

# Monitoring Environmental Degradation in Simcoe County: Impacts and Management of Land



## Host

AWARE Simcoe is a non-profit organization that prioritizes water and land conservation by addressing government responsibility and promoting public awareness on environmental degradation in Simcoe County.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study is to connect current land development and management practices to possible environmental degradation in Simcoe County. The goal of this study is to promote public awareness and provide recommendations for land management practices in Simcoe County.

## Methodology

- Reviewing Current and Historical cases of environmental degradation in Simcoe county.
- Assessing current land development projects and policies for potential impacts.
- Utilizing academic literature and local media sources.

## Findings

### Friday Harbour Luxury Resort

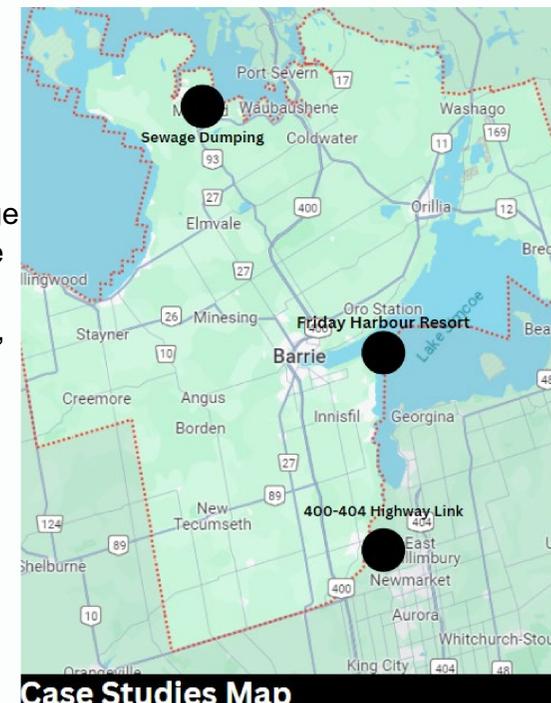
Friday Harbour is a 600-acre luxury cottage/time-share resort, that has devastatingly altered the Innisfil shoreline. Shoreline alteration is known to cause habitat loss and removal of critical shoreline vegetation. Mega cottage resorts like Friday Harbour are being developed across Simcoe County due to projected population growth plans. These developments are contributing to environmental degradation and the loss of quality farmlands. Additionally, these multi-dwelling homes are causing additional stress to current waste and water infrastructure.

### The Bradford Bypass

The 400 series expansion project exists to connect the North of Ontario to the South. The Bradford Bypass is planned to connect the 400 to the 404-highway allowing York region to easily travel to Simcoe County and increase economic growth in Simcoe County. This expansion project will cross over 3 watersheds, one being the East Holland river. The watershed feeds directly into the Georgian Bay. Increased highways and vehicle activity can lead to water degradation through stormwater carrying metal deposits, motor oil, and other pollutants into watersheds.

### Bill 23 "More Homes Built Faster"

Bill 23 is a new controversial piece of legislation in Simcoe County as it promotes rapid urbanization with less regulations in a community already struggling with a weak infrastructure and water quality issues. The rapid growth plans with minimal expansion in waste management infrastructure, will likely lead to increased cases of sewage dumping and septic spills.



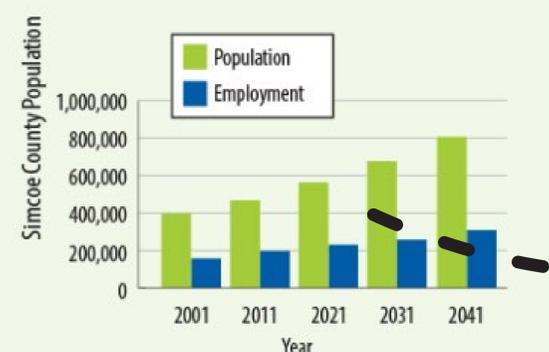
Case Studies Map

## Sewage Dumping

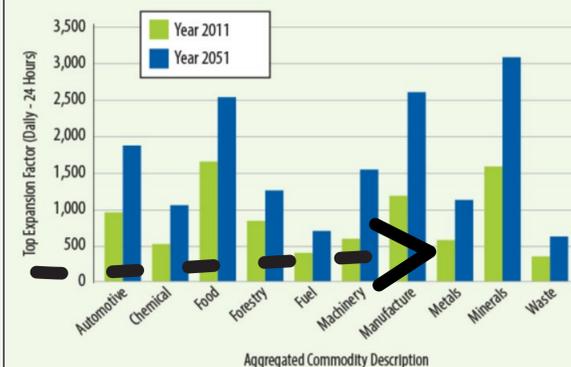
Midland and other tiny townships in Simcoe County are struggling with sewage dumping due to weak waste and water treatment infrastructure. Sewage dumping threatens ecosystem health and biodiversity. Sewage dumping is known to decline oxygen content in freshwater lakes. These communities are not only facing environmental degradation but are grappling with health and wellness issues due to water contamination and the invasive smell of sewage. The increased potential of Sewage dumping in Simcoe County due to the weak infrastructure increases the risk of cholera and E.coli outbreaks and other public health issues.

"contains some policies of concern, such as directing growth to communities currently grappling with water supply and wastewater treatment issues" - Tyler Schulz, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

Simcoe County Population Growth - 2001 to 2041 (including Barrie & Orillia)



Simcoe County Sector Growth 2011 to 2051 (Without Empty Trips)



## Recommendations

We recommend that Simcoe County advocates against advancing on Bill 23, and the further development of luxury large-scale housing developments. Prioritizing improving and expanding waste and water management infrastructure prior to population growth is critical for environmental and public health.

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