



STORM COALITION INC.  
Save The Oak Ridges Moraine

# Seasonal Storms

Fall 1999

## Riding the STORM Waves

**Gilchrist said set to halt development on moraine**  
Toronto Star, November 1, 1999

**How an Ice Age creation turned into a hot potato**

Toronto Star November 6, 1999 by David Lewis Stern

Busy times on the Moraine and down at Queen's Park during the months of October and November.

The initial spark was the whiff of possible political scandal at the provincial level, with two ministers being accused by the Opposition of actions indicating improper levels of coziness with developers.

Fueling the fire onto the pages of GTA newspapers, radio and television media, as well as on to the floor of the Legislature, is the greatly increased tension between,

on the one hand, developers seeking approval for some of the biggest urban projects ever envisaged on the Moraine, and on the other hand, vigorous response from a wide range of environmental groups. With remarkable speed, new alliances have been formed and new action plans devised to strengthen Moraine protection. And some municipal governments, on whom so much planning responsibility has been downloaded by the province, have exhibited a collaborative interest in setting firmer standards for the Moraine. Also worth mentioning is that public attendance at some key meetings has been unusually high.

The central issue is urban sprawl

and the lack of leadership shown by the provincial government to deal with either Moraine protection or the big picture planning that is so necessary. Before the Board are three extremely significant hearings, two of which involve possible extensions of 'big' sewer pipes onto the Moraine. The Liberal Opposition has shown leadership in introducing Bill 12, a private members bill, asking for an Oak Ridges Moraine Commission. Our job is to keep this going, so read on. What a ride so far.

**The road to Gilchrist's resignation**  
Toronto Star, October 24, 1999

### STORM presents Position Paper - asking for support.

Debbie Crandall, Executive Director presented STORM's Position Paper/Pledge at a panel at the Clean Waters Summit on Saturday, November 20. A copy of this Position, as well as a Background Report, is included with this mailing. If you also feel that, 'enough is enough', 'please sign on. Your

support is critical. Make copies for friends and colleagues. Those of you who have registered your e-mail address with us will have seen this already - please feel free to distribute through your group's list servers.

Many of the specific points flow from a joint press conference held on November 1 at Queen's Park. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, STORM, Earthroots, Kettle Lakes Coalition and Uxbridge

Conservation Association announced a four-part action plan for the province including: bringing in tough new planning controls, freeze on all public spending on projects (including planning processes) that are damaging the Moraine, dedication of 5% of the SuperBuild fund for land acquisition and a development surcharge on houses built on the moraine. The groups have requested a meeting with the Premier and Mr. Clement.

## Regions uniting in Moraine fight

Toronto Star, November 3, 1999

1999/2000 Board elected at Annual General Meeting on October 23.

### Co-Chairs

Dorothy Izzard  
David McQueen

### Past Co-Chair

Anna Tilman

### Treasurer

James Vermeulen

### Secretary

Lois Brown

### Members-at-large

Jeff Farrell

Dicky Glerum

Teresa Johnston

Bruce Mackenzie

Joseph O'Neill

### Executive Director

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## Joint-Regional Initiative on the Moraine

In December, 1998, Dave Sharpe, Geological Survey of Canada and Project Manager of the Oak Ridges Moraine Hydrogeology Project, wrote a letter to the Regions of York, Durham and Peel, offering the services of the GSC. Coincidentally, residents of York, via the Official Plan Report Card exercise, had just given a C grade to York's actions to protect the Moraine.

Spurred on by this, Newmarket Mayor Tom

Taylor, issued a challenge to the Regional Councils of York, Durham and Peel to work together to get the province to re-engage in protection of the Moraine.

Staff from the three regions held focus groups of stakeholders and developed a background report *The Oak Ridges Moraine Towards a Long Term Strategy*. In this, the following recommendations are made:

- The Regions of York, Durham and

Peel embrace the preparation of a coordinated long term Strategy for the Moraine.

- The three Regions commence discussions with the Province to obtain their support for preparation of an Oak Ridges Moraine-specific Policy Statement under Section 3 of the Planning Act.

- Wide consultation with area municipalities and

stakeholders.

- Establish an Advisory Panel of hydrogeologists.

- Establish a hydrogeological data management programme.

Durham and Peel Councils approved the work to date with strong support to move forward with the recommendations. However on September 15, 1999 York Planning Committee chose not to move forward at this time, instead asking for a 60-day public commenting period on the background report itself.

On October 26, the City of Toronto unanimously passed a motion to

be included in these discussions and to participate in developing a long-term strategy for the Moraine.

SIORM, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Earthroots and the Caledon Environmental Advisory Committee met with staff from the three Regions to support the direction taken.

The final staff report goes before York Council on December 1.

Below are excerpts from SIORM's response to the background report.

