

Bradford Bypass

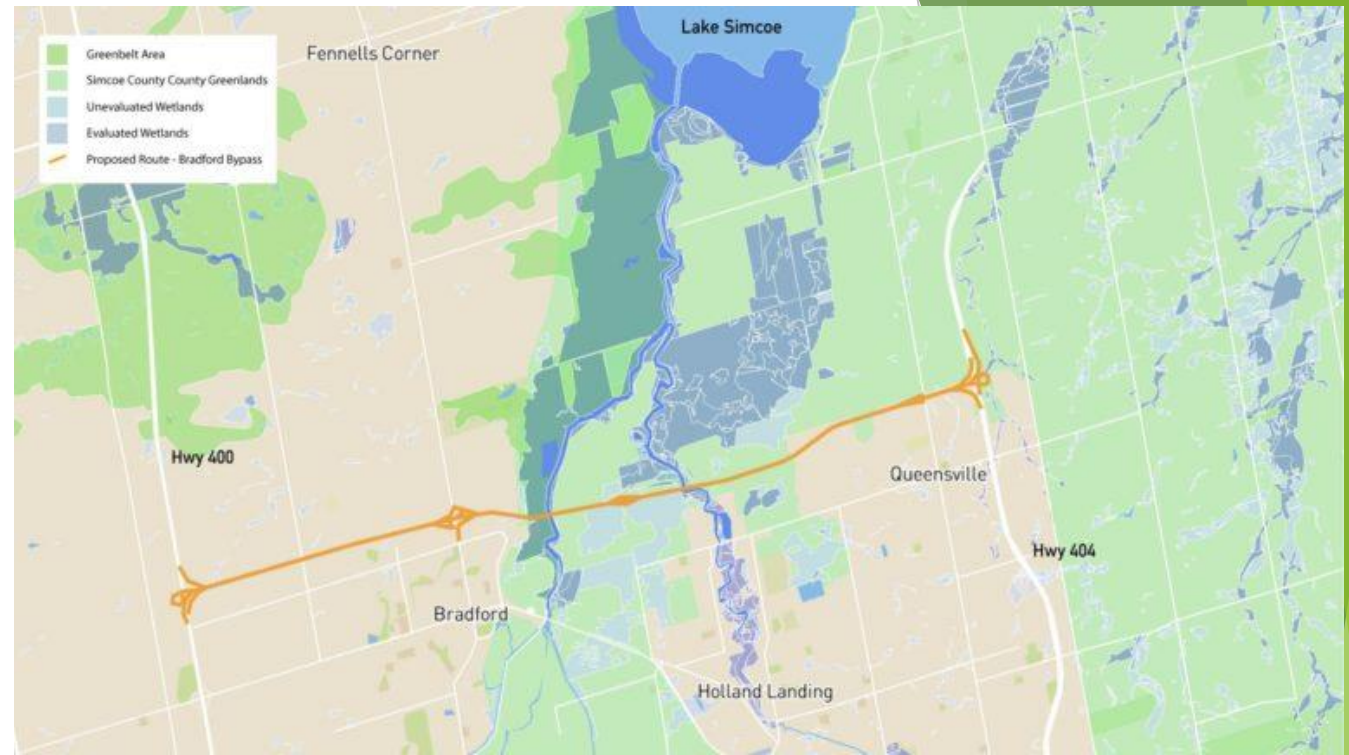
Georgina Council

August 11, 2021

By Claire Malcolmson, E.D., Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition

Location

- ▶ 16.2 kilometres long 404-400
- ▶ 4 or 6 lanes
- ▶ 100 metre right of way
- ▶ Would cross E. and W. branch of Holland River north of Queensville Sideroad and 8th Line/ near Hochreiter Road



Objectors

- ▶ Ontario Society of Professional Engineers want the government to examine alternatives and to do an updated EA;
- ▶ Auditor General finds EA process lacking in Ontario;
- ▶ Barrie, Brock Councils asked for a *full impact assessment on Lake Simcoe and those vulnerable waters and inflows into Lake Simcoe and identify considerations for alternate routes*;
- ▶ Innisfil stalemated and did not pass a supportive resolution.
- ▶ Please pass Barrie's resolution!

