WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF LAKE SIMCOE?

A 2022 update on the "Lake Simcoe Under Pressure" Report
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Introduction

About one year ago, the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition released *Lake Simcoe Under Pressure in 2021* to highlight Lake Simcoe's many stresses. This report aims to update concerned citizens, decision-makers, and the media on the status of the many pending decisions and what it all means for Lake Simcoe.

In *Lake Simcoe Under Pressure in 2021*, we asked the province and municipalities, do you love Lake Simcoe enough to:

1. Limit growth in the watershed to sustainable levels to protect the lake's health;
2. Stop the Orbit MZO development for up to 150,000 people in farm fields around a proposed GO train station;
3. Stop the Bradford Bypass through the Holland Marsh at the south end of Lake Simcoe
4. Stop the Upper York Sewage System from discharging into Lake Simcoe;
5. Keep the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan strong; and
6. Grow the Greenbelt into Simcoe County to support Lake Simcoe's health and the perseverance of farming in the area.

Based on the actions and plans of the province on these issues over the last year, there is no rational basis for optimism for Lake Simcoe. In the following brief report, we reveal why that is our position.
Housing and development growth is at the top of the list because everything else flows from this.

In the year since our initial report, we are not aware of any public assessment regarding the sustainability of the planned development, and its sewage and stormwater requirements, in the Lake Simcoe watershed. This growth is anticipated to negatively affect both water quality and housing affordability.
How does growth affect Lake Simcoe?

One of Lake Simcoe's biggest environmental issues is **Phosphorus pollution**. We are currently doubling the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan's target maximum load of 44 tonnes per year.

Phosphorus is in fertilizer, poop, and dirt! Where does it come from?

Lake Simcoe! What’s wrong?

Excess phosphorus causes algae and weed growth, and reduces oxygen in the lake for Whitefish and Lake Trout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phosphorus Sources</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban runoff and stormwater</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atmospheric</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural and agricultural</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sewage Plants and Septic Systems</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland Marsh and polders</td>
<td>4%</td>
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The impacts of development are not limited to sewage. Any water that drains across the watershed's land picks up Phosphorus and other pollutants. Untreated, it becomes part of the stormwater pollution that accounts for a stunning 31% of the estimated Phosphorus loads to Lake Simcoe, the highest contributing source.

The stripping of land and development processes themselves contribute to Lake Simcoe's pollution. Readers should note that advanced sewage treatment will not address all of the impacts of development.

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) says the watershed is now home to 465,000 people, and, "based on the Province of Ontario’s Places to Grow Plan and municipal official plans, it's projected that the urban area within our watershed will increase by approximately 50% by the year 2041 and the population will nearly double." [1]

Extrapolating from government estimates for development planned from 2008 to 2031, [2] the development projected for the Lake Simcoe watershed will increase Phosphorus loads by at least 15 tonnes per year.

It is an exercise in futility to fight the population growth across the province, but we should be careful about where it will go, what form it will take, and how much land will be disturbed in the process. As explained above, sprawling development will eat up more farmland and contribute more Phosphorus to the lake. So we must consider the denser alternatives to new subdivisions of single-family homes in farm fields.

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[2] Re development to 2031: “Under the Plan all new developments are required to have enhanced stormwater management controls in place, subject to limited exceptions. Accounting for these controls, analysis indicates the Phosphorus load from these new developments would be 15.3 T/yr. Additional analysis indicates that combining “Enhanced” stormwater management controls with LID practices would reduce the Phosphorus load from new development to 9.2 T/yr. While the Strategy and the Plan strongly encourage that effective measures are taken to mitigate and reduce Phosphorus contributions from new development wherever possible, significant Phosphorus loadings from development will occur and should be offset in some way.” (Lake Simcoe Phosphorus Reduction Strategy, p. 30)
The way the Municipal Comprehensive Reviews (part of the Official Plan review process) are rolling out, it appears that the initial allocation of land for new development will occur before climate change and water/wastewater capacity analyses are complete, thereby repeating the mistakes that put us in a situation of having development approvals without sewage treatment plant approvals. More on this in the Upper York Sewage Solution section.

