

Friends of the Rouge National Urban Park



March 10, 2015

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne

Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building,
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Wynne:

re: request for support to transfer 9,000 acres of provincially controlled land into the Rouge National Urban Park

As supporters of the Rouge National Urban Park, we are writing to request your continued support to facilitate the creation of a 15,000 acre Rouge National Urban Park and to thank you for all of the great work your government has done to protect this national treasure.

We are requesting that you support the transfer of some 9,000 acres of provincially controlled lands into the Rouge National Urban Park to help make the dream of a Rouge National Park a reality. The Rouge Park is on the verge on gaining the protected status that many of us have fought for over two decades and we want you to know that the proposals being put forward by Parks Canada have our full support.

We have an extraordinary opportunity before us and we want to share with you important aspects of the new Rouge National Urban Park which we support:

First, we support the proposal to include 9,000 acres of provincially controlled lands into the Rouge National Park (in addition to the 5,000 acres of federally owned lands) which creates the largest urban park in the world. This large land mass allows us to create a protected natural area and a protected agricultural area that will ensure these integrated ecosystems will continue in perpetuity in the largest urban centre in Canada. The dream of a Rouge Park extending from the shore of Lake Ontario to the very sources of its rivers on the Oak Ridges Moraine will have finally been accomplished.

Second, we support the significant new federal contribution of \$143.7 million over the next ten years (and \$7.6 million in permanent annual funding thereafter) in addition to the large provincial financial resources already invested. These significant investments provide a long term sustainable financial model able to protect a precious natural area surrounded by over 7 million people. We understand the value of this substantial commitment and guarantee that we will cooperate with all parties to maximize the benefit of this contribution.

Third, we support Bill C-40 which will support – and surpass – the existing legislative protection the Rouge Park has today. It has taken decades of effort to provide the current legislative protection the Rouge Park enjoys today and we are thrilled that new, Rouge-specific federal legislation will provide additional protection to this precious place. We are also thrilled that this new legislative model may help protect other significant natural areas across Canada.

Fourth, we support the unparalleled expertise Parks Canada brings to the Rouge Park in helping to restore a large natural area that has witnessed over one century of intense human activity. It is a great credit to Parks Canada that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature has adopted Parks Canada's Restoration Guidelines as the International Standard for restoring degraded natural areas around the world. While we do have local restoration experts, we are thrilled to have new restoration partners at the table who have worked on hundreds of restoration projects all across this great nation of ours.

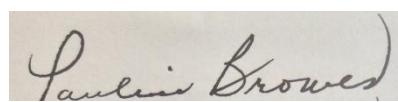
Fifth, we support federal enforcement officers being present within the Rouge National Urban Park. With the help of Parks Canada, we will ensure that the Rouge finally has full time enforcement officers to protect against inappropriate activities such as illegal dumping, poaching, vandalism, off-road vehicles, removal of native plants, fossils, etc.

We understand that the Rouge National Urban Park will last hundreds of years and that much work remains to be done in both the short term and long term, but we urge you to take action now to approve the transfer of 9,000 acres of provincial lands into the National Urban Park to make this magnificent proposal a reality now.

We are requesting a meeting with you to discuss the future of the Rouge National Urban Park and to thank you for the extraordinary work that your government has done over the last three decades. Please contact Deputy Mayor Glenn De Baeremaeker at 416-392-0204 to arrange a time that is convenient for you to meet with us.

Sincerely,

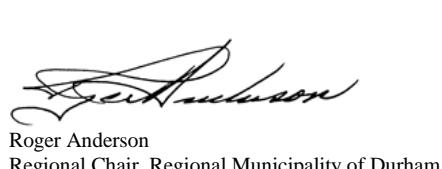
Original signed by :



The Honourable Pauline Brovess
former Minister of State for the Environment



The Honourable Peter Kent
MP for Thornhill, former Minister of the Environment



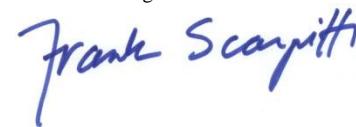
Roger Anderson
Regional Chair, Regional Municipality of Durham



Wayne Emmerson
Chairman and CEO York Region



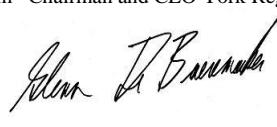
The Honourable Michael Chong
MP for Wellington–Halton Hills



Frank Scarpitti
Mayor, City of Markham



Jack Heath
Deputy Mayor, City of Markham



Glenn De Baeremaeker
Deputy Mayor, City of Toronto



Ron Moeser
Toronto City Councillor



Alan Wells
former Chair, Rouge Park Alliance



Heather Moeser, former executive member
Coalition of Scarborough Community Associations



Keith Laushway
Chair, Waterfront Regeneration Trust