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Chair

Mrs. Deborah Schulte

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• (1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.)): I'd just like to start the meeting, if I can. Thank you very much, everyone.

We have six witness groups with us today, and I want to make sure we give them as much time as we can. We had to change our standing orders to give them five minutes so that we could have all six in front us. We appreciate their understanding regarding that.

From Parks Canada, we have with us Daniel Watson, who's the chief executive officer. From the Canada Parks and Wilderness Society, we have Janet Sumner, the executive director of the Wildlands League. From Friends of the Rouge Watershed, we have Jim Robb, general manager, and Kevin O'Connor, president. From Whittamore's Farm, we have Michael Whittamore, who's the president. As individuals, we have Alan Latourelle and Stephen Woodley. Mr. Woodley is the vice-chair for science at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's world commission on protected areas. He's with us via video conference.

Why don't we start with Parks Canada? I think that's probably appropriate. If you wouldn't mind starting for us, Mr. Watson, I'd appreciate that. You have five minutes.

Thank you.

Mr. Daniel Watson (Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada Agency): Thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to address the committee as it begins its review of Bill C-18. I look forward to the committee's deliberations.

Rouge National Urban Park, set to become one of the world's largest urban protected areas, is special in its protection of natural and cultural heritage. I am pleased to be here today to speak to the steps that are being taken to complete Canada's first national urban park.

Rouge National Urban Park's proximity to Canada's largest city, and 20% of our nation's population, provides Parks Canada with an unprecedented opportunity to encourage Canadians to experience nature and to connect with Canada's cultural heritage.

[Translation]

While it is located in one of the most densely populated areas of North America, Rouge National Urban Park is home to over 1,700 species of plants and animals, as well as 27 species at risk. It also protects some of the largest examples of rare Carolinian forest

habitat and some of the largest marshes and wetlands remaining in the city of Toronto.

This site gives evidence of over 10,000 years of first nations presence in this area. It includes some of Canada's oldest known indigenous sites and villages, showing that this was a well-used gathering place and agricultural area going back for millennia.

Parks Canada will make significant use of Rouge National Urban Park to introduce all Canadians, and especially youth and newcomers, to many aspects of our natural and cultural heritage.

[English]

Being able to anticipate the formal inclusion of a full and contiguous body of land into Rouge National Urban Park, we've started the move to a full range of Parks Canada programming. Examples include work with the Toronto Zoo to release over 100 threatened baby Blanding's turtles into the park—prior to this initiative, only seven turtles remained in that area—partnerships with schools from across the GTA in educational events like Frog Watch and the restoration and creation of wetlands, forests and agricultural lands; and work with the park's farming community and indigenous partners to complete 31 conservation projects.

With the tabling of Bill C-18, Ontario resumed active work to transfer the necessary provincial lands to Parks Canada. Officials from Parks Canada and the Government of Ontario are working diligently to ensure that those provincial lands are transferred in a timely way. I am pleased to be able to report that we now expect to complete all of these transfers in 2017, with key and major elements of these transfers occurring within the first half of the year. This represents a key step in ensuring that a single and contiguous area, stretching from the shores of Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine, falls entirely within the boundaries of Rouge National Urban Park and under the same legislative framework.

• (1540)

[Translation]

Although I do not wish to infringe upon the time for questions regarding Bill C-18 and Rouge National Urban Park, which I will be pleased to answer, I would like to touch on two elements that do not relate to Rouge.

The first is the new parks and historic sites account. This account is a tool used in the development of national parks, historic sites, and marine conservation areas. It was established as a non-lapsing, specified purpose account funded from appropriations, the sale of property and immovable assets, and donations from the public.

[English]

In order to support the government's commitment to develop and expand Canada's world-class network of protected heritage areas, the proposed amendment would allow the new parks and historic sites account to be used in a broader manner. Currently, the act restricts use of the account to protected places that are not yet fully operational. The proposed amendment would allow the public to donate funds to expand or complete existing natural and cultural heritage areas.

The second amendment to which I would like to bring your attention sets out the changes to the boundary of Wood Buffalo National Park. It removes a small portion of land to facilitate the creation of the Garden River Indian reserve. The Wood Buffalo National Park management plan from 1984 committed to the excision of lands in the vicinity of the Garden River for the future creation of an Indian reserve under the Indian Act. The Canada National Parks Act from 2000 also includes a provision reflecting the future withdrawal of lands in Garden River for the purpose of establishing an Indian reserve. This commitment was made to the Little Red River Cree Nation following a series of negotiations. The amendment being proposed is consistent with Canada's commitment to reconciliation and to building a nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

Madam Chair, these amendments would ultimately improve Parks Canada's ability to protect and celebrate Canada's natural and cultural heritage.

I am pleased to answer your questions. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We are going to hear from all the witnesses, and then we'll go to questions after, because we can't always count on our video conference to stay with us.

It would be great if Mr. Woodley would be willing to take the next slot.

Mr. Woodley, you are up.

Dr. Stephen Woodley (Vice-Chair for Science, World Commission on Protected Areas, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, As an Individual): Thank you very much.

It's kind of appropriate that I am speaking to you from the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It's appropriate that I take some time out from that to speak to you.

I want to speak about the IUCN and protected areas. I work with the IUCN now. Formally, I worked with Parks Canada as chief scientist. I had a big involvement in getting ecological integrity as part of the Parks Canada management framework and indeed other management frameworks.

The language of parks and protected areas is often confusing. We use the term "park" to describe many different things, from a national park to a city park, a business park, and even a dog park. I am going to stick with the term "protected area", because that's what we are talking about today.

There is a definition that is provided by the IUCN, agreed to by Canada, and used throughout Canada: "A protected area is a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values".

The key thing about this definition is that the primacy of nature is there. In our guidance, that's further clarified. It says, "For IUCN, only those areas where the main objective is conserving nature can be considered protected areas; this can include many areas with other goals as well, at the same level, but in the case of conflict, nature conservation will be the priority."

Under the IUCN definition, there are six management categories, from private to government and indigenous communities. We can see a lot of things occurring on the landscape or seascape under the definition of "protected area".

The amendments proposed to Bill C-18 are aligned with making the Rouge national park meet that definition of protected area, in that there is a clear priority for nature conservation and a clear management goal in the name of ecological integrity. This clarifies the original act, which required the minister only to "take into consideration" the protection of ecosystems, which would not meet the "protected area" definition.

The term "ecological integrity" is used as a management end point by many protected areas agencies globally, and it's embedded in the IUCN guidance. It provides a well-understood and measurable system to understand the ecological condition. I do note that the term is used by other ecosystem management organizations as well, including the U.S. Forest Service and the International Joint Commission for the Great Lakes. Ecological integrity can apply in a number of situations, not only protected areas.

The Rouge is, indeed, a protected area. The idea of having a protected area within or adjacent to urban centres is actually an old one. There are many examples globally and even in Canada. For example, Halifax has a wilderness park within its boundaries, the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area, which is designated under their wilderness protection act.

This idea of an urban protected area is, as I said, global, but it is not to be confused with something like Stanley Park or New York's Central Park. They are urban parks, but they are not protected areas.

Some global examples of urban parks include Nairobi National Park, Seoul's famous Bukhansan National Park, which gets 10 million or 12 million visitors a year, and the Royal National Park in Sydney, Australia, which is one of the oldest protected areas in the world. All of these places are managed to high standards to conserve nature.

• (1545)

The IUCN has a guidance document particularly on urban parks. Foremost in that guidance is that urban protected areas must meet the IUCN definition of a protected area. In that sense, urban protected areas aren't really different from other protected areas. They of course have uniqueness in being close to cities and having high visitation, but they are still protected areas.

Just in closing, I think it's wonderful that there is a new national protected area within the boundaries of Toronto. Bill C-18 makes the area consistent with the IUCN definition, and I wish the Rouge every success in meeting its ecosystem and conservation goals and helping people connect with nature.

Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Next up is the PowerPoint presentation, so we'll move to Mr. Robb, if you don't mind.

Mr. Jim Robb (General Manager, Friends of the Rouge Watershed): Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members.

I'd like to thank the thousands of people who have worked on this park for many, many years, people in the whole GTA and across Canada who have experienced the Rouge Park and love it. I'd like to thank a few people who are with me today: Kevin O'Connor, our president, and Gloria Reszler, who have both worked on this as volunteers for more than 30 years.

I'd like to thank the last government for this bold initiative: Peter Kent, who is here and was the Minister of the Environment, and the Honourable Pauline Browes, who has also worked on this for 30 years. I'd like to thank all the eastern GTA Liberals who worked so hard on this, but particularly John McKay, who met with us so many times and helped to get ecological integrity there. Finally, I'd like to thank Ontario Nature and Environmental Defence for putting forward submissions today that are basically identical to what Friends of the Rouge is putting forward today.

I'm sure I've missed people. I've missed Lois James, who is a mentor and has been working on this for 50 years. I spoke to her today on the way up on the train, and I know she's here in spirit. She's 94 years old.