What is being studied? Who knows!?

- ▶ Need assessment is out of date;
- ▶ Traffic analysis not disclosed / not done;
- ▶ Transportation Environmental Study Report could be exempted. The TESR outlines:
 - the potential environmental impacts associated with the project;
 - mitigation measures to address these impacts; and
 - consultation that occurred during the development of the TESR and how the consultation changed the project to address concerns.
- ▶ Cost is low - will this be a toll road?

Past process

- ▶ Various EA studies in 1970s and 80s
- ▶ Provincial EA completed in 1997
- ▶ Was subject to federal EA until 2012 but no federal EA was completed
- ▶ 2002 Notice of approval from Ontario for 1997 EA
 - ▶ Conditions to complete Class EA updates
 - ▶ Conditions to complete archaeological and stormwater and other studies.

Current Process

- ▶ Proponent following the Group (process for new facilities) A Ministry of Transportation Class EA under Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* right now, producing 15 studies
- ▶ None of the studies are complete or have been released for public consultation
- ▶ One public information centre held May 18 2021, first consultation since the late 1990s. No Question and Answer with public.
- ▶ -→ July 2020 proposed exemption from this process. If the exemption is approved, it is not clear what the process will look like, what studies will be completed before construction, or what public or agency consultation will occur on those studies.

Water quality impacts

- ▶ 28 water crossings, including East and West Holland River Crossing.
- ▶ Crosses Holland Marsh Provincially Significant Wetland Complex
- ▶ Adverse effects on water quality may occur from contaminants introduced into waterbodies through disturbance of soils, rocks and streambanks; storm water runoff; wastewater discharge; groundwater resurgence; or spills.

Terrestrial impacts

- ▶ Thirteen (13) federally-listed migratory bird species at risk may be affected by the project
- ▶ 32.7 ha of significant wildlife habitat impacted
- ▶ 22.1 ha of higher quality woodlands removed
- ▶ The project would impact 15 natural heritage features
- ▶ 9.5 hectares of the Holland Marsh removed



During the 1997 EA -

- ▶ LSRCA indicated that the loss of wetland and forested areas in the Maskinonge River watershed is significant. Asked for reforestation budget and establishment of new wetland areas.
- ▶ LSRCA requested level 1 treatment for stormwater or better and 80% nutrient removal for Maskinonge River watershed

source: letter from LSRCA to MTO dated Dec 10, 1998

During 1997 EA - MTO response to LSRCA

- ▶ MTO refused to commit to no net loss of forested land and wetlands.
- ▶ Compensation and regeneration on surplus lands will be considered “where feasible”
- ▶ MTO commits to consult conservation authority on detailed design regarding specific mitigation measures.
- ▶ MTO refused to commit to 80% nutrient removal or level 1 stormwater.

Source, Ministry Review of Bradford Bypass EA (c.2001) page 27.

