
Ontario Protecting Important Water Resources

Province Looking for Public Input on Potential Greenbelt Expansion

NEWS

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Ontario is taking action to protect important water resources in the Greater Golden Horseshoe by launching a consultation on expanding the province's [Greenbelt](#) into the outer ring.

The outer rings located beyond the current Greenbelt and outside of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, and includes areas where valuable water resources are under pressure from urban development.

These hydrological systems provide high-quality drinking water, manage wastewater and stormwater, sustain plants and animals, and support climate change mitigation including reducing flood risks. They also provide a competitive advantage for industries, such as agriculture and the agri-food sectors.

The recent [review of four land use plans](#) for the Greater Golden Horseshoe highlighted the importance of protecting water resources in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The panel recommended that the province lead a process to grow Ontario's Greenbelt to protect areas of ecological and hydrological significance where urbanization should not occur.

The province is inviting the public, municipalities, conservation authorities, stakeholders, and Indigenous communities and organizations to provide input on a study area for potential Greenbelt expansion. The study area comprises seven areas most in need of protection, where features, including moraines, cold water streams and wetlands are concentrated.

Comments may be submitted online [[insert link to consultation document](#)], through the Environmental Registry [[link to EBR posting](#)] or in person [[link to webpage where dates and locations will be posted](#)].

Protecting water resources by growing the Greenbelt in the outer ring of the Greater Golden Horseshoe is part of Ontario's plan to create fairness and opportunity during this period of rapid economic change. The plan includes a higher minimum wage and better working conditions, free tuition for hundreds of thousands of students, easier access to affordable child care, and free prescription drugs for everyone under 25 through the biggest expansion of medicare in a generation.

QUOTES

“Our lakes, rivers and wetlands are essential to the high quality of life enjoyed by people living in the Greater Golden Horseshoe’s outer ring – today and in the future. We all have an important role to play in preserving these vital water resources. I look forward to hearing your views on the proposed protected areas.” – Bill Mauro, Minister of Municipal Affairs

[INSERT QUOTE] – Stakeholder e.g. Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation or Wellington Water Watchers

[INSERT QUOTE] -David Crombie, Chair of Advisory Panel

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario’s Greenbelt permanently protects roughly 810,000 hectares of green space, farmland, vibrant communities, forests, wetlands and watersheds.
- Approximately 10,000 hectares were added to the Greenbelt in 2017, including 21 new urban river valleys and associated coastal wetland areas that connect to Lake Ontario.
- The Greater Golden Horseshoe is one of the fastest growing regions in North America, with a population projected to reach more than 13.5 million by 2041.
- The outer ring of the Greater Golden Horseshoe is experiencing significant growth and many of its communities rely on groundwater for their water supply.

LEARN MORE

Learn more about the consultation [\[Insert link to backgrounder\]](#)

Read the consultation document [\[Insert link to consultation document\]](#)

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