



**Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital
Alliance pour les espaces verts dans la capitale du Canada**

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NEWS RELEASE

******* FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION *******

National Capital Commission, Nature Conservancy, and City of Ottawa will discuss environmental protection in a panel discussion June 8 on natural linkages that is open to the public.
Discussion could lead to significant changes in Ottawa's 20-year environmental protection policy in Official Plan.

May 29, 2013

On June 8, 2013, representatives from the National Capital Commission, Nature Conservancy, and City of Ottawa staff will be holding a public consultation and panel discussion at Hintonburg Community Centre, 1064 Wellington Street, at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the role of natural linkages as a critical component of Ottawa's natural spaces. The panel discussion will be hosted by the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital, and findings from this discussion could significantly impact environmental protection policy in Ottawa's 20-year "Liveable Ottawa" Official Plan review.

Natural linkages, also known as wildlife corridors or eco-corridors, are natural areas, or greenspace, that allow plants and animals to migrate from one habitat to another. Development of land often encroaches on the habitat of wildlife species, isolating them from the larger environment within isolated "islands" or pockets of greenspace that are disconnected from one another. Incorporating natural linkages into the design of a development project by ensuring that eco-connectivity remains viable between these "islands" greatly increases the chances of survival of local species.

The City of Ottawa has committed to identifying and mapping existing and conceptual natural linkages on a city-wide scale. Natural linkages currently are not specifically protected in the Official Plan but Ottawa City staff will recommend designating them as part of Ottawa's Natural Heritage System, providing potential protection. The Greenspace Alliance will be asking the City of Ottawa to confer true protected status on certain key linkages and amend the Official Plan to explicitly recognize key natural linkages as part of the Natural Heritage System when designating new urban land.

Findings arising from the panel discussion on June 8 will be used as a basis for recommendations, and to assure that Ottawa's policy on the protection of key natural spaces is moved forward as part of The City of Ottawa's Official Plan Review. For more information, visit www.greenspace-alliance.ca/

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