What we're really asking for is one key amendment, and it's an amendment to make sure that the last 26 years of public planning and approvals involving all the stakeholders, the first nations, all levels of governments, and several municipalities, doesn't somehow get lost in the shuffle to a national park. This amendment started off with the meet-or-exceed criteria in the Canada-Ontario agreement for the land transfer. It was brought forward by Minister Duguid, in his September 2 letter. It was agreed to by 15 eastern GTA candidates who are now Liberals, and it was in the party-approved position of the Liberal Party.

This one amendment could go in clause 9 or in clause 6. We've been told there might be an admissibility issue. If it goes in clause 6, it would just read, "For greater certainty, subsection (1) is intended to support and complement the implementation of pre-existing Ontario Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, Rouge Park and Watershed Conservation Plans."

These plans were done by all three stripes of government, and there were over 20 years of rigorous, public, science-based, conservation planning. In a time when there is so little money to go around for this kind of work and when we have to get on with fighting climate change and protecting biodiversity, we can't afford the slippage.

As I said, it was a Liberal Party-approved election commitment that the amendment would be made. It's in the meet-or-exceed policy, and it was also part of the original Canada-Ontario agreement.

I want to give you a quick context. We're in one of the largest extinctions the world has ever experienced, and in southern Ontario, 78% of the land is in agriculture and settlements. Only one-quarter of a per cent is in national parks, and about one-half of a per cent is in provincial parks. Under the 2010 International Biodiversity Convention that we signed, our target was 17%. We know that's over all of Canada, but the Rouge is in the Carolinian zone, which is Canada's most endangered zone. Almost one-third of our endangered species are there and almost one-third of our population. We have 0.25% national parks. We are very fortunate. This is the largest piece of land left.

This is a beautiful shot of the Finch Meander trail, which is one of the special places in the Rouge. This image is of the Rouge beach.

You have to follow the existing plans or you will be going astray from the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and the things that are being done to protect the water that several million Canadians drink. Under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, we have to do more.

Under biodiversity, the Rouge is the most biodiverse place in Canada that I know of. It's pretty incredible and the fact that it's next to one of our largest cities also makes that biodiversity even more....

This is what the Liberals committed to. Number one, they said that their priority was making restoration and maintenance of ecological integrity the top park priority. This bill does that, and we commend the Liberals for following through with that commitment.

Secondly, they said they would amend the act to support and complement the implementation of existing land use and conservation plans. That's what we're asking today.

Ecological integrity, is it justified? Of course it is. This is one of the most biodiverse areas in all of Canada. Yes, there will be challenges. Yes, this is an aspirational goal, but we can do it. Let's head for an A-plus park, and if we achieve A-minus, we will have left something that future generations will thank us for. The diversity is so great here and the potential is so high that we should choose no other goal than what has been put forward before you.

● (1550)

On infrastructure, I've heard a lot of misinformation on this. The infrastructure issue has been largely dealt with. First, most of the infrastructure, the highways, the roads, and the railways, have actually been excluded from the park. They're being zoned out with generous provisions for widening. In a lot of existing national parks, you have major highways, you have golf courses, you have a lot of different infrastructure, and they're within the boundaries. In the Rouge they're excluded.

Second, the minister has a specific clause in which the minister can reallocate up to 500 acres of land within the park for unanticipated future infrastructure.

I'll finish off by saying that agriculture can exist in the park, and we support it. It will be finding the right balance between public access to the land and private leases. We ask that you amend clause 6 or clause 9 to support and complement the implementation of existing conservation plans, the greenbelt plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine, and the Rouge watershed. If you don't do this, the tens of thousands of people who worked so hard on it will really feel that their efforts have somehow been diminished. We feel that if you don't do this, we'll be reinventing the wheel and spinning our wheels.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We did get this sent to us today, so I know everybody has had a chance to have a look at it.

Mr. Jim Robb: Either one, Madam Chair. If it goes in clause 9, or it goes in clause 6, it's the idea of carrying through with the commitments.

• (1555)

The Chair: Okay.

Thank you very much.

Next up is Janet Sumner.

Ms. Janet Sumner (Executive Director, Wildlands League, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society): Good afternoon.

Thank you for the opportunity to present to the committee.

My name is Janet Sumner. I'm executive director for CPAWS' Wildlands League. The mission of CPAWS and of the Wildlands League is protecting large, connected areas of Canada's wilderness. We work on large landscapes collaborating with indigenous, federal, provincial, and local governments. Our work with the forestry sector leads the way on caribou planning, and it is in our DNA to build solutions.

I've been the executive director for Wildlands League for the past 13 years. I've travelled this province extensively, especially in the far north. I've slept with polar bears—not right next to them—and walked among a herd of barren ground caribou. I've flown forestry units from Alberta to Ontario. I love this land, and it is my intention to make sure the children in my life, my grandchildren, nieces, and nephews, inherit a country where nature thrives. The children of the GTA, Scarborough where I live, Pickering, Durham, and the surrounding regions of the Rouge deserve that, too.

To that end, I would like to thank all the political parties for their efforts to protect Rouge Park, which Jim mentioned. Over the years all the political parties have contributed to getting the Rouge to this stage. While the Rouge is not a great wilderness area, it is a rare piece of Carolinian forest. It is an anchor for biodiversity in the GTA with over 1,700 species. It provides much needed habitat for migratory monarch butterflies as they wend their way south.

With regard to the bill before you, Bill C-18, I would like to thank the Honourable Catherine McKenna and her team for working diligently to come up with the solutions that rectify the critical weakness in the Rouge National Urban Park Act, the failure to prioritize nature conservation in park management and meet the international definition of a protected area.

I would also like to thank Daniel Watson, CEO of Parks Canada, and his team for patiently listening to Canadians and working so hard in their efforts to support this bill. Daniel had to listen to me for a lot of hours.

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Wildlands League supports the amendments in Bill C-18 to amend the Rouge National Urban Park Act to prioritize ecological integrity in law in the management of the park. From the red-shouldered hawk and peregrine falcon to the butternut tree and the beautiful monarch butterfly, this is huge. Nature will finally come first.

With seven million people living within one hour's drive of the Rouge National Urban Park, park managers need strong legal tools to protect the park's ecosystem from the inevitable pressures of the surrounding urban environment, which is easily the greatest threat to the park. This includes an explicit legal mandate to consider nature first and foremost in all management decisions. Without such a framework, nature would inevitably lose.

We agree with the greater certainty for the farming community that is proposed in this bill as well, and we look forward to working with farmers on the many ways we can improve the ecological integrity of the park. EI is a destination we believe can work with farmers. Rouge Park houses much of the lower Rouge River watershed, one of the last flowing into western Lake Ontario to remain free of urban development. It provides the only ecological connection for wildlife between the Oak Ridges Moraine and Lake Ontario. It is where we host our annual Paddle the Rouge event each year, training youth to paddle. It is also where I live and where I enjoy time with my grandson as he dips his paddle in and remarks to me, "It's so peaceful here."

I am pleased to answer your questions.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That was very quick. I'm sure we will have a lot of questions after.

If we could have Mr. Whittamore up next, that would be great. Thank you.

Mr. Michael Whittamore (President, Whittamore's Farm): Members of the committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today regarding Bill C-18 and the proposed changes to the wording in the Rouge National Urban Park Act.

My brother and I operate a pick-your-own farm market and farm entertainment business in the heart of the provincially owned lands that are to be transferred to the Rouge National Urban Park. We have had a front-row seat for the past 44 years watching successive governments struggle with this crown asset. We were expropriated in 1972 and have leased back land for 42 years. Five different government ministries and agencies have been our landlord. We have farmed the entire time on one-year leases and often on one-month overholds, my entire farming career.

Two words are at the heart of the discussion today: ecological integrity. The last time I appeared before this committee during deliberations on Bill C-40, the same two words were being discussed. At that time I was not in favour of including those words in Bill C-40. There was, and still is, plenty of evidence that shows reaching the ecosystem health objectives of the Rouge National Urban Park can be achieved in many ways.

As we all know, politics played a large part in the delay of the transfer of the provincially owned lands to Parks Canada. A small committee of farmers met with both Minister McKenna and Minister Philpott in early February 2016 to discuss our concerns. Minister McKenna was looking for a way forward to allow the lands to be transferred. At a subsequent meeting, we were assured that we would be allowed to continue farming even if the two words “ecological integrity” were included in the amended act. She indicated there would be a clause with words to that effect. The minister did exactly what she said she would do.

Proposed subsection 6(2) says, “For greater certainty, subsection (1) does not prevent the carrying out of agricultural activities as provided for in this Act.”

Proposed subsection 6(1) ensures that the “Maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity, through the protection of natural resources and natural processes, must be the first priority of the Minister”.

There are 42 words in the definition of “ecological integrity”, which will be included in the amended act. Words mean different things to different people. The interpretation of “ecological integrity” embedded in the Rouge National Urban Park Act will have to take into consideration section 4 of that act, which describes the three key objectives for the establishment of the park, one of which is “promoting a vibrant farming community”. Proposed subsection 6(2) of the current bill, which I just spoke about, contains six key words: “as provided for in this Act”. Those six words give some comfort to the agricultural community that there is a future for us in the Rouge National Urban Park.