*"Mention urban sprawl and most people will agree that our countryside is in imminent danger of being lost to houses and pavement. Most would agree that urban sprawl is an outcome of short-sighted thinking where a balance has been lost between serving the public interest in favour of greed. (cont'd on page 5)*

**City joins movement to save Moraine**  
Toronto Star, November 26, 1999

## Announcements

Inaugural meeting of **Building an Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust.**

Tuesday, December 7, 1999 7 - 9 pm

Hosted by Newmarket Mayor Tom Taylor. Council Chambers, Town of Newmarket, 395 Mulloch Drive. Everyone welcome. Contact Mary Dubé at 905 473-7612.

# Planning By Appeal: Three Major Board Hearings

## More Big Pipe: Uxbridge and Gan Eden

One of the biggest single urban developments

**Durham rejects moraine development**  
Toronto Star, October 4, 1999

ever proposed on the Oak Ridges Moraine – the “Gan Eden Community” – is the subject of an application by Jay-M Holdings directly to the Ontario Municipal Board.

The dimensions of the proposal are staggering. Some 2,500 residential units, an 18-hole golf course and a branch campus of Durham College would be built. This of course necessitates that the Uxbridge Urban Area Boundary would be expanded to accommodate this kind of growth.

All of the lands are designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas. They are part of the Uxbridge Creek Infiltration Area and are partially designated as provincially significant wetland.

The urban population target for the “new Uxbridge” would go from the current population of 7,000 to 19,000. Drinking water would be from local groundwater supplies but the servicing would have to be a Big Pipe connection to the York Durham Sewer System (YDSS).

The sheer audacity of Mr Tannenbaum’s actions has created quite a stir. His first proposal for 770 housing units was summarily turned down by the Town and later

withdrawn at the regional level. His second proposal for 2,500 units flew in the face of a November 9, 1998 unanimous Town resolution advising the Province and the Region

that they do “not support the extension of the Big Pipe to the Town-

ship.”

The Uxbridge Conservation Association (a STORM Coalition member) characterizes it as a proposal “to build another town south of downtown Uxbridge.” The advent of the Big Pipe will put unprecedented pressures on Goodwood and other lands south of Uxbridge.

At all public and council meetings held by the Town and Region, there has been standing room only with a strong one-voice NO to the application.

Wynn Walters, spokesperson for the newly-formed Citizens Alliance of Uxbridge says, “We are not opposed to growth. But it should be controlled. The Gan Eden is diametrically opposed to these [official] plans.”

Going into the Board Hearing, the proposal has been rejected by both the Township and the Region. Interestingly, the adjacent Region of York has sought party status at the hearing in rejection of an extension of the Big Pipe.

The hearing starts February 14, 2000 with an expected three-month duration.

## King City:

King City, a small community of 5,000 on the Oak Ridges Moraine, is in the eye of an all too typical storm. Local council has approved a community plan that will double the population to 10,000 by 2016 with a mature state of 12,000 by 2021, despite the fact that 75% of local residents expressed through a petition their vision of 7,500 people by 2021.

### Big Pipe Woes

The 10,000 population is a double-edged sword; it seems to be the magic number that makes it cost-effective to extend the Big Sewer Pipe (YDSS) to King City. Behind the scenes, local council called in the Health Department to declare parts of the village ‘public health hazards’, citing leaking septic systems as the cause. This appears to be a red herring; numerous water samples of the East Humber upstream and downstream show no indication of contamination.

A number of NGOs, including STORM Coalition, are appearing as parties at the upcoming Board hearing beginning November 22. If this is approved and the Big pipe extended west from Bathurst along King Road, there will be no way to stop a westward march of urbanization across the south slope of the Moraine. For more info call Dorothy Izzard, 905 833-5816.

**York Region's forests devastated, report says**

Era Banner, 1999

## The Yonge Street Corridor

Ah, the historic Yonge Street Corridor is once again on the move. From Newmarket to the north and Richmond Hill to the south, there are two remaining undeveloped kilometres of Moraine across Yonge Street. Four major developers have plans for up to 7,000 housing units on classic Moraine land - headwaters of the Rouge, Don and East Humber Rivers, provincially significant wetland complex, habitat for regionally rare songbirds, red shouldered hawks and forest dwelling species and rare and sensitive kettle lakes and kettle bogs. The Town of Richmond Hill rationalizes their decision to proceed with an OPA and rezoning using the 'Environment First' principle espoused in the OPA 129 OMB decision. Of course, we won't know for a few decades if this principle will prove itself - the area is only now under construction.

### Independent Peer Review Gives Low Grade to Supporting Studies

In a rare but welcome move the Ministry of Municipal Affairs called for an independent hydrogeological peer review. The conclusions of

which are that:

- the studies do not meet the intent of the ORM Guidelines,
- the studies do not meet the provisions of York's Regional Plan and,

- the studies do not meet the Town of Richmond Hill's own standards.
- Despite these findings, the Town has proceeded ahead with the first pre-Board hearing held on November 19, 1999. Member groups of the Kettle Lakes Coalition each attended and entered their requests to be participants.

