

April 21, 2017

## **LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS RALLY TO SAVE HERITAGE FOREST IN SOUTH END OF CITY**

### **Committee Demands City Say “NO” to Developer’s Plans to Destroy Parker Forest and Wetlands**

A group of concerned citizens is observing Earth Day today by rallying at City Hall to demand the city say “no” to a local developer’s plans to destroy the Parker Forest and Wetlands to make way for a housing development.

Cities all over the world are taking action to protect and preserve urban green space, while here in Winnipeg our politicians stand by as green spaces throughout the city are destroyed in the name of progress. However, outreach efforts have shown that public opposition to the loss of green space continues to grow.

The Parker forest is the highest-graded heritage forest in the city, and environmental scientists have confirmed the biodiversity is mostly untouched from ancient times. Mature oak, aspen and birch trees form a natural canopy over trails used by dog walkers, and people from all over the city come to hike, stroll or just commune with nature year-round.

The Parker Forest and Wetlands contain several types of habitat, including aspen-oak forest, woodland swamp, willow swales and marsh. The area is large enough to support many species of wildlife, including the red fox, downy woodpecker, eastern cottontail rabbit, black-capped chickadee, boreal chorus frog and wood frog, and its famous great-horned owl. The area is also home to a wide variety of native plants, including wild strawberry, wild iris, purple prairie clover, red osier and, hawthorn, Saskatoon, sarsaparilla, big bluestem, narrow-leaved cattail, closed gentian, and Solomon's seal.

“We’re talking about a priceless oasis of natural beauty in the middle of Winnipeg,” said Parker Wetlands Conservation Committee Chair Cal Dueck. “We believe that this unique combination of ecologically sensitive wetlands, forest and grasslands are very special and should be preserved for future generations. Today we’re letting City Hall know we won’t stand by and watch it be destroyed.”

For more information, find us on Facebook @ParkerWetlandsConservation.

For interviews please call Cal Dueck at 204-794-6572.