I have a certain amount of trepidation in agreeing with Bill C-18, as 44 years of government ownership has that affect, but we collectively need to finish this job and make the Rouge National Urban Park a reality. However, as I stated before, we do not need old plans such as the Rouge north management plan added to the Rouge National Urban Park Act. These documents do not address the needs or concerns of the agricultural community, and they contemplate the destruction and reforestation of hundreds of acres of class 1 farmland, and that is bad public policy.

What we really need to do is step back and let Parks Canada do its job. This is a completely new type of park in the family of Parks Canada. The agriculture community has spent several years now working with staff and management, and we have complete confidence in their ability to execute a management plan that will meet the needs and expectations of all the stakeholders and reach a level of ecological integrity for an urban park in an urban setting that has an extensive human footprint, including an agricultural footprint dating back hundreds of years.

A simple example of this is the Wendat Nation, who resided in the park over 500 years ago and grew corn. They were farmers too.

We suggested to the ministers during our meeting in 2016 that all stakeholders need to try to work together for the common goals of the Rouge National Urban Park. For far too long, farmers and environmental groups have been at odds with each other. With age comes wisdom. I now believe that spending time together and gaining a better understanding of each other will have a positive impact on the park and will actually lead to collaboration of the stakeholders within the park.

To that end, Minister Philpott arranged a meeting with a few farmers and Janet Sumner from CPAWS in October 2016. We did a walkabout on a recently completed wetland rehabilitation project on a farm, one of a number of projects that has doubled the acreage of wetlands in the park in just two years. We had a great discussion, and I think each party came away with a better understanding. Also, we broke bread. Actually, we had Tim Hortons coffee and Timbits. What could be more Canadian than that?

● (1600)

Once the lands have transferred, I hope the minister will direct Parks Canada to form the advisory committee, which will be composed of all the stakeholders. This too will provide an avenue for understanding.

I'm in the business of the rural experience. My brother and I invite thousands of people to our farm every year. Countless times I've had parents come up to express their appreciation for their children being able to see where their food comes from and to experience nature first-hand.

We have an incredible opportunity here at the Rouge National Urban Park to showcase nature, culture, and agriculture. As was the case with the Banff National Park, history will show that the creation of the Rouge National Urban Park was truly visionary.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

The last up, then, is Alan Latourelle.

● (1605)

Mr. Alan Latourelle (As an Individual): Madam Chair, good afternoon. It's a real pleasure to be here.

I am the former CEO of Parks Canada—the second longest-serving CEO of Parks Canada. I was probably the first Parks Canada employee who actually walked on the Rouge, before we started this process several years ago, even before politicians became involved, from our perspective.

I truly believe this is the right thing to do, from a long-term perspective, for Canada and our urban park program. Today what I will share with you is my views on ecological integrity specifically, because we have very limited time.

I want to be clear up front that I agree that conservation should be the first priority in the management of this park, so my comments take that into consideration.

It's important to know that ecological integrity as the first priority is the highest international conservation standard. What I mean by that is that, based on my quick review, no national parks globally other than those managed by Parks Canada have that standard in legislation. There are many policies, and I'll use the U.S. national parks as an example, but they don't have ecological integrity as the first priority in law.

The Rouge National Urban Park is truly unique in the system of Parks Canada heritage places. It is accessible, as has been mentioned before, by close to six to seven million Canadians. It is divided by numerous roads, infrastructure, highways, the Toronto Zoo, and a former dump, but also has rich agricultural lands and offers an exceptional opportunity to demonstrate international leadership in conservation, indigenous relations, and in connecting people to nature. It is truly unlike any park in the Parks Canada system.

I recommend that the committee consider reviewing the ecological integrity standard proposed in the bill from two perspectives: first, that of the practical reality of the nature of the lands and their settings that are ultimately to be included in the park, and so of the full park; and second, that of the way this could affect the management of existing and future national parks.

I would suggest that the ecological integrity standard will be impossible to achieve at the broad urban park level over the next 25 years because of the fragmented land masses and the fact that more than 50% of the proposed boundary consists of agricultural lands and because of development pressures outside of the park.

My main concern is that, as a result, I foresee future state-of-park reports that consistently provide a failing grade, based on the scientific assessment of the condition that is determined to be characteristic of its natural region, including biotic components and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change, and supporting processes.

I guess this will be a foreseeable outcome, despite the great conservation initiatives that will have been implemented by Parks Canada, by farmers, and by Canadians. As a result, I expect that there will be divisive campaigns in the longer term to limit the number of visitors or convert farmlands to their natural state.

As for existing national parks, based on my experience, having the same conservation standard in the Rouge National Urban Park as exists in all national parks will result in ongoing challenges for other national parks. Managers will be faced with increased demands to have major utility corridors, new roads, or new lands in their national parks. The proponents—this is based on my experience of the vast system of parks—will use Rouge National Urban Park as the example of how ecological integrity can still be achieved in a fragmented park. In the worst-case scenario, this could put at risk the quality of the overall system of Canada's national parks.

The Rouge National Urban Park is an amazing and unique experiment in protecting and presenting large urban spaces. Let me be very clear, once again, that I totally agree that conservation should be the first priority; however, the conservation standard should be based on the uniqueness and operational reality, and it should encourage, not divide, all stakeholders to work together to build on the current strengths and achieve new heights.

To achieve this objective, I recommend that proposed subsection 6 (1) in clause 2 be replaced by, "Conservation or restoration must be the first priority of the Minister when considering all aspects of the management of the Park."

I also recommend that the IUCN definition of conservation replace the definition of ecological integrity proposed in clause 1 for section 2 of the act as follows: "The protection, care, management and maintenance of ecosystems, habitats, wildlife species and populations, within and outside of their natural environment, in order to safeguard the natural conditions for their long-term permanence."

• (1610)

From my perspective, this would achieve a goal of legally establishing conservation as the first priority for the park. It is simple and understandable for Canadians. It meets the IUCN standards, avoids impacting existing national parks, exceeds the Ontario legislation, and allows Canadians to work together positively and constructively to make Rouge National Urban Park an international success story.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much to all of you for understanding and for respecting the five minutes. That was wonderful.

Now we'll move to questions.

First up is Gary Anandasangaree.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair, and colleagues. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am the member of Parliament for Scarborough—Rouge Park, so I have a particular interest in this file, as the park is within my riding.

I want to also acknowledge my good friend, the honourable member from Scarborough—Guildwood, who has a long-standing commitment to the park and whose work in many ways has gotten us to this point. All governments at all levels and from all parties have in their own ways contributed to where we are.

Certainly, the panel before us has had a very personal interest in the park. In particular, CPAWS and Friends of the Rouge have had an extraordinary level of commitment to ensuring that the park gets to be optimal for the people of Canada.

Mr. Whittamore, I'm very pleased to see you here, as well, in support of this amendment, and the minister's office certainly is to be commended for its work.

That's my preamble. Let me get to the chase with respect to ecological integrity.

I'd like to get a sense from the environmental groups as to why environmental integrity is important, and what more can we do to strengthen the ecological integrity within the park? This is an urban park, so we should really set a gold standard. What are the things that we need to ensure to have ecological integrity strengthened within the park?

Mr. Jim Robb: Thank you.

We really appreciate the support of so many of the people who are community leaders in the eastern GTA.

The existing plans were science-based, they were done over a 26-year period, and they had broad public consultations. All levels of government were involved, as well as stakeholders, farmers, and environmentalists, and they represent a compromise position. If the existing plans go forward, then you would end up with a park with about 50% to 60% natural and about 40% to 50% agricultural. The amount of agricultural could increase if the agriculture moves from cash crops to orchards, pastures, and things like that, which could be compatible with calling it a natural heritage system. I think there's lots of room for win-win solutions over time.

I think with the public demand for this park, it will grow over time and it will be important that at least half of the park is available to the public in nature. That may take 40 years. It won't happen overnight. At the pace that it's gone over the last 26 years, the pace has been so slow that the public demand for use of the park is outstripping the areas available. It will be a challenge, but if we can at least get going on supporting first and following through with commitments to support that type of amendment that we've put forward, then that's a foundation with which we can work and with which stakeholders can co-operate to find the right balance between nature, public use, and farming.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Janet, if I can get you to....

Ms. Janet Sumner: Thanks, MP Anandasangaree.

I think that one of the big wins in the amendments that we have today is the fact that the "ecological integrity" definition is as it is, and it is consistent between the National Parks Act and the Rouge National Urban Park. For me and for CPAWS, this is what really makes this a protected area. As Stephen Woodley has indicated, this is what makes it qualify under IUCN as a park.

I fully expect that as park management plans move forward—and hopefully this bill passes with these amendments—we will see the park management plan reflect the nature of achieving EI. As I indicated before, it's a destination. It's not something where you snap your fingers and you get it right away, but it's rather something where you are working forward and improving. As Mike Whittamore said, we did a lovely tour of a farm and saw how the hydrology is improving even now with Parks Canada working with the local members and farmers to improve ecological function on farms and elsewhere.

