

Friday, March 26, 2021.

Dear Friends,

Yesterday, we received two communications from the TRCA: one **productive**; the other **highly disappointing**.

**Productive:** The following is what we received from a TRCA spokesperson:

*TRCA and the City of Toronto enforce park [rules](#) to ensure the health and safety of visitors and wildlife at Tommy Thompson Park. Unfortunately, the rise of violations at the park has led to the increase of enforcement from both organizations, to educate visitors and turn away those looking to enter the park with pets. We are also working to engage the Toronto Police Service, as our mutual enforcement officers cannot be on site 24-7, and we understand that additional patrols are required after hours to address infractions that are occurring. TRCA will be re-starting the TTP weekend programming Easter weekend. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic the Nature Centre will remain closed, however staff will conduct park patrols to educate visitors as well as log and report infractions. All parties are committed to protecting the park and we will adapt our efforts accordingly, based on the behaviours of the visitors to the site. If you visit the park and would like to report an infraction, please contact 311 or for more information contact [ttp@trca.ca](mailto:ttp@trca.ca). <https://tommythompsonpark.ca>*

For months now, we have been advocating for more enforcement at The Spit/Tommy Thompson Park, as we saw, and heard of, park abuses: dogs, fires, cutting of vegetation, habitat destruction, etc. We have been part of a series of conversations with the TRCA as to how they will staff The Spit/TTP this year, and how the bad behaviour will be stemmed. They, and the City, are now well aware of the issues, and we understand they are putting measures and protocols in place, for which we thank both the TRCA and the City.

In the meantime, please keep reporting problems to 311, (fires to 911) and cc us on any emails. Please avoid direct confrontations for your own safety.

**Highly Disappointing:** Despite the avalanche of emails and posts protesting the recent commercial filming on the Spit and all the resultant news coverage, the TRCA has decided to again proceed with a film next week !!! The following is their announcement:

*As a valued stakeholder at TTP, we wanted to share an update on planned filming to take place March 29-31. This production is being carried out as per our existing filming policy developed in 2011. [ed note: this reference is to our knowledge a draft that was never adopted by TTPUG, let alone the Board of the TRCA]. We have evaluated the proposal and have confirmed it will not have an impact on natural areas and wildlife. The filming will take place on weekdays and will be limited to specific areas along the multi-use trail.*

*Revenue generated from this production will be directed to operations and programming at TTP and help address immediate needs triggered by the tenfold increase in visitors through the pandemic period. As per recent feedback we have received from the community, regarding filming at TTP, we are in discussions with our partners to review and update filming policies and will follow-up with further consultation on this topic in the near future. We thank you for your continued engagement in TTP.*

Despite assurances that this filming will have no impact on natural areas and wildlife, even if proven correct, filming still impacts park users, and most importantly, still sends out the message that The Spit can be a movie backlot; that The Spit's world-renowned urban wilderness features are only secondary and unimportant. **We at Friends of the Spit continue to oppose commercial filming at The Spit.** There are so many other sites available: **keep the filming off The Spit!**

The issue of revenue is a separate issue: The Spit has been chronically underfunded; yet over the years, substantial revenues have been earned by Ports Toronto (formerly the THC) from all the dumping charges.

In closing: **thank you all for all your incredible support and your actions.** Keep it up: we are making headway on some issues, and we'll keep striving on the others.

Friends of the Spit