

Winter 2005

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Greenways

Trails for Today and Tomorrow

Special Interest Articles:

Conference 2005
Professional Development
Cross-Border Event
Member News



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The opinions, ideas and thoughts contained in this publication are necessarily those of the OTC Board and Staff.

The Official Publication of the Ontario Trails Council/Conseil de sentiers de l'Ontario

OTC Conference an experience to savor and share!

Love life on Ontario trails? You are invited to Haliburton lakeside retreat, April 29-May 1, 2005 – by Frank Rasky

As big as Ontario is—over 250 million acres and home to over 250,000 lakes—one of the hottest issues in outdoor recreation today is about finding room enough for everyone who wants access to the province's natural playgrounds.

From border to border, on land or on water, hikers, mountain bikers, horse riders, snowshoers, snowmobilers, canoeists, kayakers, jet boat skiers and ATVers contend with property owners, farmers, developers—and one another. Encounters can leave wilderness advocates wondering whom to support: those who travel trails by foot, or those riding on two wheels, four tires or four hooves.

The Ontario Trails Council will host members of these diverse outdoor groups at its' three-day annual conference, Friday, April 29 through Sunday, May 1. The theme is Sharing the Experience – Experience the Sharing. Join us as we meet challenges and enact solutions to shared use issues. Anyone who loves life on Ontario's trails and waterways is invited.

"Trails can be an agent for developing mutual support and common purpose," says OTC conference committee chair Bill Bowick. "User groups can learn to respect each other. When they do, they can set aside differences and focus instead on shared values—love of the outdoors, trails, and concern for the environment."

Assisted by the Haliburton Highlands Trails and Tours Network, the 2005 OTC event will take place at Camp Wanakita, a YMCA outdoor centre 12 km south of Haliburton Village on Koshlong Lake. Cradled by 1,000 forested acres, the lakeside retreat offers a peaceful setting, abundant recreation and comfortable overnight accommodation.

More than 200 guests may stay at Wanakita's modern cottages and rustic dorm-style rooms, with dining room, lounge and fireplace, washroom and shower facilities. Other amenities include trails at your doorstep, canoes and kayaks, and an indoor area for table tennis, darts and games. Bring your own bed linen, towels, blankets or sleeping bag.

Along with a full slate of trail-related speakers, seminars and interactive workshops, the conference will provide registrants with a wine and cheese party on Friday, campfire gathering on Saturday, and opportunities to paddle the lake or participate in guided hikes.

The new OTC professional development program merges learning-in-the-classroom with practical fieldwork. Experienced trail hands and educators will guide registrants through the complexities of planning, constructing and maintaining trails.

Price of the three-day spring weekend, which includes hearty meals, indoor and outdoor activities and lodging, has been kept to a minimum. Organizers have made the event as affordable as possible for all who wish to partake in an experience to savor and share.

For registration and costs, call toll-free 1-877-ON TRAIL (1-877-668-7245) or go online to www.ontariotrails.on.ca

Snowmobilers Respect Landowners—from the OFSC

Do your part to show appreciation to landowners that volunteer the use of their land for snowmobile trails.

Remember:

1. Stay on the trail.
2. Leave the stakes intact.
3. Leave gates and fences alone.
4. Respect equipment and property.
5. Avoid farm animals and pets.
6. Please respect that the trail is for snowmobile use only.
7. Permission has been given only for winter use.
8. Use only when the trail is open.
9. Respect the Landowner.



Landowners are not compensated for allowing their land to be used for a snowmobile trail. In this sense, they too, are an integral part of the voluntary system that makes organized snowmobiling work in Ontario.

Like anyone, landowners that volunteer the use of their land appreciate even the smallest recognition for their contribution. Often, club members and snowmobilers who simply say "thanks" when they meet a landowner accomplish this. It is certainly achieved when landowners see snowmobilers respecting their land. However, increasingly there are also organized programs for landowner appreciation.

Many snowmobile clubs host "Landowner Appreciation" events or present their landowners with "Thank You" gifts. The OFSC recognizes the irreplaceable contribution of private landowners to organized snowmobiling provincially too. This winter, the OFSC Landowner Appreciation Program will again provide prizes for a landowner draw in each OFSC district.

