



February 17, 2014

Open letter to Mayors and Members of Council: Oak Ridges Moraine/Greenbelt Municipalities

Dear Mayors and Members of Council:

**Re: Public participation in the upcoming Review of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Protected Countryside Areas of the Greenbelt Plan**

In 2015 the province of Ontario will launch a review of the three plans covering the Oak Ridges Moraine, Niagara Escarpment and Protected Countryside Areas of the Greenbelt. The above listed groups have been anticipating this review and are pleased to announce a renewed and invigorated campaign to protect our water, land and rural communities through the 2015 review. The Oak Ridges Moraine Partnership for 2015, comprising four leading environmental organizations – STORM, Ontario Nature, Earthroots and EcoSpark, will be active in the lead up and throughout the review to help strengthen environmental policies and build public support for the Oak Ridges Moraine and Protected Countryside Areas of the Greenbelt.

We are aware that some of the municipalities on the moraine have already begun to develop preliminary policy positions about changes to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) and Greenbelt Plan. While this early engagement is encouraging, it has come to our attention that some municipal positions are being developed with little or no input from either the public and/or their elected representatives. This is concerning and shows a disregard for the knowledge and efforts of dedicated people and community groups involved in the decades-long campaign to protect the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Our groups feel it is necessary for this review to be conducted with strong public participation and stakeholder involvement. To this end, we would ask that our Oak Ridges Moraine Partnership be made aware of and have the opportunity to participate as early as possible as you develop your municipal policy position. In particular we'd like the chance to understand more fully how Greater Toronto Area rural and urban municipalities can and will develop the necessary capacity to prosper and protect our land and water in the face of increased population pressures and climate change. It is a daunting task requiring as many perspectives and participants as possible.

We would be pleased to share with you our campaign overview including early announcements of planned events so that you and your colleagues will be able to attend, when possible. As well, we look forward to forwarding our draft policy positions for your review and input.

Thank you for your continued commitment to protecting the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt, and on behalf of our ORM Partnership, we look forward to working with you to bring about a successful outcome to the 2015 review.

With best regards,

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Save the Oak Ridges Moraine  
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On behalf of:

Josh Garfinkel, Earthroots  
Joshua Wise, Ontario Nature  
Joyce Chau, EcoSpark  
Debbie Gordon, STORM

## Oak Ridges Moraine Partnership for 2015: Land, Water and Community



Earthroots is a grassroots conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of wilderness, wildlife and watersheds in Canada, with a focus on Ontario. Some of their current campaign areas focus on Temagami's ancient red and white pine ecosystems, wildlife such as wolves and woodland caribou, and southern Ontario greenspaces.

Contact: Josh Garfinkel, Senior Campaigner  
416 599-0152 ext 15 [joshg@earthroots.org](mailto:joshg@earthroots.org)  
[www.earthroots.org](http://www.earthroots.org)



EcoSpark works with communities and schools, providing them with the knowledge and tools to monitor their environment and take action for positive environmental change. They believe that by encouraging and empowering those who they work with to take action, they can create and sustain a healthy environment.

Contact: Joyce Chau, Executive Director  
647 258-3280 ext 2005 [joyce@ecospark.ca](mailto:joyce@ecospark.ca)  
[www.ecospark.ca](http://www.ecospark.ca)



Established in 1931 as the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Ontario Nature protects wild species and wild spaces through conservation, education and public engagement. Some of their accomplishments include spearheading the creation of a wilderness area in Algonquin Park in 1934, working for the creation of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan in 2001 and publishing science-based research for scholars and education materials for young naturalists.

Contact: Joshua Wise, Greenway Program Coordinator  
416 444-8419 ext 273 [joshuaw@ontarionature.org](mailto:joshuaw@ontarionature.org)



Save The Oak Ridges Moraine (STORM) Coalition is focused on protecting the ecological integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Since 1989, STORM has been working at the local and regional levels to ensure that municipalities make good planning decisions that respect the environmental significance of the moraine and that take into account its ecological and hydrological functions.

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