



The Municipal Protected Areas Project

The Municipal Protected Areas Project is a collaborative initiative to advance Canada's commitment, under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, to protect at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030 – known as the 30 by 30 target. The project focuses on working with municipal governments, watershed agencies, land trusts, environmental organizations and other community partners to encourage contributions to the 30 by 30 target and increase protection for natural areas across southern Canada. Project partners include Ontario Nature, Nature Canada, Alliance of Canadian Land Trusts, BC Nature and Wildlands League.

As development pressures intensify in communities across southern Canada, natural areas that support all life are being lost and degraded. The Municipal Protected Areas Project aims to leverage existing enthusiasm and capacity for local conservation by engaging with community leaders and highlighting the tools and techniques used successfully by other communities to increase protection of existing natural areas.

A key component of the initiative will be eight pilot projects with willing municipalities. With permission, Ontario Nature would like to work with municipal leaders and staff and other community partners in Hamilton to design and deliver one of the pilot projects.

Why get involved?

Additional Support: Through the pilot, Ontario Nature will be available to support conservation in your community by reviewing environmental policies and plans, supporting outreach and communications, and conducting an assessment of conservation lands for their potential submission to the 30 by 30 target. We can also share the tools and techniques used successfully by other communities to increase protection of existing natural areas, provide advice and technical expertise (policy, GIS mapping and analysis, communications), and help to build community support.

Be Recognized as a Leader: Hamilton is already demonstrating its environmental leadership in many ways, including through its endorsement of the Montreal Pledge and its development of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Involvement in a pilot project will offer opportunities to build on this work and deliver on commitments, including through an assessment of lands that could be added to the 30 by 30 target.

Assessment of Conservation Lands: The assessment process is purely voluntary. It represents an opportunity to formally recognize organizational leadership in biodiversity conservation and to reinforce community values such as environmental protection, healthy lifestyles and sustainable land use. It also provides a means of identifying ways to enhance the level of biodiversity protection at specific sites.

An assessment, if desired, would be led by Ontario Nature. We would work with municipal partners to define the scope of the assessment and to compile the information needed (policies, management plans, historical information, spatial data). Ontario Nature would then conduct the assessment, with input from municipal partners and support from the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks and Environment and Climate Change Canada.