

TWO FEDERAL LANDS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The “ecological integrity” debate with regard to the Rouge National Urban Park is now being argued before Senate committee, but Ottawa has moved ahead with its second land transfer nonetheless. **On May 15, Parks Canada confirmed the official transfer from Transport Canada to the Park of another 21 km² of land,** the fulfillment of an undertaking announced in July 2015.

This news is worth celebrating! Of the original 18,600 acres of prime farmland and natural habitat expropriated in 1972, about 10,000 acres have now been protected in perpetuity, with 9,600 acres still left to save.

Also on May 15, it was announced that **Transport Canada would be offering agricultural tenants on the remaining Federal Lands 10-year leases, as of April 1, 2018. The stated intention: to provide farmers with “better stability to make sound business decisions.”**



Musa Mansuar

After 4 decades of 1-year farm leases, this is a breakthrough. It’s also tantamount to an admission that no Pickering airport will be starting construction in the next 11 years. (We’ve been saying this all along, but Transport Canada hasn’t...). And it means that leaseholders will, to some degree, be able to invest in new equipment, and vary their crops.

Our sincere thanks to our MP, Jennifer O’Connell (pictured), for her tireless efforts on behalf of the future of these Lands.

LAND OVER LANDINGS MAKES IT OFFICIAL

We’re delighted to announce that our Agricultural Economics Study was formally launched on April 19. Those recent government announcements may give the impression that we’ve won (not true; we’ll have won when all the land is permanently protected) or they may suggest that our Study isn’t as important now. In fact, **it’s more important than ever.**

The reality is that the remaining land is still held in reserve for a possible future airport, and that 10-year leases will not be the silver bullet that ends the 45 years of slow decay of this once thriving agricultural community. They aren’t long enough to allow farmers to invest in ways that would trigger the kind of renewal this area so desperately needs. The economic chill will continue. No food hub can grow or orchard blossom in a farming area with a 10-year life expectancy.

Our consultants (who have done studies for governments and NGOs across the country), have been charged with determining, among other things, the maximum economic potential of these Lands if *permanently* used for agriculture. They have been tasked with demonstrating *how* to make that economic potential a reality. The

OUR AGM IS ABOUT TO HATCH!

Since the days of People or Planes, the winning formula has always been equal parts strategy, action – and fun! It’s the only way to keep a cause alive over the long haul. And this year’s Annual General Meeting, on **June 21 at the Brougham Hall**, will be no exception.



Join us for all the news and accomplishments of the past year, and meet our very special guest. You may have heard her on CBC radio – the very smart and funny local-food advocate and author, **Signe Langford**, Toronto’s backyard chicken lady!

We’ll also be voting in our new executive. If you’re receiving this e-mail directly from us, you’re a **MEMBER** and eligible to vote. If you’re interested in joining the dedicated volunteers on our executive, please contact us now at: landoverlanding@gmail.com.

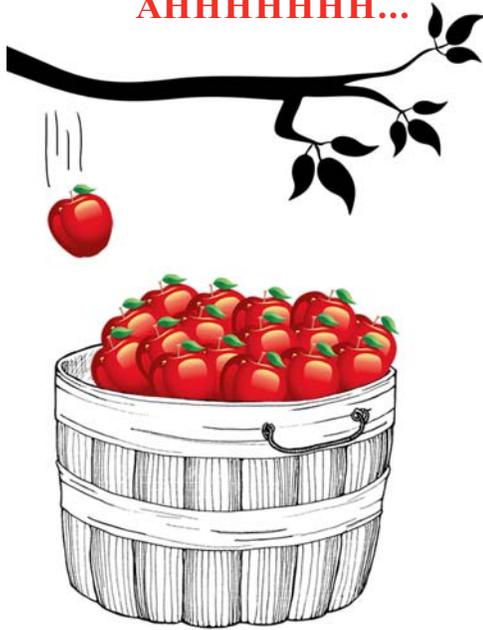
More details on our website and FB page. Please share widely.

**New members welcome!
 Gather your flock and join us!**

“how” will involve coordinated, long-term planning and years of careful, phased implementation, with the full cooperation of all levels of government, farmers, and rural stakeholders.

The groundwork could start soon, if the federal government so chose, but farmers know that such a transition requires more than 10 years to reach maximum potential. And **NONE OF THIS WILL BE POSSIBLE IF THE THREAT OF AN AIRPORT CONTINUES TO LOOM OVER THE AREA.** For a truly successful outcome, the Federal Lands must be protected in perpetuity. This has always been – and remains – our goal. Our advocacy will continue unabated.

AHHHHHHH...



SO CLOSE WE CAN TASTE IT!

Thanks to many of you, we've raised almost all the money we'll need to pay our consultants' \$85K bill for their work on our Study.

You can be part of this groundbreaking venture by helping to fill our apple basket and reach our goal.

Please make your 2017 tax-deductible donation today! It's quick and simple. Go to the **DONATE** page of our website for the details: landoverlandings.com.

THE LATEST ON BUTTONVILLE AND PEARSON

Remember Buttonville airport, whose closure was announced in 2010? The shutdown was to be done and dusted by 2015. An ambitious mixed-use development was to rise on the site, so it was said that Pickering airport would have to be built to accommodate Buttonville's clients. Well, the development plans are stalled in wrangles before the Ontario Municipal Board, and Buttonville's closure has been delayed and delayed. On May 1, *Skies* magazine quoted the airport's owner as saying that **Buttonville now won't be closing "until Oct. 31, 2018 and possibly beyond this date** if circumstances with the airport redevelopment so dictate." Meanwhile, other area general-aviation airports have been quietly preparing their facilities to handle more business when the closure does happen. Some of that business has already moved. Buttonville was handling 136,575 aircraft movements in 2011, but saw only 67,730 in 2016. Peterborough and Oshawa have been the main beneficiaries, and Oshawa is about to undergo a major runway reconstruction and modernization to better accommodate increased traffic. The old argument that "Buttonville is closing so we need Pickering to replace it" is no longer credible.

On May 9, *Airport World* magazine reported that **Pearson and 10 other airports have launched the Southern Ontario Aviation Network to manage airport capacity issues in the coming decades.** SOAN's new website states that the Network's members are preparing for the growth expected "over the next 3 decades" – which takes us to 2047. Pickering isn't mentioned in the Network's first report. (Neither is climate change.)

TVO FILM CONTEST DOC FEATURES US

When film-making collaborators Joanne Brown of Whitby and Toronto's Peter Gugeler (Pipal Tree Productions) saw that TVO was awarding prizes for short docs about Ontario stories that needed to be told, they thought of us! Over several weeks in winter, they met with us and were inspired by our efforts. Their film, "For the Love of This Land," was short-listed! It can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/210186381>.

EVERYONE LOVES A PARADE!

Volunteers needed Saturday, May 27, as the charming heritage community of Whitevale, on the banks of the Duffins Creek, celebrates its Annual Spring Festival. The day kicks off with a garage sale at 8 a.m., followed by a bake sale, crafts, burgers and beer, local musicians (featuring our own Reid Williamson), a tea garden, and food by the Souvlaki Gourmet. The best kind of village fun and a time-honoured tradition we never miss!

Please join us at our booth or walk in the parade with us! We'd love your help and your company. <http://www.whitevale.ca>

Food for Thought

"Rezoning high-quality farmland for non-agricultural use should be expressly prohibited everywhere in Canada."

~ Tom Eisenhauer, Bonfield Financial,
to Senate agriculture committee,
March 2017

Land Over Landings Because food is a **GROWING** concern!

landoverlandings@gmail.com
www.landoverlandings.com
905-649-2433