However, careless riders can easily undermine all of this important effort, good will and positive reinforcement. So why not be a part of the OFSC Landowner Appreciation Program this winter?

Follow the "Call-of-the-Wild" this winter

Experience a means of travel unlike any other. Dog sledding, Canada's traditional mode of winter travel is making a comeback! Nothing compares to being at one with a team of dogs, traveling through the silent woods with only the breath of the dog team, and the hiss of the sled on the snow! Our Parks and trails provide wondrous landscapes – let some of Ontario's best outfitters take you along for a ride – whether for an hour, a day, or overnight!

Get details on [Dog sledding packages](#) .

- ① [Dog sledding at Haliburton Forest](#)
- ① [One to Five Day Algonquin Dog Sled Adventures](#)
- ① [Half-Day Dog Sled Adventure](#)



President's Message – Bev McCarthy



"Our members are the bedrock of our council."

The last few months have been extremely busy for all of the supporters of the OTC. As President, I have had the opportunity to participate in so many trail-related activities. This includes, consultations, planning meetings, community trail group meetings and trail outings too.

My fellow volunteers and I are in the process of ensuring that the sustainability of the OTC is ensured into the future. During a winter retreat of Board members in Haliburton in January, we all worked together to look at the scope of work for the next few years. This led to the development of a comprehensive OTC trail service plan for the next three years.

This is great news for trail users and our members. The leadership of the OTC is poised to enact programs and services we believe will aid you to the greatest extent possible. We are unveiling our own trail builder certification programs at our conference, branding and extending the Trillium Trail Network, and making a full and important contribution to the provincial government by being the lead organization to the process. Our position as leader is directly related to OTC's ability to present your needs as trail supporters and trail managers throughout Ontario. The great thing about being President is not only my ability to meet so many community supporters all over Ontario, but most importantly, to listen to your concerns and then translate your needs into meaningful actions that respond to your needs.

During December and January, the OTC has been present at all Ministry of Tourism and Recreation Trails Strategy meetings. Working with our Executive Director and Past President, I've been highly supportive of their efforts to ensure that the process works on behalf of all trail groups in our membership and that the best possible public trails policy is developed. We have represented your interests to the government. We need you to do the same during local consultation meetings.

In closing, I invite you and your organization to participate in our Spring conference, April 30 to May 2, in Haliburton. We have the government leaders on the Trails Strategy, Mr. Tim Peterson and his staff making presentations. This will be their first representation to the trail community on the Provincial Trails Strategy. We will also be providing hands on trail building education programs for staff and volunteers. Our retreat method is working for our own volunteers; make it work for you as well.

I look forward to meeting you in Haliburton in April!

Bev

Reach Bev through the OTC – admin@ontariotrails.on.ca

Executive Director's Report –Patrick Connor

Capturing the wonder of trails.

The comprehensive scope of trails in terms of public value is quite startling. In Ontario, the number of trail volunteers, users and people engaged in trails related activity represents an as of yet completely catalogued number. This should not be too surprising. Unlike hospitals or theaters, there is no receipt or box office gate that allows for a quick snapshot of use. In addition, there is no quick and easy tally for an accurate analysis. However, there are a few things that we know and can say for sure.

Trails are valued and supported by at least 85 different municipal government departments or services. Health units support them, trail associations, provincial parks, conservation authorities, user groups, sports organizations, nature conservancy associations. This is not meant to be read as a list of lists, rather as an indicator of value.

Trails exist in every area of Ontario. In addition, they are valued parts of parks, waterfront areas, provincial parks and urban environments. Trails are promoted, developed and maintained by thousands of staff and volunteers all over Ontario. Trails are used by all types of people from all types of cultural background.

Why are such investments of time, energy and activity made? It is possible that the wide public accessibility of an already existing infrastructure could be an answer. However, it is also possible that many families find family unity through the enjoyment of outdoor sport or recreational activity. Furthermore, it is entirely likely that the marketing of products may have a hand in the creation of a desire to engage in a motorsport that involves a trail setting.

