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# Rouge National Urban Park

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## **Follow-up Session on Rouge National Urban Park on May 25 2012 – Summary Report**

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## BACKGROUND

Since summer 2011 Parks Canada has been collaborating with a broad range of partners and stakeholders to develop the vision and concept for Canada's first national urban park in the Rouge Valley.

Parks Canada has engaged more than 100 national, provincial and municipal organizations, Aboriginal partners, and youth, along with individuals and organizations with expertise related to conservation, farming, tourism, recreation, youth engagement and education, to develop the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept. It has held several key workshops and forums and numerous meetings to develop this concept in an inclusive and collaborative fashion.

Parks Canada committed to sharing the product of these consultations, the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept, with its partners and stakeholders before seeking public input in summer 2012. On May 25, 2012, Parks Canada hosted 49 Aboriginal and community partners, and a broad range of stakeholders, for follow-up session to share, and provide an opportunity further input on, the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept (Appendix B – List of participants). The participants represented diverse viewpoints in the areas of agriculture, conservation, education, outreach, recreation, tourism, including First Nations representation, as well as all levels of government elected and senior officials.

The session was facilitated by Karyn Dumble, a certified professional facilitator with The Monarch Park Group and over the course of the afternoon participants held discussion on the topics relevant to the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept, the Public Involvement Plan as well as Next Steps. They closed the afternoon by sharing a piece wisdom with the group as Parks Canada begins to more broadly involve Canadians in the establishment of Rouge National Urban Park.

## GOALS OF THE SESSION

The goals of the follow-up session were to:

- Share the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept
- Provide an opportunity for further input on the proposed park concept
- Present Parks Canada's public involvement approach and next steps for the establishment process

## AGENDA

11:00 am	Announcements from the Honourable Jim Flaherty, Canada's Finance Minister and Minister Responsible for the Greater Toronto Area, and the Honourable Peter Kent, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister Responsible for Parks Canada regarding funding and support for Rouge National Urban Park  Lunch
12:40 pm	Opening Blessing by First Nation Elder Garry Sault Welcoming Remarks from Alan Latourelle, Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada Session Overview by Karyn Dumble, Principal Facilitator, The Monarch Park Group
1:00 pm	Presentation of proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept by Catherine Grenier, Director of Rouge National Urban Park Initiative, and Andrew Campbell, Vice President, External Relations & Visitor Experience
2:00 pm	Activity #1 in small groups with summary to the full group
2:45 pm	Health Break
3:05 pm	Activity #2 in same small groups with summary to the full group

3:45 pm	Closing Activity – Sharing Wisdom
4:05 pm	Closing Remarks

## SESSION OUTCOME

Participants were invited to share their feedback through small group work over the course of the afternoon. Through a series of discussions and activities participants responded to the following questions and shared their summarised feedback with the larger group. Details with respect to feedback on the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept are attached as Appendices.

### Activity #1 – Discussing the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept

Parks Canada representatives, Catherine Grenier and Andrew Campbell, presented the proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept. Following this participants were invited to discuss the following two questions in their respective groups:

- **Question 1** - How does the proposed concept reflect the collective contributions to date as part of the process Parks Canada has undertaken?
- **Question 2** - Knowing this concept provides a long-term vision and a framework for park management, and that each element of the concept will be developed further as part of the strategic planning process; what elements, if any, do we all need to more carefully consider through the planning stage?



Overall, the participants agreed that the proposed concept reflects the contributions of the diverse interests that have been part of the process. Inclusiveness of the development process was applauded as the diversity of community interests were reflected throughout the document. The groups indicated that the proposed concept respects the guiding principles they developed in November 2011 (Appendix C- Guiding Principles).

Participants expressed the importance of the integration of park priorities and objectives presented. Some would have felt more comfortable being presented with additional details, as noted by one group the “Devil is in the

details”. Some of the areas identified as needing more detail included: trail system, carrying capacity, plans for existing buildings and structures, complexity regarding jurisdictions and compatibility with adjacent use, better acknowledgement of the founders and contributors, a greater emphasis on the spiritual aspects of the park, as well as the transition phase.

Given that the park concept is a high level document and framework and more detailed planning is required moving forward, the participants were asked the second question to highlight elements of the concept that we all need to consider closely through the strategic planning stage. A number of themes emerged from the discussion. The list that follows is not in a rated or value-weighted order; rather, it reflects the various threads that tied the groups’ insights together.

