

The Honourable Steve Clark  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
777 Bay Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

December 2, 2022

**Re: Response to Request for Comments - Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Plan  
(ERO #019-6216)**

Dear Minister Clark:

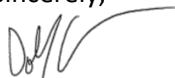
Your Toronto Zoo is dedicated to the recovery of Species at Risk in Ontario (SARO) including at-risk reptiles, amphibians, bats, fishes and molluscs. For over 25 years we have worked closely with multiple partners such as, academic, NGO, and government agencies, including the provincial government, to develop strategies and implement actions that support SARO, including multiple efforts funded by the Species at Risk Stewardship Program.

We fulfil your Zoo's mission to connect people, animals, and conservation science to fight extinction through boots-on-the-ground conservation efforts in Ontario, including biological data collection and analysis, habitat rehabilitation, community science, and outreach. The biological data collected is shared and used to support science-based decision-making by policy makers to maximize conservation impact.

We work extensively in the region impacted by the Amendments to the Greenbelt Act, specifically the area bordered by Scarborough-Pickering Townline to the east, Duffin's Creek to the west and Finch Avenue to the south. Based on our monitoring activities in this area since 2008, we know that there were SARO-listed turtles historically, and they can be found here again thanks to our long-term species recovery efforts. These areas are also home to two provincially endangered bat species in the region who make use of this habitat. The proposed amendments to the Greenbelt Act will negatively impact several of Ontario's Species at Risk we have collaborated with the Province and other partners to restore.

Based on our collective expertise and experience, we strongly encourage the Province to reconsider the Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Act in light of the associated environmental consequences that will affect species at risk and their habitats. We also urge the Province to work collaboratively with experts in the field to implement science-based mitigation strategies, and to continue to meaningfully support SARO conservation long-term. Collaboration is essential to achieving positive impacts in conservation and sustainable development of municipalities - we are prepared to continue to work with the Province and other stakeholders to achieve positive goals in both areas.

Sincerely,



Dolf DeJong, CEO