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## Response to the Draft Terms of Reference of the Rouge National Urban Park Study

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### About Us

Land Over Landings is a grassroots organization that, along with its predecessor, People or Planes, has worked tirelessly for over half a century to save the prime farmland and wild areas of north Pickering and environs from destruction by an airport.

Examining the possible impacts of “potential future development” on land contiguous to Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) is an essential undertaking. The Park is permanent, but its future ecological integrity cannot be assured if conditions on those contiguous lands change in ways that conflict with the Park’s health and mission.

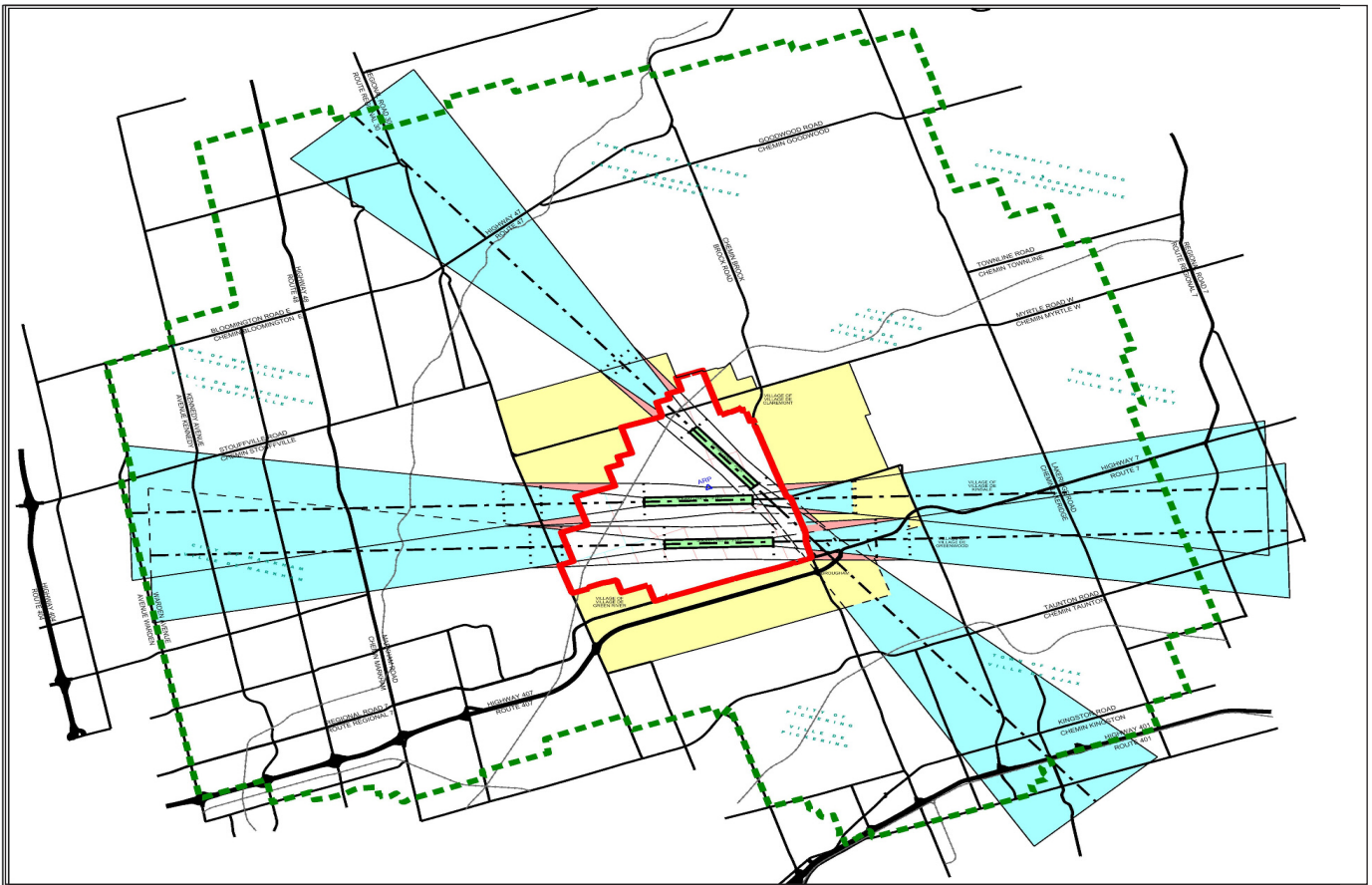
It is both logical and prudent to study the Federal Lands in Pickering together with the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve. Both are sizeable rural areas immediately adjacent to the Park. Both are under threat of major development. This wider focus will allow us to provide to the Committee a comprehensive view of the harms, some slight, *some existential*, that could be visited on the Park should these planned developments take place.

