



Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

I am writing to you today to ask you to take concrete and rapid action to protect the threatened biodiversity treasure known as the Technoparc Montréal wetlands and adjacent federal lands.

North of Montreal's Pierre Elliott Trudeau Airport, these 215 hectares of wetlands and woodlands comprise one of the last large unprotected and unfragmented green spaces on the island of Montreal. This area is equal in size to Mount Royal Park. It is the place in Montreal where we find the greatest number of bird species on the island, including several threatened species. It is also a place frequented by a growing number of people who enjoy its many attractions. These lands are managed by the federal government, the City of Montreal and private developers. Of the 215 hectares, 155 are in the federal sector, under the control of Transport Canada.

It is well known that wetlands have an important role to play in natural and urban ecosystems. They help control flooding, capture CO₂ that contributes to greenhouse gases, reduce the effect of heat islands, and enrich biodiversity by providing a variety of habitats. Despite these recognized benefits, wetlands continue to disappear. In Canada's urban areas, wetlands have declined by 80% to 98% over the past two centuries. In six years (2011-2017), more than 100 ha of wetlands have disappeared on the island of Montreal alone. During this same period, the province of Quebec has authorized the destruction of nearly 4,000 ha of wetlands. When we add up the consequences of these government decisions, it becomes clear that we are in a race against the asphalt and concrete that contribute to heat islands in Montreal, a city that is home to more than 10% of the Canadian population.

Despite Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's announcement that he advocates environmental protection, the federal government seems to have little desire to protect its own ecologically valuable land, 155 ha out of a total of 215 ha. At the present moment, construction of an industrial building of 167,000 square feet is projected on a site referred to as Monarch Fields, or *Champ des monarches*. This site is particularly important as a corridor for monarch butterflies, a species listed as endangered by COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) with 80% of its eastern population in decline. As part of a habitat adjacent to and interconnected with wetlands, this area is essential. The destruction of a portion of a former golf course goes against a growing popular desire to see these areas reclaimed as green spaces.

It is true that Aéroports de Montréal (ADM) inaugurated in April 2021 a 19-hectare area called "Parc écologique des Sources", but no official conservation status has been assigned to it. These 19 ha are only a small portion of the 215 ha that make up an exceptional biodiversity area. Transport Canada appears to be giving ADM carte blanche to develop the 155 hectares under its jurisdiction. Clearly, the federal government agrees with the idea of fragmenting the last large, contiguous, unprotected green space on the island of Montreal in order to build industrial buildings.



For all these reasons, I support the requests of the citizens' group Technoparc Oiseaux and I hope that you will act quickly with all the powers granted to you by the people who have elected you.

Technoparc Oiseaux requests that the federal government, in agreement with Indigenous communities, protect the 155 ha of land under its responsibility, and also work with the City of Montreal to help protect the 60 ha under the responsibility of the municipality and private developers.

Signature

Name of signatory