

Second Marsh Overview of Concerns re Ethanol Refinery

Area Description Summary

1. Ontario has designated Second Marsh as a **Provincially Significant Wetland**.
2. Second Marsh was described by the Honourable David Crombie as “an environmental gem in an urban setting”. (Recommendations for the Future of Oshawa Harbour, The Honourable David Crombie, February 21, 2008)
3. Second Marsh is the **largest coastal marsh along the north shore of Lake Ontario between Presquille and Niagara-on-the-Lake**.
4. The Second Marsh Wildlife Area covers approximately 308 acres.
5. Second Marsh is home to at least **4 species at risk**. These include three bird species and one reptile species.
6. Other species that Second Marsh Wildlife Area provides food and cover for include 380 plants, 305 birds and numerous mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and hundreds of invertebrates.

Problem Overview Summary

1. The Oshawa Port Authority has approved the placement, by FarmTech Energy Corporation, of an **ethanol refinery** on land right next door to, and upwind of, the Second Marsh Wildlife Area.*
2. This would subject the wildlife area, its inhabitants and its visitors to **numerous negative impacts**, including short term, long term and cumulative effects. (See Table 1 below)
3. FarmTech has effectively withdrawn every one of its applications to government environmental review processes (once federally and twice provincially). They have absolutely **no environmental approvals**, either federal or provincial.
4. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment has advised that construction of the refinery cannot begin without provincial environmental certificates of approval. FarmTech has claimed that FarmTech is not subject to provincial environmental regulations since its refinery would be on federal lands. Past judicial decisions related to the legality of enforcing various provincial laws in areas typically under federal jurisdiction support the MOE position and run counter to the FarmTech claim. **Will the MOE ensure that provincial protections are enforced?**

* This was despite the fact that, in his federally commissioned report, (Recommendations for the Future of Oshawa Harbour, February 21, 2008) the Honourable David Crombie identified the Gifford Farmlands (the proposed site of the refinery) as an important buffer zone between industry at the Port of Oshawa and the environmentally sensitive Second Marsh.

Table 1: Concerns Summary

This is a partial list of concerns submitted to the federal and provincial environmental review processes re short term, long term and cumulative impacts of the refinery on the Second Marsh Wildlife Area.

Item of Concern	Comments
Emissions	Re; effects on humans and wildlife, particularly the enormous numbers of wildlife that are in their early stages of development since the Second Marsh is the breeding area for so many species. These emissions involve VOC,(including carcinogens and respiratory irritants) The emissions also involve fine particulate matter, a toxic substance listed under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Recently the Canadian Medical Association raised concerns about the serious effects of this material.
Corn Dust	This can have a number of effects a standing water ecosystem like the marsh including acting as a fertilizer which can lead to devastating events like algae blooms resulting in the widespread death of aquatic wildlife.
Heavy truck traffic	Between approximately 200 to 300 daily entrance and exit trips depending on which FarmTech numbers you want to believe. These trips will be along an entrance road that will be just 5m from an extensive section of the Waterfront Trail as it passes through the SMWA. This means that visitors and wildlife in this section will be constantly exposed to the noise and exhaust fumes from these heavy vehicles
Light Pollution	This includes potential negative impacts on sensitive wildlife species that utilize the west side of the marsh. These impacts, among others, include the disruption of breeding activities of various amphibian species due to extra ambient light in their breeding zones.
Accidents	Ethanol plants have triggered over fifty fires and explosions in North America since 1997. Fire at an ethanol refinery is an extremely dangerous situation for the surrounding areas. The predicted blast zone would impact not only the wildlife area but schools, residential areas, parks, businesses (including the Minacs and General Motors office buildings) and even a section of Highway 401. Add to this the very close

	proximity of the asphalt plant and there is the very real possibility that an accident at one plant will involve the other with even more catastrophic effects.
Spills	Effects on ground water and escape into Harmony Creek, Second Marsh and Lake Ontario.
Visual Impacts	The proposed refinery is a visual monstrosity. It would be virtually impossible for school groups and other visitors to come to the marsh and not be forced into a visual confrontation with this enormous industrial complex.
Interference with Wildlife: Disruption of the Little Gull Staging Area Courtship Flights	The area of right beside the Gifford Farmlands is one of only two spring migration staging (or gathering) areas in all of North America for one of the rarest breeding birds on the continent, the Little Gull. This is where they carry out their courtship flights and a much of those flights occur over the Gifford Farmlands. Disruption or interference of these flights by the refinery could have a major impact on the North American population of this bird.
Interference with Wildlife: Nesting Sites Reduction including that of the Blanding's Turtle	There is also concern for the availability of nesting habitat for the Blanding's turtle, which is one of our species at risk. Much of the Gifford Farmlands have soils suitable for this specie's nesting requirements. The refinery would eliminate most of this area as potential nesting sites.