Specific environmental issues

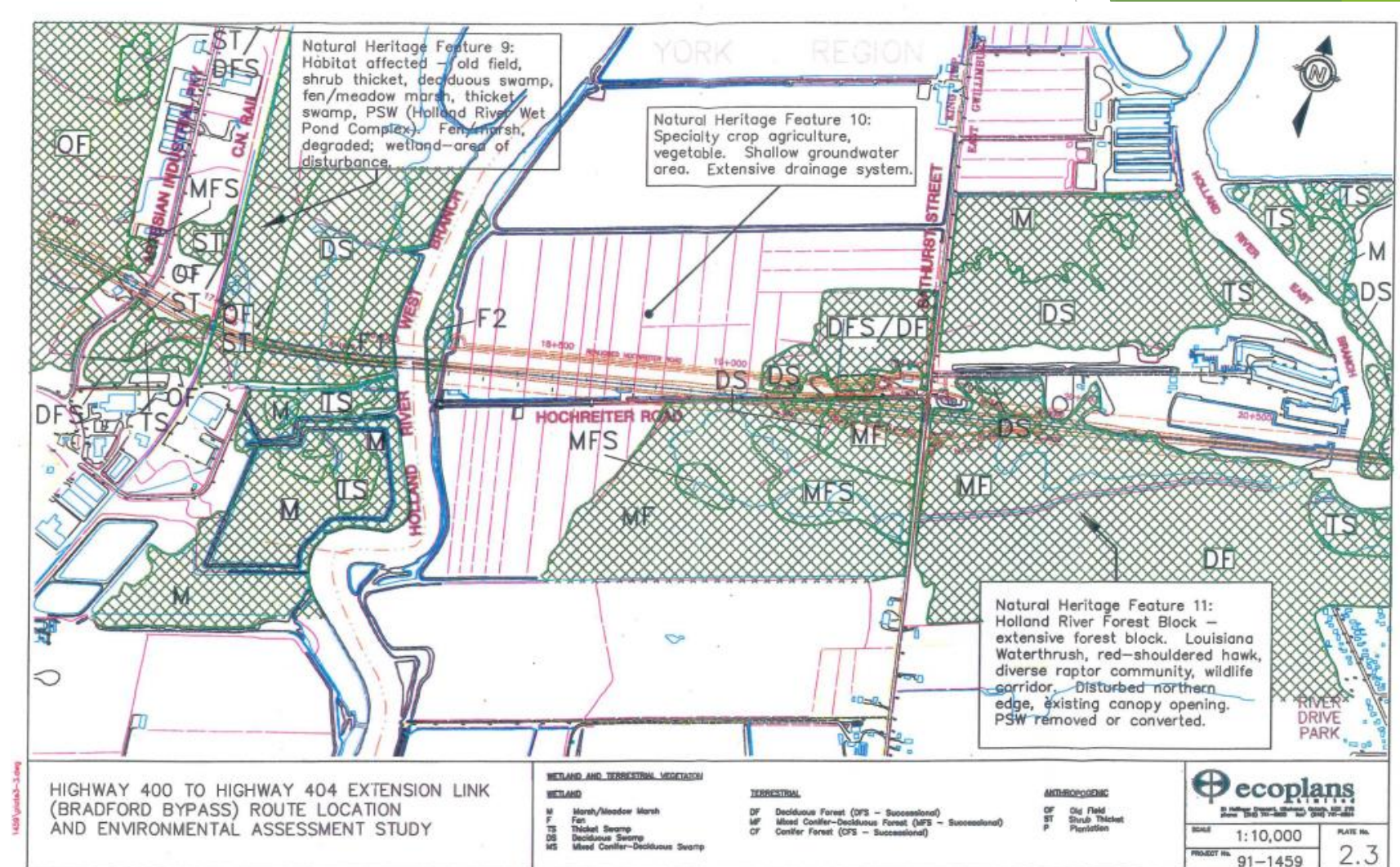
Holland Forest and East Holland River Crossing:
Holland River Crossing:

Large sensitive woodlot
at end of Bathurst
Street

Contains Red-Headed
Woodpecker and
Louisiana Waterthrush
Habitat.

Would be destroyed for
interchange at end of
Bathurst Street

E-bird birding hotspot
right under proposed
interchange.

