

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
34 Civic Ave, 3rd floor, Stouffville, ON, L4A 7Z5

PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Debra Kelly
BUSINESS MANAGER
Robert Lazaruko

DIRECTOR INTERACTIVE
MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY
John Futhy

DIRECTOR, ADVERTISING
& DISTRIBUTION
Barry Black
DIRECTOR, CIRCULATION
SYSTEMS
Lynn Pashko

MARKETING/PARTNERSHIPS
DIRECTOR
Debra Weller
YORK REGION PRINTING
GENERAL MANAGER
Bob Dean

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Town should learn from errors before building more

The more things change, the more they stay the same. We've heard this scenario before.

Cornell was supposed to be an integrated, self-contained community where people lived, worked and played. Most residents in Cornell were to walk and bike to work.

Living in the east end of Markham, I am reminded of this every time I try to use Ninth Line southbound in the morning, seeing the traffic congestion as a result of all the cars leaving Cornell.

Before any further plans are made to build new residential communities, the town planners need to take a large, statistically sound, survey of Cornell residents. I would be shocked if even 10 per cent of the residents use alternate transportation to cars.

Buses are not the answer to the lack of adequately planned transportation corridors. They are but a small part of the solution.

I use Cornell as my example because the town planners were so adamant about the lifestyle that was to be there, with, as they wrongly predicted, few cars being used.

One only has to look at the southbound cars on McCowan, Kennedy, Warden and Woodbine in the mornings as a result of Angus Glen, Bur Oak and other communities that have recently cropped up without the adequate roads. They totally block up 16th Avenue to the point that westbound cars can't even

move forward on green lights, gridlocking these intersections.

Let us please learn from what has already transpired from the latest surge in residential growth before moving forward with more.

RUTH BESSANT
MARKHAM

Don't denounce all Mexicans

Re: Mexico not worthy of our tourism dollar, column by Debora Kelly, March 2

Ms Kelly's view of the slaying of Dominic and Nancy Ianiero is, in my opinion, uneducated, uninformed and racist.

In any given week, there are approximately 20,000 Canadians on vacation on the Mayan Riviera. You would be more likely murdered in certain parts of Toronto than you would at the Barcelo Maya Resort.

The Mexican authorities' "deliberate incompetence" may not be as deliberate as Ms Kelly suggests. They simply do not have the funds to conduct an investigation as we would in Canada.

How can you denounce an entire country for the despicable acts of a few people? Mexico is filled with kind hearted, hard working individuals. Without our tourism, the country would have serious economic issues.

All we can do is pray for the Ianiero family and hope for an easy closure for them.

JOE GENOVESE
MARKHAM



Preventing extinction before it begins

When most of us think about protecting species, we tend to envision ways of saving those creatures that are most endangered or whose populations are perilously low. This makes perfect sense — a kind of species triage, if you will. But it's also the most expensive and least effective way to prevent species from disappearing.

Far more effective would be to first identify which species may be doing fine currently, but are likely to be in trouble in the near future. This would enable us to create more cost-effective conservation plans that will keep populations at healthy levels, rather than just on life support. But how do you identify those species on the edge?

A new report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences does this.

Researchers looked at available databases for information on nearly 4,000 non-marine mammal species, then mapped the global geographic distribution of what

they call "latent extinction risk". The results were surprising.

It turns out areas with the highest latent extinction risk are often not those currently with a high number of endangered species — so they aren't often singled out for conservation.

Most species conservation measures currently tend to focus on what have been called biodiversity "hotspots" — areas, usually in the tropics, that have very high levels of life diversity.

However, this new research highlights a kind of latent hotspot where the potential for future loss of species is very high.

And two of the largest areas in the world are in Canada. Why Canada? Well, different species respond in different ways to human encroachment. Some can tolerate greater human disturbances.

Those that don't tolerate human impacts very well, such as road building, hunting, oil drilling and logging, are more likely to suffer once people begin to move into their habitats.



David Suzuki

These creatures tend to be confined to relatively small geographic areas, have a large body mass or are slow to reproduce.

It turns out the boreal forest of northern Canada and eastern forests of Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes have lots of species with some of these characteristics — ungulates such as musk oxen and caribou, for example, or large carnivores such as polar bears or lynx.

Some populations of these species have been fairly sheltered from human activity because of Canada's vast size, challenging weather and geography. However,

as human activities encroach on their habitat, they are at risk of serious and sudden decline.

This precipitous drop is called leapingfrogging, where a species previously considered robust suddenly passes other endangered animals and declines to the point of near extinction.

It happened between 2000 and 2004 with the Guatemalan howler monkey when its critical forest habitat was destroyed.

In total, researchers for the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences paper identified 20 hotspots of latent extinction.

Many of these areas are islands, such as New Guinea, Sumatra, Borneo, the Bahamas and the Melanesian Islands, where geography severely limits species' ability to withstand human pressure.

Canada may have two of the largest areas of concern for latent extinction risk, but we are lucky because we have a small population and large land base.

We have the resources and time to develop conservation plans to

counteract any threat to any animal.

A latent hotspot analysis cannot help bring back the myriad species already endangered but,

Canada may have two of the largest areas of concern for latent extinction risk, but we are lucky because we have a small population and a large land base.

critically, it can help us prevent species from becoming endangered in the first place. It offers policymakers new, potentially less costly and more effective options to protect biodiversity. And that's an opportunity we'd be foolish to ignore.

Take the Nature Challenge and learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org

LETTERS POLICY

The Economist & Sun welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Economist & Sun reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space. Letters to the Editor, The Economist & Sun, 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, ON L3P 1M3 letters@econsun.com

EDITORIAL
Editor
Jim Mason
jmason@yrmg.com
Assistant Editor
Rick Vanderlinde
rvanderlinde@yrmg.com
INTERACTIVE MEDIA
Marketing & Advertising
Manager
Dawna Andrews
dandrews@yrmg.com

ADVERTISING
Retail Manager
Stacey Allen
sallen@yrmg.com
Classified Manager
Ann Campbell
acampbell@yrmg.com
Assistant Classified
Manager
Bonnie Rondeau
brondeau@yrmg.com

New Business
Development Manager
Mike Rogerson
mrogerson@yrmg.com
PRODUCTION
Team Leader
Sherry Day
sday@yrmg.com

EDITORIAL
905-513-1717
Fax: 905-513-7525
ADVERTISING
905-513-1717/ Classified:
1-800-743-3353/Fax: 905-853-1765
DISTRIBUTION
905-513-1717
Canadian Circulations Audit Board Member Ontario Press Council

Sun-Tribune

A York Region Newspaper Group community newspaper The Economist & Sun, published every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, is a member of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. Metroland is comprised of 70 community publications across Ontario. The York Region Newspaper Group includes The Liberal, serving Richmond Hill and Thornhill, Vaughan Citizen, The Era-Banner (Newmarket/Aurora), Stouffville Sun-Tribune, Georgina Advocate, York Region Business Times, North of the City, yorkregion.com and York Region Printing.