



## **ROUGE PARK ALLIANCE MINUTES - MEETING #3/11 - JUNE 17, 2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Rouge Park Alliance met at the Cedar Brae Golf and Country Club, Scarborough. The Chair, Alan Wells, welcomed everyone, and thanked the Cedar Brae Golf and Country Club management and staff for hosting the meeting. He called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

### **PRESENT**

#### **Members:**

Alan Wells, Chair  
Councillor Paul Ainslie, City of Toronto  
Hon. Pauline Browes, Waterfront Regeneration Trust Corp.  
Hon. Michael Chong, MP, Government of Canada  
Markham Deputy Mayor Jack Heath, Region of York  
Councillor Logan Kanapathi, Town of Markham  
Regional Councillor Peter Rodrigues, Region of Durham  
Gerri Lynn O'Connor, TRCA  
Councillor Clyde Smith, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

#### **Alternates:**

Ian Buchanan, Region of York  
Brian Denney, Toronto & Region Conservation Authority  
Tom Melymuk, City of Pickering  
Debbie Pella Keen, Province of Ontario  
Dr. Bill Rapley, Toronto Zoo J  
Jim Robb, Save the Rouge Valley System Inc.

### **ABSENT**

#### **Members:**

Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, City of Toronto  
Andre Flys, Save the Rouge Valley System Inc.  
Councillor Castro Liu, Town of Richmond Hill  
Dr. Helena Jaczek, MPP, Province of Ontario  
Mayor Dave Ryan, City of Pickering  
John Tracogna, Toronto Zoo

#### **Alternates:**

Councillor Colin Campbell, Town of Markham  
Mayor Wayne Emmerson, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville  
Adele Freeman, Toronto & Region Conservation Authority  
Mark Graham, Save the Rouge Valley System Inc.  
Sue Gunton, Toronto Zoo  
Keith Laushway, Waterfront Regeneration Trust Corp.  
Tracey Steele, Richmond Hill  
Carolyn Woodland, TRCA

#### **Staff:**

Barb Davies, Manager, Policy & Administration  
Ron Dewell, Acting General Manager  
Michelle Holmes, Manager, Visitor Experience  
Izabela Kalkowski, Nat. Heritage Field Assistant  
Vicki MacDonald, Biologist

#### **Staff (Continued...)**

Doreen McCarty, Administrative Coordinator  
Maria Papoulias, Manager, Natural Heritage  
Sheryl Santos, Stewardship Coordinator  
Diana Smyth, Trail Coordinator

#### **Observers:**

Mike Adler, Metroland (Scarborough Mirror)  
Peter Bashaw, Office of Cornelius Chisu, MP  
Cat Beattie, Rouge Watch  
Shiloh Bouvette, Environmental Defence  
Gary Bowen, TRCA  
Brian Buckles

#### **Observers (Continued ...)**

Kailey Chislett, Friends of the Rouge Watershed  
Councillor Raymond Cho, City of Toronto  
Anne Marie & Ron Christie  
Jim Dillane, TRCA  
Lilli Duoba, Town of Markham  
Donna Dougan, Milne Park Conservation Association

**Observers (Continued...)**

Kim Empringham, York Federation of Agriculture  
Andrew Farnsworth, Friends of the Rouge Watershed  
Scott Finlayson  
David Harvey, Consultant - GreenThink  
Lois James, Green Door Alliance  
Murray Johnston, Rouge Valley Foundation  
Cecilia Kutas, Office of Corneliu Chisu, MP  
Hon. Peter Kent, Minister of the Environment  
Nancy Lowes, City of Toronto Parks  
Evelyn Lurz, Friends of the Rouge Watershed  
Marvin Macaraig, Dept. Of Geography, U. Of T.  
Owen Macri, Office of Paul Calandra, MP  
Lyn Mariner Duffield  
John P. Mason, Scarborough-Guildwood Conservatives  
Sandra McElleney, Durham Region