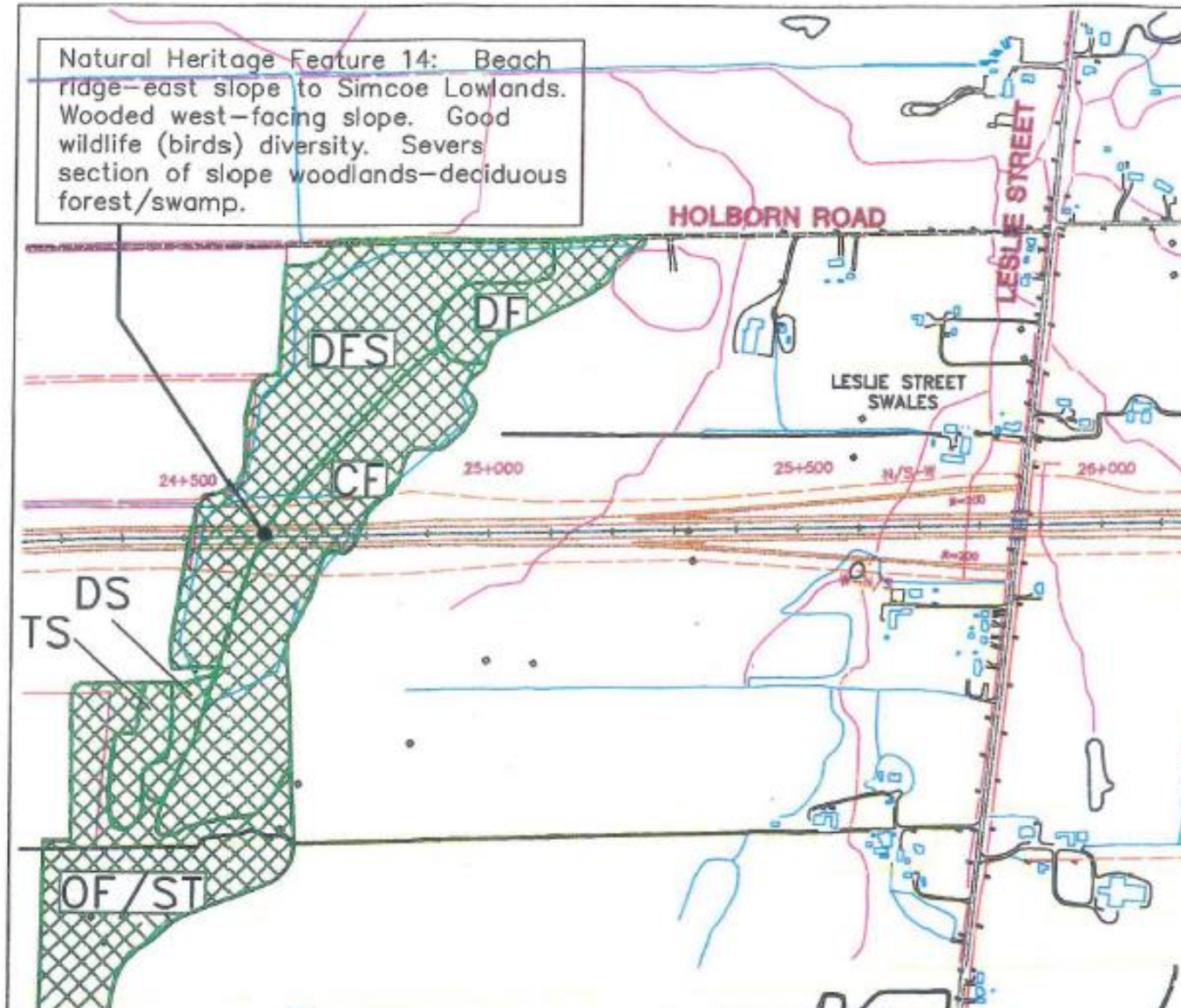


Specific environmental issues

Woodlands at Natural Heritage Feature 14, deciduous forest/swamp. “Beach Ridge”

