

Oak Ridges Trail Association

We are the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) and we want you to join us! Come out on one of our organized hikes on weekdays and weekends. Completing a hike is exhilarating. The fun of meeting people who share the same love of the outdoors is gratifying. Get some good, low impact, enjoyable exercise and bring the children along, too.

At present about 250 km of trail have been completed. The trail starts with a link to the Caledon Trailway near Palgrave in the west and continues to the town of Gores Landing on Rice Lake in the east. The trail will be extended further to the east in the future.

History

The first attempt to provide a trail along the Oak Ridges Moraine was undertaken in 1973 when the Ontario Trail Riders' Association established the equestrian Great Pine Ridge Trail. It used existing roads for the most part.

A system of public recreational trails along the full length of the Moraine, from Albion Hills in the west to the Northumberland Forest in the east (about 160 km), was a visionary idea developed by a group of volunteers gathered together in October 1991 through the co-operation of STORM Coalition (Save the Oak Ridges Moraine Coalition), the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and Hike Ontario.

As a result, the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) was officially inaugurated in May 1992 at a public meeting at Albion Hills. The main objective of the Association is to develop and secure the Oak Ridges Trail, *"... thereby promoting an appreciation and respect for the Moraine's ecological, cultural, and scenic integrity, with the aim of retaining the trail corridor in its natural state"*.

The Association

The Oak Ridges Trail Association is an incorporated body with charitable status, governed by a Board of Directors elected at an annual meeting. The Board includes coordinators responsible for the trail, membership, newsletters, promotion and organized outings. All members can have input into trail identification and development and vote on ORTA business.

ORTA "Chapters"

The Association is organized into ten "Chapters" along the Moraine, so that local knowledge and expertise can be used to plan, develop and maintain the trail. The Chapters are: Caledon, King, Aurora, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch/Stouffville, Uxbridge, Scugog, Clarington, Hope/Hamilton and Northumberland. Each is represented on the Board of Directors.

Trail Development And Links

Chapters continue working to extend the Oak Ridges Trail at the east end of the Moraine; to seek new, improved routes; to develop interesting side trails; and to forge links with other trails.

In Caledon, the Oak Ridges Trail links to the TransCanada Trail and the Caledon Trailway, and thus to the Bruce Trail and Humber Valley Heritage Trail. Our trail links in Aurora to the Nokiidaa Trail along the Holland River; in Uxbridge to the Trans Canada Trail; and in Hope Township to the Ganaraska Trail.

While most trail development is done by the ORTA membership, there are opportunities for other groups to help and such aid is much appreciated.

Supporting the Oak Ridges Trail Association

Become a Member

Members of the Oak Ridges Trail Association can enjoy regular hikes along sections of the Moraine. Members receive quarterly newsletters with information on trail progress, over 200 guided hikes and other items of interest to ORTA members. Members have input into trail development, vote on ORTA business and are invited to participate in trail building. Many events are planned at the Chapter level, providing a social network with like-minded individuals.

Membership fees are relatively inexpensive and provide important funds for trail development, maintenance, publications and promotion. Membership fees are considered donations and tax receipts will be issued each calendar year.

Your membership in ORTA demonstrates interest in the trail to provincial and local governments, influencing potential legislation and ensuring preservation and public enjoyment of the moraine.

ORTA promotes and practices conservation, restoration and an appreciation of the natural environment surrounding the Trail system. In other words, we help people understand why the Moraine should be protected.

For your membership send your cheque for \$30.00 to :
Oak Ridges Trail Association
P.O. Box 28544
Aurora, ON L4G 6S6

What are you waiting for? Come on. Join us. Lace up your boots. We've got over 200 km of trail waiting for you!