**Observers (Continued)**

Beth McEwen, City of Toronto  
Andy McKinnon, Rouge Watch  
Faisal Moola, David Suzuki Foundation  
Edith Montgomery, Former City Councillor  
Maryam Nassar, TRCA  
Kevin O'Connor, Friends of the Rouge Watershed  
Lionel Purcell, Rouge Valley Foundation  
Ruth Rendon, Town of Markham  
Rocco Sgambelluri, TRCA  
Matt Setzkorn, Ontario Farmland Trust  
Brian Shipp, Friends of the Rouge Watershed  
Keith Thirgood, Capstone Communications  
Susan Walmer, Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust  
Helen Walter, Capstone Communications  
Tupper Wheatley, Milne Park Conservation Association  
Lewis Yeager, Rouge Park



2. Tour de Greenbelt

**KEY ISSUE**

Rouge Park has been invited to host the 2011 Tour de Greenbelt by the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation.

**MOTION:**  
**Res. #21/11**

**Moved by: Peter Rodrigues**  
**Seconded by: Pauline Browes**

**THAT the Rouge Park Alliance receive the report for Rouge Park’s upcoming Tour de Greenbelt.**

..... **CARRIED**

**ACTION**

- Deputy Mayor Jack Heath said that Markham is a sponsor for this event and that Rouge Park should apply to Markham for funding.
- Staff to send in request for funding to Markham.

**BACKGROUND**

The Tour de Greenbelt is a family friendly cycling tour that will wander through Rouge Park’s rural landscape. With a tag line of “on your mark, get set, meander” the tour encourages participants to enjoy a leisurely exploration of Rouge Park, and explore all the features that characterize Ontario’s Greenbelt in this area.

This fourth annual tour will slightly differ from past tours. Rather than a four day event as held in the past, this year will focus solely on Rouge Park, in September. Rest stops will highlight Rouge Park features, neighbours, projects and events. Participants can sample Greenbelt foods grown in Rouge Park, stop at a wetland restored by our partner organizations, and learn about the storied past of this area. The day will end with a celebration, with plenty of food, music, information and fun.

The tour will offer a number of routes to appeal to a wide audience, from a short, family friendly loop, to a challenging 100 km route for more experienced riders. In the past, the Tour has welcomed hundreds of participants to each event, from beginner to elite.

Rouge Park is in the early planning stages, but we are excited to partner with the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation to host this event. We are currently negotiating an agreement with the Foundation, but we anticipate generous support from both the Foundation, and various event sponsors. We are thrilled to host this event as it lays the groundwork for future cycling and running fundraisers for the park.

Further details will be shared with the Rouge Park Alliance as they become available. Support from the Alliance to assist in the promotion of this event through member networks is requested; materials will be available in the coming months.

**Report prepared by:** Michelle Holmes, Manager of Visitor Experience, Rouge Park  
**For information contact:** Michelle Holmes, 905-713-6021; email: michelle\_holmes@rougepark.com  
**Date:** May 4, 2011



1. Welcome by Alan Wells
2. Previous Meeting Minutes  
Minutes approved.
3. Actions Outstanding from Previous Meeting Minutes
  - a. Staff to initiate a meeting to discuss fundraising ideas.
4. 2011 Revenue Update and Cost Controls  
**KEY ISSUE**  
Provide an update in regard to 2011 projected revenues and present recommendations for cost controls.

**ACTION: THAT the 2011 cost control recommendations as presented in the attached report be accepted;**

**AND THAT the budget adjustments and updates as presented be implemented;**

**AND FURTHER THAT this report be presented at the May 13, 2011 Rouge Park Alliance meeting for approval.**

5. In-Camera Items  
The In-Camera report, will be kept confidential and remain on file at the Rouge Park Office.

Alan Wells, Chair, reported that the Finance Committee will bring forward to the Rouge Park Alliance a copy of the in-camera report to be discussed in-camera.