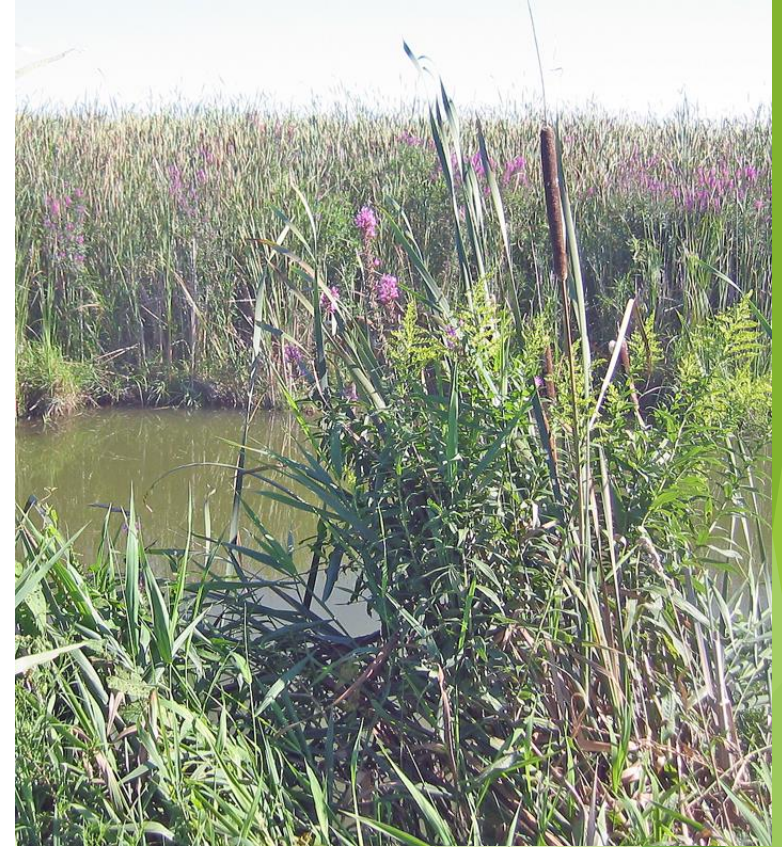
Good quality bird habitat, with diversity.

Would sever the corridor in half.



