

## Highway 413, A Sacrifice We Should Not Make

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Premier Doug Ford aims to build a roadway for nobody. A road that would doom endangered species and farmers alike, all to save a measly “30 seconds”, (Gray, 2025). The proposed route would decimate the main Humber River Valley ecosystem and eliminate the local habitat for endangered species like the Redside dace, Western Chorus frog, and the Rapids Clubtail dragonfly (Gray, 2025). This damage is simply the direct effects that only the construction of the road will have on the environment. The 500 hectare area around the roadway is often irreparably damaged by projects like this highway (Harris, 2026). Eco-Kare principal Kari Gunson, in an interview with TVO, points to noise pollution, changes to the habitat roadkill, and invasive plants like *Phragmites Australis* as possible problems that this roadway could inflict on the surrounding area (Eschner, 2024). Ontario is running out of natural spaces as it is. We should aim to protect what we still have, especially if that land contains 14.8 hectares of provincially significant wetland, a precious treasure that lies in the middle of the path of the 413 and the urban sprawl ruin it represents (Harris, 2026).

However, the environment is not the only thing that would be devastated. The local farming community would be forced either move, or find new careers. According to Rav Singh, an immigrant farmer from India, most young and new farmers like herself would choose to do the latter, given the already stretched resources within the industry (Cheng, 2023). This project would only be a small part of the crisis of urbanization that the Ontario farming industry is facing. While the road itself may only take up a relatively small portion of the farmland, the rippling effects of its existence and creation would be irreparably damaging to the farmland that is not getting paved over. Effects like road salt runoff would damage the quality of soil, a quality that is renowned across the world, perhaps permanently, according to Singh (Cheng, 2023). Continued projects like this will lead to the end of the Ontario farming industry, without question. This is without considering the effects the highway will have on property development. With a proper highway, it's likely that the area around the highway will be further developed into a low density housing development, sacrificing the important wild land for more suburbs.

As a whole, Ford's project will undeniably cause permanent harm to Ontario and its environment, for little to no benefit to anybody. To support this project is to support the sacrifice of thousands of years of growth for an extra thirty seconds outside our cars. That is a sacrifice I, and many others are not willing to make. Stop Doug Ford. Stop Highway 413.

Word Count: 410 Words

### References

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