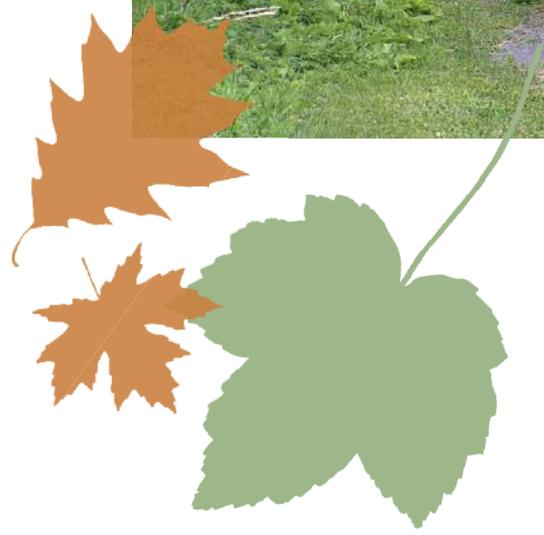
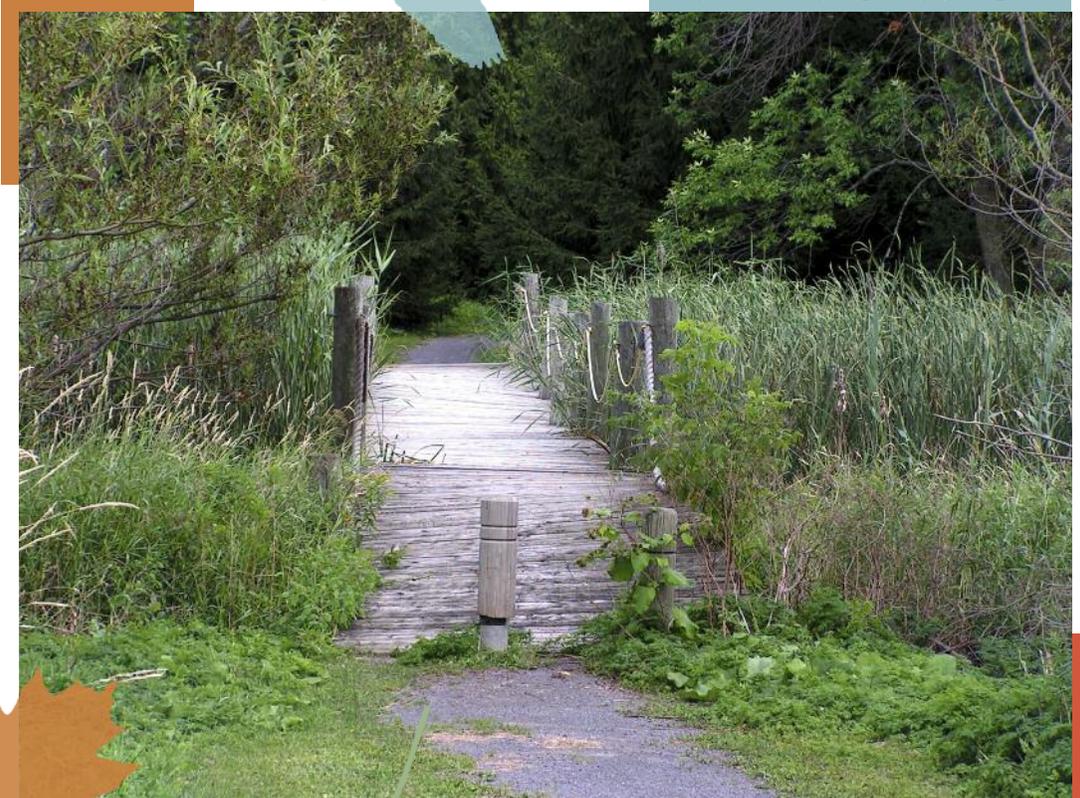




07 + 08 REPORT
WORKING DOCUMENT



POLICY ON THE
PROTECTION AND
ENHANCEMENT
OF NATURAL
HABITATS



April 2009

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OBJECTIVES WITHIN REACH

Since adoption in 2004, the Policy on the Protection and Enhancement of Natural Habitats has resulted in significant progress, mostly owing to a concerted planning approach. After halting the annual loss of several dozens of hectares of woodland through acquisition-based action, we now need to diversify our efforts to maximize results. This represents an imposing challenge for the city which, to date, we have managed to meet successfully.

In 2007-2008, considerable efforts were sustained to increase the percentage of protected land, which now stands at 5%, bringing us closer to our 6% target. These results were achieved through land acquisitions, as well as through the implementation of important conservation projects and structuring action aimed at ensuring long term protection. The enhancement of our natural heritage needs to be supported by an integrated vision of urban development which guarantees the conservation of the island's biological diversity. Results achieved by means of recent initiatives show that it is possible to plan development in a manner which respects ecosystem integrity.

These approaches, which aim to preserve our green heritage, will be supported by action designed to develop and enhance newly protected sites with a view to increasing points of contact with nature for Montrealers one and all.



