

Friends of the Spit

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Autumn 2025 Newsletter

“Engagement pop-ups”

October 11 10 am to 1 pm, and October 15 7:30 am to 10:30 am.

No, this engagement pop-up is not an erstwhile suitor on the spur of the moment, although we’re sure that’s happened at the Spit, but the start ... a soft launch.. of the long-awaited **Visitor Experience Plan**.

Now is your chance to let them (The TRCA and the City) know in person how much you love The Spit ----Toronto’s car-free public urban wilderness.

As we posted on our FB page, we heard last week from the TRCA that they will be commencing the long-promised **Visitor Experience Plan (VEP)** by having their consultants do two “engagement pop-ups” at the Spit. The first will be **Saturday, October 11th between 10 am and 1 pm** and the second on **Wednesday, October 15th between 7:30 am and 10:30 am**, all weather permitting. Look for the blue tent near the entry pavilion.

The consultant team is led by Third Party Public (formerly Swerhun Inc.): they have been hired as the engagement specialists, and they’ll be present, likely along with the TRCA, and Lord Cultural Resources Inc. There may also be someone present from DTAH, who are also on the team of consultants (DTAH designed the entry pavilion).

Do enter into conversation with them, please, and do tell them how much you love The Spit as a car-free public urban wilderness. Wax poetic at will!

As you know from our newsletters, this VEP plan makes us nervous: after all, what can the consultants do or plan that strives to “Let it Be “ ?

But, once again, we have been reassured that (as written in the TRCA’s RFP) “The VEP will identify priorities that consider the current urban context and visitor needs, while preserving, protecting, and enhancing the park’s ecological integrity, consistent with the TTP Master Plan.” !

Don’t be shy: let them know your love for The Spit. We need all your voices!

And PS: our hope is that these consultants will identify a stable funding formula for the Spit, that will enable the TRCA and the City to adequately staff the Spit, maintain the four small buildings, maintain the site, and continue with ecological work as necessary.

The Spit needs LOVE and CARE, and right now, it’s being “undernourished”

A new butterfly species for the Spit! (and second record ever for Toronto!)



Photos courtesy of Jack Alvo

On September 29th, two park naturalists found and photographed a *common checkered skipper* well out on the Spit near the intersection of the Spine Road and the path to Peninsula A. This is a first for the Spit - and the butterfly checklist on our website will be updated accordingly!!

Most interesting is that this is only the *second record ever* of an occurrence in Toronto: the first sighting of this skipper was recorded just 3 weeks earlier, on September 7th, at a location near Leslie Street and Sheppard Avenue!

From our 35 mm slide archives! Another photo from The Spit history....

The aerial photo below, which we believe is circa 1990, shows the initial stages of filling of the Outer Harbour Marina, with the Baselands to the north. At this time, the Baselands were still zoned I2D2, awaiting an industrial subdivision!

What is so intriguing to us, and to our collective memory, is how unforested the Baselands were at that time: they were meadows with the occasional tree, and of course piles of rubble strewn about. At that time, the “wet woods” were virtually nonexistent. Amazing what grows in three decades!



What's that construction??

Finally, power is being restored to the staff booth/visitor center on the Spine Road isthmus.

You've probably noticed the fencing and excavation work along the west side of the Spine Road – photos below. This work involves laying a new power line, to replace the old one which was damaged during the construction of the entry pavilion (so we understand), to allow power to be restored to the staff booth.

Tree protection has been put in place, and if the work goes well, the vegetation should flourish again quite quickly.



HAVE A HAPPY THANKSGIVING WEEKEND !