Trails are a resource we all share in one form or another. Like other infrastructure the public uses, the sharing of a valued commodity involves managed allocation of sharing. Without these managed processes, there is confusion, conflict and possible injury. This type of controlled response is enacted in other activity areas, as in the controlled use of a road surface, which implements regulation and safe use practices through licensing and policing practices.

However, user behavior on a freely accessed, 24/7 infrastructure like a road is the best determinant of safety during shared use surface. This is also the logic behind the Ontario Trails Council's history of work on trail etiquette. Compiled from a variety of other user groups, the OTC Etiquette practices are published on our web site, on trail signs on some trail systems, and available on DVD.

Capturing the public demand for access, and the wide variety of uses during any daily period, it is important that the control of trail systems does not eliminate the freedom to explore and value nature. In many ways all trail users are at very least outdoors enthusiasts. As enthusiasts we all bear a responsibility to ensure that the experience we value, our outdoor trail experience is available to the next person. After all our trails are your trails, unless otherwise posted.

So let's all capture, and then release, the wonder of trails through trail respect and responsibility.



Trail Conference Hits the Trail – by Bill Bowick

OTC Launches Trail Builder Certification Program

And now for something completely different . . .

Even if you live in the city, you probably think of trails in terms of outdoor or even wilderness experiences. Well, here's a chance to really experience these things – but in relative luxury. The 2005 Ontario Trails Council conference will be held at Camp Wanakita on Koshlong Lake in Haliburton. This rustic facility located on a 1000 acre forested site offers year-round accommodation in heated cabins with modern indoor toilet facilities.



The camp has a reputation for great food and offers lots of outdoor recreation. The only thing that makes it rugged is that you must bring your own bedding (sleeping bag) and comforts (Teddy Bear). You may also bring your own recreational beverage but that's optional. Camp Wanakita is owned and operated by the Hamilton/Burlington YMCA. In addition to the children's programs one might expect, they offer a wide range of adult and family programs, especially in the "off" season. A visit to their web site www.ymca-wanakita.on.ca will show you the great facilities that can turn our annual meeting into a really fun trails retreat.

Last year's conference was held in an urban setting and focused largely on urban trails. This year's setting is rural. The theme 'Sharing experience – Experience sharing' reflects a focus on how trail groups and individuals, urban or rural; can work together for mutual support. Program plans include presentations, workshops, outdoor recreation and professional development sessions. The professional development program is being put together by recognized educators and will be used to launch the OTC Trail Builder certification program. The presentations and workshops all have an interactive tone which will ensure that the conference is a place to learn while having fun together.

Mark your calendar now; April 29 to May 1 – after the snow but before the black flies. Then watch for more information – next issue of Greenways, e-bulletins or on our web site www.ontariotrails.on.ca. It's back to camp with softer beds, flush toilets and food much, much better than you remember. This will be the way you want to remember camp.



Specialized Professional Development Programs

Trail Building

- Earn an IMBA Certificate in Trail Building
- Build an Accessible Trail
- Develop and Plan Your Trail – Planning, Policies, Politics and Practices systems
- Assess and Minimize the Environmental Impact of Your Trails
- Join a discussion with Parks and Recreation Ontario, the Ontario Parks Association and OTC, as we examine programs and services that use trails to facilitate Active 2010

Shared Practices

- Learn ways to share the land
- Economic sustainability via shared use
- Involve business in your trail
- Steps to developing a multi-use
- Creative Conflict Resolution-Learn to limit conflict and promote user peace
- Training Trail Stakeholders: Implement a Partnership Approach
- Training in Trail Etiquette – Learn skills to implement effective etiquette

Celebrate International Trails Day - June 4, 2005

Get your trails clubs to a bridge near You!

Since November 2004 a group of hard working and earnest Americans and Canadians from the Niagara region have been focused on efforts to symbolize the International Trails Day via the meeting of our trail users in the area. The significance is that the trail community has a profile event that illustrates our significance to trade, our communities and profiles our activity in concert with the Active 2010 agenda.



In January a bulletin was forwarded to each of the cross-border areas encouraging them to pursue similar efforts with their cross border cousins. These are local events that the OTC is supporting provincially and we are asking that the provincial cycling and hiking, trail and user groups contact their local border members to see if they are focusing on events such as the closure of part of the Peace Bridge so that trails users may crossover on June 4th. For more information go to www.ontariotrails.on.ca/crossborder.htm and **WATCH FOR** www.binationalniagaratrails.org, and the e-mail is trailsday@gnrtc.org for information from our American friends!