The contribution of natural habitats to the quality of living environments is now undeniable. The urgency to act led us first to intervene in developing neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the city. Although based on a different approach, the integration of natural habitats into existing or redeveloping neighbourhoods nearer the city centre shows just as much potential and allows for the introduction of stimulating new initiatives to protect our natural heritage.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan DeSousa'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Alan DeSousa, FCA
Member of the Executive Committee,
Responsible for sustainable development.



NATURE IN THE CITY: PLANNING ECO-DEVELOPED LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

The close connection between ecosystems and human health has led to increased demand for enhanced quality of life and protection of the environment, especially in cities. Using urban development expertise to strike a balance between natural and built up environments with a view to creating living areas favourable to citizen well being constitutes one of the major challenges facing municipalities today.

NATURE AND WILDLIFE IN MONTRÉAL

The city's natural heritage is an essential component of our identity as Montrealers.

Imagine what the city would be like without the majesty of Mount Royal or the St Lawrence River. In total, Montrealers enjoy access to 133 km of shoreline and 65 km² of green spaces which include some 1200 local parks and 17 large parks. Home to a wealth of fauna and flora, Montréal's nine nature parks benefit from an ecological management program aimed at maintaining biodiversity, restoring degraded areas and preventing further degradation. Although residents are not as familiar with them as they are with their neighbourhood parks, nature parks foster contact between the citizenry and plant and animal diversity through recreational and educational activities. Moreover, these invaluable resources are located just metres from city services such as public transport.

In addition to providing important ecological, social and economic services, natural urban spaces are irreplaceable places of tranquillity and escape for city dwellers. The City of Montréal is aware of the substantial ecological and landscape potential and, in 2004, adopted the Policy on the Protection and Enhancement of Natural Habitats which aims to intervene in the following three sectors: natural habitats in existing



Stream Nature Park De Montigny

WHAT IS AN ECOTERRITORY?

An ecoterritory is a large tract of land 15 ha or more in an area conducive to the creation of new protected areas. These tracts of land include parts of existing large parks and nature reserves, as well as natural spaces of high ecological value deserving of protection and enhancement. By targeting these areas, we seek to establish an ecological network which will provide for the long term sustainability of plant and animal life in each ecoterritory. The notion of ecoterritory is recognized in the City's Master Plan.

parks, shoreline and aquatic environments of ecological interest, and the ten ecoterritories where protection and enhancement of natural spaces are a priority.

A MULTITUDE OF BENEFITS

Natural habitats located in the vicinity of residential areas promote healthier lifestyles and provide places for citizens to engage in outdoor activities. Natural spaces improve neighbourhood aesthetics, add value to properties in the immediate vicinity and allow for wildlife observation without the need to travel great distances. In addition, natural urban areas located close to schools help foster contact between young people and their natural environment, thereby contributing to the development of a sense of appreciation and respect for nature.

Plant life growing in natural spaces actively helps reduce city-related nuisances by improving air quality, reducing noise and wind, and absorbing rainwater which significantly impacts the volume of storm runoff and diminishes damage owing to flooding. Furthermore, on a hot summer day, people can seek refuge in a green space and enjoy the refreshing feeling of hiding in the shade of trees.

THE 2007-2008 REPORT IN NUMBERS

From a sustainable development perspective, the Policy on the Protection and Enhancement of Natural Habitats aims to preserve and enhance Montréal's biodiversity with a view to improving the quality of living areas for present and future generations. Through the Policy, the City seeks to meet its objective of protecting 6% of the aggregate island land mass, thereby contributing to making Montréal a greener city.

