

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 26, 2023**

**Conservation Organizations Praise Unity in Passing of Bill C-248, Look to Discussions on Park Boundaries as Next Step**

The Friends of Ojibway Prairie and the Citizens Environment Alliance are praising today's support from all parties in the House of Commons for Bill C-248 to establish an Ojibway National Urban Park through federal legislation. As the private members' bill moves on to the Senate, we look forward to the spirit of collaboration continuing through the rest of the process to ensure the creation of a park that our community can be proud of for generations to come.

"We're very fortunate here in Windsor to be the only proposed national urban park location in Canada that continues to move forward with federal legislation to protect an Ojibway National Urban Park to our highest standard," said Mike Fisher, Chair of The Friends of Ojibway Prairie's National Urban Park Committee.

"We're also the first location in Canada to complete the pre-feasibility phase of the Parks Canada national urban park process with all the great work the project team has completed so far. We're very pleased to continue forward in collaboration toward a park that will be designed by Indigenous partners and community members leveraging the best of all perspectives."

Today's unanimous vote follows recent weeks of positive movement in completing the federal transfer of Ojibway Shores.

"The Citizens Environment Alliance is happy that the 25+ year advocacy campaign to conserve Ojibway Shores was ultimately successful. For the Ojibway National Urban Park to get off to a good start, we need collaboration from all parts of our community. The Parks Canada process and Bill C-248 must work together for the successful establishment of the park," said Derek Coronado, Coordinator of the Citizens Environment Alliance.

Under the current private members' bill, Ojibway National Urban Park would be created to initially include Ojibway Shores, Ojibway Park, Spring Garden Natural Area, Black Oak Heritage Park, the Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park and the Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve. Not yet included in the Park boundaries is another key piece of the Ojibway Prairie Complex, Oakwood Natural Area.

"The inclusion of Oakwood Natural Area is something we brought up at the standing committee studying the private members' bill, but it wasn't addressed through amendments in the House of Commons. We're hoping that the Senate process will provide a second opportunity to work together and ensure that an Ojibway National Urban Park includes the entirety of the Ojibway Prairie Complex at the establishment as well as any other lands that may be appropriate to include at this time", said Bill Roesel President of The Friends of Ojibway Prairie.

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**About The Friends of Ojibway Prairie**

The Friends of Ojibway Prairie is a registered charity and volunteer organization dedicated to

promoting public awareness of the Ojibway Prairie Complex and its unique biological, cultural and historical importance. The Friends work closely with the City of Windsor and Ontario Parks to provide assistance with educational programs, special events and restoration projects.

**About The Citizens Environment Alliance**

The Citizens Environment Alliance (CEA) is a non-profit, grass-roots, international, education and research organization established in 1985. The CEA works to protect, restore and enhance the quality of the local environment in the Detroit-St. Clair River corridors, the western basin of Lake Erie and in the Windsor-Essex-Kent Region of the Great Lakes basin.

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