But it gets worse. The province has called for an even higher population for the watershed while weakening the Environmental Assessment process for building new highways and sewage treatment plants. Conservation Authorities’ and municipalities’ ability to spend time getting excellent, environmentally-friendly development proposals has been curtailed. The province has also limited the time allowed for proposal review. [3] Municipalities that exceed the shorter review period will face new financial penalties, and the independence of Conservation Authorities’ decisions on some land use matters has been undermined with new laws allowing ministers to override Conservation Authority requirements. That is a non-exhaustive list of how Ontario laws have changed since 2018 to limit environmental protections and facilitate development.

Sprawl is also bad for residents’ and municipalities’ finances. An exacerbating factor for both environmental and housing affordability concerns is the province’s entrenchment in “market-based” analysis to determine the correct mix of housing in the future. This approach uses old market preferences favouring single-family home development over more compact and affordable housing options. In today’s housing market, this is a missed opportunity to build what mid- and lower-income Ontarians can afford. Research from York Region shows that it is increasingly difficult to buy a home for the average York Region resident. [4] Smaller, more affordable, and family-friendly units are urgently needed.

**York Region Affordable Housing Threshold and Average Cost of New Homes (2019)** [4]

![Graph showing affordable housing threshold and average cost of new homes](https://yorkpublishing.escibemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=18865)

[3] This change was made on April 14, 2022, in the *More Homes for Everyone Act.*
Strangely, the province is pushing sprawl and massive density at the same time. The province is forcing massively dense tower projects such as those at Yonge St. and Hwy 407 in Richmond Hill, using Enhanced Minister’s Zoning Orders to permit what would be the highest density development in the western hemisphere. [8]

When it comes to the long-term protection of farmland, water quality, and housing affordability, there is a lot to criticize in the province’s frequent changes to the Planning Act. Development lobby groups love it. [9] So far, it’s hard to tell who else does.

Sprawling neighbourhoods rely on sprawling infrastructure for water, wastewater, and hydro. Ottawa analyzed the impacts of sprawl vs. infill development scenarios. Their consultant, Hemson, “found it now costs the City of Ottawa $465 per person each year to serve new low-density homes built on undeveloped land, over and above what it receives from property taxes and water bills....On the other hand, high-density infill development, such as apartment buildings, pays for itself and leaves the city with an extra $606 per capita each year.” [5] This leaves sprawling municipalities with fewer dollars to spend on services that make people’s lives better as they try to cover the long-term maintenance costs of sprawling infrastructure that are not covered by development charges.

Although there is absolutely a way forward that would create complete communities, increase affordability, and reduce environmental impacts of new development, the government is passing on the options that would build “the missing middle,” typified by 3 - 6 story, small buildings of condos, apartments and/or townhouses. This is the way we used to build our communities before we succumbed to the sprawl experiment. In Bill 109, the More Homes for Everyone Act [6] which received Royal Assent on April 14th, 2022, the province did not take important steps recommended by experts, academics, and housing advocates to allow more gentle density to existing neighbourhoods. [7]

[9] BILD influencing policy development, politics and voters: https://bildgta.ca/voteforhousing
It’s full steam ahead in Innisfil, where a Transit Oriented Community is planned to be built around a GO train line and a proposed new GO station.

We are not opposed to Transit Oriented Communities. But developing this way does not improve existing low-density towns, nor does it help existing residents get out of their cars.

If Innisfil had opted for “missing middle” housing and intensification on its arterial and main roads, higher density in existing towns would contribute to achieving transit-supportive densities. This in turn would support financially feasible public transit systems.
One of the significant problems with the use of Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs) is that they do not follow the normal public input and consultation required in Ontario's planning process. MZOs remove the public's ability to appeal. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is no new publicly available information on this project. Innisfil's public page about the Orbit [10] shows no consultation or movement on the file since the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's issuance of the MZO. Between October 14 and November 4, 2020, the Orbit plan came to Council and was approved, before the end of their public consultation period. Breakneck speed may be ok for a train, but not for the planning of 150,000 residents in a town of 37,000.

Where is the promised GO station?
Innisfil Councilor Orsatti asked in the October 14th Council meeting: Does the developer have to build the GO station by a certain time? If not, what is the point of an MZO?