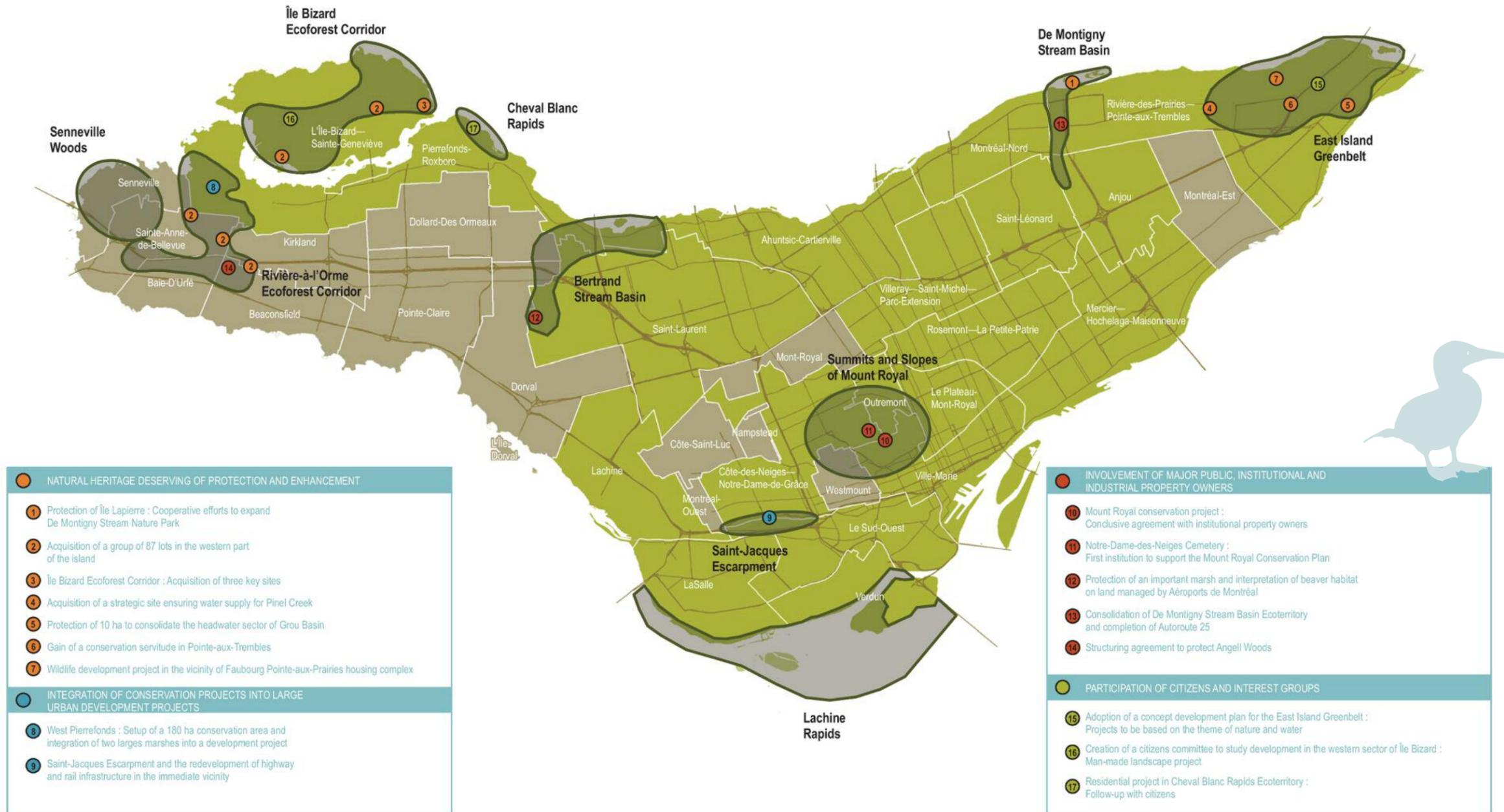
When the last report was published in May 2006, 1672 ha of land were under protection, which is the equivalent of 3.3% of the total island land mass. Two years later, a total of 2473 ha will have been accorded protection status, representing 5% of the total island land mass.

We can all benefit from an urban planning approach which takes ecosystems into account and allows for increases in protected natural spaces of high biological activity which provide habitat for urban flora and fauna, and provide unique recreational sites for city dwellers.

INITIATIVES YIELDING RESULTS

Recent initiatives aimed at protecting natural habitats have centred around the conservation of strategic tracts of land, the integration of conservation projects into large urban development projects, the diversification of overall intervention, the involvement of major public, institutional and industrial property owners, and the participation of citizens and interest groups. The 2007-2008 report presents results achieved based on the priorities set out in the last report.

MAP OF THE ECOTERRITORIES 07 + 08 REPORT



PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF OUR NATURAL HERITAGE

Four years after the adoption of the Policy on the Protection and Enhancement of Natural Habitats, Montréal is nearing its goal of protecting 5% out of a total of 6% of targeted land sites.

CONSERVATION OF STRATEGIC LAND

In 2007-2008, the City engaged in important acquisition and development projects to enhance the following four ecoterritories: De Montigny Stream Basin, Île Bizard Ecoforest Corridor, Rivière à l'Orme Ecoforest Corridor and the East Island Greenbelt.

Protection of Île Lapierre: Cooperative efforts to expand De Montigny Stream Nature Park

In the fall of 2008, an acquisition by the City combined with an important ecogift on the part of the land owner led to the protection of Île Lapierre. The agreement between the City and the owner, through non-profit organization Ducks Unlimited Canada,

allows for the protection of a site of high ecological value, the preservation of biodiversity and the expansion of De Montigny Stream Nature Park, the object being to develop recreational activities focusing on wildlife observation.

The surrounding area (5.4 ha) constitutes breeding habitat as well as feeding grounds for several species of wildlife such as muskrats and waterfowl. The site is also home to a number of species at risk.

Furthermore, in December 2008, the City acquired an area of 1189 m², including a century-old house and garage at 7110 Gouin Boulevard East. This acquisition will contribute to enhancing the nature park and ensuring an unbroken link between the stream and Rivière des Prairies.



Île Lapierre

Acquisition of a group of lots in the western part of the island

By acquiring 87 lots which belonged to Groupe Immobilier Grilli and which were located in the cities of Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue and Kirkland, and the borough of Île Bizard-Sainte-Geneviève, the City advanced conservation action in the Rivière à l'Orme Ecoforest and Île Bizard Ecoforest corridors. This initiative will indeed make it possible to expand Anse-à-l'Orme Nature Park, Cap-Saint-Jacques Nature Park, Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard Nature Park and Bois-de-la-Roche Agricultural Park.

Île Bizard Ecoforest Corridor: Acquisition of three key sites

The consolidation of the southeastern sector of Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard Nature Park continued with the acquisition of two tracts of land which had constituted private enclaves within the park, and the acquisition of Pointe-aux-Cèdres which offers a new park window out onto Rivière des Prairies.

