

Ontario's Greenbelt planning a complex and crucial issue

Ontario's Greenbelt Task Force has published its report, summarizing several months of public consultations and providing a series of recommendations to the minister of municipal affairs and housing. When this exercise started, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) stressed the importance of viability for agriculture's future.

The Task Force's report mentions viability as an objective, but provides no real solutions.

Partway through the consultation process, when the OFA insisted that viability into the future for agriculture was a requirement, the province named Lyle Vanclief and Bo Bedgood as an Agriculture Advisory Team to look exclusively at viability.

The Task Force report says it "hopes this team will address the concern that protection of land alone does not ensure agricultural viability." The OFA and Ontario's farmers need to be convinced the advisory team will be able to do what's necessary to make the connection between viability and the protection of farmland from development.

At this stage, we don't even know if or when the advisory team will be issuing a report or what the government's response might be to the advisory team's thoughts on maintaining viability in the farming sector. The Task Force's report lists a number of possible alterna-

OFA Paul Mistele Commentary

tives for protecting agricultural lands. Residential severances is front and centre in all of them.

There are regional differences throughout the province dictating that a different approach to granting severances is needed, depending where you live. In some areas, granting the sale of residential lots for surplus dwellings should be restricted to enhance agriculture's economic future.

In other areas, the only way a farm can remain viable is if farmers are allowed to sell off surplus residential units. We need local agricultural input into these land use decisions.

Land use policy is only one aspect in ensuring that agriculture and green space are protected. The OFA has made a number of suggestions to the Task Force and to the Agricultural Advisory Team. We need to see these thoughts brought forward as policy recommendations:

- Public investment in drainage
- Stronger farm practices protection legislation
- Clear commitment to funding the costs of source water protection

on farms

• Confidence in continued government involvement in agricultural research

These are items that will help agriculture and green space in Ontario.

The Task Force's recommendation that the greenbelt "be branded and marketed as a publicly valued and important resource... for cultural activities, recreation and tourism," isn't something farmers and their organizations can support, especially when we consider the issues with abandoned rail lines that have been formed into hiking trails.

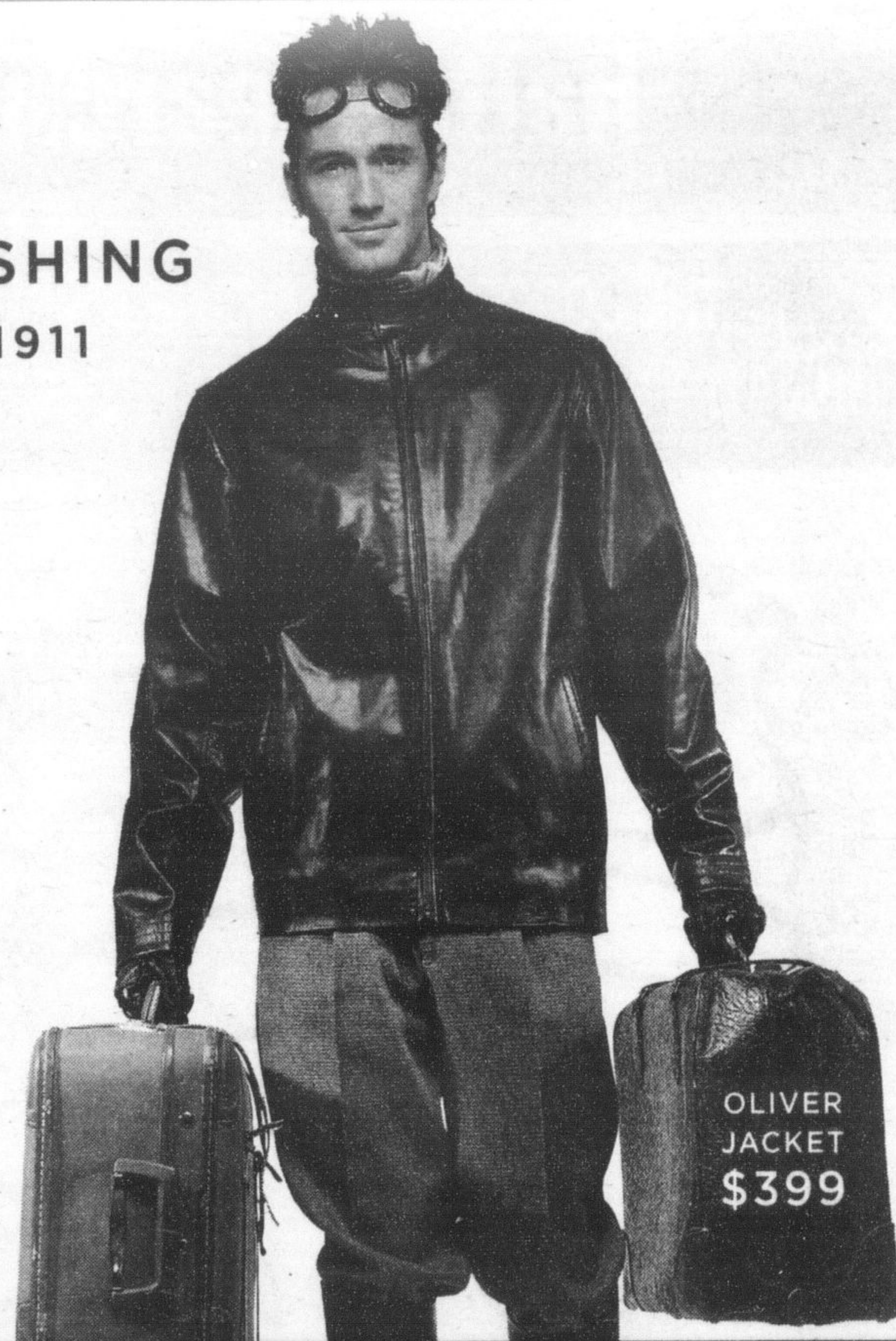
Farmers, while supportive of maintaining green space, aren't willing to have their crop lands turned into areas for hiking and other forms of recreation by a public lacking understanding or respect for private land rights. These are issues that erode the economic future of farmland.