Answer from Chief Planner Tim Cane: We have always been talking with our partners about 2022 for the GO.

That is not much of a commitment. It is hardly surprising that it is 2022 and there is no GO station, since the MZO did not have a date associated with building the station. This public service has been left to the discretion of the developers. The location of the entire project, including the GO station, benefits the developers more than any other stakeholder. The GO station should have been in Alcona, one concession line north, where the majority of Innisfil's population lives. This would have served the existing population and helped them get on transit.

The question of impacts on Lake Simcoe remains unanswered. Although staff assured the public that they had approvals for expansions to their sewage treatment plant that would enable them to service this massive plan, a Simcoe County Council meeting on April 12th, 2022, [11] revealed that Innisfil's wastewater servicing could be limited. Said Chief Planner Stephen Westendorp, “Can we service the growth that's coming [to the county]? I don't think there's a clear answer to that.” He anticipates wastewater servicing constraints in 20 to 30 years and named Innisfil specifically.

All the Lake Simcoe watershed municipalities growing now should consider that this could be their last phase of major revenue coming in from development charges and consider how they will maintain their infrastructure without future development charges. This is the Orbit's advantage; although it converts farm fields into residential development, it will not be as expensive to service as new sprawling subdivisions.

The apparent lack of coordination for wastewater servicing in the Lake Simcoe watershed is entirely on the province. By all appearances, the coordination of wastewater servicing is an afterthought. This approach to planning could wipe out the hard-fought gains made in Phosphorus reduction in Lake Simcoe.

[10] www.getinvolvedinnisfil.ca/go
Williams Treaties First Nations (WTFN) agree that this approach to “planning” is not ok. WTFN filed a court action in September 2021 over the Orbit, naming Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Steve Clark.

As reported by Miriam King in Barrie Today:

“The court filing says “no analysis was done by the town, the Cortel Group or the minister on the potential impacts of the project on Lake Simcoe’s water quality, aquatic life and habitat.” The group says there’s no proof the project will not impact the lake or WTFN treaty rights.

“The importance of Lake Simcoe to the WTFN cannot be overstated,” states the court filing, while also explaining that First Nations rely on Lake Simcoe for their water and food resources, as well as for ceremonial purposes.”[12]

Stay tuned to find out how Innisfil manages this mess. Read more on the RLSC blog: Orbit or Obit for Innisfil? [13]

The most significant development on the ‘highways in the Lake Simcoe watershed’ file is that on top of the Bradford Bypass, the province is planning another 54 km of highways on the southeast shore of Lake Simcoe. [14]

If building the Bradford Bypass worries you, it’s time to get completely freaked out. The map on the next page shows the locations of all of the province’s planned highways through the Greenbelt.

Exemption from the Environmental Assessment process

It’s been a busy year on the Bradford Bypass file, with disappointing results for Lake Simcoe. In the fall of 2021, the province passed an exemption from the Environmental Assessment Act for the Bradford Bypass, allowing the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to carve off a piece of the project and start building before all of the Environmental Assessment studies and (very scoped) consultation is complete. [15] Due to the exemption, the highway has received all environmental approvals, despite studies not being completed. Even the studies that will be done no longer require government approval, so it isn’t clear how they will affect construction decisions.

In the words of the former Environment Commissioner of Ontario, Gord Miller, “This is a violation of international standards. It’s widely recognized that when you’re doing an assessment of an initiative, you don’t start until you’ve at least measured all of the impacts to the best of your ability so you can make a rational decision. They are clearly violating that.” [16]

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Fish habitat destruction and “early works” construction
The MTO’s construction timeline for the “early works” overpass just north of Bradford at Yonge St. was April/May 2022, but has now been pushed until the latter part of 2022. One of the explanations for this could be that they may require Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) permits to alter and potentially destroy fish habitat. Our team of community members at Stop The Bradford Bypass, and our pro-bono lawyer from Ecojustice, alerted the DFO of the risks of fish habitat destruction from the project.

We effectively encouraged the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters to communicate the same to the MTO’s project team. We are happy that this is slowing the process down and are cautiously optimistic that this will improve things for the fish.

