

For immediate release

Sierra Club Quebec, GRIP-UQAM, the Green Coalition and several citizen groups demand a ten-year moratorium on all residential development in green spaces on the island of Montreal.

Sierra Club Quebec, GRIP-UQAM, the Green Coalition Sauvons Anse-à-l'orme, Sauvons la Falaise and les Amis du Parc Meadowbrook join forces to demand from the Montreal Agglomeration, from all municipalities on the island of Montreal and from the government of Québec a Green Moratorium. Such a moratorium requires a halt to all development on and in green spaces on the island of Montreal for the next ten years, the time needed to assure proper protection of natural spaces.

Despite the adoption of the *Politique de protection et mise en valeur des milieux naturels*, in 2004, 750 hectares of natural spaces have disappeared from the island of Montreal, between 2004 and 2014, as the result of development. To deal with this problem, the municipalities on the island of Montreal have committed to protecting 10% on its terrestrial surface, but without announcing a timeline, without identifying the areas to be protected and without assigning a budget for this objective. To this day, 6.5 % of the territory on Montreal Island is protected, of which only 2% have been added between 2004 and 2014.

The failures of our municipal governments are putting at risk two of the last remaining green areas on the island, representing 300 hectares, which are under immediate threat of government-promoted industrial and residential development. These areas are the Anjou Golf Course and l'Anse-à-l'Orme.

Failure to intervene promptly will mean that no spaces will remain for future generations, as well as for a variety of endangered and vulnerable animal and plant species that find refuge in these ecosystems. Recent studies indicate that these areas are inhabited by rare species, some of which had been believed to have disappeared from the region. They also provide important services for our own human survival by filtering air and water, moderating extreme temperatures and capturing green house gasses. As an example, the area of 185 ha in Western Pierrefonds, where the city of Montreal intends to construct more than 5000 housing units, captures approximately one thousand tons of CO₂ per year. Building on that specific natural area, on the other hand, will result in an extra 15 000 car rides in an already highly congested part of the island.

The *Résolution de la ville de Montréal du 24 novembre 2014 du droit à un environnement sain* and the *Loi sur le développement durable* require the city to apply the precautionary principle. The city of Montreal and the Quebec government are hence legally obliged to assure the protection of these green spaces for all citizens. The abovementioned groups appeal to the Montreal Agglomeration and the Quebec government to respect these obligations by imposing a Green Moratorium and ensuring the study, analysis, and protection of the natural spaces on the island

of Montreal, before it's too late.

An online petition is being launched:

<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/moratoire-vert-green-moratorium.html>

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