

We represent a group of guides and educators who recently came together to form a new environmental education organization called Programmes Coyote. www.programmescoyote.com

We have been working in the area under question for the last 5 years and are concerned by the development project.

We run a regular tracking club that meets in the area and have a lot of experience participating in the eco systems, getting to know the wildlife, and sharing the magic of nature with others. We lead nature connection mentoring programs for youth, adults, and teacher trainings, and regularly use this area for activities. The development project will hinder the ecological integrity of the area, and send the wrong message to the public about our environment- that this enough for the protection of the land. As citizens, we are also concerned about the overall state of the world in regards to loss of habitat due to over-development, climate change, loss of heat sink areas around our cities, natural water filtration systems and more consequences other ecological consequences of this project.

We urge you to protect the entire area under question and not develop any of it for housing developments.

It's a great gesture, to protect around half of this area, but this is insufficient for the protection of the current populations of wildlife and flora. No doubt you will make the trails more accessible, and help promote the area, however the fact that half of the area will be destroyed is not acceptable.

Our current global situation of drastic climate change, the human caused mass extinctions on a scale comparable to the previous major mass extinctions demands that we as a species with enormous impact on the rest of the planet take dramatic action for the protection and regeneration of wild spaces.

This area represents an important opportunity for urban populations to connect to the wilderness, as accessible wild nature is a rarity. This area has a number of rare species of plants (for example the Canadian Black Snakeroot ..) and animals (for example the Jefferson salamander, and cerulean warbler) that will not withstand the disturbances. This area has the potential to welcome more rare and endangered species and increase the range of species that need our protection. The populations of deer, coyote, foxes, fisher, otter, mink, wild turkey, porcupine, owls, rodents, birds, and amphibians will undoubtedly be compromised.

We don't have time for slow progressive change, we need strong leadership to help protect, connect, and regenerate wild spaces.

Here is an opportunity for montreal to send a message to the rest of the country, that we can be leaders of positive change and influence. Anything less will be a disservice to future generations, to wildlife, and to the long term economy. We need to cultivate more healthy, diverse, rich wild spaces, not less.

Please protect the entire area under question.

Regards,

Steve Leckman and Stefanie Dimitrovas

co-directors and co-founders of Programmes Coyote

info@programmescoyote.com