Costs and traffic impacts
Although the government has not confirmed the price of the highway, estimates show that Ontarians will be paying anywhere from $800 million to $2.2 billion for this 16 km, 400 series highway.

The commuter time-saving claims have been wildly overstated. The traffic studies that have been released showed that congestion on Highways 400 and 404 will be worse with the Bypass than without, and that those who live in East Gwillimbury or further east won’t see any time savings at all with the Bypass compared to using current roads. [17] MTO studies also demonstrate that the new highway will be congested by 2041, and therefore more lanes might need to be added.

When traffic alternatives were considered, the GO train did not go to Bradford, nor did it offer all-day, two-way service, which is planned for this line. [18]

A lot has changed since 1997; we believe that alternatives to this highway must be thoroughly examined using the current transit and population context.

Wildlife habitat and road salt impacts on Lake Simcoe
Environmentally, we have loads of concerns. Primarily, it is a TERRIBLE place to put a highway while in a climate and biodiversity crisis. It is slated to cross the Holland Marsh Provincially Significant Wetland, farmland, and Greenbelt, in the “protected” Lake Simcoe watershed. It will cross 13 watercourses and affect bird, fish, and spawning habitats.

Lake Simcoe is on a trajectory to exceed the guideline level for chronic salinity in 37 years. This would change the entire ecosystem within the lake, and affect both its freshwater inhabitants and the seven municipalities that take drinking water from the lake. Highways create chloride hotspots in our rivers. It is virtually impossible to remediate chloride pollution. [19] [20]

The Bradford Bypass is proposed to cross the Holland River’s east and west branches that flow north into Lake Simcoe. The LSRCA measures salt concentrations at the Holland Landing (approximately where the highway would be built), where chloride concentrations exceeded the acute guideline 44 times in the winter of 2011/2012. This project would literally add salt to an open wound. [21]

[19] Learn more about salt in Lake Simcoe at https://www.lsrca.on.ca/Pages/Sodium-Chloride.aspx
Holland Landing Station - Daily Chloride Concentrations (July 2011-April 2012) [22]

The majority of the summer and autumn chloride concentrations can be seen to exceed the chronic guidelines, while winter concentrations can be seen to be greatly elevated, exceeding the acute guidelines on 44 occasions at the Holland Landing station (downstream of Aurora and Newmarket.)

Public opinion turns against Bradford Bypass

In the year since we last reported on the Bypass in Lake Simcoe Under Pressure in 2021, eight Lake Simcoe watershed municipalities passed resolutions regarding the Bradford Bypass, expressing concern for Lake Simcoe and a desire for a more thorough Environmental Assessment process.

We got significant media attention due to our team's tireless reporting on the results of our Freedom of Information requests and our many municipal delegations to Council.

By the end of that year, public opinion had shifted away from supporting the Bypass: **48% of 900 poll respondents in three Lake Simcoe ridings opposed the Bradford Bypass**, 29% supported the Bypass, and 23% were unsure. [23]

[22] LSRCA's Lake Simcoe Science: Sodium Chloride (Winter Salt) page. https://www.lsrca.on.ca/Pages/Sodium-Chloride.aspx
Lake Simcoe Coalition joined six other ENGOs in litigation against the Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Hon. Steven Guilbeault. The lawsuit challenges the Minister’s failure to designate the Bradford Bypass highway project for a federal impact assessment, alleging that the Minister’s decision was not based on the criteria in the Impact Assessment Act.

In a press release, the groups explain: “The purpose of the litigation is to hold the federal government accountable for the proper review of the impacts of the proposed highway, which is needed to understand the full impact of the proposed project on vital habitats, wildlife, and watersheds in the area. The case for building a highway is thin at best and we must better understand the impacts of the project on natural heritage, migratory birds, fisheries, greenhouse gas emissions, air quality, and First Nations cultural heritage.” [24]

We wonder, who will take care of Lake Simcoe?

With the Upper York Sewage Solution (UYSS), York Region Council is poised—dangerously—to encourage the development of a new sewage treatment plant (STP) in Northern York Region. The UYSS will add Phosphorus (P), a fertilizer and pollutant that will harm fisheries, to Lake Simcoe.

