

**FURTHER TO ANNUAL AUTHORITY MEETING #1/05  
To be held Friday, February 25, 2005**

**Pages**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE**

**ITEM 6.2 - NEW CORRESPONDENCE**

**6.2** A letter dated February 22, 2005, from Margaret Catto, Conservation Councillor,  
Toronto Ornithological Club, in regards to item 10.1 - Correspondence. 21

**7. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS TO THE AUTHORITY**

**ITEM 7.4 - NEW ITEM**

**7.4 OAK RIDGES MORaine CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
PLAN 22-25**

CORRESPONDENCE 6.2



**The Toronto Ornithological Club**  
(Founded 1934)

**FAX TO:** THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD,  
TORONTO AND REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
416-661-6898

**FROM:** MARGARET CATTO  
TORONTO ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB  
416-485-5188

294 Bessborough Drive  
Toronto, ON M4G 3L1  
Feb.22, 2005

Dear Chairman O'Brien and Board members,

On February 11, TOC colleague Glenn Coady and I appeared before the Watershed Management Advisory Board to present the views of the Toronto Ornithological Club regarding a proposal from Tommy Thompson Park staff to use lethal measures against nesting Double-crested Cormorants. On behalf of Friends of the Spit, John Carley also spoke on this subject, and letters of opposition to a lethal cull of nesting cormorants were received from a number of other organizations and individuals, including Ontario Nature and Toronto Councillor Paula Fletcher.

The positive resolution subsequently passed by the Board was most welcome, stating as it does that no lethal cull of cormorants will be carried out at the Park this spring. We look forward with confidence to your Board's endorsement of this resolution on January 25th.

All three delegations were very pleased with their reception by Chairman Dave Ryan and members of the Watershed Management Advisory Board. We enjoyed the opportunity to speak with Board members and TRCA staff after the meeting, and look forward to working with them on this issue in the future.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret Catto". The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with the first and last names being the most prominent.

Margaret Catto  
Conservation Councillor  
Toronto Ornithological Club  
Member, Tommy Thompson Park Advisory Committee

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Authority  
Meeting Annual #1/05, February 25, 2005

**FROM:** Brian Denney, Chief Administrative Officer

**RE: OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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**KEY ISSUE**

Provincial request to have the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) enter into a management agreement and to undertake an environmental management plan for the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor within the Town of Richmond Hill.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT staff be directed to finalize a management agreement with the Province of Ontario and to facilitate the implementation of an environmental management plan for the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor within the Town of Richmond Hill;**

**THAT the management plan be developed in consultation with all stakeholders including the Town of Richmond Hill, Region of York, Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation, interested landowners and various public interest groups;**

**THAT staff be directed to seek avenues for funding assistance to implement the completion and recommendations of the management plan, including making application to the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation;**

**AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to the Authority on the status of the development of the management plan and its implementation.**

**BACKGROUND**

The Province of Ontario has requested that the TRCA act as their agent in the development of a management plan for the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor within the Town of Richmond Hill. The lands are located generally between Bathurst Street and Bayview Avenue, north of Jefferson Sideroad. The lands to be covered by the management plan are those lands within the Town of Richmond Hill which would come into public ownership as a result of a land exchange between the Province of Ontario and certain private landowners on the Oak Ridges Moraine. The management plan must also consider the context of these lands to adjacent publicly owned lands between Leslie Street and Bathurst Street.

The area to be covered by the management plan is in excess of 1,000 acres (see attached map) and comprises mainly agricultural lands, and includes an existing golf course, wetland features, hedgerows and woodlands. These lands were the subject of a planning process which involved a lengthy Ontario Municipal Board Hearing and the eventual agreement by developers and the province to identify these lands as an important east west ecological link across the moraine. These lands are essential for ecological preservation and restoration as they represent the narrowest open space area on the east west corridor of the Oak Ridges Moraine. TRCA staff was instrumentally involved in advocating the protection of this corridor and of their transfer to public ownership throughout the planning process.

The request of the province to have TRCA act as their agent is a recognition of TRCA's role in advocating the protection of these lands and TRCA's ability to work with partners, both public and private, to achieve ecological restoration objectives within its area of jurisdiction and across the Oak Ridges Moraine. TRCA staff are supportive of the development of a management plan and see this request by the province as a singular opportunity to kick start the regeneration process in the short term.

The management plan must be consistent with the Oak Ridges Conservation Plan which recognizes these lands as Natural Core and Natural Linkage, must consider the town's Open Space System and TRCA's draft Terrestrial Natural Heritage System Strategy. Therefore, the land use must change from mainly agricultural to natural cover. The management plan must also address the relationship with the surrounding land uses which include residential development and other environmentally sensitive features and ensure a sustainable balance between the corridor and adjacent uses. It is for that reason that the management plan must not only consider ecological restoration but passive recreational/nature interpretation use expectations by the adjacent community.

As a component of the agreement reached between the Richmond Hill Landowners and the province, the Richmond Hill lands will be conveyed into public ownership in exchange for publicly owned lands in Seaton. The agreement also requires the landowners to provide approximately 3.5 million dollars for restoration and trail construction within the Richmond Hill Corridor. The province has requested that the TRCA accept the 3.5 million dollar contribution by the Richmond Hill Landowners to undertake the environmental management plan, including the trail and initial restoration. It is recognized that these funds represent a significant investment but are a small amount of the total investment required to actively restore the lands. The TRCA and the province recognize that other sources of funds will be required in the longer term to implement the management plan vision, however the initial funds do represent an opportunity to begin the process of restoration by developing the management plan, initiating key ecological restoration works and implementing components of a trail system. These funds could also be used to leverage additional funds from interested stakeholders who share a vision for an improved ecological link across the moraine.

One initiative which could assist in realizing the vision for an improved publicly owned ecological link across the moraine is the continued utilization of the existing Bathurst Glen Golf Course which is located within the corridor. Recently there has been a strong promotion by residents of Richmond Hill to have the golf course remain in operation. The environmental management plan process should consider this direction to have the golf course remain open and explore the opportunities to create a temporary revenue stream to implement the vision or a publicly owned ecological link across the moraine.

Given this, TRCA staff are requesting that the Authority support the above recommendations which would allow staff to take a lead role in implementing a management plan which will in a timely way, set the direction to achieve the vision of an improved ecological corridor.

**Report prepared by: Russel White, extension 5306**  
**For Information contact: Russel White, extension 5306**  
**Date: February 22, 2005**  
**Attachments: 1**

Attachment 1