6. February 11, 2011 RPA Meeting Request to Review Project Allocations  
*From the draft February 11, 2011 Rouge Park Alliance Minutes:*  
**ACTION:** - Staff to bring forward to the Finance Committee, for further discussion, the matter of the budget allocation for Natural Heritage Committee Projects.

**KEY ISSUE**

Review the 2011 budget and finances in consideration of maintaining the project funding at 2010 levels (\$206,000), and discuss the declining number of applicants.

**ACTION: THAT the Finance Committee receives this report;**

**AND THAT the project funding levels remain as approved at the February 11, 2011 Rouge Park Alliance meeting;**

**AND FURTHER THAT the Rouge Park Alliance is provided with a copy of this report.**

*Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 p.m.*

**Report prepared by:** Barb Davies, Manager, Policy and Administration, Rouge Park  
**For information contact:** Barb Davies, 905-713-6022 - email: bdavies@rougepark.com  
**Date:** May 3, 2011  
Attachment



The rationale being that:

- The two projects ranked high enough to be eligible for funding but not recommended by the Heritage Committee require further negotiations in order to produce beneficial results for the Park.
- In 2011, when combined with the enhancement project funding through York Region, project funding is higher than any other year (\$180,000 + \$150,000 = \$330,000).
- The increase to the municipal levies revenue budgeted for 2011 was not achieved from the City of Toronto (-\$69,000).
- After 2011, the Provincial Special funds will have been depleted (~\$300,000 annual allocation) making a conservative approach to 2011 important to maintaining project funding levels in 2012.

Moving forward from this in review of projected revenues against the February 11, 2011 Rouge Park Alliance approved budget, the Finance Committee recommends adjustments and updates to that budget in order to move forward with a balanced budget. Please see the attached budget summary report.

Generally, the operations are within our 2011 approved budget with the following exceptions:

1. Municipal levies revenue line. In the approved budget, \$240,000 in revenue were anticipated through Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) from the senior municipalities. Our letter to TRCA requesting an increase to levies was well received and subsequently TRCA adjusted their submission to the senior municipalities to account for this increase. The Regions of York and Peel agreed to support this increase; however, the City of Toronto did not. As a result, we do see an increase in levies compared to previous years but not to the level we had budgeted. **A shortfall of \$69,000.**
2. 2010 anticipated revenues from topsoil habitat berm creation projects were half of that anticipated. A more conservative budget figure is proposed in light of this. **A shortfall of \$77,600.**
3. TRCA has offered to provide the Rouge Park Alliance with a part time General Manager for the year at no cost which will greatly assist with compensating for the revenue shortfall and recommended increase in expenditures. **A savings of \$100,000.**
4. The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation has invited the Rouge Park Alliance to host the Tour de Greenbelt awareness event on a cost sharing basis recovery basis. **An increase of \$25,900 in expenses and \$53,500 in revenues therefore contributing \$27,600 to expenses as they relate to the approved budget.**
5. Other minor staff changes will result in reduced expenditures to further cover the recommended adjustments. **A savings of \$19,000.**

**Report prepared by:** Barb Davies, Manager Policy & Administration  
**For information contact:** Barb Davies, 905-713-6022, email: bdavies@rougepark.com  
**Date:** May 4, 2011  
Attachment



**BACKGROUND (Meeting Minutes Attached)**



**ROUGE PARK NATURAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE  
MEETING- MINUTES, MARCH 23, 2011**

The Natural Heritage Committee met in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom, 50 Bloomington Road West, Aurora. Maria Papoulias welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**PRESENT**

**Members:**

Tom Boudreault, City of Toronto  
Ruth Rendon, Town of Markham

**Alternates:**

Bob Clay, Toronto & Region Conservation Authority  
Kathleen Mulroy, Town of Richmond Hill  
Beth McEwen, City of Toronto

**Resource Members:**

Jim Robb, Friends of Rouge Watershed  
Paul Reesor, York Federation of Agriculture

