

December 2, 2022

**\*\* For Immediate Release \*\***

**Settlement in Quinte Isle Campark Appeal**  
*New Shoreline Protection and Wildlife Corridors Adopted*

Picton – On December 1, 2022, the Friends of South Shore (“FOSS”) appeared before the Ontario Land Tribunal (“OLT”) to announce a settlement in their appeal of the proposed Quinte Isle Campark expansion on Soup Harbour, in Prince Edward County (“PEC” or the “County”). Soup Harbour lies seven kilometres south-east of Sandbanks Provincial Park, near Picton, Ontario.

The Minutes of Settlement and Revised Development Site Plan will see substantial new ecological restoration across the site, including two new wildlife corridors and an improved climate-resilient process for shoreline protection and naturalization. The development site lies between two Provincially Significant Wetlands (“PSW”), with the Soup Harbour PSW immediately adjacent on the eastern boundary, and the Salmon Point PSW just west of the existing Quinte Isle Campark. Both are among the last significant and intact coastal wetlands on Lake Ontario. Wetlands are critical for biodiversity and ecosystem services such as flood-protection under climate change.

“The ecological features of the site are better protected with this settlement, which was the primary goal of this appeal”, said David Donnelly, legal counsel to FOSS.

“The County has new benchmarks to meet with respect to maintaining and creating critical wildlife corridors, ecological restoration, site plan design, public engagement, and First Nations consultation. FOSS deserves considerable credit for raising the bar for climate-resilient, good planning in PEC”, Donnelly added.

FOSS is contributing 50% of the cost of hiring a professional landscape architect with ecological restoration expertise to design wildlife corridors that will provide safe movement and connected habitat between the PSWs for local species, including the endangered Blanding’s turtle. The wildlife corridors will include native trees, shrubs, and perennial vegetation that is essential to many species of nesting songbirds and the Monarch Butterfly, a species-at-risk in Ontario. No buildings, structures, or other obstacles to wildlife movement will be permitted in the wildlife corridors. Notably, the wildlife corridors planned will support and amplify the Natural Heritage Linkage area identified in PEC’s updated Official Plan.

Significantly, the agreement specifies the “Shoreline Area” shall be kept in a naturalized state, maintained, and enhanced in accordance with the recommendations of the professional landscape architect and current best evidence for climate resilient design. The exact location of the shoreline protection area to be protected will be established by Quinte Conservation, who adopted an updated Shoreline Plan in June, 2022.

“We’ll never come to terms with how PEC proceeded with and approved the original proposal for this development, which was not permitted under the County’s Official Plan. However, we did achieve a much better result by using mediation and evidence, and therefore, our environment is better protected, and the planning process in PEC is improved”, said Debra Marshall, Executive Director of FOSS.

Additional new conditions include street lighting is to be dark sky compliant, wildlife crossing traffic signs are to be added, and an emergency access road is to be relocated to make way for an east/west wildlife corridor.

The Campark application was submitted nearly five years ago seeking an Amendment to the Official Plan to change the land use designation from Rural to Shoreland, which would allow for an expansion of the existing campark from 619 sites to 956, bringing potential occupancy (based on 2.5 persons per site) to a population of more than 2300 persons – more than the Village of Wellington. At its peak, it will be the second largest population centre in the County. The site is the last worked farm field that touches Lake Ontario on PEC’s entire south shore, from Salmon Point to Ostrander Point, an extraordinary fact in terms of the property's cultural and heritage value.

FOSS had submitted evidence to the County that normally (including under the current Official Plan), developments of this size are directed towards towns, not rural lands, and are properly planned with infrastructure and services.

FOSS retained a number of leading expert witnesses to review the proposal and technical reports, including a professional planner, a heritage landscape architect, and an ecologist (Kari Gunson, well-known for her evidence against the White Pines development project). FOSS summoned Peter Zuzek, author of the *Quinte Conservation Shoreline Management Plan* (June 21, 2022), to testify regarding the appropriate shoreline hazard limit.

“Lake Ontario has precious few remaining places like Soup Harbour. During one of the darkest times in Ontario’s land use planning history, we are proud of our community’s effort to protect Soup Harbour, our natural and cultural heritage, and to improve the County’s process for regulating development. We raised the bar for climate-resilient and community-engaged inclusive planning”, Marshall added.

-30-

**For more information contact:**

Debra Marshall - Executive Director  
Friends of South Shore  
[friendsofsouthshorepec@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsouthshorepec@gmail.com)

David Donnelly - Principal  
Donnelly Law  
[david@donnellylaw.ca](mailto:david@donnellylaw.ca) 416-722-0220