We echo Parks Canada’s deep concern that the Ontario government’s decision to remove the Agricultural Preserve from the Greenbelt and to use the land for residential development risks causing “irreversible harm to wildlife, natural ecosystems and agricultural landscapes within Rouge National Urban Park.”

An even greater threat to the Park is posed by the largely agricultural Federal Lands in Pickering, situated just north of the Preserve. The Lands share an even longer border with the Park – and are earmarked by Transport Canada for a potential international airport.

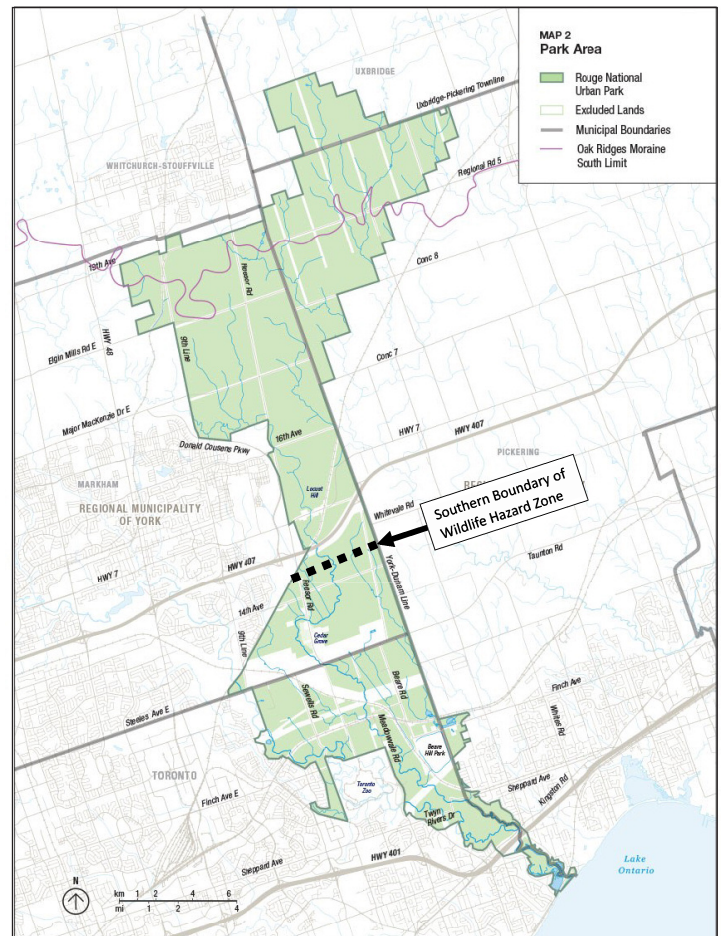
Such a “plausible development” would devastate an area steeped in Indigenous history – the very history that is being showcased and honoured within the adjacent Park. The construction of an airport would also mean the imposition of a destructive Wildlife Hazard Zone on most of the Park (see attached maps). Our Submission to the Committee will describe in detail the impacts this Hazard Zone would have on the Park, showing in particular how it would harm wildlife and farming. None of the Park’s three pillars – nature, culture, agriculture – would be spared.

All of this explains why we are endorsing the broader focus outlined in the Terms of Reference. We endorse as well the modus operandi as described in the draft. Thank you for inviting public comments. We look forward to submitting our concerns and recommendations to the Committee when the time comes.



**Above:** Pickering airport's proposed boundary (red), the approach surfaces (blue), and the Wildlife Hazard Zone (dotted green).

The map predates the land transfers to Parks Canada that left the airport site abutting a national park along virtually all of its western and northern boundary.  
*Map source:* Transport Canada



**Right:** RNUP. The land reserved for an airport lies to its east, sharing a boundary with the Park from Hwy 7 up to the Uxbridge-Pickering Townline.

The mandate of the airport's Wildlife Hazard Zone (in effect across all areas of the Park above the dotted line shown on the map) would override that of the Park, impacting any Park activities deemed dangerous to aircraft.

*Map source:* Parks Canada.  
 (boundary indication added)