► Planned action

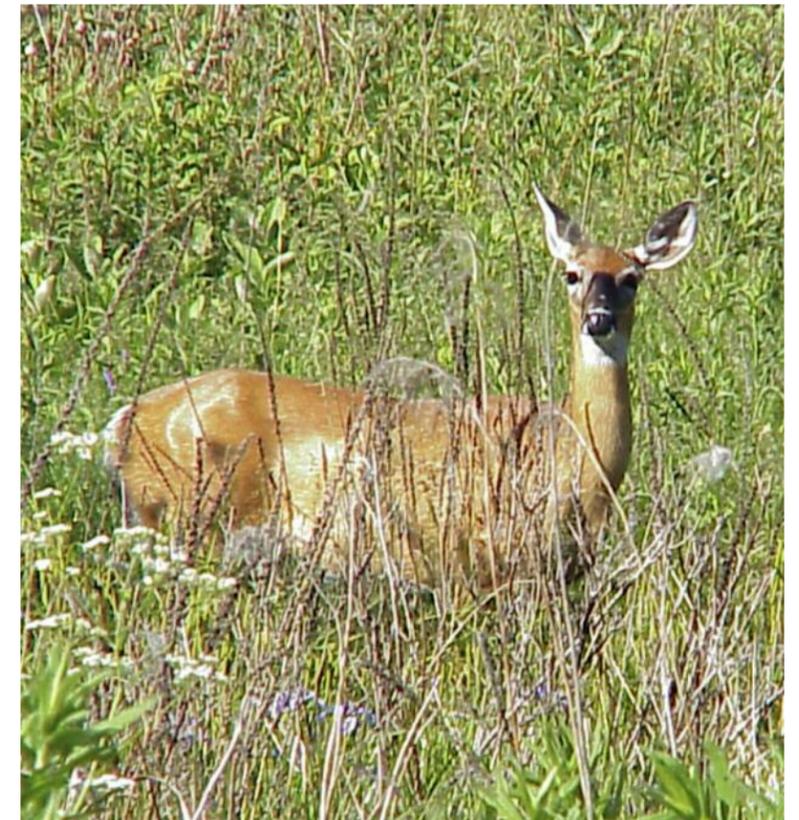
The protection of these sites will make it possible to envisage a public access point to the shoreline in a sector where access of this nature is rare.

East Island Greenbelt: Agreements to protect 15 ha of habitat of interest

This ecoterritory includes Pointe-aux-Prairies Nature Park and natural habitats of interest in the surrounding area linked to Pinel Creek and Grou Basin, including wetlands and woodland some of which is home to species at risk such as the cork elm. Agreements provide for the protection of the headwater sector of Pinel Creek and Grou Basin, as well as a wooded area near Autoroute 40.

• Acquisition of a strategic site ensuring water supply for Pinel Creek:

The 4 ha site is characterized by a mosaic of wetlands as well as undeveloped land with a mix of brush and trees which will eventually develop into a forest. This strategic acquisition, which includes the headwater sector of Pinel Creek, will



White-tailed deer

ensure water supply for the entire creek. The creation of the Pinel Creek corridor will help meet one of the important targets of the East Island Greenbelt concept development plan which entails ensuring an adequate supply of quality water for Pinel Creek.

• Protection of 10 ha to consolidate the headwater sector of Grou Basin:

To compensate for the loss of wetlands as a result of a construction project, 10 ha of natural habitat were protected in the headwater sector of Grou Basin. This area is home to herpetofauna, avifauna and white-tailed deer, and includes a mix of woodland, wetland and undeveloped land. The conservation of this space will make it possible to protect the entire upstream sector of Grou Basin and expand the riverside sector of Pointe-aux-Prairies Nature Park by a third.

• Conservation servitude in Pointe-aux-Trembles:

Gaz Métro has accepted to donate a conservation servitude on certain parts of a tract of land currently occupied by a distribution facility in Pointe-aux-Trembles. The company is now committed to conserving a 0.34 ha wooded area and protecting resident trees. This will help the City achieve its objective of conserving the wooded areas along Autoroute 40, thereby reducing urban noise and improving overall aesthetics.

Wildlife development project in the vicinity of Faubourg Pointe-aux-Prairies housing complex

Faubourg Pointe-aux-Prairies is an important residential development project currently under way in the East Island Greenbelt Ecoterritory. In 2005, the developer donated 9.6 ha of land to the City through a concerted planning initiative. The

site is made up primarily of wet woodlands (bog) and a waterway. The City has begun planning the development of a 10 ha wildlife network to preserve existing natural habitats and create ecologically viable natural wetlands, the aim being to maintain the characteristics and hydric conditions of the wet woodlands and waterway over the long term. Further downstream, the City also plans to develop two marshes to serve as breeding and feeding habitat for reptiles and waterfowl. In 2008, a recreational component was added to the part of the project involving the shoreline.

Planned action

Development will continue on both the riverfront park and the wildlife interpretation project. Moreover, plant species have been selected based on the needs of wildlife in the area. Action will, for the most part, take place in 2009 with some overlapping into 2010.

