

Mid-Peninsula Highway Corridor: Wetlands (red) and Woodlots (green).

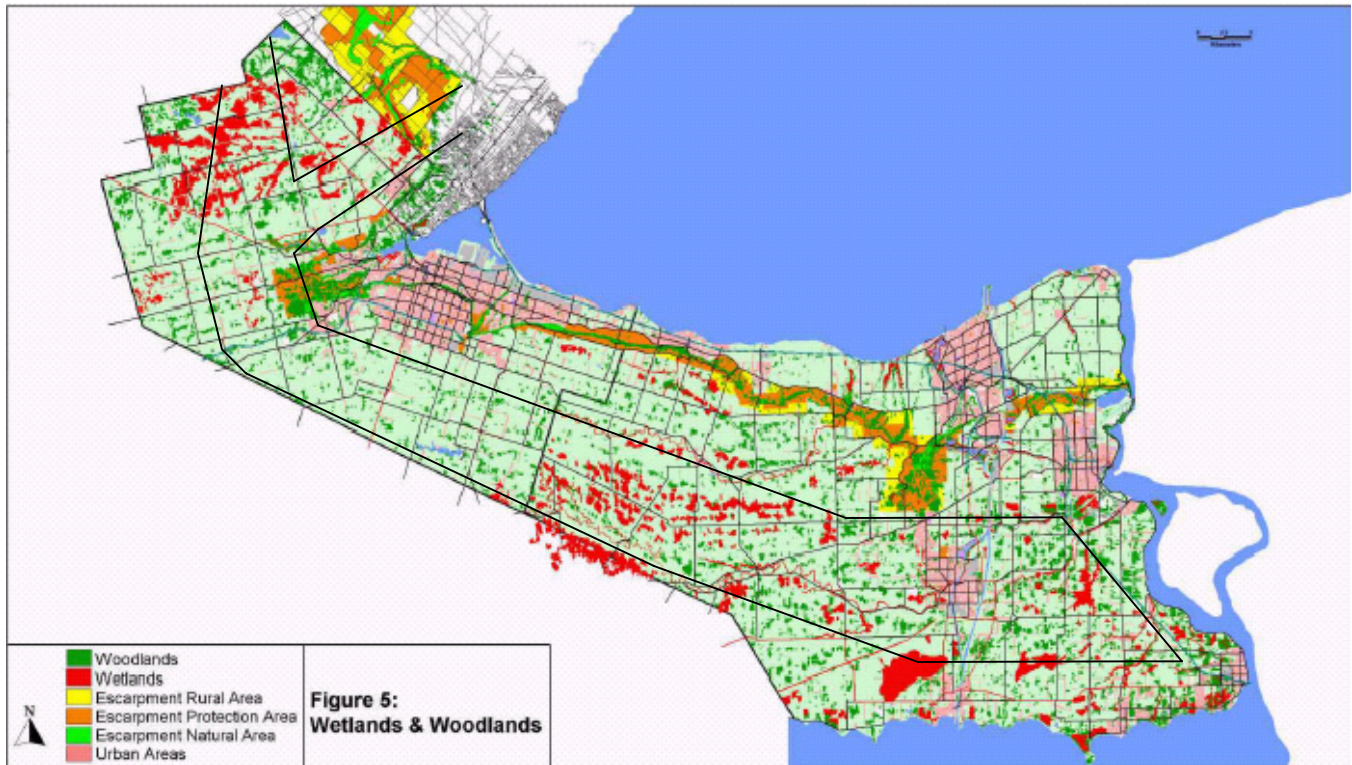


Figure 5 is an MTO Graphic from the Mid-Pen Highway Needs Assessment regarding wetlands and woodlands. The black lines have been superimposed by COPE and represent the approximate boundary of the highway study corridor.

The high number of wetlands and forests that could potentially be damaged by the MPH is readily apparent.

The portion of the Mid Peninsula Highway from Niagara up to north of Hamilton cuts through the *Carolinian Forest Zone* that covers most of the peninsula. To quote from the MTO Needs Assessment:

“This area has more species of plants and birds than any other life zone in Canada. Because of this, even small, degraded or isolated remnant woodlots or wetlands here have ecological significance while larger natural, relatively undisturbed blocks have high ecological sensitivity and value.”

“The flora and fauna of this region are unique to Canada and many rare habitats and species are recorded in the remaining natural areas of the Carolinian region.”

To state that the plants, animals, and natural features are unique and of high value and then to plan a highway that runs through the middle of the area seems perverse in the extreme. A

highway doesn't just have effects in its 'footprint' or right-of-way. It changes the way wildlife can move around in their habitats, and it fragments woodlots and wetlands even further than has been done already.

It will also affect the flows of groundwater. And of course, the pressure for development that comes with highways will mean more roads and buildings and people in the area of the road in the future, resulting in further damage to the small remaining unspoiled areas of Carolinian Forest and wetlands shown on the map.