Enforcement and concerns of misuse  
 Accessibility  
 Wildlife – control, manage, education  
 Current infrastructure and nearby urban growth  
 Carrying capacity of the park

Working with the Agriculture community to define terms and conditions for farming in the park  
 The 10,000+ year history of First Nations  
 Balancing access with protection  
 Pace of development of the Park

## Activity #2 – Public Involvement Approach and Next Steps

Catherine Grenier also shared with the group Parks Canada’s Public Involvement Approach and Next Steps. The Agency’s approach will primarily be web-based through an *On-line Public Engagement Portal* and will be supported by various communication products and channels, on the ground presence, and partner engagement kits. The facilitator led the group into another activity and discussion to respond to the following question:

- **Question** - As part of Parks Canada's public engagement process, how can you help facilitate involvement of your respective communities and networks?



The most frequent responses received in support of the public involvement phase included newsletters, e-blasts, use of social media, attendance at local events and symposiums, use of partner networks all the while ensuring consistent messaging all around. Other ideas were to house a kiosk at venues, festivals and events, attend First Nations events, local summer camps, group picnics, and take communities into the Park.

## Closing Activity – Sharing Wisdom

Each participant was invited to share a parting thought, a piece of wisdom they wished to share with the group and Parks Canada for the path forward in establishing Rouge National Urban Park.

- **Question** - What would be one piece of wisdom you would like to share with the group as we begin to more broadly involve Canadians in the establishment of the Rouge National Urban Park?

The wisdom shared stayed true to the themes of the day. It reflected people's desire to see the park land managed in an integrated way and build upon the legacy of past efforts.

## MOVING FORWARD

With a firm funding commitment by the Government of Canada for the creation of Rouge National Urban Park coupled with the input provided by key stakeholders and partners with respect to the proposed park concept, Parks Canada will now work to finalise the park concept and launch the next critical phase of the park establishment process, the public involvement phase at the end of June 2012.

Parks Canada looks forward to inviting all interested citizens to provide input to help shape Rouge National Urban Park during summer 2012 and will continue to work closely with the session participants to communicate and promote this next phase.





## APPENDIX A – PARK ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS



# ROUGE NATIONAL URBAN PARK ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS

## LAND COMPONENTS

### LANDHOLDERS TABLE

(Creation in FALL 2011)

- Province of Ontario (Ministry of Infrastructure)
- Toronto Region Conservation Authority
- City of Toronto
- Town of Markham
- City of Pickering
- Regional Municipality of York
- Regional Municipality of Durham
- Rouge Park Alliance

ONGOING DIALOGUE

WINTER/SPRING 2012

OUTPUTS:

- Statement of Intent (SPRING 2012)
- Multi-Party Agreement on Land Transfer (FALL 2012)

## CREATING A NATIONAL URBAN PARK

NOVEMBER 2011

Stakeholders Workshop

NOVEMBER 2011

Information Session with First Nations

OUTPUTS:

- Guiding Principles
- Key Elements of the Vision

### Planning Process

OUTPUTS:  
Proposed Rouge National Urban Park Concept

WINTER 2012

Information Session with First Nations and Stakeholders

Spring 2012

OUTPUT: Rouge National Urban Park Concept

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Rouge National Urban Park Concept
- Park Establishment

