

# Environmental Planning

*Fact Sheet*

Understanding that environmental studies are an essential precursor to any planning considerations, the GTAA is in the process of evaluating all environmental aspects involved with planning for a regional/reliever airport.

As one of the four cornerstones of the GTAA's business, environmental responsibility is a key aspect of all its planning and development decisions.

After taking over management of Toronto Pearson in 1996, the GTAA developed an

Environmental Policy that commits the Authority to operate in an environmentally responsible manner.

#### ISO 14001

The Authority made history in 1999 by becoming the first airport in North America to receive ISO 14001 certification. The GTAA obtained this prestigious certification by creating an Environmental Management System that articulates a commitment to continual improvement. This includes the regular monitoring of significant environmental aspects, as well as the development and promotion of environmental standards applicable to day-to-day operations.

The Authority is also working toward a policy that promotes sustainable development. This discipline is a holistic

approach, including environmental, social and financial responsibility. The philosophy behind this growing international movement is that today's generation should enjoy its current standard of living without compromising the ability of future generations to enjoy a similar standard.

Both the ISO environmental management policies and the idea of sustainable development are being applied to the GTAA's planning activities in Pickering. In its seven years of operating Toronto Pearson, the GTAA has learned valuable lessons about environmental management, and is excited to apply this knowledge to the planning of a new airport. The Authority understands the difficulty involved with fixing environmental concerns at an operational airport, and is committed to ensuring that the natural environment at Pickering is managed properly from the beginning.



Public participation is an important aspect of an Environmental Assessment, as it not only strengthens the quality and credibility of the process, but ensures the communities views are taken into account.



— Matt Holder

### Baseline study

After being tasked with the Pickering project in 2001, the GTAA began their studies by looking to the past.

Historically, the federal Pickering lands has been one of the most extensively studied environmental areas in the province. Recognizing that data already existed in a variety of different mediums, the GTAA initiated an Environmental Baseline Study to begin the process of assembling this information.

The purpose of this study, completed in early 2004, is two-fold. While it was undertaken to identify what is already known about the area from a multi-faceted environmental discipline, it has also been designed to determine which aspects require further study. The Baseline Study examined data pertaining to the Pickering lands, gathering information on the area's physical environment, as well as its natural or biological aspects.

### Further research

The baseline study determined that a great amount of data on the physical and biological make-up of the Pickering lands already exists on a macro scale. The baseline survey also identified areas in which there is a lack of information or knowledge gaps. Topics that have been identified as needing further study include:

**Air Quality**  
**Noise**  
**Surface water and hydrology**  
**Fish and habitat**  
**Birds, vegetation**  
**communities, amphibians,**  
**reptiles and insects**

### Next steps

The information gathered in the Environmental Baseline Study is currently being used

to assist the GTAA with the creation of a Draft Plan, scheduled to be released in the fall of 2004. The Draft Plan, public consultation from a series of public open houses, and data from environmental studies currently underway will be recognized in a Project Description. An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be formally initiated once the Project Description is submitted to Transport Canada.

Public participation is an important aspect of the EA as it not only strengthens the quality and credibility of the process, but ensures the communities views are taken into account.

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For more information on the GTAA, the Pickering site office, or the restoration of the Bentley House, please contact us at:

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