Before the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and its members can endorse the apparent goals and objectives of the provincial government with its greenbelt report, we need a comprehensive report from the Agricultural Advisory Team and a clear indication of what the government intends to do with that report.

Paul Mistele is a member of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture executive committee.

DASHING

1911



BEARDMORE

BETTER LEATHERS SINCE 1844

ACTON, COOKSTOWN, ST. JACOBS AND NEW AT HEARTLAND CENTRE (MAVIS & BRITANNIA, MISSISSAUGA) STORE HOURS & LOCATIONS 1-866-565-0018

HOT TUB SALE

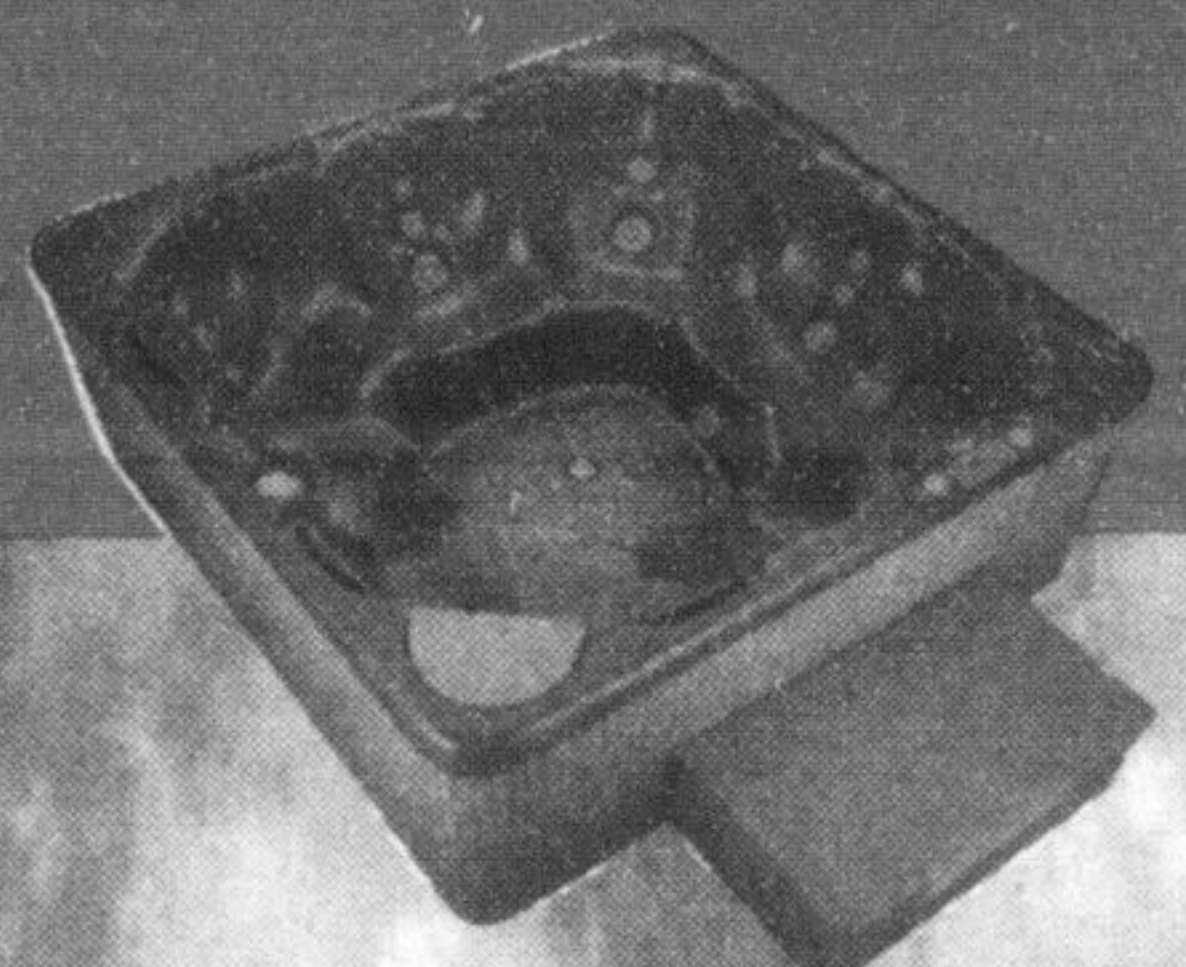
WEEKEND ONLY!