SUMMER 2012

OUTPUT: Public Input Summary

FALL 2012

Recommendation to Government on Legislative Process and Final Steps

May 25 2012



Parks Canada  
Parcs Canada

Canada

## APPENDIX B – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR MAY 25TH 2012 SESSION

Key Representative	Organization	Title
Alan Latourelle	Parks Canada	Chief Executive Officer
Alan Wells	Rouge Park Alliance	Chair
Andrew Arifuzzaman	University of Toronto (Scarborough)	Chief Strategy Officer
Andrew Campbell	Parks Canada	VP, External Relations and Visitor Experience
Beth McEwan	City of Toronto	Manager, Urban Forest Renewal
Brandon McClounie	YMCA Canada	GM, Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre
Brett Wilcox	Hillside Outdoor Education School	Teacher
Brian Denney	Toronto Region Conservation Authority	Chief Administration Officer
Bruce Singbush	Ministry of Infrastructure	Director, Real Estate Policy Branch
Carol Sheedy	Parks Canada	VP, Operations East
Carrie Hayward	Ministry of Natural Resources	A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Chris Alexander	MP, Ajax-Pickering	MP, Ajax-Pickering
Colin Creasey	10 000 trees for the Rouge Valley	Chairman
Corneliu Chisu	MP, Pickering - Scarborough East	MP, Pickering - Scarborough East
Dave Pearce	CPAWS-Wildlands League	Forest Conservation Analyst
David Harvey	Park People	Executive Director
David Lawrie	Rouge Valley Foundation (Rouge Valley Conservation Centre)	Program Director
Diane Sheridan	Hiawatha First Nation	Land Resource Worker
Faisal Moola	David Suzuki Foundation	Program Director, Terrestrial Conservation and Science
Garry Sault	Mississaugas of the New Credit	Elder
George Meyer	West Rouge Ravine Property Owners Association	President
Glenn De Baeremaeker	City of Toronto	Councillor, Ward 38, Scarborough Centre
Helena Jaczek	Member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Oak Ridges - Markham	MPP, Oak Ridges - Markham
Ian Buchanan	Region of York	Manager, Natural Heritage and Forestry Services
Jack Heath	Region of York/Town of Markham	Deputy Mayor/Regional Councillor, Town of Markham
Jane Weninger	City of Toronto	Senior Planner
Janet Horner	Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Agricultural Action Committee	Executive Director
Jim Robb	Friends of the Rouge Watershed	General Manager



John Tracogna	Toronto Zoo	Chief Executive Officer
Kim Empringham	York Federation of Agriculture	Secretary and Chair of the York Region Agricultural Committee
Lilli Duoba	Town of Markham	Senior Project Coordinator Environmental Planning and Rouge Park Planning
Lois James	Rouge Valley Foundation (Rouge Valley Conservation Centre)	Founding member of Rouge Park
Louis Lesage	Huron-Wendat Nation	A/Director for the office of Nionwentsio
Malcolm Campbell	University of Toronto (Scarborough)	Vice-President (VP), Research
Matt Setzkorn	Ontario Farmland Trust	Policy Coordinator
Melissa Dokis	Curve Lake First Nation	Land Resource Consultation Worker
Michael Chong	MP, Wellington - Halton Hills	MP, Wellington - Halton Hills
Mike Bender	Rouge Park Alliance	General Manager
Nestor Chornoboy	Region of Durham	Director, Strategic Planning
Paul Reesor	York Federation of Agriculture (YFA)	YFA representative on the Rouge Park Agriculture Advisory Group
Pauline Browes	Waterfront Regeneration Trust Corporation	Director
Peter Bashaw	Office of MP Corneliu Chisu	Executive Assistant
Peter Notaro	City of Toronto	Manager, Intergovernmental Affairs
Peter Rodrigues	Region of Durham/City of Pickering	Regional Councillor, Ward 3
Ron Moeser Heather Moeser	City of Toronto	Councillor, Ward 44, Scarborough East
Shyam Ranganathan	Centennial College	Dean, School of Hospitality, Tourism and Culture
Suzanne Howes	Chippewas of Georgina Island	Community Consultation Officer
Tom Melymuk	City of Pickering	Director of Sustainability

## APPENDIX C – ROUGE NATIONAL URBAN PARK GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Foster a culture of community, youth volunteering, engagement, respect and partnership
- Inspire people to experience this park
- Environmental leadership in park operations
- Collaborate to ensure multi-modal connectivity and access
- Inclusive, progressive governance led by Parks Canada
- Respect and support sustainable agriculture and other compatible land uses
- Honour diversity, local heritage, cultural inclusiveness...past, present & future
- Maintain and improve ecological health and scientific integrity
- Encourage people, especially youth, to learn and connect with nature

## APPENDIX D – ACTIVITY #1 AND QUESTION #1

### *HOW DOES THE PROPOSED CONCEPT REFLECT THE COLLECTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO DATE AS PART OF THE PROCESS PARKS CANADA HAS UNDERTAKEN?*

#### *Responses provided in no particular order*

- Great focus: Contributions from all
- All contributions there
- Linked to guiding principles
- Very inclusive to date
- Agriculture, infrastructure, natural environment well highlighted
- Greater acknowledgement of contributors/founders
- Need clarity on approach to buildings & structure
- More detail needed on hiking trail connectivity through various park experiences
- North-South trail connectivity
- Importance of ecological health and restoration
- Avoid perception of rank in park objectives
- Many good things at conceptual stage but “Devil is in the details”
- Good starting point for discussion, need more focus on ecological health and restoration
- Very diverse opinions well reflected
- Attention to carrying capacity
- Emphasize spiritual aspect more
- Park boundaries issues could be more inclusive, - “ok with RPA but others not engaged”
- Emphasis on learning is good but could be stronger
- Concept good capture – but very high level – complexity of governance could have more detail/transparency & more info on transition
- Bridge the grass roots genesis
- Careful about balancing the various objectives

