

*Sauvons la falaise !*

**Mémoire  
L'Anse-à-L'Orme in Pierrefonds West  
(OCPM)**

Lisa Mintz, founder  
Sauvons la falaise  
Board member Green Coalition

## **We need to save all of l'Anse a l'Orme from development**

Sauvons la falaise! Is a group in NDG and the South West which was formed to protect and enhance the falaise St. Jacques ecoterritory. We understood, as did many other environmental groups, that l'Anse a l'Orme was also designated an ecoterritory. An ecoterritory is an area of great biological interest and is not protected from development. When we learned that the last large greenspace on the Island of Montreal, l'Anse a l'Orme, was slated to become 5500 houses, we could not just sit idly by and watch it happen. We joined in with Sauvons l'Anse a l'Orme, the Sierra Club, the Green Coalition, les amis du parc Meadowbrook and others to try to save this precious resource. All 185 hectares must be conserved: all 185 hectares. Decisions being made right now will define the future for Montreal's iconic natural heritage. The 185 hectares of L'Anse-à-l'Orme's wet meadows in Pierrefonds West are now the last large un-conserved natural space on Montreal Island. They are essential habitat for the flora and fauna of the area.

Montreal has a goal of 10 per cent for natural spaces conservation in the *Schéma d'aménagement et de développement de l'agglomération de Montréal*, adopted in 2015, and a metropolitan plan that promises a regional greenbelt - a vast network of protected natural spaces across the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal (CMM). Less than 6 per cent of Montreal Island is actually protected, which means that we need more than 2,000 additional hectares to reach the city's own objective. So far, the Coderre administration has conserved only 61 hectares on Montreal Island and just 2.5% of the entire CMM territory has been protected.

The biodiversity and connectivity importance of l'Anse a l'Orme is confirmed by scientific studies. The David Suzuki Foundation presented an *Évaluation écologique de l'ouest du territoire de Pierrefonds-Roxboro* (2016) by Marie-Eve Roy (Université du Québec en Outaouais), Patrick Gravel (Coopérative de solidarité des Forêts et des Gens), et Jérôme Dupras (Université du Québec en Outaouais).

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/fr/publications/%C3%89valuation%20%C3%A9cologique%20de%20l'ouest%20du%20territoire%20de%20Pierrefonds-Roxboro%20-16f%C3%A9vrier2016.pdf>

Important species of flora and fauna were identified, many rare, vulnerable or at risk, subject to federal and/or provincial statutes.

A connectivity study was also done:

[www.davidsuzuki.org/fr/publications/Rapport%20sur%20les%20connectivites%20-%20Pierrefonds.pdf](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/fr/publications/Rapport%20sur%20les%20connectivites%20-%20Pierrefonds.pdf)

This study reveals that the development would also cause connectivity loss, that is, the breakdown of the tissue of natural habitats and the loss of animal populations in the order of 27% across a 5 km area.

Using the L'Anse-à-l'Orme Corridor to house approximately 16,000 new residents, adding 10,000 more cars to West Island's traffic gridlock is irresponsible. Human behaviours, would inflict invasive noise, light, air, soil and water pollution on the pristine ecoforest-corridor. Urban infrastructures for the project would destroy most of the ecological quality of the 185 hectare site. Even more troublesome is the fact that human communities are not static: they grow.

Montreal holds the greatest biodiversity in all of Québec. Environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club, Sauvons la Falaise, Sauvons L'Anse-À-L'Orme, Les amis du parc Meadowbrook and Green Coalition continue to press the city to fulfill its goals and to step up for biodiversity conservation. Consider that the Ontario Greenbelt, created in 2005, that protects nearly 2 million acres in and around Toronto, is now the largest greenbelt in the world. Citizens here want real conservation action from our political leaders, too.

## **CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, the 185 hectares of L'Anse a l'Orme must be protected in its entirety. Instead of building a small town in the middle of totally unsuitable wet meadows, we submit that the area should be preserved as a nature park and used for ecotourism.

Birding is the most popular hobby in North America. It is worth billions of dollars a year. L'Anse a l'Orme is a birding hotspot, which contains rare and endangered birds which would be of much interest to foreign and Canadian birders alike. Canada itself, the unspoiled Canada that is rapidly becoming a thing of the past, is very attractive to tourists and should be exploited for ecotourism, without damaging the ecosystems. L'Anse a l'orme can easily be more valuable as a green space than as tract housing. There will e very little upkeep and almost no infrastructure investment. Think about it. Please. Soon it will be too late for our precious biodiversity.