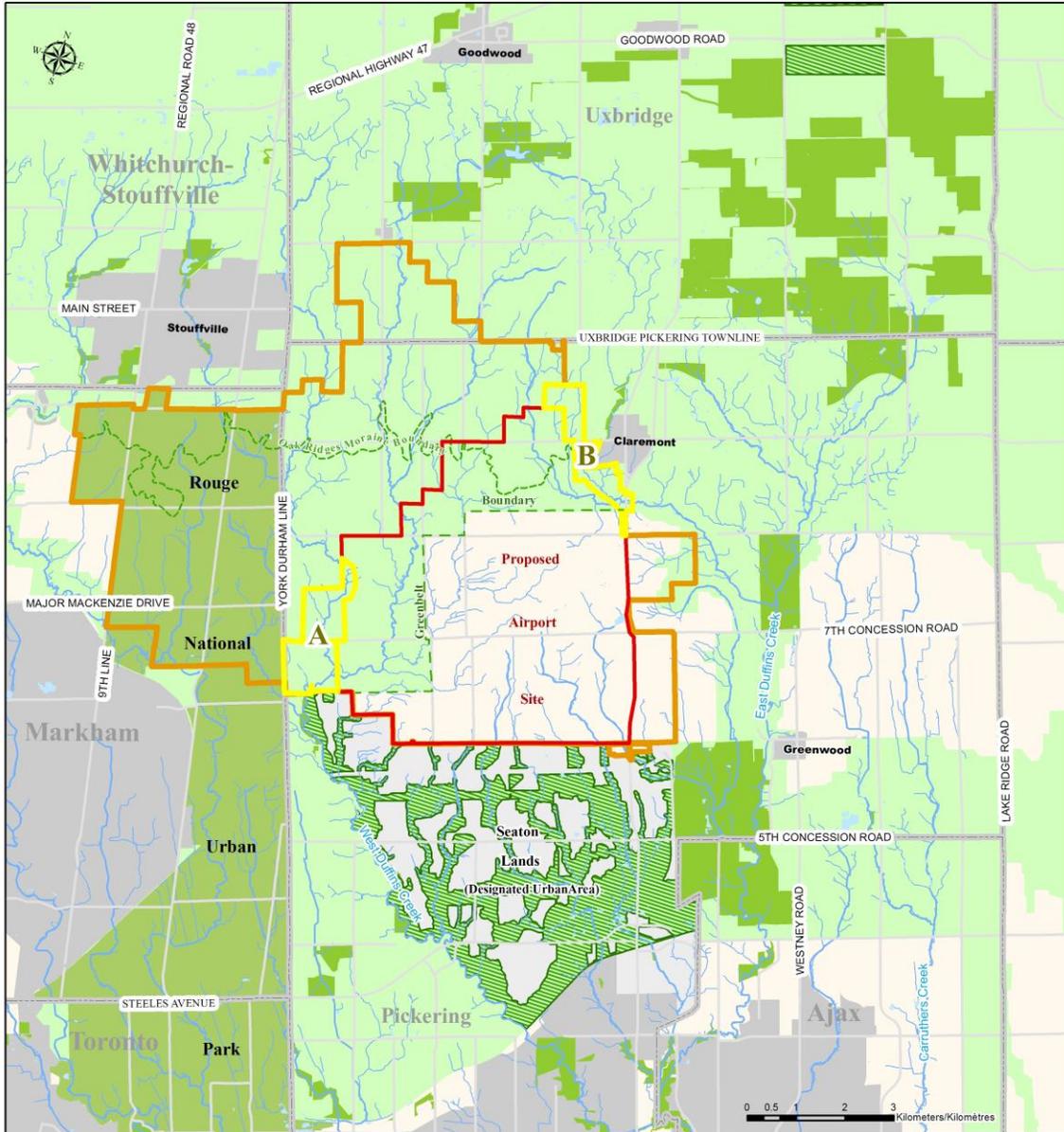
Conclusion

In summary, we are proposing that approximately 909 acres be added to the 5,200 acres that will be transferred to the RNUP as part of Bill C-18, in order to connect Seaton and Claremont to the RNUP. We recommend further that active consideration should also be given to negotiating with the Province to evaluate the further addition at a later date of some of the Province's Seaton lands into the RNUP.

None of these decisions would in any way preclude or complicate the possibility of a future airport. They would also result in significant economic benefits for Durham, and if it can be accomplished through this current Bill, this benefit will start earlier and not be delayed for years.

If for some reason it is felt there is not the time to sufficiently evaluate this recommendation and include it in C-18, we would ask whether there is any way either in the wording of the Bill itself, or with other actions, that consideration be given to potentially expediting the inclusion of the RNUP connections to the Durham communities in the near future.

Appendix 1: Federal Lands



Legend	Légende	Disclaimer:	Avertissement:
Federal Lands	Biens fonciers fédéraux	<p>The Data used to create this map was compiled from a variety of sources & dates. The T.R.C.A. takes no responsibility for errors or omissions in the data and retains the right to make changes & corrections at anytime without notice. For further information about the data on this map, please contact the T.R.C.A. GIS Department. (416) 661-6600. © Parks Canada Agency May not be reproduced without permission. December 7, 2016</p>	<p>Les données utilisées pour la création de cette carte proviennent de nombreuses sources et de dates variées. TRCA n'accepte aucune responsabilité pour quelques erreurs que ce soit ou omission de certaines données sur cette carte. TRCA conserve le droit de modifier ou faire des corrections à cette carte en tout temps, sans préavis. Pour de plus amples renseignements au sujet des informations sur cette carte, prière de vous adresser à TRCA au (416) 661-6600. © L'Agence Parcs Canada Cette carte ne peut être reproduite sans permission. Décembre 7, 2016</p>
Provincial Lands	Biens fonciers de la province		
TRCA and Other Conservation Lands in Pickering and Uxbridge	Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) et autres aires de conservation à Pickering et Uxbridge		
Urban Areas	Régions urbaines		
Greenbelt/Oak Ridges Moraine	Ceinture de verdure/ La moraine d'Oak Ridges		