## APPENDIX E – ACTIVITY #1 AND QUESTION #2

*KNOWING THIS CONCEPT PROVIDES A LONG-TERM VISION AND A FRAMEWORK FOR PARK MANAGEMENT, AND THAT EACH ELEMENT OF THE CONCEPT WILL BE DEVELOPED FURTHER AS PART OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS; WHAT ELEMENTS, IF ANY, DO WE ALL NEED TO MORE CAREFULLY CONSIDER THROUGH THE PLANNING STAGE?*

*Responses provided in no particular order*

- Goals should be equal (eg: nature not above agriculture)
- Continued education/engagement of youth to be a priority
- More information and details on First Nations interpretation/education/history/culture (discovery hub)
- Be mindful that the new park integrates new components, presents new opportunities, & new ways of thinking in moving forward
- Balance of access based on zone sensitivities
- Trail planning and connectivity is an important component
- Specific species at risk in park: protect/educate public
- Accessibility to the park, a priority (consider alternative modes, senior, mobility impaired)
- Maintain current characteristics of park
- Integration of agriculture and infrastructure components (How will this occur?)
- Services of infrastructure (i.e. Police Services)
- Address transitional [*sic*] zones (i.e. Farm lands): Private Residences
- Balance of road access, railways with park sensitive zones
- No over-programming (not “loved to death”)
- Maintain current transportation corridors
- Ensure integration of various goals (nature vs. people, respect carrying capacity of the park)
- Limiting road access on certain days within certain hours
- Importance of telling First Nation’s story
- Interpretive centre on lake Ontario framed to tell the story of the Rouge
- Emphasis more on wilderness
- Explore potential synergies with the Toronto Zoo (more emphasis) (Excluded but lot to offer)
- Opportunity for a “quiet hub” or multiple spaces/quiet trails within the trail system
- Enforcement issues (garbage, traffic, infrastructures)
- Manage wildlife for population health & human safety
- Manage & educate human population about wildlife
- Manage infrastructure for wildlife
- Consider wildlife damage to crops (control and manage)
- Establish connected system of forests for resilience to visitor use
- Resolve issues with adjacent land-uses
- Manage dumping issues (ex: related to Standard auto wreckers)
- Plan to protect aboriginal sites
- Path (trail) interconnections
- Identify every opportunity for environmental sustainability & net benefit through each aspect of the plan
- Infrastructure connectivity w/n the park (ex: bottleneck at Steeles Av.)
- Importance of having a dedicate hub for Aboriginal history, create an artefact repository

- Further public consultation with existing users and other audiences (e.g. seniors)
- Pace of park development (staged implementation)
- How will Park Plan respond to urban growth around Park which will put pressure on the infrastructure that goes through the Park
- Management areas required further definitions (suggest: 4 areas and separate buildings and assets from infrastructure)
- Farming: Long term leases for farmers important
- Expand the Park to Pickering lands
- Enforcement and people management (trespassing)
- Given complexity/variety of uses is there going to be enough \$ and resources to look after it properly
- Access (future roads)
- Infrastructure/connections within the Park, connecting the entire park (parking/cycling/walking/bridges)
- Protecting the native heritage sites
- Integration of protection and visitor use
- Informal vs. Formal use of the park
- Ensure that areas do not become silos but are part of an integrated management plan
- Need to consider existing plans, policies, legislation in designing the park strategic plan (Greenbelt, municipal plans, provincial policies/legislation)
- Need to pay attention to potential tensions between goals within the Park's borders relative to stakeholders that neighbour the park (no park is an island)

## APPENDIX F – ACTIVITY #2

*AS PART OF PARKS CANADA'S PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS, HOW CAN YOU HELP FACILITATE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUR RESPECTIVE COMMUNITIES AND NETWORKS?*

*Where possible, group your ideas into these categories:*

*-Communications*

*-On the Ground Presence*

*-Partner Engagement Kit*

*Responses provided in no particular order*

### *Communications*

- Newsletters (community, elected officials)
- Parks Canada newsletter & advertisement
- National newspapers + SNAPP, Observers, Bluffers
- Public service announcements
- 1-5 minute videos for CPAC & networks
- Email blasts – groups, individuals
- Facebook, blogs, web pages, Twitter
- Publish list of events on Parks Canada website
- Links on municipal/partners websites
- Clear communication plan
- Press releases
- Fact sheets – concept, process, info sources
- Digital & print
- Planning & transition timelines
- Community newspaper, public information notices
- Organizational mailing list

