

Nov 6, 2022

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RE: ERO number 019-4868

*Amendment to Ontario Regulation 316/07 under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006 to create Alfred Bog Provincial Park*

*Proposal: .... to create a new non-operating provincial park east of Ottawa, regulated under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006. Creating this park will provide greater protection to an ecologically important and sensitive area.*

Dear Susan Grigg,

At a recent meeting with the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club (OFNC) on the Alfred Bog, I heard the wonderful news about designation Alfred Bog as a park and the planned amendments to park regulations. The presenters were from South Nation Conservation; Nature Conservancy of Canada, Eastern Ontario; and Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club conservation committee.

The presenters advised the history on the 7700 acres being purchased since 1988, led by the Ottawa Field-Naturalists, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Vankleet Hill Nature Society, and private landowners. The purchase was to protect the Alfred Bog from commercial peat mining and land drainage.

Turning these 7700 acres into a Provincial Park is a significant milestone for Ontario as our wetlands are decreasing, especially in southern Ontario. I am so glad that all involved parties have reached this turning point. My comments and suggestions given below are to make this park even better and work together to fiercely protect this Class I wetland ecosystem. Alfred Bog is visited and studied by environmentalists from Europe on how to restore their peat bogs. All efforts to protect Alfred bog from decline will be recognized internationally.

- 1) How will the management of the Alfred Bog, with respect to regulations and controls be done, specifically monitoring and restricting drain ditches on adjacent privately-owned lands that have the most damaging effect of the bog. What can be done to minimize drainage? Can more land be purchased? Can landowners be offered compensation not to drain their lands? Can the buffer zone around the PSW and wetland be increased? If the bog is drained, trees start to encroach, and the wetland is destroyed.

- 2) What is the effect of industry emissions in the area? A nearby Colacem Factory is planned to be built. Cement manufacturing produces high amounts of nitrogen oxide that will damage the bog ecosystem.
- 3) It is my experience, that visitors to a park often walk off trail as the perception is the park is for their use. There are several trails leading out from the boardwalk that visitors will use unless told otherwise. Education is needed to advise visitors on the damaging effect of one footprint in the bog (I have heard can take up to 100 years to recover the delicate plants). The park is not monitored, so signage must be clear on staying on the boardwalk. Student ambassadors during the key visiting months would help visitors learn about the bog and to cherish it.
- 4) Why is Alfred Bog not being classed as a Nature Reserve Class Park to better ensure its protection? The proposed regulations are to designate it as a Natural Environment Class Park, which offers recreational use, such as walking on the boardwalk and hunting of ducks and moose. I understand that private landowners were given hunting access. However, I have concerns on this, as hunting will mean damaging the plants with the ATV vehicles and footsteps when the ground is not frozen, lead gunshot and empty casings left behind.

I cherish my visits to Albert Bog in the spring, summer and fall to see the unique landscape, variety of bog plants, visiting birds and it is so quiet. Thank you for your time reviewing and considering my comments to protect the jewels of Ontario, our parks, wetlands, plants and wildlife. Your decisions will have a significant impact.

Kind Regards,