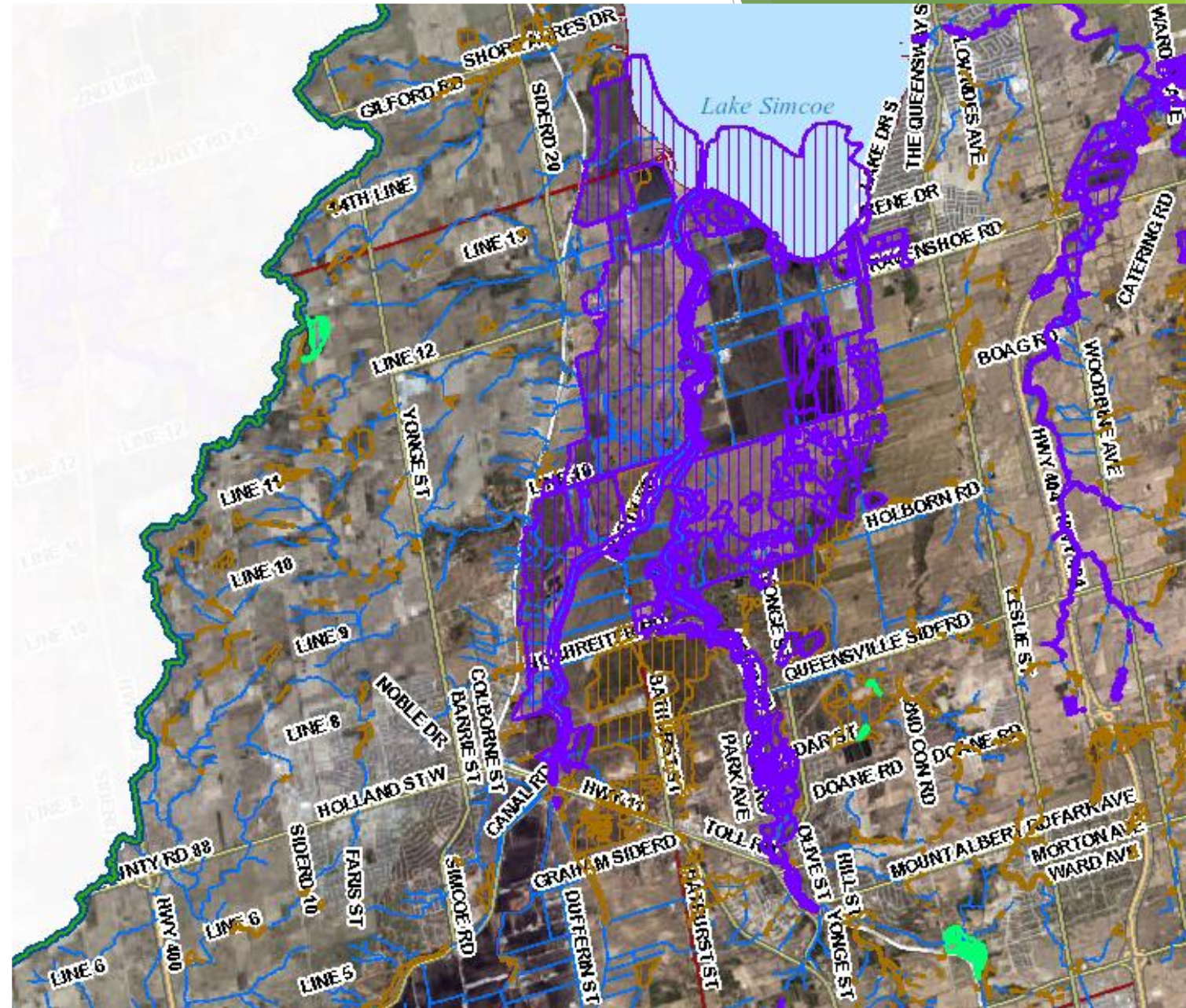
Wetland impacts

- ▶ “High quality amphibian habitat”
- ▶ 17.2 ha of Holland Marsh ESA impacted
- ▶ 1997 EA predicts severe stormwater and groundwater contamination and did not propose any specific mitigation measures



