



NATURAL HERITAGE CONSTRAINTS MAP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

June 2025



INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The Natural Heritage Constraints Map is used to identify the limits of development with respect to the natural environment. This document is typically prepared as part of a scoped or full Environmental Impact Study (EIS), but may be submitted as a standalone document where an EIS is waived by City staff.

WHEN IS THIS REQUIRED?

A Natural Heritage Constraints Map may be required where development is proposed within or adjacent to the Greenway System. The Constraints Map may be required as part of the following Planning applications:

- Official Plan Amendment
- Zoning By-law Amendment
- Draft Plan of Subdivision
- Site Plan Control
- Consent Applications
- Minor Variances



WHO PREPARES THIS?

A Natural Heritage Constraints Map is to be prepared by a qualified ecologist, biologist or an environmental planner.

WHY DO WE NEED THIS?

The Natural Heritage Constraints Map shall follow the appropriate standards and procedures to:

- Identify natural heritage features, hydrologic features, natural hazards and the associated vegetation protection zone.
- Identify the limits of the Natural Heritage Network, Rouge Watershed Protection Area, Provincial Natural Heritage System and the Greenway System
- Identify natural feature boundaries that have been staked and confirmed by the City, TRCA and/or MNRF.
- Identify any negative impacts or encroachments that are proposed within the Greenway System or Natural Heritage Network.
- Demonstrate that development is in conformity with the natural heritage policies of the Official Plan.

STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED?

Submission Requirements

The Natural Heritage Constraints Map is typically prepared under the direction of the ecologist/biologist/environmental planner. Depending on the complexity of the site, the following information may be required.

Base Map Information:

- Air photo
- Property boundaries
- Roads, utilities and other infrastructure
- Topography

Development Information:

- Contours, grading and stormwater management
- Development Concept or Site Plan overlaid on top of the final constraints map
- Official Plan designations and/or zoning
- Mitigation measures such as tree preservation fencing and erosion and sediment control measures



Natural Heritage Information:

- Watercourses, waterbodies and headwater drainage features
- Vegetation communities (ELC for Southern Ontario)
- Woodlands, wetlands, valleylands, fish habitat, significant wildlife habitat, habitat for endangered and threatened species and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest
- Natural hazards (regulatory flood plain, top of bank and erosion hazards)
- Vegetation protection zones and other regulatory setbacks
- Field survey locations
- Location of rare flora and fauna
- Location of sensitive receptors
- Ecological linkages and corridors
- Restoration areas
- Natural Heritage Network & Rouge Watershed Protection Area
- Provincial Natural Heritage System
- Greenway System

WHAT ELSE SHOULD WE KNOW?

The scope of the mapping should be discussed with the City and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) as part of the pre-consultation process. The Natural Heritage Constraints Map should also address any applicable TRCA, Provincial and Federal regulatory requirements and/or policies.

WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE THERE?

- Markham Environmental Impact Study Guidelines
- Natural Heritage Reference Manual
- Significant Wildlife Habitat Criteria for Eco-Region 7E and 6E
- Markham Official Plan – Chapter 3
- York Region Official Plan
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority - Living City Policies

NOTES

If the proposed development is revised, the Constraints Map shall reflect the revisions through an updated map from the author along with a covering letter describing any changes to the recommendations and conclusions.

A peer review may be required. The cost of the peer review will be borne by the applicant.

The details and content of the Constraints Map may vary depending on the nature of the proposal. This will be determined through the pre-consultation process and in consultation with any applicable external agencies.

If the Constraints Map is incomplete, is authored by an unqualified individual or does not contain adequate analysis, the application(s) will be considered incomplete and will be returned to the applicant.