Waterfront Trail Update

Progress at Port Union - Last December staff members of the Waterfront Trust were treated to a tour of the Port Union section of Waterfront Trail led by Larry Field, Waterfront Specialist for the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. This new section of multi-use Trail, once complete, will cover an area of approximately 3.6-km from Highland Creek to Port Union in the former City of Scarborough. In keeping with environmental regulations, fill has been added along the shoreline to create four headlands that will afford impressive views of the lake along the Trail. Interpretive signage will also be installed detailing the history of the area as an active wharf. For increased accessibility Trail users will be able to access this part of the Trail via the Rouge Hill GO Station, as plans are underway to construct a tunnel under the station providing a direct route to the Trail.

Phase I of the project (Highland Creek to Chesterton Shores) is slated for completion by spring 2006. Phase II (Chesterton Shores to Rouge Park) will be completed in 2008. This project is part of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation's \$25 million in funding to revitalize Toronto's waterfront outside of the downtown core. To view pictures of the construction site go to: www.wrtrust.ca

Pickering's Western Gateway - John McMullen, Coordinator of Landscape and Parks Development for the City of Pickering recently gave Waterfront Trust staff members a tour of the western gateway of Pickering's Waterfront Trail section. Pending Council approval, the City of Pickering will begin this year to construct an asphalt connection of the Waterfront Trail from Bella Road to the Rouge Hill Bridge making the Trail wheelchair accessible on both sides of the bridge. In addition to the paved path, construction will also include handrails and new stairs. Pickering will also be building an octagonal overlook across the mouth of the Rouge River, creating a unique entry point into the Pickering section of the Waterfront Trail.



Waterfront Regeneration Trust

Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail

Hike Ontario - Become a Hike Leader

Standard Hike Leader Certification – 7 hours

Goals include an introduction for participants to the standards of a trained hike leader, instruction, and risk management for Day Hikes where the hike is no more than 2 km from road access. Hike Ontario also provides direction towards the Wilderness Day Hike Leader, and Wilderness Trip Hike Leader programs and other Hike Ontario programs.



Much of the emphasis is instructional but, as a certification program, a significant portion of the agenda is assessment and skill evaluation. The certification issued to the successful candidates is a sanctioned standard and will assist the candidates in leading club hikes, and finding work in Provincial Parks, Youth Camps, Scouts and Guides. Expectations include:

- Demonstrate good physical fitness and the ability to move confidently and efficiently when traveling on trail.
- Present a positive and commanding attitude on safety when leading a group.
- Demonstrate a high standard of leadership and route finding.
- Show ability to establish effective communication about the hiker's safety, comfort, and enjoyment.
- Demonstrate a respect and care for the environment.
- Have a proper standard of equipment as required for day hiking trips.

To be eligible to take this course and, thereby become a Standard Hike Leader, students must have completed a minimum of five-day hikes and present a letter of reference and/or recommendation from a recognized authority. (i.e. a certified Hike Leader, a teacher, a hiking club, etc.)

Niagara Timberline Riders and East Side Canal Trail Update

East Side Trail Update: We met with the GNCR Committee regarding the notification and marking of hazards along the trail. We were given the contact numbers of the Parks and Recreation committees for each of the three communities that are responsible for the upkeep of the trail.



Port Colborne has agreed to supply us with permanent hazard signs that we can place in the Port Colborne section of the trail. It was also suggested that more trail indicator signs be installed as well as the signs that have been vandalized and removed to be replaced. It was also suggested to have the posts spray painted florescent red to give greater visibility especially for the snowmobilers, Timber-line has agreed to spray the post with paint supplied by the municipalities.

The Region has also committed to move ahead with the installation of the main trail entrance signs at the north and south end of the trails. We are also in the process of re-signing the EST agreement between the user groups and the municipalities. We promised to keep up the terms of the agreement regarding monthly patrols and periodic cleanup of the trail system. The Upper Canada Equestrians and Timber-line are planning a joint cleanup effort in the spring.