I see that the elements are there. We have the amendments, we have the definition right, and I think now we need to get to the business of doing that park management plan and making sure it lives and breathes, and that we have everybody at the table working on that.

•(1615)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Just as a quick follow-up, I know that during the debate a lot of discussion took place with respect to the types of infrastructure that exist and the types of infrastructure that may be required for the area in the future. What provisions are there right now that will ensure that the infrastructure needs of the local community can be addressed, while ensuring that the park itself is kept intact?

Ms. Janet Sumner: I think, as Jim indicated earlier, much of that has already been removed from the park, and then liberal allowances made for future infrastructure needs. I don't see that as a conflict.

Mr. Jim Robb: On the issue of infrastructure, I think one of the things that would be great is if we can work on the connectivity. Underpasses and overpasses have been done in other parks to keep the public and nature safe. There are things like funnel fences, where you can actually funnel wildlife towards safe underpasses and overpasses. I think the infrastructure has been excluded, largely, and we also have the minister's flexibility in reallocating some of the land.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Kent.

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thanks to you all for appearing before us today. All of your presentations were thoughtful.

First of all, Mr. Watson, congratulations on your first year as CEO of Parks Canada. Also, it's good to see Superintendent Veinotte accompanying you here today.

It's satisfying to hear that Ontario is finally beginning to prepare to formally transfer the lands, but I'm just wondering if Ontario Parks has responded yet to the appeal from Parks Canada to assess the management plan.

Mr. Daniel Watson: The draft of that management plan, of course, went out in 2014, and it would be replaced with another one in 2017. We've been working with the province closely on a number of things, mostly on the land transfer at this point in time. I can't honestly say whether or not they've responded on that, but I can find out and get back very quickly to you.

Hon. Peter Kent: Infrastructure, certainly in our time, had prevented them from responding at all.

Mr. Latourelle, it's good to see you again, and congratulations on your 13 years as CEO of Parks Canada.

You stated that having ecological integrity as a management priority in the Rouge National Urban Park actually puts at risk other Canadian national parks. Can you explain that?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I'll use some of the other witnesses' comments, also. Basically, the definition of EI is very scientific, and what we're seeing across the country is basically people interpreting very differently, and then people looking for equal legislation with what's happening elsewhere.

For example, I foresee there will be some challenges with places like Pukaskwa, in terms of the hydro line, and people coming in and saying that they want the hydro line through the park. Because on the Rouge you have all of this infrastructure; you have a smaller park.

I'm not inventing this. In my 13 years, I wouldn't say daily, but very regularly we have been approached in meetings for this type of development, which we said "no" to. My main concern is, how do we say "no" when people start using comparisons, especially if you are using the exact same legislation?

Hon. Peter Kent: With the wilderness parks under Parks Canada's administration....

Mr. Alan Latourelle: Yes.

Hon. Peter Kent: This goes back a number of years on the political side of the talks with Ontario to develop the Rouge National Urban Park. You said, “Any organization that implies that the Rouge National Urban Park Act”—the original act, Bill C-40—“does not meet current provincial legislation is misleading the public.”

Is that because the provincial lands, until now, have no prohibitions on aggregate mining, infrastructure, destruction of species at risk habitat, and the potential expansion of existing transportation corridors?

• (1620)

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I did say that, so I'll be clear on that. Those were generally my words.

The other part of it—and now I'm free to say what I want—is that basically, when you look at the history, I think what happened is that we sat with Ontario at that time, agreed that we would meet or exceed, and they agreed. I think the standard has changed from an Ontario perspective, clearly, and that's where we are today.

I think, whatever comes out of this process, putting ecological integrity as the first priority, as an example, was not the requirement by Ontario at that time. If that's a requirement now, that happened after the process when we signed the agreement initially at the officials' level.

Hon. Peter Kent: It's good to see you again, Mr. Whittamore.

I think everyone around this table certainly agrees that the first priority is completing the Rouge National Urban Park, moving those Ontario lands in under the auspices and management of Parks Canada.

You said that while you have some comfort with the assurances in Bill C-18, you still have a certain amount of trepidation. Does what Mr. Latourelle has said here today feed into that trepidation and concern about future challenges to your existence as an agricultural operation?

Mr. Michael Whittamore: Not so much that it's going to affect other parks. The trepidation I have is that when these lands get transferred, it's not going to end.... We're going to have to work together, and that's why I said exactly what I said. We're all going to have to sit down, because there are going to be and continue to be competing interests.

Agriculture just wants to get a fair shake at the table. That's all we're asking for. We don't feel that in the last.... I know, Jim, there were 26 years of public consultation, but the agricultural community was not fairly consulted.

All we're asking is that as we move forward.... We recognize that agriculture is going to have to change. We're not against planting trees. Make no mistake; we plant trees. All farmers plant trees. We're not against that, but we want to work together.

Hon. Peter Kent: I have just one very quick question to Mr. Woodley.

When Mr. Latourelle was the CEO of the agency, he said that the original Rouge National Urban Park Act was the strongest legislation governing IUCN urban parks in the world. Would you

agree with that, given that much of the ecological integrity references are outside of the legislation and in policy?

Dr. Stephen Woodley: No. I think that if you look at all the legislation around the world that governs parks that are in urban areas, protected areas in urban areas, many of them have national-park-strength legislation. Without a management goal in the old act, no, I don't think it met that standard.

Hon. Peter Kent: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Stetski is next.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Thank you.

Thank you all for being here today.

Mr. Whittamore, I really liked your phrase that the park needs to be a showcase for “nature, culture, and agriculture”. I absolutely think it's important that the park serve all three of those aspects.

I want to focus a bit on ecological integrity. All of the amendments we've proposed today have been focused on ecological integrity. I'd like to start with Mr. Woodley, a well recognized chief of science with national parks who is now recognized internationally.

How do you feel about the words “ecological integrity” when applied to Rouge Park?

Dr. Stephen Woodley: We don't have a gold standard for assigning an ecological end point. Alan is perfectly correct that Parks Canada led on the development and application of the idea of ecological integrity, and it has been picked up by many countries. I don't think it's really all that different than the IUCN definition of conservation. I think the most important thing to understand is that it's not a binary condition. It's not a condition that you either have or you don't. It's a sliding scale.

We all agree that the Rouge isn't pristine, but it has real ecological value now. In terms of ecological integrity, I think that the management goal is to maintain what we have, and where we have opportunities to make it better, to restore it. I think that the state of park reporting we set up looks at success or failure based upon relativity, where we are now. We don't want to decline. I think ecological integrity can easily account for that kind of sliding scale. In fact, it does so right now in the range of national parks.

Parks Canada runs a park in Point Pelee, a park in the Thousand Islands, and a park in P.E.I. that is a coastal strip, all under the rubric of ecological integrity. I think it does so quite successfully because it uses relativity in its management, and I think it can equally apply here. Ecological integrity is used, as I mentioned, by management agencies. It can be used for forest companies.

If you look at the case of Pukaskwa and the power line, that clearly takes away ecological integrity from its current state. I think the answer is in relativity.

• (1625)

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I'll ask the same question if I might to Mr. Robb from Friends of the Rouge Watershed.

Mr. Jim Robb: I think that Dr. Woodley gave an excellent answer.

I've had the benefit of visiting about 20 of our national parks. If you go to Banff, there's a lot of development there, but in the National Parks Act, ecological integrity is prioritized. If you go to Jasper or Riding Mountain, they have roads and sewage treatment plants and a lot of different things. The Rouge has its own unique challenges, but with the biodiversity, cultural, agricultural, and ecological potential that's there, you want to set a high aspirational standard.

As Dr. Woodley said, there is a certain relativity. We're heading for a point way in the distance that will be much better than what is there now. However, we're not trying to straitjacket Parks Canada into changing the Rouge into a northern park, which is basically at no impacts or very little.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Ms. Sumner, if I might, I'll ask you the same question with your national perspective.

Ms. Janet Sumner: One of the interesting things I'd like to comment on is the idea that it has to meet or exceed.

If you look at the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, it clearly already has in there that it's protecting the ecological and hydrological integrity of the moraine. Where you already have it in existing Ontario legislation, you need to meet or exceed that. That's what the provisions for EI do in the C-18 amendments.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I'll stick with you, Ms. Sumner.

If you could add any improvements to what you've seen in the amendments to the act, is there anything you would recommend?

Ms. Janet Sumner: Back to Mike Whittamore's comments, I think that getting the park management plan right is going to be a delicate balance, and it's going to be a conversation. Frankly, we need everybody at the table to be moving this forward in a way that will help us achieve and move forward on EI. It is going to be through that collaboration that we find that sweet spot and make those connections. I'm pleased to see that we're going to be moving forward on this and that C-18 is hopefully going to pass.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Mr. Watson, congratulations on becoming CEO.

What are your general thoughts on how important having an urban national park is to the future of national parks?

Mr. Daniel Watson: It's incredibly important.

When we set up the first national park in the country, it was something that was brand new. Over time that has served to change the way Canadians see themselves. In the past, we created parks where the land and the natural treasures were. This time, we're finding that in the midst of where the people are. That represents an enormous change for this country.