September 17th - 19th

FACTORY DIRECT

TRUCKLOAD

SALE



OUTSTANDING
SPECIALLY PRICED
CUSTOM ORDER
PROGRAM!

LARGE
SELECTION OF
MODELS &
COLOURS!

MAKE NO
PAYMENTS
UNTIL MARCH/05
O.A.C.

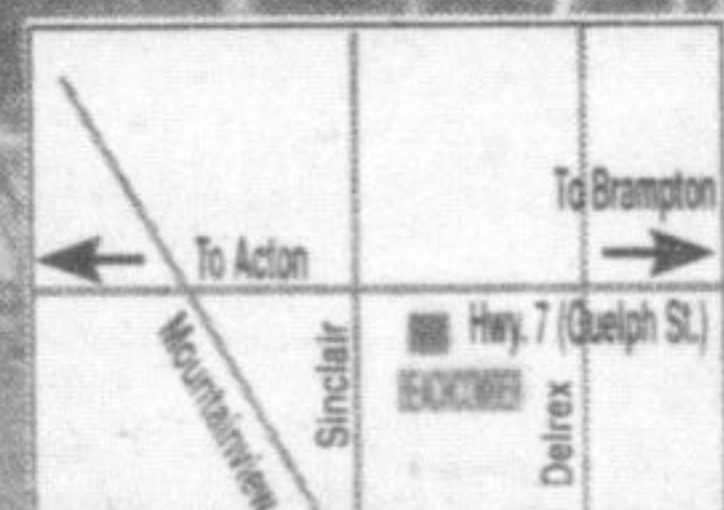
BEACHCOMBER HAS JUST SHIPPED US A TRUCKLOAD FULL OF 2004 SPECIALLY PRICED HOT TUBS!



BEACHCOMBER
HOT TUB & HOME

318 Guelph Street Georgetown 905.873.8835

HOURS: Fri. 10 am - 9 pm; Sat. 10 am - 5 pm; Sun. 11 am - 4 pm



HOT TUBS | GAS GRILLS | POOL TABLES | PATIO FURNITURE | POOL SUPPLIES | SAUNAS



Your United Way In Action

The United Way of Milton

Hey Neighbour!

We invite you to join us for a free "getting to know each other" barbeque at our annual United Way of Milton Awareness Event!

Place: Milton Loblaws Parking Lot
Date: Saturday, September 18th, 2004
Time: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The Event Features:

- * Hot dogs and drinks
- * Meet your Mayor, local Councillors & United Way Volunteers
- * Face painting for kids
- * Fun & Easy Fundraising Ideas
- * Chance to win an ice cream cake from Jay's Ice Cream Parlour or a gift certificate from Pasqualino's Restaurant!

To our long-time residents, this is our chance to say "thank you" for the many years of support and encouragement. To our many "new" residents, we say welcome and let's all become "good neighbours" together!

Note: This is NOT a fundraising event!!!

The United Way of Milton - Neighbours Helping Neighbours

How can you help?

- If you work outside of Milton and donate by payroll deduction - please designate your donation "home" to The United Way of Milton.
- Make a direct donation • Attend a United Way of Milton Special Event

Tel: (905) 875-2550 Fax: (905) 875-2402

URL: www.milton.unitedway.ca E-mail: office@milton.unitedway.ca