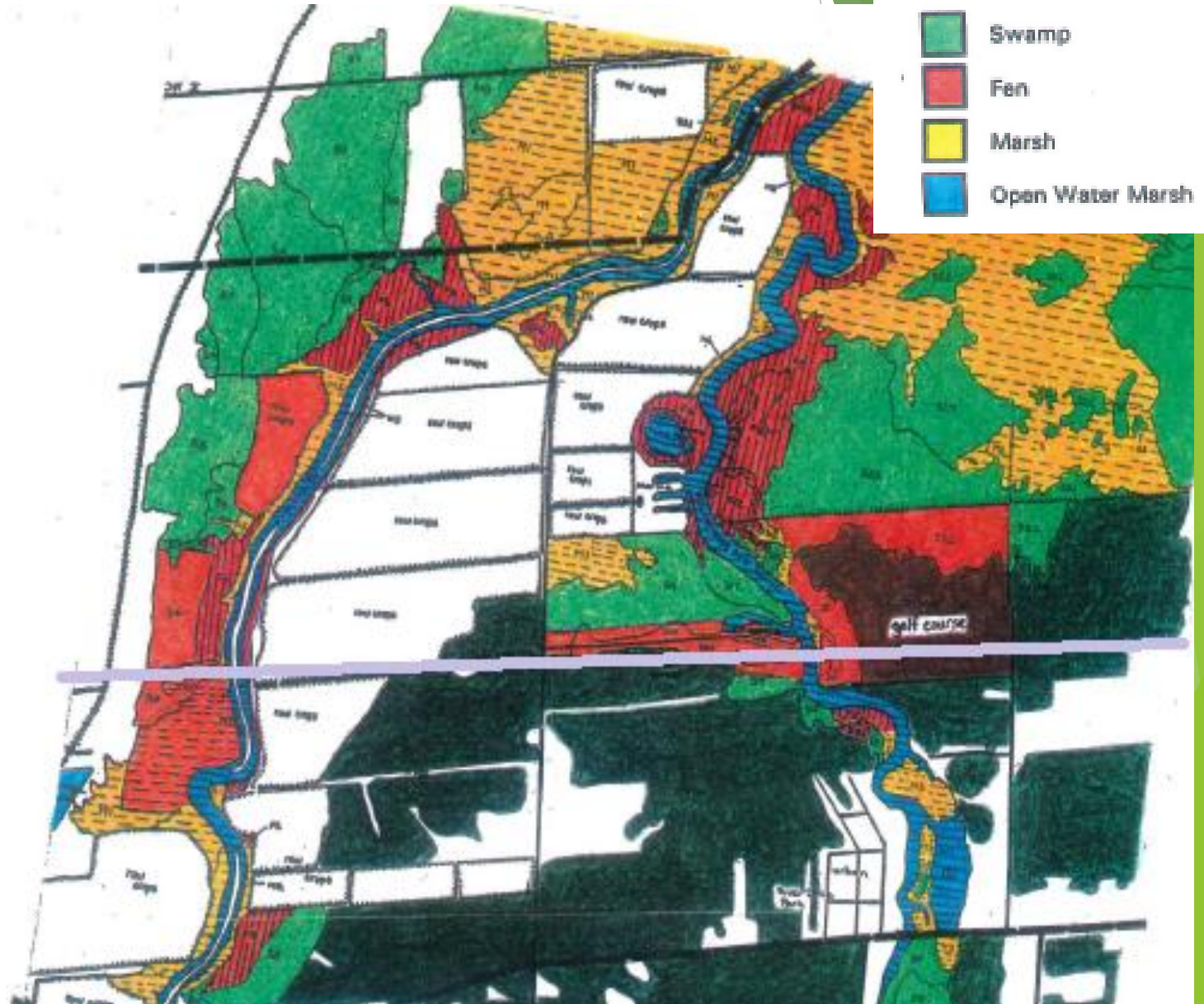
Overall bisecting of East and West Holland River corridors/PSW

- ▶ Holland Marsh PSW evaluation indicates numerous rare species in the Holland Marsh PSW.
- ▶ Lack of comprehensive, or up to date surveys.
- ▶ Scored 660 points in wetland evaluation
- ▶ Destruction of integrity of n-s corridor.