WHAT IS A CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

It is a planning tool, which makes it possible to:

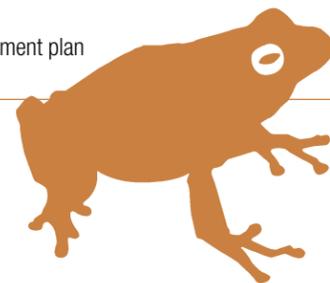
- Develop an ecoterritory taking into account development projects as well as the protection and enhancement of natural habitats of interest
- Appreciate the great ecological and landscape value of natural habitats of interest deserving of protection, and understand the conditions necessary to ensure the sustainability of such areas
- Foster dialogue among citizens, environmentalists and developers, and ensure enlightened decision-making choices.

The targets considered when drawing up a concept development plan include:

- Planning for the best possible use of lands located within the ecoterritory
- Outlining the important issues relating to the protection of these unique sites
- Proposing a vision for the future of the ecoterritory as part of the collective heritage

The drawing up of a concept development plan is a five-step process:

- Step 1** > Knowledge of the territory
- Step 2** > Consultation workshop
- Step 3** > Preliminary version of concept development plan
- Step 4** > Public consultation
- Step 5** > Final version of concept development plan



INTEGRATION OF CONSERVATION PROJECTS INTO LARGE URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Partnerships with developers are beneficial, as they make it possible to allow for ecosystem and biodiversity protection at the design stage of major urban projects. The integrated development project in West Pierrefonds and the protection of Saint-Jacques Escarpment in the context of the redevelopment of highway and rail infrastructure in the immediate vicinity are landmark examples in this regard.

West Pierrefonds: Establishment of a 180 ha conservation area

The multi-purpose urban development project initiated in the western sector of Pierrefonds will include the construction of several thousand housing units, and the establishment of stores, businesses and neighbourhood parks. This project includes an important conservation initiative linked to the Rivière à l'Orme Ecoforest Corridor; the objectives of this initiative are set out in each of the Policy on the Protection and Enhancement of Natural Habitats and the City's Master Plan. The proposed development concept centres around the protection of an area of 180 ha.

The main conservation area encompasses 169 ha of woods, undeveloped land, wetlands and small waterways along Rivière à l'Orme. This area will allow for the expansion of Anse-à-l'Orme Nature Park and connect to Cap-Saint-Jacques Nature Park, Bois-de-la-Roche Agricultural Park and Angell Woods. This will result in the creation of a vast, ecologically viable territory in the area of the only inland river on the Island of Montréal. An additional area of 10.6 ha, comprising a mosaic of wetlands

INTEGRATION OF LAUZON MARSH INTO THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN WEST PIERREFONDS

Covering an area of 2.13 ha and surrounded by a 50 m buffer zone, Lauzon Marsh constitutes precious habitat for several species of birds and amphibians. In the context of the urban development project, wetlands of interest such as Lauzon Marsh need to be protected to compensate for the loss of other natural areas. Adding large buffer zones around the marsh will protect the biodiversity of the core zone from external threats and preserve the marsh's ecological integrity.

Action has been taken to protect natural spaces around the marsh. Links to Cap-Saint-Jacques Nature Park and Anse-à-l'Orme Nature Park would provide for the creation of ecological corridors conducive to wildlife movement. Acting as consultants, Ducks Unlimited Canada has also proposed ways to develop the marsh to increase biological productivity. Water levels are currently being monitored to enhance knowledge on marsh development and the impact of changes on resident wildlife.



Lauzon Marsh

in the vicinity of Lauzon Marsh, Marsh 90 and peripheral waterways, will be combined with the main conservation area to compensate for the loss of wetlands in development areas in accordance with the legislative requirements of Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs (MDDEP).

The conservation of 180 ha of land is a highly positive addition to the development project. Aside from the many ecological and

social benefits, the proximity of Anse-à-l'Orme Nature Park will bestow added value of between 15% and 20% upon neighbouring properties.

Planned action

The development and ecological enhancement of natural spaces in this area will be defined in cooperation with MDDEP, the borough, developers and Ducks Unlimited Canada, an important partner.

Ensuring the protection of Saint-Jacques Escarpment during redevelopment of highway and rail infrastructure in the area

The Saint-Jacques Escarpment covers approximately 20 ha and comprises tracts of lands unfit for building purposes. Maintaining plant cover on the escarpment contributes to protecting the soil from erosion. As Québec's Ministère des Transports (MTQ) plans changes to highway and rail infrastructure in the area in the near future, it is important that the conservation objectives of the ecoterritory be taken into consideration during the upcoming stages of the redevelopment project.

A technical committee comprising representatives of the City and boroughs involved was set up in 2007. To improve knowledge of the site, three types of studies were conducted. An historical study painted a portrait of the site from the 19th century to today. A geotechnical study demonstrated that the escarpment is the result of filling work and that the slope, albeit abrupt, has been stabilized with well rooted vegetation. Lastly, biological studies detailed plant and animal life in the area. Results showed that the Saint-Jacques Escarpment represents one of the most important habitats in Greater Montréal for the brown snake, an at-risk species.

Planned action

The technical committee has set about defining a vision for the site which will focus on conservation, while allowing enhancements along the periphery for recreational purposes (non-intensive). Development principles have been determined and constitute the basis of a preliminary concept development plan providing for the protection and enhancement of the ecoterritory. The plan will eventually be presented to area citizens at a public consultation.



WHAT IS AN ECOLOGICAL NETWORK?