We are now in a world where second, third, fourth, and fifth generations of people have no meaningful connection to nature. They didn't grow up on farms; they didn't travel across the country in station wagons and camp along the way. To know that literally two blocks away from where you are are endangered species, which you might have an impact on in half an hour of volunteering at the end of your workday or school day is something that changes Canadians' understanding of not only what environment is there but what they can do to help save it.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent. Thank you very much.

Next up is John Aldag.

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.): Thank you.

It feels like a bit of a homecoming day. It's fantastic to see many former Parks Canada colleagues here, all of them highly respected in the area. It was an organization I know I've talked about before. I was part of it for more than three decades, and I'm proud to see the work that continues to go into the organization.

I'm mostly going to do a quick, shameless bit of public service announcement encouraging everybody to go online and get their Discovery Pass for 2017 as part of Canada's 150 celebrations. I understand there's been a great uptake, and I look forward to seeing Rouge welcoming many people into 2017 and beyond.

I'm going to start with a quick acknowledgement because we get into the clause-by-clause later today.

Mr. Watson, I recognize the elements of this that are outside of the Rouge, the changes that are going to be made to the new parks and historic sites account to be used in a broader manner. I was able to speak to that in the House. I've worked in parks that have passed that establishment threshold and could benefit from this kind of access to ongoing funds. I hope my colleagues will support that piece when we get to it. I also had the opportunity to work in Wood Buffalo from 1986 to 1991 and was there under the 1984 plan that had committed to the excision of lands for Garden River as a reserve, and it's great to see that happening.

With that, I'm now going to move to Rouge and this question of ecological integrity because that's the key issue we need to understand today.

Mr. Watson, I'd like to get your perspective as the head of Parks Canada Agency. We've heard the former head, Mr. Latourelle, speak about the issues and concerns.

Would you be able to give us a sense of where the agency's thinking is today on this question of ecological integrity, and why it is important today to have it as part of this legislation that we're considering?

• (1630)

Mr. Daniel Watson: Thank you very much for the question.

I think the first reason it's important is that the province was very clear that without changes to the legislation it was not going to transfer the land. Having an entire contiguous body of land under a single regime that is a known regime, that builds on an institution that is the oldest national park service in the world, is infinitely better than having a situation in which you have two, three, four, or several blocks of land under several different regimes, maybe for a considerable period of time.

As people have noted, this work has been going on for some 30 or 40 years. At different points in time, people have gotten very close to things. Certainly, the opportunity to get the transfer under way—and I can confirm that the discussions have been very serious and are moving forward and that we have a time frame now in sight, next year—provides a very exciting opportunity to bring this single block of land, from the shores of Lake Ontario all the way up to the Oak Ridges Moraine, under a single piece of legislation to govern the whole thing.

The province's insistence on changes that they judged acceptable—and they have seen the language around ecological integrity—is something we have been able to manage in conversations with a broad range of players. Agriculture has been mentioned, but we've also worked with first nations in these conversations, as an important part of this. We're obviously trying to be very true to the core purpose of Parks Canada, as reflected by the fact that what is imported here is in fact the very language from the Canada National Parks Act.

Mr. John Aldag: Okay, great. Thank you.

The next question I have for you is this. We heard from Mr. Robb today the request or suggestion of an amendment to the bill that's before us. In the handout that we received, the request is that the park management plan will support and complement the implementation of pre-existing Oak Ridges Moraine, Greenbelt, Rouge Park, and Watershed conservation plans.

I'm wondering whether you could offer a comment, from Parks Canada's perspective, about whether that is an appropriate amendment to put forward. As I read it, it seems to include more policy pieces, which may not be appropriate within a legislative framework, but before we get to the debate, I'd like to get the agency's perspective on this amendment, so that we'll have it when we deliberate this today.

Mr. Daniel Watson: The first I saw of it was when it was shown here, so this is a short-term assessment. I guess I would say a couple of things, though.

The first is that Canada's national parks are national treasures, and they're for all Canadians. We have learned, sometimes the hard way, over the last 130 years that consultations with all Canadians are a very important part of making sure that these treasures reflect the values that we want to see in them and reflect the realities that we expect to see in a national park system.

At the same time, we recognize that there are people in local areas who are more affected by some of those decisions than people may be on the other side of the country, so we work very hard to make sure that we both bring a national perspective to things and also pay close attention to what people locally are interested in and are hoping to see.

To build into legislation something that is very local in nature, when the process for consulting on those things did not extend to the 35 million Canadians whose heritage we are very much trying to make them understand is theirs.... Those processes don't give the type of involvement, the type of room for consideration, that one would expect to see in the national institution.

In terms of the planning process, outside of the legislation, we would fully expect that anybody who wanted to bring a perspective on what was the right thing to do in a national park or a national urban park would do so, and we would expect to see that issue play out.

• (1635)

Mr. John Aldag: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Kent.

Hon. Peter Kent: Thank you very much again, Chair.

Just as a comment for the record to Mr. Watson's point that he felt that Ontario wouldn't transfer the Ontario lands without ecological integrity, I think the record should show that ecological integrity was a secondary condition of the Ontario government. The first condition was an ask for \$100 million as payment for the transfer of the lands.

But my question is to Ms. Sumner.

In response to the Ontario claim that the Rouge National Urban Park, as originally provided for in Bill C-40, is not up to Ontario standards, I wonder whether you could share with the committee what the specific provincial legislation is that applies to the current provincial Rouge lands that the federal government didn't meet in the original legislation.

Ms. Janet Sumner: Certainly. I think I referenced the Oak Ridges Moraine act, which actually has in it the promise of hydrological and ecological integrity. I can get the official language and forward it to the committee for your consideration, but that is one piece of legislation that actually includes that in there, from Ontario. We support that because for us it was also about it qualifying and being considered a protected area under IUCN standards. It was both of those things.

Hon. Peter Kent: To Mr. Latourelle, in the four years that the consultations and development of the Rouge National Urban Park plan was in the works, were you able to have any consultations at all with Ontario Parks with regard to their conditions, their priorities, or the interaction of federal and provincial law?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I'm being cautious because I want to be careful not to share information that I've had through that process. I think the only comment I'll make is that we had a very positive, productive relationship with the Ontario officials. We worked hard together to actually get to the agreement that's been signed with Ontario. From there, we worked very successfully with all the landowners at the landowners' table, as they were the first ones we wanted to engage because they had to provide their lands to the park.

I think since then, throughout all of this, we consulted with about 20,000 Canadians at that time. We spent a huge amount of time working and building the relationship with farmers, for example, who, I would say when we started, would have been against a park. We built a relationship one contact at a time as an agency at that time.

Hon. Peter Kent: Thank you.

Again, coming back to the point, I believe everyone around this table does want to see the park completed, the Bill C-18 amendments notwithstanding. I wonder, Mr. Watson, of the \$143.7 million committed by the previous government for the first 10-year development of the park, we know that, under Superintendent Veinotte a lot of work has been going on for the lands already controlled federally. I'm just wondering if you could update us on the amount of expenditure to date and the accomplishments to date.

Mr. Daniel Watson: Sir, in terms of the accomplishments, a number of things are going on, and I'll get to the numbers here in a moment. I may have to get back with the specifics.

We've begun, in partnership with the conservation authority, to offer programming. One of the biggest things that we've done so far is to have schoolchildren attending from across the GTA, and they've participated in a whole range of projects. We had over 300 public events last year from all across the community: hiking activities, learning to camp. It is in fact our premier "learn to camp" place across the country. We've been doing bioblitzes as well, which gets people involved in counting different species and engaging in them.

We have just under 40 staff there at this point in time, so having gone from just a handful, we're up to nearly 40 at this point in time, as we get ready, moving into the future.

In terms of the other work, obviously working with the province, I can, just in answer to an earlier question, confirm that the province has in fact responded to the park management plan draft at this point in time. They did so in the month of September. We have spent \$2.5 million to date in conservation, and I'd be happy to provide a more detailed breakdown later on if that's of interest.

• (1640)

Hon. Peter Kent: Thank you very much, and congratulations on that. It's only regrettable that Ontario, in delaying transfer of the lands, has allowed dumping of garbage, poaching, all sorts of traffic-control issues and so forth to happen, and we look forward, as speedily as possible, to completing that transfer in whatever form Bill C-18 eventually emerges.

Mr. Daniel Watson: I'm pleased to report that some of the 40 are law enforcement officers down there looking for speeders and dumpers and other people like that.

Hon. Peter Kent: That's good to hear.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That's great.

Mr. Amos.

Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you to all of the witnesses. We appreciate that five minutes each is not a lot of time, and you have been very concise. I'll try to do the same.

First, I should say thank you to all of you for your respective involvement in this file. I think we can all agree that this is a really important Canadian initiative and no matter what the outcome of this legislative debate, we're on the right path.

I would like Mr. Watson to help us look forward. This park initiative is a really interesting example of intergovernmental

collaboration. It's a complicated one involving all sorts of levels of government.

I wonder if you can comment on what lessons have been learned about the nature of how Parks Canada co-operates with other governments and what can be improved going forward. I would invite you not to limit this just to Ontario, but how does this help us consider, and how should we consider this as a committee, given that we're about to write another report on the broader context? How does it speak to that kind of co-operation?

