



DEC 17 2015

Mr. Brian Masse, MP (Windsor West)  
[brian.masse.a1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:brian.masse.a1@parl.gc.ca)

Dear Mr. Masse:

Thank you for your email inquiry, addressed to EnviroInfo, regarding the selection criteria and the formal process that is followed for land to be designated as a National Wildlife Area in Canada.

The planning and establishment of Environment and Climate Change Canada's protected areas is a multiple-step process that can take many years to complete given the current requirements in the *Canada Wildlife Act*. Grounded in science, the process assesses lands and waters based on their ecological importance for migratory birds and wildlife. It begins with the identification and selection of habitat areas of national importance, the protection of which would directly benefit one or more migratory bird populations, species at risk, or other wildlife species. This is a regionally-led process involving coordination with other departments, governments, Aboriginal peoples, and stakeholders that have interests in the potential protected area. To learn about the specific selection criteria that are used to designate candidate National Wildlife Areas, please consult the Environment and Climate Change Canada website at <http://ec.gc.ca/ap-pa/default.asp?lang=En&n=BEB3DB50-1>.

Once a candidate site is selected, a series of feasibility assessments must be conducted to determine the impact that the potential new protected area could have on the environment and society. The results of these ecological, social and economic assessments will help determine the boundaries and the various options available for protection, in accordance with the ownership and jurisdiction of the land targeted. In addition, the type of protected area will determine the appropriate instruments to achieve securement. For example, lands for National Wildlife Areas must be federal lands that can be secured through purchase, donation or transfer, while lands for Migratory Bird Sanctuaries can be private, provincial, territorial or federal and can be secured by agreement, easement, purchase or transfer.

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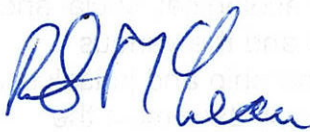
The last step in the establishment of a National Wildlife Area is based in legislation, such that the related regulation is amended. This is achieved through careful planning and preparation that entail various requirements, such as consultations to be held with all stakeholders who could be affected by the designation of the protected area. The regulatory process usually takes a minimum of one year to be completed.

The full process for protected area consideration and establishment is summarized on the Environment and Climate Change Canada website at <http://ec.gc.ca/ap-pa/default.asp?lang=En&n=4FE417C5-1>.

You may also be interested to know that Canada's Ecological Gifts Program provides a way for Canadians with ecologically sensitive land to protect nature and leave a legacy for future generations. Made possible by the terms of the *Income Tax Act* of Canada and the *Taxation Act* in Quebec, it offers significant tax benefits to landowners who donate land or a partial interest in land to a qualified recipient. Recipients ensure that the land's biodiversity and environmental heritage are conserved in perpetuity.

Ultimately, the planning and establishment of Environment and Climate Change Canada's protected areas is conducted in close collaboration with other federal departments, provinces, territories, Aboriginal peoples, non-governmental organizations, and individuals. Should you have any follow up questions about the establishment and management of National Wildlife Areas in Ontario in particular, I would encourage you to contact Andrea Kettle, the Head of Protected Areas for the region of Ontario, at (416) 514-2633, or by email at [andrea.kettle@canada.ca](mailto:andrea.kettle@canada.ca).

Sincerely,



*for* Sue Milburn-Hopwood  
Director General  
Canadian Wildlife Service