An ecological network is defined as a natural space or environment comprising three zones: a core zone, a buffer zone and an ecological corridor around which a development project may be designed. This model fosters a better meshing of urban development projects, while safeguarding the long term viability of high value ecosystems.



A Core zones are pockets of biodiversity which provide environmental conditions conducive to the safeguarding of ecosystems, habitats, as well as significant populations of animals and plants.

B Buffer zones play a number of roles. They protect the core zones from potential external threats and provide habitats which are essential to the survival of the species living in the core zones.

C Ecological corridors provide a linear link from one core zone to another, allowing species to disperse and migrate.

DIVERSITY OF ACTION



Anse-à-l'Orme Nature Park

By adding conservation initiatives in municipal parks and shoreline areas to the conservation projects planned in the ecoterritories and existing protected areas, the objective of protecting 6% (3000 ha) of land sites is now within reach.

Conservation approach in existing parks

With a view to implementing conservation projects in municipal parks, *Direction des grands parcs et de la nature en ville* conducted a characterization study of 10 large parks and 49 local parks to identify natural areas of interest. In cooperation with the boroughs, the City is considering according formal protection status to certain existing parks. These parks will have a conservation function and ecological management practices will be introduced to maintain and enhance biodiversity without limiting public access.

Planned action

An integrated management program in municipal conservation parks is in the process of being drawn up. Inspired by what is currently being done in nature parks, the City will seek to monitor habitat evolution and anticipate changes likely to occur over time. Action plans will be designed to control and eradicate invasive and harmful plants, develop wildlife habitat, and provide for the planting of indigenous species. The parks will also be enhanced to allow for recreational activities.

The City and municipal representatives in charge of the parks are currently holding discussions to assess the possibility of ecological management in specific local

parks and ascertain which areas within those parks could be eligible for incorporation into an inventory of protected natural spaces.

Ecological characterization of shoreline areas

Direction des grands parcs et de la nature en ville completed a detailed inventory of these areas with a view to identifying shoreline segments of conservation interest. This initiative led to the production of an atlas of shoreline and aquatic environments of ecological interest which details the biophysical characteristics of the identified shoreline segments and descriptions of the 26 potential conservation areas. This tool is certain to prove invaluable : for the first time ever, all existing data on shoreline areas will be collated in a single document.

Planned action

Direction des grands parcs et de la nature en ville is contributing to the production of a map which will identify waterways subject to Québec's Protection Policy for Lakeshores, Riverbanks, Littoral Zones and Floodplains.



Montréal Agglomeration Inventory of Protected Natural Spaces

Montréal plans on listing all conservation projects undertaken in the ecoterritories, existing parks and shoreline areas in an official inventory of the island's protected natural spaces. Established on the basis of the objectives set out in the Policy on the Protection and Enhancement of Natural Habitats, this inventory will record protected natural spaces and allow officials to monitor them and ensure sustainability over time.

Planned action

A committee comprising representatives of the City, boroughs and reconstituted cities is currently working on the formulation of an appropriate inventory model which will be made available online once approved by the agglomeration council. Also, working groups are currently evaluating the findings of the characterization study to select segments deserving of inclusion in the inventory.

INVOLVEMENT OF MAJOR PUBLIC, INSTITUTIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY OWNERS

In the last two years, the City has devoted considerable effort to involving major public, institutional and industrial property owners in projects. These concerted initiatives, such as the Mount Royal conservation project and the integration of the De Montigny Stream Basin consolidation project into the completion of Autoroute 25, have made it possible to explore different options and optimize action taken.

Mount Royal conservation project: Conclusive agreement with institutional property owners

In our city, the summit and slopes of Mount Royal are of unique heritage, aesthetic and ecological value. To enhance protection of the vegetation cover, Montréal put together an important conservation project in 2007.

Associated with the habitat protection component of the Mount Royal Conservation Plan, the conservation approach addresses issues of biodiversity protection through ecological management, conservation of natural landscapes of interest and reinforcement of the biomass. The City's approach, combined with the work of *Table de concertation du Mont Royal* and the notable collaboration of members such as *Les Amis de la montagne*, *Conseil régional de l'environnement* and *Héritage Montréal*, led to the signing of the Mount Royal Heritage Pact in February 2008 by the 14 institutions established on its slopes. This agreement makes it possible to better coordinate voluntary institutional efforts with City initiatives, ensuring that Mount Royal enjoys increased protection. This could not have been achieved solely through land acquisition and expropriation.



Cooper's hawk

A financial support program was established as part of the partnership between the City and *Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine* du Québec. This program aims to encourage institutional property owners located in the Historic and Natural District of Mount Royal to conserve biodiversity by granting subsidies for the implementation of eligible work on their land.

► Planned action

Steps have been taken to implement the first component of the conservation project which focuses on biodiversity. A number of proposals with regard to this component, which covers 52% of the borough, are being reviewed by the institutions involved. Discussions currently under way should lead to tangible commitments in the short and medium terms, such as the recent adoption of the *Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery Green Plan*.

Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery: First institution to support the Mount Royal Conservation Plan

In adopting its green plan, Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery has become the first institution established on Mount Royal to officially support the Mount Royal Conservation Plan. The cemetery's green plan is based on three general principles: the preservation of the historical landscape, the integration of plant and animal biodiversity, as well as forest regeneration and growth.

