

## Skyway 8 Wind Farm Secures Offset Habitat



To meet and exceed the requirements of Ontario's *Endangered Species Act* (ESA), Skyway 8 Wind Farm has entered into an agreement with The Couchiching Conservancy to mitigate the temporary and permanent habitat impacts associated with the construction of the project. The Skyway 8 Wind Farm involves the installation of wind turbines, ancillary equipment and the construction of access roads within bobolink and eastern meadowlark habitat. Both of these bird species, which are protected under the ESA, rely upon grasslands for breeding.

Under this agreement, Skyway 8 Wind Farm has secured and will fund offset grassland habitat lands, owned by the Couchiching Conservancy, outside of the project development area for the bobolink and eastern meadowlark species. The Couchiching Conservancy will oversee and maintain this land for the duration of the project.

Skyway 8 Wind Farm is required to compensate for the removal and disruption of 6.26 hectares of habitat related to the project but has committed to funding the enhancement and management of 10 hectares of grassland to increase the habitat patch size preferred by the bobolink species. Skyway 8 Wind Farm selected these lands in consultation with The Couchiching Conservancy. Habitat creation and enhancement initiatives will include seeding a mix of grasses to increase the size and integrity of existing grassland habitats and managing and monitoring tree and shrub invasion. The offset habitat lands will be monitored each year through a series of site visits to document the number of bobolinks and eastern meadowlarks present, determine fledging success and assess overall grassland conditions.

### **About The Couchiching Conservancy**

The Couchiching Conservancy is a non-profit, non-government Ontario land trust, established by naturalists in the Orillia region. The Conservancy is dedicated to preserving the special features of ecologically significant land in the Couchiching-Severn area to provide crucial habitat for plants and animals. They protect the land in these regions by negotiating land donations and conservation agreements.

Since its inception in 1993, The Couchiching Conservancy has helped protect over 10,000 acres of natural land, through direct ownership, partnerships with other organizations such as the Nature Conservancy of Canada, or through conservation easement agreements with private landowners.

For more information on The Couchiching Conservancy please visit <http://www.couchichingconserv.ca/>.

**For further information on the Skyway 8 project, please contact:**

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