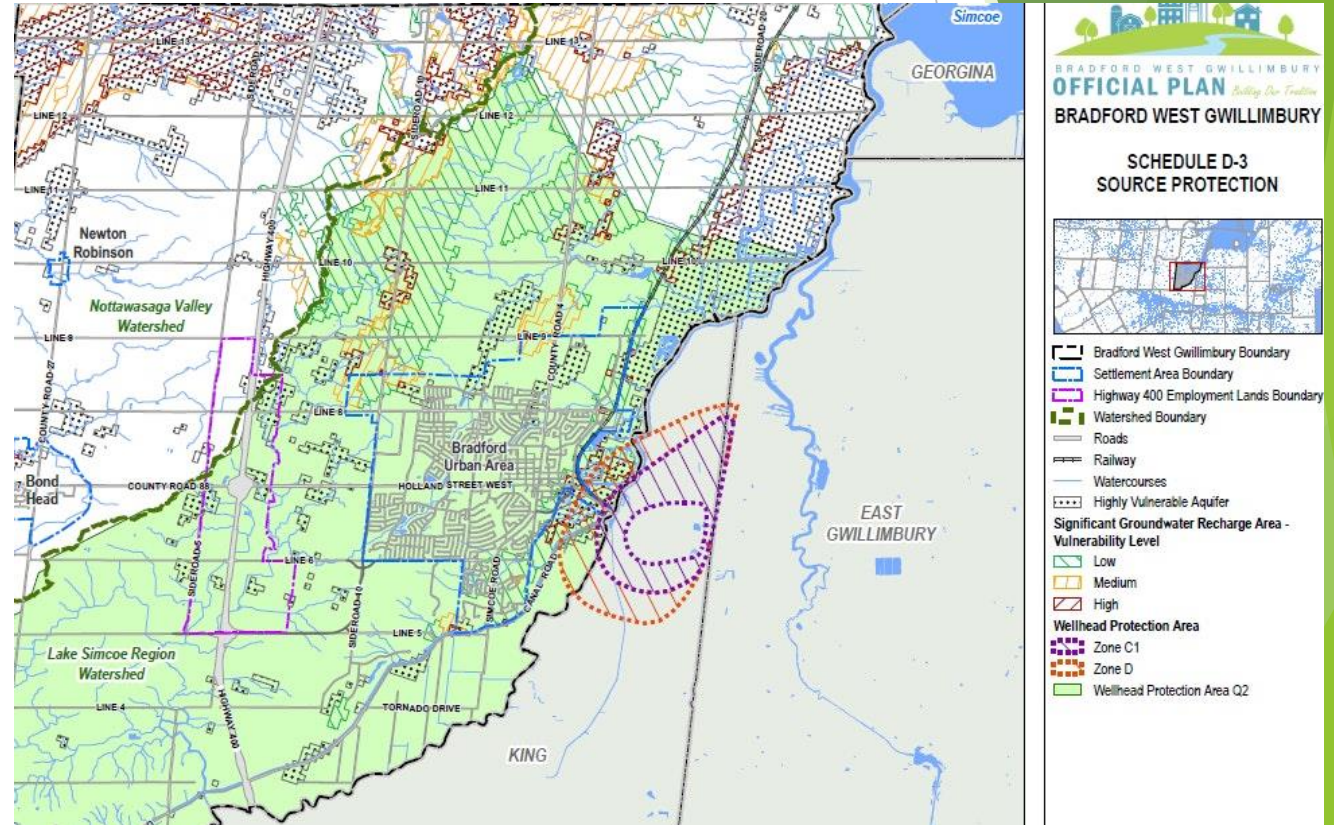
Fen wetlands

- ▶ Bathurst street interchange and East and West Holland River Crossings interfere with bisect or destroy fen wetlands.
- ▶ Fen wetlands cannot be replaced with wetland compensation.
- ▶ Source EA Natural environment report Exhibit 6.



Source water protection

- ▶ Project would disturb a large amount of land adjacent to a wellhead protection zone for the Town of Bradford.
- ▶ 1997 EA predates the *Clean Water Act* SPZ.



Nutrients in Lake Simcoe

- ▶ Increase the total impervious area to the south of Lake Simcoe by approximately 1.6 million square metres. (based on 4 lanes, proposal now anticipates 6 lanes).
- ▶ The impervious area is known to contribute to nutrient loadings and is an important metric for predicting increased nutrients and chloride in the Lake Simcoe watershed.
- ▶ The west Holland River subwatershed is already 7% impervious and imperviousness exceeding 8-10% begins to have significant adverse impacts.

Nutrients in Lake Simcoe cont'd

- ▶ No assessment of the additional nutrient loading and chloride in Lake Simcoe
- ▶ Highway 404 has increased salt pollution in the Maskinonge River. Pre-404, 12% of samples of river water quality tests exceeded the provincial acceptable chloride levels; post 404 74% of samples exceeded the acceptable chloride level.
- ▶ We believe there are little to no remediation techniques for this impact of highways.
- ▶ Will mitigation be in line with the provincial Lake Simcoe Protection Act and Plan reductions?

Major information gaps

- ▶ Wildlife surveys are old, pre-dates federal and provincial species at risk protections and listings/recovery strategies.
- ▶ In 24 years, no mitigation for severe stormwater and groundwater mitigation has been proposed or identified
- ▶ Lack of up to date aquatic and terrestrial, wildlife surveys for Holland Marsh and Maskinonge impacted areas.

Questions?

- ▶ Contact us at
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647-267-7572
- ▶ Thank you for caring for Lake Simcoe!