

March 20, 2020

### A Message to Membership about the Use of Trails

HI - soon a joint statement from Ontario Trails, Ontario Parks Association and Parks and Recreation Ontario will be issued regarding COVID-19, trails, parks and open spaces.

In the meantime, I wish to share with you a statement from OTC.

At this time of social distancing, as a measure to reduce the spread of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), as recommended by the WHO, the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario, members of Ontario Trails are either keeping their trails open or closing them. At this point 56% are closed and 44% are open. The response is different based on each trail oversight organization.

Ontario Trails is tracking who is open and who is closed. Many trails are closing for non-covid-19 reasons or would be closed at this time due to seasonal issues. Too muddy, no snow. Ontario's Snowmobile season has ended so they are closed, dirt bike, ATV and ORV are largely off until the ground is dry. Snowshoe, dog-sledding and cross-country skiing is winding down.

As we head into spring, usually a time for more walking, hiking, bird watching and other non-motorized activity you can still achieve important health benefits on open trails. If you go out, practice social distancing in your activity.

Trail activities such as hiking, walking, running, paddling, equestrian, or dirt bike are very individual so social distancing is almost at the core of the activity. Group situations either for training, hike leadership, bird watching, trail building and group rides, should be curtailed.

We encourage you to follow our trail conditions page at: <https://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/learn/current-conditions> for open and closed trail notices.

We encourage you to follow our Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 page for links to updated health awareness and advisory information.  
<https://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/novel-coronavirus-covid19>

Stay safe and enjoy the outdoors.



Wayne Terryberry, President  
Ontario Trails Council