**Guests:**

Jaap Wensvoort, Toronto Zoo

**Staff:**

Ron Dwell, Acting General Manager  
Maria Papoulias, Manager, Natural Heritage  
Vicki MacDonald, Biologist  
Sheryl Santos, Stewardship Coordinator

**ABSENT**

**Members:**

Ian Buchanan, Region of York  
(Chair, Natural Heritage Committee)  
Alan Wells, Chair, Rouge Park Alliance  
Karen Boniface, Town of Markham  
Dave Ireland, Toronto Zoo  
James Lane, Region of York  
John Minor, City of Toronto  
John Nemeth, Town of Richmond Hill  
Lynne Timmy, Transport Canada  
Gord MacPherson, TRCA  
John Pisapio, Province of Ontario

**Alternates:**

Lilli Duoba, Town of Markham  
Emma Followes, Province of Ontario  
Linda Irvine, Town of Markham  
Nancy Lowes, City of Toronto  
Sandra Malcic, Region of York  
Dr. Bill Rapley, Toronto Zoo  
Nory Takata, Town of Markham

**Resource Members:**

Murray Johnston, Rouge Valley Foundation  
John Bowen, Hydro One  
Rick Schofield, Scarborough LACAC  
Lorne Smith

**Alternates:**

Linda Sarang, Rouge Valley Foundation

1. Welcome – Maria Papoulias

Dave Ireland will be the new Toronto Zoo representative. Bill Rapley will be the alternate.

2. Previous Meeting Minutes

Minutes approved.

3. Pending Actions and Rouge Park Alliance Directions

The Alliance meeting scheduled for April 1, 2011 will be cancelled. The next meeting will be May 13, 2011.

4. Rouge Watershed Fisheries Management Plan

The FMP will be posted on the environmental bill of rights for comment. Any questions about the plan can be sent to John Pisapio or Christine Tu. John Pisapio will give a presentation at the next Heritage Committee meeting, and it will go to the next Alliance meeting.

5. Available Restoration Areas for 2012

The sites in Bob Hunter Memorial Park will be funded through the SE Collector project. Comments on the sites were:

Beth McEwen – The City of Toronto would like to be part of the decisions made on the old nursery site.

Jim Robb – I think there has been some grading and dumping of soil on the site north of Finch. It might need topsoil to be brought in.

Maria Papoulias – We will need some further investigation of sites before prescriptions are finalized.

7. June 29, 2011 Special Meeting Itinerary

At the time of this meeting, the native grass meadow will be flowering, most tree planting will be done and the Zoo browse site will be planted on April 21, 2011. These are options for site visits. The meeting will start at 9:00 a.m., we will do site visits, then will book a room at the Zoo or Cedar Grove Community Centre for the meeting in the afternoon. Beth McEwen suggested a visit to the Beare Hill site.

8. Rouge Park Trails Master Plan – Special Meeting of Natural Heritage Committee

This meeting will be April 11, 2011 at 2:00 p.m., to discuss the Natural Heritage features of the trails plan.

9. Next Regular Meeting, May 18, 2011

This meeting will be changed to May 11, 2011.

10. Other Business

Jim Robb brought up the subject of invasive species control. He mentioned that he usually removes invasives around restoration sites, such as buckthorn, Norway maple, Manitoba maple and black locust. However, he does not have the permission to do this. He would like a protocol to be developed so this can be allowed. Comments were as follows:

Beth McEwen – There is a Ravine By-law in Toronto to prevent tree cutting. City of Toronto has protocols and notifications in place. If removing buckthorn, the stump needs to be treated with herbicides to prevent more buckthorn from spreading. The liability of the landowner is a big concern as well.

Bob Clay – No one disagrees with the need for invasive species control, but we need to have protocols and policies in place.

Beth McEwen – Need to prioritize species and locations as well.

Ron Dewell – This should be part of the prescriptions of the site.