We have also defined the necessary steps to obtain permission by the user groups to hold organized activities along the trail system - **Gary Price, Pres. - Feb.0**

Editor's Note

This page is dedicated to our members and their upcoming events. Please contact us with your information so that it can be included. Email information to

admin@ontariotrails.on.ca

Make sure there is enough lead time to allow the event to be published before it happens. Deadline for next issue:

May 2005

Upcoming Events – compiled by OTC Members

Trail Accessibility Training Sessions Listed below are three upcoming training opportunities related to making trails accessible to people of all abilities:

- **Monday March 21, 2005 - Universal Park Design for the 21st Century**, hosted by the Design Exchange, www.dx.org/ud.
- **Friday May 27, 2005 - Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access**, hosted by the Oak Ridges Trail Association, www.interlog.com/~orta/about.htm.
- **Saturday May 28 and Sunday May 29, 2005 - Universal Trail Assessment Process Coordinator Workshop**, hosted by the Oak Ridges Trail Association, www.interlog.com/~orta/about.htm

OFTR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Delta Hotel, Mississauga Road - Friday, April 1, 2005 - Doors open @ 6:00 P.M. The Ontario Federation of Trail Riders Annual General Meeting will be Friday April 1, 2005 starting at 7:00 PM. This year we will be using a great new location, the Delta Hotel located on Mississauga Road just south of the 401

Trail Rides

- **April 24 (Sun.) Beagle Bash** Turkey Point - Tom 519-469-3977 or benderfamily@porchlight.ca
- Turkey Point Hotel 9:00 A.M. Start Time
- **May 1 (Sun.) Mini Pine** Ponty Pool. - Rick/Debbie 416-439-6600 or ocmc@sympatico.ca
- **May 22 (Sun.) Northumberland** Cobourg - John 905885-4385

SUDBURY TRAIL STRATEGY

In response to the City of Greater Sudbury's Healthy Communities Initiative, Rainbow Routes, in partnership with City of Greater Sudbury Citizen & Leisure Services, will be conducting Public Input Sessions to garner trail ideas from the general public.

Citizens are encouraged to attend one of the following sessions:

Ward 1: Monday, March 21 Ward 2: Wednesday, March 23

Ward 3: Wednesday, March 30 Ward 4: Monday, April 4

Ward 5: Wednesday, April 6 Ward 6: Monday, April 11

Times and places are still to be announced so stay tuned to RRA for more information.

Provincial Hiking Day - April 24 - contact Hike Ontario for more information!!
www.hikeontario.com

NEW OTC MEMBERS - WELCOME TO ALL!

City of Burlington
Ontario Equestrian Federation
City of Greater Madawaska
City of
Toronto Bicycling Network
Hamilton Conservation
Halton Conservation

If you know of an organization in need of trails issues support e-mail them about the OTC – www.ontariotrails.on.ca

THE ONTARIO
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LA FONDATION
TRILLIUM DE L'ONTARIO

The OTC used Trillium Funds in the design of its publications.

OTC Board of Directors – as at March 9, 2005

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Patrick Connor – OTC Executive Director execdir@ontariotrails.on.ca	

OTC fully engaged in the Provincial Trails Strategy - News

There have been at least 25 meetings amongst trails stakeholders, their provincial organizations and the representatives from the lead Ministry for trails: the Ministry of Tourism and recreation since December 2004.

For full Ontario Trails Council Trails Strategy reports contact the OTC office and we'll e-mail you a copy!

For detail posted by the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation go to:

http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ebr/english

For other important landowner issues and Greenbelt information go to: www.ontariotrails.on.ca/whatsnews.htm

For information on OTC initiatives related to trails funding go to: www.ontariotrails.on.ca/sample.htm

For information on how to become a member in order to fully participate and support the OTC in its efforts to support and build trails in Ontario go to: www.ontariotrails.on.ca/otc_feestructure.htm

For information on trails organizations in the province go to: www.ontariotrails.on.ca/trail_links_groups.htm

For information on trail insurance go to: www.ontariotrails.on.ca/otc-orec2.htm

For other OTC information or services please e-mail us at admin@ontariotrails.on.ca