► Planned action

In 10 years, the number of trees will have increased by 33% and the area conducive to biodiversity by 40%. The additional 7 ha of woodland combined with the ecological developments and protected areas set out in the cemetery's green plan will contribute to enhancing biological diversity on Mount Royal. A program aiming to

replace damaged trees will be instituted and 3000 new shrubs will be planted. The creation of ecological corridors, buffer zones and waterways, one of which will follow the flow of Rimbaud Stream which disappeared in 1925, is also in the works.

The cemetery is considering extending the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Woods conservation servitude from 20 to 50 years. Moreover, a 7500 m² tract of land will be donated to the City of Montreal, by means of a servitude, and allow for the creation of a path along Côte-des-Neiges Road.

Protection of an important marsh and interpretation of beaver habitat on land managed by Montréal International Airport

The federal Ministry of Transport, Aéroports de Montréal (ADM), the City of Montréal and other partners have cooperated in an effort to protect habitat of interest for beavers in the upper sector of Bertrand Stream Basin Ecoterritory.

At the beginning of the decade, negotiations were initiated to conserve a natural area of 11 ha on land managed by ADM to compensate for the destruction of wetlands on the site of the Technoparc. The City sought to expand the conservation area to further protect the site's biodiversity which includes a century-old forest and marsh some 7 ha in area. The marsh is a favourite with resident beavers which build dams to control water levels.

► Planned action

A concept development plan relating to the conservation project was drawn up in late 2006. The plan centred around the improvement of the shoreline areas of the marsh and interpretation of beaver habitat. Minor infrastructure development with a view to establishing a nature interpretation centre, instituting green classes and creating a link with Bois-de-Liesse Nature Park, are envisaged.

Consolidation of De Montigny Stream Basin Ecoterritory: Integration of this Montréal initiative into the completion of Autoroute 25

Initiated by Québec's Ministère des Transports (MTQ) in 2007, the completion of



Beaver lodge

Autoroute 25 was conditional upon the protection and enhancement of the ecoterritory located along the future highway. Montréal was planning to consolidate the ecoterritory and nature park, and seized the opportunity to intervene at the outset of the project by cooperating with MTQ and partner Kewit-Parsons which accepted to negotiate to achieve the nature-based objectives and limit problems associated with the completion of A-25.

In 2006, the acquisition of land in the vicinity of De Montigny Stream resulted in a 4.36 hectare expansion of the linear park. In the context of the completion of A-25, a new sector located along the future highway will be enhanced by the creation of hillocks comprised essentially of excavated earth and planted with indigenous species to improve aesthetics, reduce noise and provide habitat for urban fauna. The agreement includes a financial contribution on the part of the developer, proportional to the volume of excavated soil, that the City will then use to develop the park. Kewit-Parsons will also design a water retention basin for the benefit of fauna and flora and accessible to users via a footbridge.

This concerted initiative contributes to achieving the objectives relating to the ecoterritory through the preservation of the ecosystem surrounding the stream and the

site's biodiversity, as well as the creation of an unbroken link between the stream, Rivière des Prairies and the offshore islands.

The acquisition in December 2008 of an area of 16 100 m² located on the southern side of Maurice-Duplessis Blvd and west of Louis-Hyppolyte-La Fontaine Blvd is also part of the nature park enhancement project.

► Planned action

Once the hillocks are completed, in the period from 2010 to 2012, over 1000 trees will be planted. Two green bridges linking Maurice-Duplessis and Perras boulevards will provide for an unbroken link within the ecoterritory. In total, indigenous species will cover an area of 10 ha.

Structuring agreement to protect Angell Woods

The structuring agreement concerning Angell Woods is another example of a successful concerted initiative which made it possible to expand Anse-à-l'Orme Nature Park. Firstly, Alta Industrial transferred a tract of land to Ducks Unlimited Canada. This non-profit organization kept part of the property and donated another part to the City of Beaconsfield and the City of Montréal under a conservation servitude which ensures conservation and enhancement of

the property in keeping with the principles of sustainable development. The protection of these 22.2 ha will guarantee integrity of the local habitat which includes a large wetland (tree marsh) and mature tracts of forest which are home to several species of birds of prey.



PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS AND INTEREST GROUPS

Citizens interested in protecting our natural heritage have been and will continue to be solicited by the City which considers them as essential partners. Experience has shown that public participation allows citizens to develop a sense of project ownership and to contribute to their improvement. The concerted process leading to the adoption of an ecoterritory concept development plan and the setup of a citizens committee to report on project progress constitute some of the successful methods used by the City to involve the citizenry. In 2007-2008, various communications initiatives have been put in place, including the creation of the 'Nature in the City' website, to inform residents of Policy objectives and related projects.

Adoption of a concept development plan for the East Island Greenbelt: Projects to be based on the theme of nature and water

The East Island Greenbelt concept development plan is the result of a concerted initiative between the City, the borough of Rivière-des-Prairies/Pointe-aux-Trembles, citizens, as well as other groups and experts. Adopted in 2007, this tool proposes action which makes allowance for the sector's natural habitats and promotes the incorporation of environmental, social and economic factors into urban development. The borough's Urban Development Advisory Committee consults this document when considering planning decisions.