### NGOs Call for a Kettle Lakes Park

On October 6, 1999 member group representatives from the Kettle Lakes Coalition held a press conference at Queen's Park calling for a ministerial zoning order for the Yonge Street Corridor and for the province to purchase the land for a park. A coalition of six groups - STORM, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Save the Rouge, Richmond Hill Naturalists, West Humber Naturalists and Earthroots have banded together in an effort to save the Yonge Street corridor from being completely urbanized.

The proposed Kettle Lakes Park is 12 kilometres long stretching from Bathurst to the 404 and Bloomington to Stouffville Road. It would be the largest park in southern Ontario complementing the Rouge Park downstream. In this stretch there are seven kettle lakes (including Bond, Phillips and Hanes), Jefferson Forest (500 ha interior forest), numerous wetlands, kettle bogs and headwater streams. It is a green island of hope within the urban landscape of Richmond Hill.

Contact Gloria Marsh 905 773-4028

**See back page for location map.**

## Other happenings

- Liberal MPP and Municipal Affairs Critic Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence) introduced Bill 12, a private members bill asking for an Oak Ridges Moraine Commission. For more info call 416 325-8707.
- City of Toronto will appear before the Board in the Yonge Street Corridor OMB Hearing.
- Rural Countryside Working Group of the Greater Toronto Services Board is introducing a motion on December 3 calling for a six-month freeze on development. For more info call Lynn Morrow 416 338-2993
- Clear cutting of the Jefferson Forest through the Bayview Extension area re-commences on Monday, November 29. Local residents are staging a sit-in and peaceful demonstration. Set up a tent in support. Gloria Marsh 905 773-4028
- STORM Boutique - Open for Christmas. Sweatshirts, t-shirts, greeting cards. Phone 905 833-5816

(cont'd from page 2)

Ask most people how to stop it and they shake their heads.

Across the United States changes are taking place. Portland, Oregon in the 1970s began a process of protecting their countryside - by drawing a line around its core. A 50% increase in population has been accommodated with only a 2% increase in developed land area and a moder-

ate rise in the number of trips by car. Florida, the land of sprawl, is taking matters in hand by directing growth away from environmentally sensitive lands to existing populated areas. And in California the value of clustered development and public transit are seen as a key way to stimulate economic growth. The alternatives of congested traffic and isolated suburban enclaves are no longer considered as acceptable choices.

The GTA is experiencing huge growth. If we continue on the way we have since 1991, sprawl will have followed the water and sewer pipes up the south slope of the Moraine, over the divide and down the north slope.

### Status Quo?

Official plan policies at this time are not strong enough to prevent this from happening. The Official Plans of York, Durham and Peel all have clear statements of intent about how important the Moraine is, clear protection policies on how to protect the Moraine and how to discourage urban sprawl and how to maintain rural character. So, how to explain the following:

- Since 1991, 6,575 ha of land on the Moraine have been approved for development (6,100 ha in York Region, 108 ha in Durham and 371 ha in Peel).

- Fourteen OPAs in York targeting 3,227 ha (not including King City or Oak Ridges).

- Six OPAs in Durham targeting 629 ha.

- Plans for 14 new golf courses that

For this reason, we feel that a provincial policy statement designed specifically for the Oak Ridges Moraine will not create that needed parity. The 'shall have regard to' stipulation is but a small step up from the Implementation Guidelines, subject to interpretation and inconsistency of application."

STORM Coalition advocates that at this juncture the province must take a

strong leadership role in both the short- and long-term. The short-term measures are:

- An immediate freeze on all public spending, by the provincial and municipal governments, including respective agencies on any further activities, planning or on the ground, that will further compromise the Moraine.

- Prescriptive land use controls that identify clearly where development is off limits and where limited development may occur.

- Engaging in discussions with all stakeholders including the private, charitable and NGO sectors, on a land acquisition strategy that will help to help resolve land ownership conflicts.

- Assembling a small and effective team to prepare protocols for defining groundwater constraints criteria.

Long-term measures include the creation and adoption of an Oak Ridges Moraine Act with an attendant land use plan that provides a clear and certain land use planning framework.

## Who's protecting the Oak Ridges Moraine?

Toronto Star, September 9, 1999

## Politicians to blame for letting countryside go

Toronto Star, September 30, 1999

have been in the works since 1991. Golf courses, on average, have permits to take up to 500,000 gallons of water daily.

Most of these proposals will go before the Ontario Municipal Board and all have a good chance of proceeding given the current status of planning in Ontario.

STORM Coalition has advocated for the last 10 years that management of the Moraine cannot follow political boundaries - the downstream population must have a voice.

A consistent application of policies under a clear vision of intent to protect is the only way to achieve long-term ecological sustainability and this cannot be accomplished in a fragmented planning framework. Without consistency and fairness of application, political imbalances will cause erosion over time.

In all frankness, York Region deals very differently with its Moraine lands than does either Peel or Durham. The three Regional Official Plans all contain statements of intent and policies to protect the Moraine, however when comparing the number of OPAs in York (14) versus Durham (6) and Peel (0), the differences are obvious.