Mr. Daniel Watson: Thank you very much for the question.

I would say that setting up a national park is a breathtaking experience. Parks Canada has done it 46 times, and they are always complicated. Part of this is about the creation of a park from 1922, with the business of the Garden River excision here. That is a park that, while it was created almost 100 years ago, still isn't finished. If you talk to the Mikisew Cree, if you talk to the Garden River First Nation, if you talk to the GNWT, or if you talk to the province of Alberta, they sure aren't finished talking to us either on this.

These things are always complicated. They are complicated when you have different orders of government. They are complicated when you have very passionate interests that are brought to them. They are complicated whether there are 20 million people living within a short drive away from it, or whether in some of our northern parks there is nobody living within a two-hour's drive because you can't drive there. They are always very challenging.

I think what's important that we relearn about this is that if parks are going to be successful in the long term, then there has to be enough common ground built into the starting point to allow people to continue to work together. We have learned that again and again. There are points in time in this country where we barred first nations people from participating in parks and from doing things they had done there for thousands of years. We learned the hard way that was wrong.

There are other places where we went in and we evicted people as a way of creating parks. We discovered that didn't make for the types of relationships you needed to be successful going forward.

There were other points in time where we thought we understood what was important to go on in that park, and we didn't ask a whole lot of other people. We learned that didn't make for a very successful park.

I think it's probably a good idea that we're 130 years in before we tried something as complex as Rouge National Urban Park. We learned a lot of lessons along the way. The core of that is you have to listen to people. The core of that is it's not always our stories as an agency, but it's a broad range of Canadian stories that need to be brought to bear. That's something we've learned. Patience is something you relearn in this business again and again.

To me, those would be some of the key lessons we've learned that we can take forward.

• (1645)

Mr. William Amos: I would like to give the opportunity for my colleague to continue with the line of questioning he has.

Mr. John Aldag: I'm going to turn to Mr. Woodley.

You touched a bit on this related to the ecological integrity, but I was going through some of the Bill C-40, which is the original legislation for Rouge National Urban Park, and I came across a figure from whatever the point in time was. There's a quote that says, "Our own Parks Canada experts have determined that approximately 72% of the current Rouge Park is disturbed."

I would like to get your thoughts related to ecological integrity. That seems like a high level of disturbance. Is that enough reason to not consider ecological integrity? I think you touched on this a bit, but I would like to get your further thoughts on looking at that level of disturbance and how ecological integrity may be appropriate to have within this legislation dealing with this kind of level of disturbance.

Dr. Stephen Woodley: I think the fundamental point about the Rouge is that it's the very best of what remains, and it's important to protect that. It has values that don't exist anywhere else in the GTA.

Yes, it has been disturbed. Parks Canada has a history of dealing rather well with disturbed landscapes. If you look at P.E.I. or if you look at St. Lawrence islands, they both had high degrees of disturbance, and there have been major restoration efforts there to improve ecological integrity on those sites.

Again, I would go back to it's being a relativist kind of opportunity, and the Rouge remains the best opportunity. The Rouge is a visionary place because it's going to connect the people of Toronto and visitors to Toronto with nature, and that's visionary and a great opportunity.

Mr. John Aldag: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We appreciate that.

Mr. Fast.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Thank you.

Thank you very much to all our witnesses.

I have a question for Mr. Latourelle. Looking at Bill C-18 and the proposed subsection 6(1) that actually highlights the ecological integrity, it also refers to the protection of natural processes. I think that's probably also signalled in the definition of ecological integrity, where it talks about rates of change and supporting processes. What do you understand that to mean? Should we be concerned that there are processes we would just have to let happen? What are your comments?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I'll speak from experience. For example, one of the natural processes that has usually been used, in which Parks Canada is an international leader, is prescribed burns, for example, for ecological reasons and also in terms of fire management.

What we did in Parks Canada and what we've been doing for several decades is manage those responsibly. That's the type of natural processes that we would manage, but always considering the local reality. There are places where we've done a lot of burns

historically, in Banff for example, and managed those. There are other places such as Grasslands National Park where we've been a lot more conservative in our approach when we were doing it. I say we were doing it, but I think natural processes are those types of things. The use of fire is one example, but again, with a responsible approach and a local engagement approach.

Hon. Ed Fast: In your testimony you referred to the potential for the current drafting of proposed section 6 to possibly lead to divisive campaigns to restrict visitors and close down agriculture. Is that something you've seen in the past? Could expand a little bit on why you would have that concern based on the current drafting of Bill C-18?

• (1650)

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I've seen this in the past in terms of specific areas within the country. I think in the Rouge, to be very frank, when all of this started, that's where everyone was at. There were a lot of different perspectives during the initial two years of our process. My concern is to make sure that people don't use Parks Canada and the Rouge Park in every state of the park report.

Like Stephen has mentioned, if 70% of it is disturbed, we want to acknowledge success. We don't want people to come back in five years from now in the first state of our park report and bash Parks Canada and the people of the Rouge because the park is not meeting the ecological integrity standard. It won't in the first five years, that's for sure. In the first 25 years, it won't.

Hon. Ed Fast: You also mentioned that, as a practical reality, you felt that the nature of the lands made it impossible to achieve ecological integrity as it's currently defined in this bill.

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I think the reality is that as people assess ecological integrity, there are different aspects of it in terms of the ecological integrators internationally and within Parks Canada. Disturbance is one clearly, and fragmentation is another one. In this case, huge fragmentation is a reality of this place. I'm not saying that we shouldn't create a park, because otherwise we wouldn't have started the process, but I think by putting in place the ecological integrity standard within a very fragmented park, my concern is that it's going to take so much time that, basically, over the next 25 years, a lot of money will be spent. People here today all want it, and all want that standard and celebrate it. In 10 or 15 years from now, different people will be around, and they may be using the fact that Parks Canada has not met that standard negatively. That's my main concern.

Hon. Ed Fast: I share my colleague Mr. Kent's concern that the process somewhere along the way became highly politicized. Mr. Kent suggested that at some point in time the provincial government in Ontario asked for a payment of \$100 million for the transfer of provincial lands into this park.

Are you independently aware of that request actually having been made?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I cannot answer that question today. I'm sorry.

Hon. Ed Fast: Do you have the information, or do you simply not...?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I don't have the information. It's been documented in the press. In Parliament it has been stated. There is documentation, I'm sure, in Parks Canada, but I think it would be unfair for me to share internal information about Parks Canada that is very specific.

Hon. Ed Fast: All right, but you can confirm that ecological integrity was not one of the priorities raised originally, when discussions about transfer of provincial lands—

Mr. Alan Latourelle: The agreement is a public document. In the agreement it is very clear that those words are not there.

Hon. Ed Fast: Right, thank you.

The Chair: Okay.

Next up we have Mr. Garretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I'm going to start with a question that I'm relaying from another member; the member for Pickering—Uxbridge asked me to ask this. I believe this is for Parks Canada, if you could provide some insight.

Green Durham Association has submitted a brief, and in it they ask for two small gateways to connect the future residents of Seaton and the community of Claremont, both of which are in the city of Pickering. The two land connections are owned by Transport Canada but were not transferred in this legislation.

Do you know what the process would be or how we can ensure that these connections are made, which would then allow the Rouge Park to connect to the Trans Canada Trail through Uxbridge?

Mr. Daniel Watson: I have an answer for that. We have an excellent field unit superintendent by the name of Pam Veinotte, who is here today and would be pleased to get the information to the questioner and to set up a meeting to have a conversation about it.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Thank you. I'll definitely pass that along.

Moving over to the discussion about ecological integrity—Mr. Woodley or somebody else or whoever wants to can jump in on this—can you offer some information as to what the practical effect will be on park management? What does it practically mean?

Mr. Robb?

• (1655)

Mr. Jim Robb: Let me start. I'll just give you a couple of comments.

This legislation is separate from the Canada National Parks Act, so although it adopts the ecological integrity definition, it is a separate piece of legislation and it flows from 30 years ago.

The roots of this flow from a report called "Parks 2000" by John Theberge. In that "Parks 2000" report, John Theberge laid out that new types of parks that Parks Canada would create might involve more partnerships. They already involve many partnerships, but perhaps more partnerships.

The Rouge is a model of that, and in moving to a new model wherein you have these partnerships and you're bringing parks to people, the idea is that you cannot be high-handed, that you can

actually support what has already been done, such as the greenbelt plan.

The basis for the Rouge legislation and plans is the greenbelt plan of 2005. They gave the Rouge the policy priority in that area. Ecological integrity and practicality, as Dr. Woodley said, are relative, and in the Rouge, Environment Canada has actually—for Great Lakes "areas of concern", which the Rouge is—put down definitions of what they think ecological integrity means. Those definitions are based on whether the biodiversity is similar to what that area could support, whether the water running through the rivers is clean, and whether it meets standards.

