



## NIAGARA FALLS NATURE CLUB

P.O. BOX 901, NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO, L2E 6V8.

April 15, 2021

Mr. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Re: ERO 019-3136 – Growing the Greenbelt

Dear Minister Clark,

Protecting our land in Ontario is of vital importance to members of the Niagara Falls Nature Club. We would like to see the greenbelt expanded to protect natural areas, agricultural lands, our wildlife habitat and our drinking water. There are also valuable land areas that are not in or connected to the greenbelt that need protection.

Here are our responses to the six questions that you proposed:

Question 1: What are your thoughts on the initial focus area of the Study Areas of the Paris Galt Moraine?

We recommend growing the greenbelt to include the Paris Galt Moraine. As healthy and intact moraines are vital to ensuring sufficient and clean ground water in Ontario, we would like to see all the moraines in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) included.

Question 2: What are the considerations in moving from a study area to a more defined boundary of the Paris Galt Moraine?

We would like to see a science-based approach that involves protecting key hydrological features. Indigenous Peoples must be consulted about any greenbelt expansion that includes their lands.

Question 3: What are your thoughts on the initial focus area of adding, expanding and further protecting Urban River Valleys?

We support adding and further protecting urban river valleys. All the river valleys in the GGH should be included and also cold water streams such as Twelve Mile Creek.

Question 4: Do you have suggestions for other potential areas to grow the greenbelt?

The northern shoreline of Lake Erie should be considered. There is a hodgepodge of private and public ownership but this is true of much of the greenbelt. There are species found here which are rarely seen in other parts of Canada. There are diverse plant communities and geological formations, as noted in the attached ecological survey. There is no systematic protection for this shoreline and development pressure is extreme throughout southern Ontario.

Other areas in the GGH should be considered. Areas south of the greenbelt, including in the Niagara area, are richer in plant and animal species than almost any place in Canada. The threat to this rich area of Carolinian Canada is immense. There is concern that not being included in the greenbelt will mean that our wonderful wetlands and woodlands will not be given the level of protection that they need and we will lose that which makes Niagara so special forever.

Question 5: How should we balance or prioritize any potential greenbelt expansion with the other provincial priorities mentioned above?

No sensitive natural areas or farmland should be sacrificed to more housing developments. There is sufficient land for our housing needs if we create complete communities where people can live, work, shop and age in place. Incentives are needed to encourage development in brownfields and to re-develop unused commercial areas for mixed communities.

Residents of Ontario have the right to be involved in land planning in their communities without that right being subverted by MZOs.

More highways lead to more congestion and more residential sprawl. We do not need the Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass or the Niagara to Mid-Peninsula Highway.

6. Are there other priorities that should be considered?

Protecting our lands from inappropriate development helps to make us more resilient to changes in climate.

Preserving sensitive lands encourages us to connect with nature, thereby increasing our health and well-being.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals.

Sincerely,  
Joyce Sankey, Conservation Director  
Niagara Falls Nature Club

C: Wayne Gates, MPP, Jeff Burch, MPP, Jennie Stevens, MPP, Sam Oosterhoff, MPP

Attachment: Bert Miller Nature Club Ecological Survey of the Lake Erie Coast in Ecodistrict 7E-5