

Top 10 Conservation Benefits of Rouge National Urban Park



Strongest ever protections in the Rouge's history – no urban park in the world will be as well protected

The Rouge National Urban Park Act, is a tailor-made approach for protecting the Rouge. It complements Ontario's Greenbelt Act and obligates the Government of Canada to protect the Rouge's natural ecosystems and cultural landscapes, to maintain native wildlife and to ensure the health of those ecosystems. Simply put, there is no other urban park on the planet with protections as strong as those proposed for Rouge National Urban Park.

Year-round law enforcement will ensure wildlife, ecosystems, cultural landscapes, water, fossils and artefacts are protected to the full extent of the law

For the first time in the Rouge's history, dedicated park wardens will have a year-round presence in the park to enforce laws and stop poaching, dumping, pollution and other issues. Wardens will patrol the park and work with local police on a variety of enforcement measures to keep visitors safe and the park's farmland and other resources well-protected. Also for the first time in the Rouge's history, harmful activities such as poaching, polluting, dumping, theft of fossils, harassment of wildlife, hunting and mineral extraction will be directly and specifically prohibited under the Rouge National Urban Park Act.

A focus on restoring native ecosystems, wildlife and landscapes

While more than 75% of the current Rouge Park landscape has been altered or disturbed, Parks Canada is committed to restoring the Rouge's native ecosystems, including Carolinian forests, marshes and meadows. Parks Canada has already begun working on restoration projects with municipalities, environmental groups and local farmers by reintroducing endangered turtles, making it easier for wildlife to cross park roads, and enhancing the health of agricultural wetlands.

A strong science program

Parks Canada will apply its rigorous, award-winning and innovative scientific approach to the management of Rouge National Urban Park. Leading-edge science will be used to recover endangered species and eliminate invasive species. Parks Canada will ensure the health of park ecosystems and native wildlife with a full suite of monitoring, assessment and reporting tools specifically developed for the Rouge.

Canada will protect a much larger park

Rouge National Urban Park will become one of the largest urban protected areas in the world. The park will be larger than Bermuda, Monaco and Gibraltar and 16 times larger than Central Park in New York. By expanding the size of the current protected area, Parks Canada will achieve the long-standing conservation goal of connecting Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine, thereby linking communities and ecosystems throughout the entire Greater Toronto Area.

Parks Canada brings its world-renowned park management approach to the Greater Toronto Area for the first time

Created in 1911, Parks Canada is the world's first national parks service dedicated to conservation. Parks Canada will draw on over one-hundred years of experience to protect the Rouge's natural ecosystems and cultural landscapes, maintain native wildlife and ensure the health of those ecosystems.

First ever dedicated legislative protection for Bead Hill National Historic Site

The Rouge features over 10,000 years of human history and is home to Bead Hill National Historic Site and the Carrying Place National Historic Event. Parks Canada is working closely with First Nations to ensure their living history becomes an important part of Rouge National Urban Park's story.

Record financial investment in the Rouge's conservation

The Government of Canada's 2012 funding announcement of \$143.7 million over the first 10 years of park establishment and operations is the most significant conservation investment in the Rouge's history. This unprecedented financial commitment will allow Parks Canada to make investments in conservation, restoration, education, endangered species recovery, visitor experience, and community-driven stewardship initiatives in Canada's first national urban park.

The park will protect nature, culture and – for the first time in a Canadian federal park – agriculture

Farms have become an endangered species in urban areas across much of the world. Rouge National Urban Park will protect large tracts of Class 1 farmland, the rarest and most fertile in the country. Park farmland will continue to produce local food while at the same time providing visitor experiences and contributing to the overall health of the park.

These lands will be protected forever

Now is our chance to get things right for the Rouge. Once under the care of Parks Canada, park lands will be protected in perpetuity for countless future generations of Canadians to enjoy. Parks Canada's plan also provides the ability to add more lands to the park in the future should the opportunity to do so arise.

