



The Greenbelt Game

Rules

The hula-hoops represent the Greenbelt. You're an animal living here. You're allowed to move around as long as you can reach the new area of the Greenbelt without stepping out onto the floor.

When someone pulls a card from the deck, look to see if the card is going to help or cause harm.

If it is a card with a **red suit** (♥♦), I will read a "THREAT" and remove a piece of the Greenbelt. Look around to see if there is any Greenbelt nearby. If you can still reach the rest of the Greenbelt without stepping out onto the floor, go ahead and move. If not, you're out.

If we get a card with a **black suit** (♣♠), it's an ACTION. An action could be a new government program, better enforcement, a cleanup project, or volunteers working together. Whoever pulls it can use it to stop a THREAT in the future. ♠ Spades stop new construction. ♣ Clubs stop new pollution. You need a spade and a club to stop climate change (♣+♠).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU'RE OUT

When you're out, remove your section of the Greenbelt if I haven't already removed your hula-hoop. Then, pick up a card from the deck.

ENDING THE GAME

The game is over when the time runs out or when there isn't any Greenbelt left.

HOW TO WIN THE GAME

This is a cooperative full-class game. If there are all six types of animals remaining at the end of the time, the class wins. Otherwise, the class loses.

HOW TO WIN THE GAME (ALTERNATIVE)

This is a cooperative full-class game. Use a stopwatch to see how long it takes before the Greenbelt disappears or until there are no longer all six types of animals remaining. Compare the time each time you play or with another class.

Narrative

TO START THE GAME

You can go to the Greenbelt now and start walking around slowly.

We are here in Ontario's Greenbelt.

This is a rich habitat. There are "turtles sunbathing on stream banks, the sound of birdsongs from the trees, and the flicker of tiny movements in the grass as small mammals duck in and out. Slick-skinned salamanders and tiny, brightly striped fish rely almost entirely on the land and water of the Greenbelt for their survival."

This Greenbelt is land that we all agreed to set aside for growing plants and forests, protecting natural habitat for wildlife, and critical water systems like wetlands and rivers. It looks green most of the time (that's the "green" part of the Greenbelt). It's called a belt because the land connects together in a long strip or band across the land.

When government makes a promise that they want to keep, they write it down as a policy or a set of rules and laws. Ontario's Greenbelt is a land-use planning government policy, and a promise that we all keep. We all want to make sure that it stays healthy and protected because at the end of the day, it helps to keep us healthy too.

Have you ever asked for extra screen time or tried to stay up late even though it isn't the rule? Well, the same thing happens with the Greenbelt. Sometimes people come looking for exceptions. There is a "constant push of cities to grow and convert natural areas to shopping centres, residential developments, parking lots, and roads". The question today is whether or not we give up the land. And if we decide to, what are the consequences? We're going to play the Greenbelt Game and see if, together, we can keep the Greenbelt safe, connected, and thriving.

Now I'm going to draw the first card.

Threats

Choose threats at random from the grid below. Alternatively, print and cut them out to draw from a hat.

MEGA-HIGHWAY Two snapping turtles are cut off from their nesting grounds.	POWER LINES Two flying squirrels lose their nesting habitat when trees are removed.	PARKING LOT Two Jefferson salamanders lose their wetland habitat.	NEGLIGENT HIKERS Stomp on pollinator plants when they go off trail. A monarch butterfly goes elsewhere in search of food.
FLOOD A reptile is carried off in a storm.	HEAT WAVE The wetland habitat is parched. Two amphibians go off in search for water.	HOUSING PROJECT Three monarch butterflies go hungry without their field of milkweed.	SPRAWLING SUBDIVISION The bobolink loses its spot for foraging. Food is scarce. It has to move its nest.
CLEAR-CUT Two flying squirrels no longer have the necessities of life.	SHOPPING CENTRE A pond habitat is split up and becomes overcrowded. It can no longer support so many Jefferson salamanders. Two must leave.	LAWN EXPANSION Low biodiversity means two monarch butterflies have no milkweed to eat.	NEW HOME A Jefferson salamander has to go around a basement to get to its breeding grounds.
AIRPORT A bird species can't stand the noise. One hits a plane and another moves away.	SOIL CONTAMINATION A nearby river gets polluted. Three fish species swim off to find a new home with clean water.	LAND CONVERSION Two mammals leave in search of healthy trees for shelter as the suburbs push northward into the forest.	CYANIDE Four insects try to get away from a contaminated soil dump to reach some flowers in the distance.

INVASIVE SPECIES A local gardener's mistake means the yellow floating-heart overtakes a water-way. Boating is impossible and the Redside dace fish is finding it hard to find food.	ROAD Four snapping turtles try to cross the road in search of food.	POLLUTION Freshwater habitat is badly polluted. There's no nutrition here for the snapping turtle. It goes looking for healthy habitat.	SMOG One mammal is finding it hard to breathe. It goes in search of clean air.
BOIL WATER ADVISORY Redside dace fish lose half their population. No one can drink the water.	WETLAND DRAINED A wetland is drained so it no longer filters the water. Now there is more pollution in a nearby stream. A Redside dace fish suffers.	CULVERT A natural water spring is diverted away from a wetland. A snapping turtle and a Jefferson salamander both lose their damp hiding place.	LEAKY SOIL DUMP Pollution leaks from a contaminated soil dump. Floods carry it into water habitat, hurting one fish and one amphibian.
MEGA-HIGHWAY Three bobolinks lose the farmland where they lived.	HOUSE CAT ON THE PROWL One flying squirrel leaves in search of safety.	HERBICIDE Someone decides they can't take the dandelions anymore. The herbicides pollute soil and kill nearby milkweed. A monarch butterfly goes hungry.	CLIMATE CHANGE A bobolink heads north hoping to find cooler nesting grounds.
WETLAND DRAINAGE A wetland is drained so it no longer acts as a sponge to prevent flooding. A bobolink's nest is ruined.			