Bob Clay – We will need to commit funding to do this.

Beth McEwen – If the City has notifications of where the work needs to be done, they can go out and do the work. If a contractor wants to do the work, then we need to go through a bid process.

#### 6. PRESENTATION: Toronto Zoo Browse Planting

The total area of the site is about 1 ha.

Comments on the project were as follows:

Jim Robb – The site should be planted with native species.

Beth McEwen – Cultivars provide ecological benefits as well. We need to think of this project as an agro-forestry project.

Jim Robb – I don't think it should be in the 300m buffer around the Little Rouge Corridor.

#### 10. Other Business

Jim Robb brought up the issue of the oil spill at the Standard Auto Wreckers site. FRW did water quality samples on March 1, 2011. They found oil, grease and lead downstream. No pesticides or herbicides were found. He will bring the results to the next Heritage Committee meeting.

Jim Robb would also like to give a presentation on Natural Heritage Systems Strategy at the next meeting. Maria Papoulias suggested the presentation be done at the special trails meeting as the topic has to do with fragmentation by trails.

*Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.*



**ROUGE PARK NATURAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING - MINUTES, APRIL 11, 2011  
- Rouge Park Trails Master Plan Update**

The Natural Heritage Committee met in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom, 50 Bloomington Road West, Aurora. Ian Buchanan welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

**Members:**

Ian Buchanan, Region of York  
(Chair, Natural Heritage Committee)  
Karen Boniface, Town of Markham  
Gord MacPherson, TRCA  
Dave Ireland, Toronto Zoo  
Ruth Rendon, Town of Markham

**Alternates:**

Bob Clay, TRCA  
Lilli Duoba, Town of Markham  
Bill Rapley, Toronto Zoo

**Resource Members:**

Jim Robb, Friends of Rouge Watershed  
Paul Reesor, York Federation of Agriculture

**Guests:**

Mark Schollen, Schollen & Company, Inc.  
Sal Spitale, Schollen & Company, Inc.

**Staff:**

Ron Dewell, Acting General Manager  
Maria Papoulias, Manager, Natural Heritage  
Michelle Holmes, Manager, Visitor Experience

**Staff (Continued...)**

Vicki MacDonald, Biologist  
Sheryl Santos, Stewardship Coordinator  
Diana Smyth, Trail Coordinator

**ABSENT**

**Members:**

Alan Wells, Chair, Rouge Park Alliance  
Tom Boudreault, City of Toronto  
John Pisapio, Province of Ontario  
Linda Irvine, Town of Markham  
James Lane, Region of York  
John Minor, City of Toronto  
John Nemeth, Town of Richmond Hill  
Lynne Timmy, Transport Canada

**Alternates:**

Emma Followes, Province of Ontario  
Nory Takata, Town of Markham  
Nancy Lowes, City of Toronto  
Sandra Malcic, Region of York  
Kathleen Mulroy, Town of Richmond Hill

**Resource Members:**

Murray Johnston, Rouge Valley Foundation  
Beth McEwen, City of Toronto  
Linda Sarang, Rouge Valley Foundation  
John Bowen, Hydro One  
Rick Schofield, Scarborough LACAC  
Lorne Smith

1. Welcome – Ian Buchanan

Ian Buchanan introduced the new members from the Toronto Zoo, Dave Ireland and Bill Rapley.

2. Delegation from Andy McKinnon

Andy McKinnon gave comments on the trails plan. The comments were that the proposed trails will fragment the Park and there was not enough public consultation on the plan. Also, the sensitive species mapping should have been done before the first open house.

Mark Schollen responded that the SAR info has been incorporated, but the new drawings have not yet been completed.

3. Background – Michelle Holmes

Michelle Holmes gave some background information for the trails plan. The next stage in the planning process is to create some smaller focus groups.

4. Context – Rouge Park Management Plans – Maria Papoulias

Maria Papoulias gave some background information to show where the trails plan fits into the goals and objectives of the Park as outlined in the 1994 Management Plan.

