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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rouge Park wins Ontario Parks Association Award

TORONTO, PICKERING & YORK REGION – Rouge Park was awarded the prestigious “Protecting Tomorrow Today” award at the 2005 annual general meeting of the Ontario Parks Association (OPA).

The Association represents a broad range of parks and related organizations in the Province and is committed to “Protecting Tomorrow Today” through the beautification and conservation of parks, open space and the natural environment.

At the awards ceremony, Paul Ronan, past president of the OPA, noted that their nomination committee recognized Rouge Park staff’s vital role in ensuring that a large reservoir of biodiversity in the Greater Toronto Area was included in the Ontario *Greenbelt Plan*, released in 2005. Mr. Ronan also noted that staff from Rouge Park made major contributions to enhancing natural environment goals in “Our Common Grounds”, the City of Toronto’s new strategic plan for parks, forestry and recreation. The OPA acknowledged these as significant initiatives which will help to Protect Tomorrow Today.

“It is gratifying that in the short, ten-year lifetime of Rouge Park we are already being recognized by our peers in the OPA as contributing to the Association’s goals in the Province,” said Lewis Yeager, General Manager of Rouge Park, who accepted the award from OPA President Bruce Hay. “I am proud to receive this award on behalf of all those who work hard for the goal of Rouge Park. The presenters cited our strong natural and cultural heritage programme, and our attractive and informative web site as important tools to protect and enhance the best examples of forests, wetlands and meadows in the Toronto area.”

Rouge Park protects a wilderness area near Canada’s largest city, and is currently 38 km² in size, following the river valleys and nearby lands of the Rouge River system, from the Oak Ridges Moraine to Lake Ontario. The Park provides a diversity of natural habitats and a countryside landscape of farms and historic hamlets merging with culturally-diverse eastern Toronto. Visitors enjoy hiking, riverside camping, a sandy beach and spectacular views. Many areas are accessible by public transit. Visit www.rougepark.com for details. Go “Wild in the City!”

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Photos available upon request.

For more information, contact:

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