There are already, then, criteria established by Environment Canada for what ecological integrity would mean in the Rouge. In the Rouge, the Environment Canada standards are that 50% to 60% of the park landscape would, in the long term—and this could be 40 or 50 years away—be in a natural sort of cover, and that natural cover could include some types of agricultural use.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: How is that different from what is currently out there, which is that the minister consider the health of the ecosystems?

Mr. Jim Robb: We actually went to an Ecojustice lawyer, John Swaigen, who literally wrote the book on environmental law. He was one of the founders of the Canadian Environmental Law Association. I worked with him when I was a vice-chair with the environmental assessment board with the province. He was the chair of the environmental appeal board.

John's advice to us, after researching it, was that ecological health is very ill-defined. It's defined in so many different ways. In Canada, thanks to Parks Canada, we already have a good definition for ecological integrity.

People in the GTA want a first-class park. They don't want a second-class park, so what you are doing today is giving the GTA an opportunity, long term, to have a first-class national park. Right now it may be fragmented, but I've travelled east and west to many of our parks, and I love them all. I came back to an area that I used to bicycle to when I was a kid, and I found this to be the most biologically rich area in Canada.

It's really special. Even Lord Simcoe knew that. Lord Simcoe asked for a land grant in the Rouge as one of his perks of being the lieutenant-governor way back in the late 1700s.

Ecological integrity is an aspirational goal. It will take a century for us to get close to it. Also, because there were first nations farms in the past, which have been a part of its landscape for hundreds of years, that will be part of the ecological integrity in this area.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Thank you.

Mr. Aldag will take my last minute.

Mr. John Aldag: I'll jump over to Mr. Robb. I think in my first round of questioning you were trying to get in, and I don't know if you still have something you want to share.

Mr. Jim Robb: It was basically that thing that you have separate legislation. We've heard things like we don't want to undermine this high, lofty ideal of ecological integrity that is applicable to some of our parks way out there in the great north and other places. That's true, but this is a separate piece of legislation, number one, so it's not directly under the National Parks Act that governs the other parks.

As Dr. Woodley said, if you go to many of our parks, if you go to Riding Mountain, you find there is the highway, the golf course, a sewage treatment plant, a cottage community, and leases on the land. It's the same in Jasper. Five of our parks are much smaller than the Rouge. The Rouge has the potential to be over 100 square kilometres. There are still another 30-plus square kilometres of public land out there that could gradually be added.

The Rouge has this amazing potential that you don't want to underestimate by saying, "It's a bit tattered right now, so we won't try to make it into a really beautiful quilt for our country. We'll leave it tattered."

The Chair: Thank you very much.

The last round of questioning is with Mr. Stetski.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Thank you.

I started my career working as a park naturalist at Pacific Rim and Rev-Glacier, and in Manitoba and B.C. parks. I'm really excited by the opportunity the Rouge presents to talk about the national parks story, ecological integrity, and the importance of agriculture and getting people back in touch with nature.

Now that the editorial is out of the way, I'd like to give Mr. Robb an opportunity to talk again to his proposal and tell us why he thinks that's so important. Is it because you don't want to waste all the good work that was done over the years or are you concerned that a new management plan might not be as ecologically involved as those? I'm just trying to understand a little better.

● (1700)

Mr. Jim Robb: Thank you.

We have such amazing environmental challenges: climate change, Great Lakes health, biodiversity. The World Wildlife Fund put out a report about a month ago that said, I think, that more than a half of our wildlife populations are in danger worldwide. When we have a park of public land like this, it's really important that we look at the opportunities for making it better for the public in the future. Because we have separate legislation, ecological integrity should apply.

I'd like to say in terms of connecting people with nature that we came to Ottawa 30 years ago, in 1987, with the help of the Honourable Pauline Browes, and we pitched to Parks Canada then that they should create a national park in the Rouge. With many parks you have more urban people. You have people who come from the most diverse city of our entire globe, and you want to reach out to them and connect them with our distant national parks.

The station wagon story really touched my heart, because every year we went out west to see my mother's family on Vancouver Island, and we went through our national parks and through the U.S. national parks every year; and I developed the love.

My wife's from Trinidad, and she came to Canada when she was 10. Some of her teachers took her out to the parks, and we now go camping and canoeing all over Canada. That's our vacation.

What I'm saying is that you need to reach out to urban and multicultural communities like Toronto and tell them about this wonderful nature. They get exposure to it in the Rouge, and then you open the door for them to explore our wonderful country and all the other national parks. This makes Parks Canada more relevant to a larger population in the future, so there will be more support and funding to protect these wonderful heritage areas.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Could you speak specifically to your amendment and the importance of those plans?

Mr. Jim Robb: Thank you.

With the amendment, this is a different type of park. This is a new partnership, and if you're not going to be high-handed.... Parks Canada has amazing expertise, but there is 26 years of work. I can tell you that I've been to hundreds of meetings with tens of thousands of people. Those people want to see the federal government not fly in from Ottawa to say, "Ottawa knows best", but to say, "We're going to take the kernel of what's already been done, and we're going to help it to flourish".

It's really important, and if you don't do it, you will slide back in your time scale. It will cost you more money, and you will probably be reinventing the wheel. That is what people promised to do.

Mr. Kent talked about the original agreement. The original agreement said, "meet or exceed existing policies and plans". If they'd look carefully, then they'd see that the greenbelt plan talks about ecological integrity and biodiversity, and it gives priority to Rouge Park plans or the greenbelt plan, whichever is greater.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Jim Robb: Let's carry forward. The legislation is good, but it will be much better with that amendment.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I want to thank all of our guests today for their excellent depositions and for answering the questions. There were a lot of good questions.

We're going to take a very quick pause, because we have to move to clause by clause. I'm going to invite some of the staff to be with us, so we're going to change over from witnesses to staff.

We'll have Pam Veinotte, field unit superintendent, and Rachel Grasham, director of policy, legislative and cabinet affairs, for Park Canada; and Jim Rossiter, counsel, Parks Canada legal services.

I'll take a quick pause, and we'll make the change.

•(1700) _____ (Pause) _____

•(1705)

The Chair: I am going to reconvene the meeting.

We have agreed that we will do clause-by-clause. I know a lot of people have to get flights and what have you, so at 5:30 we're going to end it and then we'll pick it up again on Tuesday and carry on with the clause-by-clause.

I'm just going to go slowly. We have done one clause-by-clause before, which was Darren's bill. This is the second one we will be doing on this committee, and some of us are still quite new, so I would just like to walk through it slowly.

(On clause 1)

I don't have anything submitted on clause 1.

Hon. Ed Fast: On clause 1, I do have one. It is that Bill C-18, in clause 1, be amended by replacing lines 7 through 13 with the following.... It's the definition of ecological integrity.

The Chair: It's taking all of the ecological integrity....

Hon. Ed Fast: Yes.

A voice: It's line 12.

Hon. Ed Fast: Okay, make it line 12. Yes, that's good.

Now, for the substance of it.

•(1710)

The Chair: Are we all on the same page, guys? We're in clause 1, section 2, and it's the ecological integrity. That's exactly where he's at.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: What's the amendment?

Hon. Ed Fast: It's coming. I'll read that back.

The amendment is that Bill C-18, in clause 1, be amended by replacing lines 7 to 12 with the following, "Conservation or restoration must be the first priority of the Minister when considering all aspects of the management of the Park." That comes straight from Mr. Latourelle's testimony.

A voice: It would be nice to have that in writing.

The Chair: We have it in his testimony. He gave it in his testimony and asked us to make some changes.

It's in English only; it's a problem.

There's a question here about the exact section in which his change is to go and what you're trying to do.

Hon. Ed Fast: My apologies.

The Chair: I think you're putting it in the wrong place.

Hon. Ed Fast: Absolutely. Let me read it again.

The Chair: Okay.

Hon. Ed Fast: That's my oversight.

Let me go back. It is that Bill C-18, in clause 1, be amended by replacing lines 7 through 12 with the following—

Mr. John Aldag: I'm sorry, Ed; where does the wording start, just so that we can...?

The Chair: It starts at line 7.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: That's the line that says "ecological integrity"?

The Chair: Yes, that's the beginning.

Hon. Ed Fast: The actual substance of it would be "the protection, care, management and maintenance of ecosystems, habitats, wildlife species and populations, within and outside of their natural environment, in order to safeguard the natural conditions for their long-term permanence."

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Are you taking out the whole definition?

Hon. Ed Fast: Yes. Ecological...I'm sorry.

No. It's "conservation means".

The Chair: Let's just make it clear. He's replacing "ecological integrity means" with "conservation means". Then he has.... Go ahead. —

Hon. Ed Fast: "The protection, care, management and maintenance of ecosystems, habitats, wildlife species and populations, within and outside of their natural environment, in order to safeguard the natural conditions for their long-term permanence", which is the IUCN definition of conservation.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Aldag.

Mr. John Aldag: While I appreciate Mr. Fast's input on this proposed change, ecological integrity is essential to Bill C-18. With that said, I'm not supportive. I don't know where we move into the process. I just want to say that this is not consistent with the intent our government has put forward with this legislation, and I can't support this.

The Chair: There's always a little bit of a challenge with these things. There's an order that has to be followed properly, and I'm just trying to follow that order.