York Region recommends that the STP's Phosphorus pollution be offset by projects that remove Phosphorus from the water, specifically agricultural and stormwater infrastructure improvements. However, there is little evidence that offsets from agricultural projects can be relied on as long-term P offsets. The reduction in family farms and the related increase in corporate-owned farms (mainly land speculators) also means there are fewer farmers who are land stewards and fewer farmers willing to undertake remediation on their farms at the scale required to offset the UYSS.
The problem started in the 1990’s, when development was approved in Northern York Region without water and wastewater servicing. The original plan to send it south to Lake Ontario at Durham region’s Duffins Creek wastewater plant was thwarted in 2010 when the provincial government of the day supported an examination of a Lake Simcoe “solution.” This was odd, given that the same government introduced the Lake Simcoe Protection Act in 2008, with a prohibition on new sewage treatment plants as a way to control the extent and impact of new development in the watershed.

It is possible that both Lake Simcoe and the Lake Ontario Duffins outlets are being considered to accommodate all the growth planned. It is impossible to know exactly what is happening since the province had the affected regions sign Non-Disclosure Agreements (never a good sign) regarding their conversations about the UYSS.

It has been speculated that the province passed legislation to prohibit the approval of the UYSS to shield themselves from legal liability stemming from development hold-ups due to the lack of servicing.

Affected municipalities and developers are understandably tired of this game. We are concerned that the province will approve this at some point.

The one positive piece that came from this is that in response to public and municipal pressure, [25] the province agreed to pay the balance of the cost of a Phosphorus Recycling Facility on the Holland River, which could remove 2.5 tonnes of P per year from that river as it flows into Lake Simcoe. [26] This would be the single largest P reduction project completed at Lake Simcoe!

This Phosphorus Recycling Facility was first proposed as a P offset for the UYSS. The federal government promised $16 million toward the facility's construction in 2020. [27] York Region wants the UYSS, and they want the Phosphorus Recycling Facility to be one of its offsets. Other Lake Simcoe municipalities want P reduction to come at this scale, regardless of the outcome of the UYSS. Indeed, their municipal motions requested that:

... York Region, the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario work collaboratively to move the Holland Marsh Polder Phosphorous Recycling Facility forward notwithstanding the "paused" status of the broader Upper York Sewage Solutions Project, including proceeding to an Environmental Assessment for the Facility commencing in 2021...

[28]

The provincial funding announcement did not include any reference to this facility's connection to the UYSS. We hope that they will decide against the UYSS; but if they do approve it, the province and York Region must develop more enduring and measurable offsets like the Phosphorus Recycling Facility.

Thanks to the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act* (2008) and Plan (2009) the Lake Simcoe watershed is subject to some of Ontario’s strongest environmental policies, meant to protect its water for all its inhabitants, human and non, and the sensitive cold-water fishery, an economic driver in the area. All of the province’s 2018 - 2022 communications about Lake Simcoe have been rather rosy. [28] This is not unique to this government, but it is greenwashing, and it worries us.

The Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition has been sounding the alarm about the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan’s 40% “High Quality Natural Cover” target, which is a target without any implementation policies.

In addition to years of letters, research, mapping, reporting, policy analysis and briefs, [30] the we suggested that the province could use the Municipal Comprehensive Review’s provincial Natural Heritage System mapping process to bring us closer to this target. [31] They said, no thanks, and cc’d the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on their reply to the Coalition.

Lake Simcoe Protection Plan review
The Lake Simcoe Protection Act requires the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks to review the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan every ten years to determine if its targets are being met, and whether its policies need to change.

Although it should have started in 2019, the province launched the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan review in late December 2020 and had finished consultation by mid-2021. [29] Despite the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan review being complete, the province has been silent on the results of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan review for more than a year while it “sits on the Minister’s desk” for a decision.

Why not release its findings? We worry it is because the province plans to weaken protection in favour of development. In effect, by being silent on the coordination of sewage treatment plant allocations that would flow from the watershed’s population explosion outlined in A Place to Grow, 2020, that is what the province is already doing.

