



Ontario Public Interest Research Group

Groupe de Recherche d'Intérêt Public d'Ontario

OUTLINE OF TORONTO ECOTOUR PROJECT

Objective

To provide a unique educational experience for Toronto residents, visitors, students and educators, by means of a self-guided Ecotour of the local environment. A selection of Toronto locations and institutions will be identified and used to introduce the larger context--the provincial, national and global environment. The Ecotour will contain a mixture of accolades and critical concerns related to local focal points and the broader related issues. Suggestions will be included about what the individual and the community can do to make a positive contribution to the environment.

Rationale

The environment is not something that exists outside of or independent of the urban centre; the environment is everything around you, including the man-made. Everyone is part of the environment, and consequently impacts on the environment. Individuals and communities can make a difference in determining the future of the environment. Because we all shape the environment, the Ecotour contains suggestions on how to live with the environment in mind.

The environment is seamless; therefore, in the Ecotour, local focal points are considered in terms of their larger environmental contexts. The Ecotour emphasizes the view of the environment as a whole, not a collection of unrelated things.

Project Output

1) Ecotour Booklet

The booklet will be a reader's guide to selected local sites and institutions of environmental interest (about 20 to 30 local focal points). Each of the local focal points will be followed by discussion of the larger environmental context. The booklet will be about 30-40 pages in length, and also contain information about further references and organizations to contact for those interested.

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2) Ecotour Slide-Tape Show

The slide-tape show will enable the tour to take place in a classroom or community hall, and be of about 20-25 minutes duration.

3) Ecotour Map

A poster-size map will diagrammatically portray the Toronto environment. The map will have notes about each local point of interest.

The three formats will be designed so as to be usable alone or together with the others.

So that the Ecotour will have wide potential usage, the booklet and slide-tape show could be produced in one set targeted (with appropriate terminology and concepts) for grades 1-6 and as a second set targeted for grades 7 and up.

A fourth format which would be useful is a travelling exhibit to inform people about the Ecotour. The travelling exhibit would likely consist of the Ecotour Map, together with photographs and brief text about local focal points, and an invitation to the viewer to participate in the Ecotour. The exhibit would be intended for circulation in libraries, schools, community halls, recreation centres, etc.

Staffing/Job Descriptions

- 1 Coordinator-oversees the work being done by researchers
 - ensures the project objectives are met
 - does the administrative and financial work
 - holds project meetings
- 3 Researchers-assist in identifying local focal points of environmental interest
 - relate local focal points to provincial, national and international context
 - translate background research into formats suitable for booklet, slide-tape show and annotated map

Timetable

Project duration of 20 weeks, consisting of-

- 10 weeks background research
- 8 weeks writing, editing and designing booklet, slide-tape show and map
- 2 weeks of getting the message out about the Ecotour and testing it out with various groups of residents, students and educators