In the fall of 2005, a consultative workshop was held. Representatives of the local community took part in this event and



Île Bizard countryside

contributed to the production of the concept development plan which was presented at a public consultation in March 2006. The public's comments were integrated into the final version of the plan which identifies key elements which are keeping with Policy objectives for the ecoterritory and which are based on the theme of nature and water. These elements are as follows: consolidation of the three ecological zones; creation of a green window several kilometres in length; and, reinforcement of links between areas of interest. Participation by *Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal* and *Comité ZIP Jacques-Cartier* helped enrich the debate on the implementation of the East Island Greenbelt concept development plan. Concerted efforts will continue with respect to the guidelines set out in the plan.

Creation of a citizens committee to study development in the western sector of Île Bizard: Concerted planning under way on a man-made landscape project

A conservation project was proposed for land several hundred hectares in area which comprises a mix of permanent agricultural land and a floodplain. Several factors, such as the size of the area in question, its agricultural vocation and limited acquisition resources, suggest that this initiative be managed differently than the nature parks and involve the community to a greater extent.

In the context of the technical committee's work regarding the ecoterritory, the Urban Development Advisory Committee commissioned a group of Île Bizard residents to analyse the concept development plan and make recommendations. The citizens committee notably recommended the creation of a multifunctional path along the Autoroute 440 right-of-way to be used by pedestrians, cyclists and skiers and provide a link from the nature park to Pointe Théorêt. The borough, the Urban Development Advisory Committee and the technical committee of the ecoterritory all

favour the idea and are anxious to seize this opportunity to mobilize the population with respect to a vast conservation project which would involve community stewardship through a management technique not dissimilar to the one applied to man-made landscape projects.

Residential project in Cheval Blanc Rapids Ecoterritory: Monitoring progress and informing citizens

In 2006, an exchange of land allowing for the development of a residential project in Cheval Blanc Rapids Ecoterritory was agreed on the condition that sectors located partly in

the designated floodplain (10 ha) and partly in the area to be developed (5 ha) be incorporated into the public domain to provide for the creation of a conservation project, new 44 ha nature park and natural window out onto Rivière des Prairies.

Presented during a public consultation in 2006, the property development project known as Domaine des Brises takes into account both resident concerns and the recommendations of the Montréal Heritage Council. Proposals included protecting existing trees and planting indigenous species. The project, which involves the construction

of approximately 200 residential units and the development of service infrastructure, will benefit from the added value associated with proximity to the future nature park.

A committee comprising developer, City and citizen representatives was set up to ensure that each partner's commitments were honoured and that residents were apprised of project progress.



OBSERVATIONS AND PRIORITIES FOR 2009-2010

will prove to be structuring over the short, medium and longer terms.

Implementing innovative projects

The Mount Royal conservation project, which is already subject to a consensus by *Table de concertation du Mont Royal* and the Heritage Pact, constitutes a conclusive example of a structuring action. The establishment of a 180 ha conservation area in West Pierrefonds in the context of a major urban development project is also significant in terms of environmental protection. These two projects illustrate the change in attitude regarding the incorporation of natural habitats into urban spaces. Nonetheless, ensuring ecosystem viability in an urban context and subordinating different interests to conservation principles remain a challenge. The implementation of major

protection projects initiated in 2008 will be a priority in 2009-2010, and are the result of close cooperation between citizens, property owners, developers and municipal stakeholders. Follow through with other large projects initiated in 2007-2008, such as the conservation and ecological management program in existing parks and the creation of an official inventory of the island's protected natural spaces, will also be part of our action priorities.

Planning and ensuring the creation of protected natural environments

Rendering natural areas in an urban context accessible constitutes an integral part of our conservation approach. In the years to come, projects such as the consolidation of the De Montigny Stream Basin Ecoterritory, in the context of the completion of

Results achieved by the City indicate that striking a finer balance between the natural and built up environment is not only possible but also improves both biodiversity protection and quality of life. Several large scale projects initiated in 2007 and 2008



Aerial view of Mount Royal

Autoroute 25, or the consolidation of the East Island Greenbelt and Île Bizard Ecoforest Corridor call for concerted planning together with citizens and rigorous follow-up. Improvements to De Montigny Stream Nature Park and development of related activities are also planned, as is a community managed initiative in the agricultural sector of Île Bizard which would include a conservation area of several hundreds hectares. Discussions will continue with regard to the creation of a nature park in the Cheval Blanc Rapids Ecoterritory, expansion of Anse-à-l'Orme Nature Park and the conservation of Grou Basin.

Integrating new sites into the network of large parks

The development of new protected sites and the budgets required to support initiatives of this nature pose a number of challenges. The intended use and role of these sites need to be carefully considered, and issues such as stewardship and activities programming need to be taken into account. Reflection on ways to integrate new sites into Montréal's network of large parks constitutes a priority for 2009-2010.

Diversifying action for a greener city

In light of the moratorium on the acquisition of green spaces, in effect from 1992 to 2002, achieving the objective of protecting 6% of total island land mass represented a considerable challenge at the time this Policy was adopted. The City has nonetheless risen to the challenge and intends to support action with an approach designed to augment overall biodiversity in areas beyond the three sectors targeted at the outset. As a result, it will be increasingly important to develop initiatives for more highly developed central island areas.



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