

## Time is now to reclaim Rouge Park

May 11, 2009 2:41 PM

Re: 'Rouge Park sitting in a state of helpless limbo,' Opinion, April 10

Mike Adler's piece strikes the heart of the matter. Federal protection and financial input is needed in order to bring the sentiment of the park's creation to reality.

Meanwhile the natural attributes that are supposed to be protected by the creation of the park are being compromised. Park lovers and creatures face real physical danger from illegal cross bow hunters.

At heart too is the sentiment that people in the Greater Toronto Area have faced tremendous loss of natural capital and want to protect what little natural area we have left. People living in the region over the last 25 years have watched helplessly as our farmland and forests were razed by bulldozers and replaced with endless, empty, identical housing and sprawl. You don't have to be an ecologist or scientist to accurately say that you have watched the eradication of biodiversity happen in your lifetime.

So to is his true telling of the tale of the 1970s land grab. Our own Canadian government forced people out of the homes and off the farms they loved. This is a constant and living memory for the second and third generations who know this story as their history. We not only lost farms, but a way of life.

The land grab should not have happened in a democratic country.

We will never forget this sad chapter and many of us continue to fight for some way to make peace with this history. Giving back our farms and homes is out of the question. The way to make peace and heal those who lost their land is to give what was taken back to us all - as a public treasure and national park.

If any politician from any current political party has any conscience they will come on board and help fulfill the dream of a real park that will offer real protection to not only the Rouge, but the endangered Duffins Creek Watershed as well.

We only have one chance to get this right. The time is now. Will we use it or lose it?

Bernadette Zubrisky