5. Presentation – Schollen and Co.

Mark Schollen gave a presentation on the trails plan. The presentation was included with the meeting agenda. A comment from Jim Robb was that the goals and objectives from the 1994 management plan should be used instead of coming up with new ones.

Some of the highlights of the plan include multi-use trails along the roads and low impact hiking trails in the interior. There will be no bikes on the interior trails and no motorized vehicles in the Park at all. The trails will use natural rather than built infrastructure whenever possible. Twyn Rivers Drive and Steeles Avenue pose crossing hazards for the public, so this will be addressed in the plan.

Another comment from Jim Robb was that it might help to narrow down the number of trail types for the public so that it is easier to understand.

Sal Spitale from the North-South Environmental gave a presentation on the natural heritage aspects of the planning process. For the sensitive species mapping, they used species that are sensitive to trails, some are SAR and some are not. They used sensitive areas classified as high, medium and low to determine the types of trails that would go into the area.

Comments included:

Jim Robb – The Little Rouge Corridor Plan states that there should be a 600m corridor along the Little Rouge River to create interior forest. This should be taken into account in the mapping.

Mark Schollen – the 600m corridor allows for low-impact trails within it.

Bob Clay – We need to include Bob Hunter Memorial Park around 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue where native grasses have been planted in the sensitive area mapping.

Gord McPherson – You should look at TRCA’s terrestrial natural heritage system.

Bob Clay – There are lots of restoration areas not included on the map, this needs to include future habitat.

Mark Schollen – This is a high level plan and site conditions will need to be verified before detailed site designs are done. Sensitive species locations will continue to be added going forward.

Bob Clay – What science was used to determine how many and where trails are needed?

Mark Schollen – No exact number exists, we considered connections and different users.

Jim Robb – The spine trail would be better on the west side of the river.

Mark Schollen – The east side is better for connectivity and it will have to cross the railway and 407 on the east side, not the west.

Gord McPherson – We need to put some sort of trail in the sensitive area or people will find their own way and they will create a network of trails themselves.

Bill Rapley – Hedgerows make great trail opportunities and experiences.

Bob Clay – What are the next steps? What role will the Heritage Committee play?

Maria Papoulias – We would like the HC to provide updates on sensitive species locations in the next 2-3 weeks.

Michelle Holmes – The next steps are more public consultation in smaller focus groups.

Any comments on the trail plan should be sent to Diana Smyth.

*Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.*

**Report prepared by:** Maria Papoulias, Manager, Natural Heritage, Rouge Park  
**For information contact:** Maria Papoulias, 905-713-6308, email: [maria\\_papoulias@rougepark.com](mailto:maria_papoulias@rougepark.com)  
**Date:** May 2, 2011

6. Rouge Park Plantation for the Provision of Browse Silage to the Toronto Zoo

**KEY ISSUE**

Establishment of a 1 hectare, highly productive shrub plantation intended for harvest by the Toronto Zoo for animal feed, while restoring habitat and promoting re-vegetation on a former agricultural field within Rouge Park.

**Co-proponent Organizations:**

- Toronto Zoo (Conservation programs, Horticulture, Animal Care, Animal Health and Nutrition Department)
- Rouge Park Alliance
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) (Restoration Services Department)
- Natural Resources Canada/Canadian Forest Service (NRCan/CFS)

**MOTION:**

**Moved by: Jack Heath**

**Res. #25/11**

**Seconded by: Gerri Lynn O'Connor**

**THAT the Rouge Park Alliance request the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to enter into an agreement with the Toronto Zoo to permit the establishment, maintenance and harvesting of a browse plantation, as described in the report below.**

..... **CARRIED**

**BACKGROUND**

Many zoo animal species require browse (leaves and twigs from woody plants) as part of their natural daily diet. Browse provides unique nutritional values which are currently impossible to obtain through other feed sources and essential to an animal's physical and psychological wellbeing. Currently, the Toronto Zoo lacks an adequate amount of browse material, especially during the late fall, winter and early spring seasons. In order to address this requirement, the Zoo plans to establish plantations on their own grounds to provide fresh browse to their animals during the summer, and is also seeking a location where additional browse can be grown and preserved for winter feeding. This location needs to be close enough to the Toronto Zoo to be economically viable but does not have to be directly on the Zoo grounds as browse can be pressed and packaged with the Zoo's mobile browse press.