### *On the Ground Presence*

- Local events
- Brochures for distribution/hand out
- Contact universities, colleges, TDSB [Toronto District School Board], TDCSB [Toronto Catholic District School Board] and provide information through these networks
- Logo and signage
- Display booth at events, promotion at events/venues (ex: Rouge Park, Farmers' market, Toronto Zoo)
- Corporate Engagement
- Survey current park users
- Involve summer day camps
- Art competition "Art of the Park"
- Speak to Scarborough Community Council/Pickering/Markham
- Take opportunities of events coming up : PAN AM Games

- Collaborate on adjacent planning exercises (ex: Beare Road Planning)
- Church picnics & local festivals
- Make presentations to partners board meetings
- Tourist events
- Taking community to the Park & other park-directed activities
- “Rouge Days” & other events, “Bio Blitz”, Nuit Blanche, Science Rendezvous, Luminato, Hot Docs, TIFF
- Stakeholder meetings – e.g. Youth Forum

### *Partner Engagement Kit*

- Place information in community centers
- Collaborative messages on events or themed days
- Take advantage of partners visitors/distribution network (ex: zoo)
- Local food to attract
- Check calendar of events & local councillors offices
- Taking press calls/stakeholder calls
- Academic programming – primary, high school, post-secondary education
- Research
- Environmental, health, volunteer groups (newsletters and distribution list)
- Fact sheet at trail heads
- Host symposium/themed seminars with partners
- Contacting leaders of groups

### Some considerations shared:

- Need to get Park prepared before the word gets out to come to the Park
- Need to be clear that communication is on input, not invitation to come
- Provide a clear definition of what is a National Urban Park
- Consistent message from Parks Canada
- Attract input, but not foot traffic
- Frustrated groups may not want to engage Federal Government because of the past
- Need to do more than communicate with partners, need to engage them



## APPENDIX G – CLOSING ACTIVITY - SHARING WISDOM

### *WHAT WOULD BE ONE PIECE OF WISDOM YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE GROUP AS WE BEGIN TO MORE BROADLY INVOLVE CANADIANS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROUGE NATIONAL URBAN PARK?*

- Keep the emphasis in park establishment & visitor experience on growing the connections between the environment, heritage, food & health, & the importance of active stewardship of nature & food lands.
- Be innovative. Be respectful. Be careful out there.
- Need to be careful that Rouge does not become a victim of its own success.
- Three words of wisdom. Go: Slow, Steady, Strategic.
- Engage new Canadians and engage ethnic media, provide editorial content in various languages.
- Biodiversity that balances the world around us as the natural places shrink so does our touch with the environment.
- Keep environmental/agricultural/cultural education the focus for our People's Park.
- Take care of the land and all it provides for.
- Protect the ecosystem first & foremost. That is why the park was created.
- Develop interim operational plan using current infrastructure.
- People will be disappointed when they visit if we don't start building a "real" park quickly.
- Think long-term sustainability.
- Plan carefully.
- You will never be able to make everyone happy & meet all stakeholder interests. Don't try! But choose the most important ones based on consultation & best practices/land management principles.
- Education on how to use the park to prevent damage top priority.
- Develop a process of issue resolution for competing interest.
- Handout sheet for neighbours, mailboxes, saying we exist soon.
- Make sure that you have completed all of your inventories of what flora & fauna is currently living in the park, and make sure that it is protected. As a back-up, also talk to local people who have been using the park for years to correlate your data.
- Don't lose sight of the past history of the Rouge and always remember the future of our children's use of the area.
- If the park is for the 20% of Canadians that live within 1hr and Park Canada wants this to be their Park – you must engage this community sooner rather than later.
- Ecological Health = Human Health (physical, social, economic, spiritual)
- Do not rush the process, take the necessary time to establish the park.
- Employ systems design thinking within the park planning process (linked socio-ecological systems) as well as resilience theory.
- Manage the carrying capacity and protect the park.
- Take a look at communication plan of the Friends of the Greenbelt – brilliant! 90% public acceptance.
- Communication, Consultation and Cooperation with the public => TRIPLE C
- Be clear on what Rouge National Urban Park is and what it is not.
- Take time to savour and celebrate this historic moment.
- Establish Valley Halla as the National Office for the Rouge National Urban Park and at that site build a place or focus for the Rouge. This is where people can go to learn of the Rouge and then branch out to explore, discover & enjoy the rich natural beauty!