

BRINGING NATURE HOME

Creating a 'Homegrown National Park'



David
Suzuki
Foundation

SOLUTIONS ARE IN OUR NATURE

OUR URBAN NATURE-DEFICIT: Although we depend on nature for our health and well-being, the urban landscape often leaves us feeling disconnected from the natural world. An increasing body of evidence has demonstrated that exposure to nature profoundly enriches the quality of life for both individuals and communities. Greener communities enjoy countless benefits, such as increased vitality, better health, less stress and reduced crime. This is why we must bring nature home to our city.

THE HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK: Inspired by an idea from renowned author Richard Louv, the David Suzuki Foundation is launching a project to create the Canada's first "Homegrown National Park." This new green urban corridor will be created in Toronto's Ward 19, following the former path of Garrison Creek, one of Toronto's most notable "Lost Rivers." We will work with community organizations and local residents to enhance, restore and create urban green space. Together, we will get our hands dirty by planting native trees and shrubs, cultivating bird and bug-friendly gardens, and growing food in backyards and balconies.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK RANGERS: Through an innovative leadership program, we will train a team of two-dozen volunteer "Park Rangers" that will champion the Homegrown National Park project. They will raise awareness, recruit local residents, host community events, and organize planting projects. And they will promote the amazing array of activities offered by groups and agencies in the city.

BRINGING NATURE HOME: Our goal is not only to spur green activities in hundreds of yards, balconies, roofs, alleyways, parks and green spaces. We want to make this urban corridor one of the greenest in the country and demonstrate that together we can bring nature home, one act at a time. The David Suzuki Foundation's long-term goal is for the community to take pride and ownership of their Homegrown

National Park and continue enriching this green space for years to come.

THE PLAN: The project will begin with recruitment of at least a dozen groups and agencies that are actively involved in neighbourhood and site-level greening activities. At the same time we will recruit a committed team of local volunteers for the Park Ranger training. The leadership training session will kick start the project in early April. The Homegrown National Park events will take place throughout the summer and a harvest ceremony will close out the growing season in the fall.