58% of the Lake Simcoe watershed's land is protected by the Greenbelt and its policies, and for this we are grateful. However, Lake Simcoe’s western shorelines in Simcoe County are not in the Greenbelt, nor is the rest of the County. This has contributed to leapfrog development over the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine and into Simcoe County, particularly in Barrie, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Innisfil, and New Tecumseth.
Despite 15 years of requests to add Simcoe County to the Greenbelt, this has not happened. Meanwhile, we lose and destroy land that purifies and stores our drinking water and prevents flooding.

Public support for the Greenbelt translated into a provincial promise to protect it, which the province has upheld so far. But it’s tenuous. There have been motions from the York Region Councils of Markham [36] and Vaughan [37] to either downgrade protections of Greenbelt land next to existing communities or to develop in the Greenbelt.

The province has put the 830-acre North Gwillimbury Forest into the hands of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, in the Greenbelt within the lake-side municipality of Georgina. [38] This is a welcome move, but it did not add any land to Southern Ontario’s protected areas. The forest was protected through a legal battle fought by resident and activist Jack Gibbons, who created the North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance, and fundraised more than $500,000 to fight the Town of Georgina, the Region of York and the LSRCA until it was ultimately protected. The credit goes to Jack, generous donors, and the citizens who insisted that a Provincially Significant Wetland should be protected.

For example, sprawl removed 37,000 acres of natural and semi-natural space in Barrie between 1971 and 2011. [32] Between 2006 and 2012, Simcoe County zoned over 32,000 acres of farmland and natural space to sprawl. [33] Without protective policies like the Greenbelt to keep farmland in production and greenspace preserved, our natural spaces will be under constant threat to urbanization. Case in point, during Simcoe County’s Municipal Comprehensive Review consultation, the County received 79 developer requests to sprawl outside existing boundaries for a potential loss of almost 16,000 acres. [34]

Moreover, Simcoe County is highly reliant on groundwater for both private and municipal wells. This abundance of water is made possible by our recharge areas, wetlands and aquifers that pepper the region. Unfortunately, these places are also prime areas for new development, aggregate activity, and infrastructure such as highways. In 2006, the Intergovernmental Action Report for Simcoe County saw the threat that rampant urbanization was going to have on Simcoe’s water supply stating, “A number of the municipalities in the study area rely on inland water systems which have been demonstrated to be under strain (for example, the Lake Simcoe watershed has known issues as a result of Phosphorus loadings). Without intervening action, these watersheds’ available potable water and aquaculture are threatened.” [35]

[34] County of Simcoe staff report to Committee of the Whole. August 10, 2021. Report: CCW - 2021-265
Finally, the province had some great ideas for Greenbelt expansion, which would have protected the Paris-Galt Moraine, a vulnerable aquifer in the Waterloo area, among other things. Unfortunately, the only idea they acted on was to extend the Greenbelt into already protected urban river valleys. Critics said in a media statement: “Proposed Provincial Greenbelt “expansion” does nothing for farmland and natural areas that need protection while new highways threaten the existing Greenbelt.” [39] It could be described as more of a re-branding of protected greenspace than meaningful policy change.

Conclusion

Well, now you know. The growth agenda is forcing municipalities to plan for massive, sprawling growth in the absence of provincial direction on water and wastewater. We see no increase in the Greenbelt’s size or the amount of natural lands protected by policy in the Lake Simcoe watershed. In addition to the Bradford Bypass, the province plans to build another 60 km of highways on Lake Simcoe’s southeast side, using recently weakened Environmental Assessment processes.

Lake Simcoe’s health has been bad before, and maybe it can recover. The province’s recent announcement about funding the balance of the cost of a Phosphorus Recycling Facility is a good start. But if we carry on with the development and highway plans outlined in this report, it will be virtually impossible to save this beautiful freshwater ecosystem as we know it today.

The Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition is a lake-wide member-based organization, representing 25 groups in the Lake Simcoe watershed, that provides leadership and inspires people to take action to protect Lake Simcoe.

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The Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition is a diverse coalition of 40 organizations from across Simcoe County and the province calling on local and provincial leaders to better protect our water resources, green spaces and farmland through smart growth and sustainable policies including expansion of the Greenbelt into Simcoe County.

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