My understanding is that I would need unanimous consent to stand this down, so that you could move to the further clauses to see whether there's something you're going to do there that would allow this, then, to be changed. There's an order here.

You're really putting me through my paces today. Thank you very much.

Hon. Ed Fast: You asked about clause 1.

The Chair: I did.

Hon. Ed Fast: If I had allowed clause 1 to go by, we would have been....

•(1715)

The Chair: We will need unanimous consent to stand down the discussion on clause 1.

Hon. Ed Fast: Provided we bring it back afterwards, we are supportive of that.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: No, I'm not....

The Chair: Okay, there's a no. We do not have unanimous consent.

Now we're kind of stuck.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Chair, I have a point of order.

The Chair: If we don't have unanimous consent, it can't be admissible. It doesn't fit within the flow; it's not in the right place.

I have to have a reason to bring this forward. I'm rather caught in a box.

Hon. Ed Fast: How do you actually address amendments?

The Chair: I'm trying....

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: On a point of order, Madam Chair, the unanimous consent was only to allow the discussion to happen, essentially; it was not a question of voting in favour of what Mr. Fast was proposing.

The Chair: No, it was only to stand down this discussion.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: To move to the other part....

The Chair: We could move to the next discussion to see if we're going to adopt any changes that then require this definition to be changed.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Can Mr. Fast not explain now what his intent is with respect to why he's doing this? He's obviously going to change wording later on to reflect this new definition he's creating.

The Chair: Because I'm in a bit of a box, yes, let's do that.

Mr. John Aldag: I'm going to say the other option is for me to retract and offer unanimous consent.

The Chair: To stand down on this so that we can move on and then see when we come back to it?

Mr. John Aldag: Then we just revert back to this.

The Chair: Yes, we come back to this.

Mr. John Aldag: I'll take that offer.

Hon. Ed Fast: I'm under no illusion where this is going, but I think—

The Chair: I'll put it out there again. I think I'm in order to do that.

Do we have unanimous consent to stand this discussion down and move on to the next clause and see whether we come back to this? We will come back to this if it's required in the changes that we adopt later.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I'm willing to hear what he has to say.

The Chair: Okay. We're going to stand this down at the moment and we're going to move on.

(Clause 1 allowed to stand)

The Chair: The next one up then is PV-1, which was Elizabeth May's.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I don't know how much time you allow me at this committee. This is my first time at clause-by-clause with you, but the convention around here has been to call Green Party amendments "*Parti vert*". That's where the PV-1 comes from. I think it was because government amendments are the big G and people didn't want the Green Party amendments to be momentarily distracting government members who would potentially vote for something just because it looked like a government amendment.

So, backing up—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Come on, we have some credibility.

Ms. Elizabeth May: I know, absolutely. I'm just having a flashback.

If you'll forgive me, I'll just say that when Jim Robb came to Ottawa in 1987 to meet with the Minister of the Environment on Rouge Park, I was the one meeting with him from the minister's office. I want to add one little historical footnote that Jim missed, which is, not only was John Theberge's report "Parks 2000" a key part of where ecological integrity came from, but the very definition that we are now using in the bill for ecological integrity comes from the panel on ecological integrity convened by Minister of the Environment Sheila Copps in 1998, reported in the year 2000, and it is pivotal to the integrity of our national parks process that we have this ecological integrity.

My amendment is adding after line 12 on page 1, and I'd like to actually, if you'll forgive me, Madam Chair, change one word in my amendment, but let me explain where it goes. It would come right in after the definition of ecological integrity, a new section adding, "The Minister must, in the management of the Park, ensure that protection for its natural resources and natural processes is at least equal to that provided by", and then I'd like to change the word "provincial" to "existing" because the impression could be created that we're actually dealing with Ontario provincial park standards, and we're not. They're fairly much unique to the way the Rouge is managed now, so I'd rather use the word "existing" than "provincial".

It would continue, "existing park management plans that apply to areas near the Park." That's my proposed amendment. It fits in right after the definition of ecological integrity.

The Chair: Thank you.

I am going to rule. You're not going to be happy with me, but I'm going to rule that it's inadmissible. The reason I'm going to rule that it's inadmissible is that in the *House of Commons Procedures and Practice*, second edition, on page 766, it states:

An amendment to a bill must be relevant in that it must always relate to the subject matter of the bill or to the clause thereof under consideration.

You're actually addressing a different clause that is about the management of the park, which is not actually discussed in Bill C-18. I know you're not going to be happy with me, but that's my ruling.

I'm now moving to clause 2 and CPC-1.

It's not really debatable if I do a ruling.

• (1720)

Ms. Elizabeth May: I wouldn't try.

The Chair: I know. I just didn't know if Mr. Stetski was going to do that.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: No.

The Chair: Jolly good. Thank you very much.

We're just moving along here.

(On clause 2)

The Chair: The next one is clause 2, and it's CPC-1.

Would you like to bring that forward?

Hon. Ed Fast: Yes. I'll bring it forward, but I understand you may be ruling that out of order.

The Chair: We'll see.

Hon. Ed Fast: Which is why—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I still want to see you put it forward.

Hon. Ed Fast: We have backup plans, you know.

The Chair: It's okay. You're giving me practice today. I knew I would be on the hot seat.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: It's more rewarding when you put it forward, and she shuts it down.

Hon. Ed Fast: Yes, I know. She loves that.

The Chair: Not really. Trust me, no, I don't. You know me well enough to know that's not the case.

Hon. Ed Fast: What's your ruling, Madam Chair?

The Chair: It's admissible.

Hon. Ed Fast: It's admissible. If it's admissible, then we would be glad to debate it.

The Chair: Okay, because you are actually addressing the clause, lines 15 to 18, that are in the act, so it's admissible.

Hon. Ed Fast: What this simply does is revert it back to the way the act is.

The Chair: Just for clarity, this is the fun of all these amendments. They do often overlap, so I need to make it really clear that, if we adopt this one in our committee, NDP-1 and PV-2 cannot be moved as they will amend the same lines. You just have to be aware there's a lot going on here. If we're looking at yours, and we do adopt it, then in essence, those others will not be addressed.

Hon. Ed Fast: Yes, and we would be pleased.

The Chair: Yes, I can see that. I just want to make sure the whole committee is aware.

Go ahead and let us know why.

Hon. Ed Fast: Let me start off, and I'll pass the floor, if I may, to Mr. Kent after that.

I think we've heard evidence. We know ecological integrity is the standard that is used in all of our national parks, but that isn't justification enough because this national park, by all accounts, is unique. It is urban. There's a much more direct interface between urban areas and this park. I believe we've had testimony at the table and we've also reviewed testimony from the previous time the bill came forward that spoke to the issue of ecological integrity as taking this legislation beyond what actually can be delivered.

I believe Mr. Latourelle in his testimony said that he didn't believe this definition could actually be achieved, which many believe should be achieved. The goals that it's intended to achieve will likely not be achieved because of such a significant interface.

We've seen concerns raised by some of the users within the park area. We've seen Mr. Whittamore who has acknowledged that he has seen the provisions on agriculture, which have assuaged his concerns

somewhat, but he still has trepidation over where this might lead going forward.

I believe the wording that was in the original act was appropriate for what is truly a unique park.

With that, if I may, Madam Chair, I'll pass it to Mr. Kent.

Hon. Peter Kent: Thank you, Mr. Fast.

I think we heard from Mr. Woodley today and from Mr. Latourelle on the record in previous appearances that the original legislation for the Rouge National Urban Park was guided by the IUCN's best practices. Mr. Woodley today conceded that, in fact, the IUCN's standards and policies are very clear and that ecological integrity is open to a variety of interpretations.

This is basically speaking to what the IUCN considers to be its guiding principles and highest practices. Ecological integrity is not conditional on the IUCN's high practices.

● (1725)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Aldag.

Mr. John Aldag: As I said in the previous discussion on clause 1, ecological integrity is key to the legislation we're putting forward. To see it taken out and replaced with this is not a position I'm willing to support. I can give more reasons.

To Mr. Fast's point, that the park is unique, it's special and our belief is very much that ecological integrity needs to be part of the legislation to see it move forward. That's where we stand on that one.

The Chair: Mr. Stetski's next.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I just want to add my support to Mr. Aldag's position.

Ecological integrity is key to this bill, and ecological integrity can be applied to an area as small as a marsh.

The Chair: Mr. Kent, go ahead.

Hon. Peter Kent: Coming back to Mr. Watson's point, that the Province of Ontario has made it clear that they will not transfer the lands without ecological integrity, I think they are imposing ecological integrity on Parks Canada to ease the way forward in order to actually see the transfer of the lands.

I'll leave it at that.

The Chair: Is there anyone else?

(Amendment negatived [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

Hon. Ed Fast: My heart is broken.

The Chair: We still have a few minutes. Do you want to go to the next one or move this to the next meeting? I'm happy to keep going, but I know the time and we won't have a lot of time to get into it.

What do you want to do?

Mr. John Aldag: I move that we move it over.

Hon. Ed Fast: So do I.

The Chair: Okay.

There is a motion to adjourn.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

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