Rouge Park was chosen as an ideal location for the off-site browse plantation, due to its proximity to the Zoo and the established partnership between Toronto Zoo, Rouge Park, and TRCA. In addition, the cultivation of browse furthers Rouge Park's objectives for both natural heritage protection and agriculture. It represents a new form of local, near-urban agriculture which provides greater benefits for wildlife habitat and water quality than conventional forms of agriculture, and could potentially be a profitable crop for Rouge Park farmers in the near future. Therefore, staff of Rouge Park and TRCA, with technical support from Natural Resources Canada/Canadian Forest Service, are working with the Toronto Zoo to establish a browse plantation, with the objectives of producing this important food for the Zoo animals while enhancing natural vegetative cover in the Rouge River watershed.

### Site Location

In collaboration with the Toronto Zoo, staff of the TRCA and Rouge Park Alliance selected a former farm field east of the Little Rouge River as an ideal location for the plantation. The site is located north of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and east of Reesor Road, within Rouge Park (Figure 1). This area is owned by the TRCA and managed for Rouge Park purposes. The site is bordered by TRCA-owned rental properties to the west and south, and by restoration areas to the north and east. Access to the site for future maintenance and harvesting will be via the laneway from 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which is also owned by the TRCA.



**Figure 1: Proposed Site of Toronto Zoo Browse Plantation. The area is about 1 ha in size, located north of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and east of Reesor Road, in Markham.**

### Establishment and Maintenance

The site will be planted in late April of 2011 with fast-growing shrubs suitable for browse harvesting by the Toronto Zoo, as well as some hardwood and coniferous trees to enhance diversity on the site. It is expected to take 3 to 5 years to establish a sustainable and productive plantation and that production will be useful for approximately 10 to 20 years in total. The browse planting will be approximately one hectare in size, and will contribute to the long-term goal of establishing a 300 metre vegetated buffer on each side of the Little Rouge Creek.

The tree and shrub species that will be used have been determined through consultation with Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN), and include highly productive species that also meet the Zoo's animal nutrition targets. The proposed plantings consist of approximately 10,000 hybrid willows and poplars sourced from the NRCAN nursery. These species were chosen for their high productivity, allowing for maximum browse production in as little area as possible. Furthermore, the hybrid willow and poplar species to be planted have been bred by NRCAN to be sterile. Reproduction of these cultivars, either by seed or vegetative propagation, is exceedingly rare, and they do not hybridize with native species nor spread to natural areas. Additionally, 400 native deciduous and coniferous trees will be planted to increase the long-term biological diversity and

ecological health of the site. Trees will be planted in rows allowing space for harvesting pathways. Tree tending will include use of compost (supplied by Toronto Zoo), mulching, and possibly the planting of clover in between rows to reduce competition by other species.

The plantation will advance the Rouge Park and TRCA goals of habitat restoration and promotion of diverse forms of local agriculture. It will also strengthen a partnership with the Toronto Zoo by providing a site for much needed browse.

To inform Rouge Park visitors and the surrounding community of this partnership initiative, a large explanatory sign will be incorporated next to the plantation in a visible location. The sign and project will raise awareness of the restoration successes achieved by Rouge Park and the TRCA, while highlighting continued collaborative efforts to promote sustainability and innovation while preserving and enhancing the natural heritage of the Rouge River watershed.

### **Future Plans**

The browse plantation is expected to be productive for approximately 15 years, after which time the Toronto Zoo will remove the willow and poplar shrubs and the site will be converted to native forest. The 400 native hardwoods and conifers planted around the border of the plantation will provide seed source for future forest regeneration, and additional trees will be planted in the interior of the site if required to assist recruitment.

This browse plantation is intended to be a pilot project and demonstration site. Provided the Toronto Zoo can demonstrate that browse can be harvested efficiently at this site, local farmers may choose to start growing browse as a profitable crop in the future. Browse plantations on local farms will diversify crop types and will provide benefits in the form of enhanced wildlife habitat, soil retention and protection of water quality on Rouge Park farms.

### **Financial Details**

The Toronto Zoo will be assuming all costs related to the development and operations of the Zoo browse plantation.

### **Partner Responsibilities**

- Toronto Zoo: - provision of plants and plant material, planting, weed control, watering (contingency plan), harvesting
- Rouge Park Alliance: - land availability
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority: - land availability, site preparation (will be executed as part of an adjacent project), restoration advice, management of land use agreements
- Natural Resources Canada: - technical advice

**Report prepared by:** Maria Papoulias, Manager, Natural Heritage, Rouge Park  
**For information contact:** Maria Papoulias, 905-713-6308 - email: maria\_papoulias@rougepark.com  
**Date:** April 28, 2011





Figure 1 - Proposed Areas to be Made Available for Restoration in 2012

**ACTION**

- Issue needs to be discussed further at Natural Heritage Committee meeting with cost estimates and be brought back to the Alliance in September.

8. Rouge Park 2010 Annual Report

**KEY ISSUE**

Rouge Park 2010 Annual Report, including an abridged version of the unaudited financial statements.

**MOTION:**

**Moved by: Pauline Browes**

**Res. #27/11**

**Seconded by: Michael Chong**

**THAT the Rouge Park Alliance approve the 2010 Annual Report.**

..... **CARRIED**

**BACKGROUND**

The Rouge Park Annual Report highlights our work in a given year to our partners, stakeholders, and others, as well as helps us review the work we do to ensure that we are continuously improving Rouge Park and meeting Park objectives in our management plans. This report includes an abridged version of our unaudited financial statements.

After the 2010 Annual Report has been approved by the Alliance, the Report will be distributed.

**Report prepared by:**

Mike Bender, Acting General Manager, Rouge Park

**For information contact:**

Mike Bender, 905-713-7374 - email: mbender@trca.on.ca

**Date:** June 8, 2011

Att.

9. Correspondence

**MOTION:**

**Moved by: Peter Rodrigues**

**Res. #28/11**

**Seconded by: Bill Rapley**

**THAT the Rouge Park Alliance receive the following correspondence:**

- 1. Letter dated February 1, 2011 to Alan Wells, Chair, Rouge Park Alliance, from Denis Kelly, Regional Clerk, Region of York, re: Appointment of Alternate Representative to the Rouge Park Alliance.**
- 2. Letter dated February 16, 2011 to Alan Wells, Chair, Rouge Park Alliance, from John Tracogna, Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Zoo, re: Appointment of Member and Alternate Representatives to the Rouge Park Alliance.**



**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Immediately after the Rouge Park Alliance meeting, the Annual General Meeting commenced. Alan Wells, Chair, welcomed everyone and again thanked the Cedar Brae Golf and Country Club personnel for hosting the meeting. He announced that the Hon. Peter Kent, Minister of the Environment, is expected later. He introduced the Alliance's guest speaker, Dr. Faisal Moola from the David Suzuki Foundation.

Dr. Faisal Moola, David Suzuki Foundation, talked about the intensity of urban development in and around the Rouge River watershed and greenbelt and the importance and value of protecting nature and agriculture within and around our major cities.

The Hon. Peter Kent, Minister of the Environment, attended our Annual General Meeting and reaffirmed the Federal Government's commitment to move forward and establish a near urban national park in the Rouge valley.