

CHAPTER THREE

COMPLETING THE MORAINE-WIDE TRAIL 2004 – 2009

Implementing A Strategic Plan for The Oak Ridges Trail and The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan

Continuing from Chapter Two the story of our development, at the Inaugural Meeting of our association back in 1992 the Oak Ridges Trail was envisaged to link with the Bruce Trail at Palgrave in the west and extend to the Northumberland Forest in the east. The Optimum Trail Alignment, a defining component of the Strategic Plan, extended our trail to the western extent of the moraine and eastwards through the Northumberland Forest to the eastern boundary of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

This significant change was to fulfil the intent of the Oak Ridges Conservation Plan for a trail system across the entire moraine. Re-routes were also desired in order that the trail be located in the Natural Core Areas and Natural Linkage Areas as much as possible.



During the preparation of the Strategic Plan, Trail Director Peter Schaefer had visited the eastern extremity. Castleton in the Township of Cramahe looked to be an appropriate location for the eastern gateway, but Peter famously reported: "There's not even a chip truck!" However the community enthusiastically embraced the idea and banners to that effect appeared in short order. Just beyond to the northeast Warkworth in the Municipality of Trent Hills offered the option of connecting to a future Hastings Heritage Trail.

Recapping from Chapter Two, the trail statistics as at December 2003:

Length of the Oak Ridges Trail 193 km.
Of this 40% was located on public roads, 18% on road allowances, 33% on public lands, and 9% on private lands.

Oak Ridges Trail Strategic Plan Advisory Committee

It was immediately realized that the task in hand was, to say the least, big. To date the trail had been established through the enthusiasm of our volunteers and the goodwill of landowners and public authorities. With development of the moraine-wide trail a requirement under the Act, ORMF recognized that implementation of the Strategic Plan in the five year time span – for which it would be the primary source of funds – needed some clout and accountability. The objective was now to provide a public recreational facility 'for all' not just a trail for avid hikers. Hence an Advisory Committee was convened with representatives of public and private stakeholders. Their first meeting was on May 10, 2004 after which they planned to meet quarterly. Trails Director Peter Schaefer represented the association.¹

Harold Sellers was convener and secretary, heading up implementation. His report to the ORTA Board following their initial meetings is included in Appendix 3.2. Subsequently he briefed the Board monthly with a note "Irons in the Fire." The committee was an important contributor to the process, but ultimately the responsibility lay with the Association.

Harold had the advantage of sharing space at The Gatehouse with the staff of the ORMF and the ORMLT. Over the next five years he clocked many miles meeting with representatives of municipalities, conservation authorities, regional forests, and other trail associations in addition to private landowners and local citizens. These negotiations were crucial as it was essential that the trail route be secure – a legacy for the foreseeable future. It was a busy time for all involved on the moraine as the trail was only one of seven project areas supported by the ORMF.

"He who pays the piper calls the tune." Not surprisingly the substantial funding provided by ORMF meant their agenda for trail development became ORTA's agenda. Through the wise leadership of Harold Sellers, and his incredible work ethic, the relationship between the two organizations became cordial and effective. ORTA's Board, and especially its Executive Committee, was at times left breathless, but Harold's continued leadership – as a volunteer - of the Wednesday Hike Program and introduction of the Discovery Night program kept him firmly in touch with the spirit of the membership.

¹ See Appendix 3.2 to this Chapter for the composition and initial deliberations of this committee.

Funding Development of the Trail and the Association

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation had been endowed with \$15,000,000 to provide grants towards achievement of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan over the five years 2004 -2009. ORMF recognized that development the moraine-wide trail system as spelt out by the Strategic Plan was ORTA's responsibility. In the first year they provided a grant of \$36,000 for the services of ORTA staff to work with the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee to detail implementation. Through the good efforts of ORTA's Finance Committee led by Tom Rance a matching grant of \$79,500 over two years was obtained from the Trillium Foundation towards office costs and supports such as accounting services.

Subsequently ORMF Grants were on a project basis. ORTA Executive Director had to submit proposals endorsed by the Board; in most cases matching funds were required. These are summarized in Chapter Ten, Appendix 10.

2004 – 2005

ORTA VOLUNTEERS WERE KEPT BUSY

ORTA now had an office with part-time services of an Administrative Assistant – later upgraded to Office Manager and of course the Executive Director. There was a significant change of pace. The Board had to approve the ED's proposals for submission to the grant authorities and review implementation recommendations. Administratively the association's Officers, especially Treasurer Barry Hammerton, were responsible for the finances. He created a new account, *The Strategic Plan Implementation Budget*. This was six times greater than the *ORTA Operations Budget*. The Financial Year, originally April – March, was changed to the Calendar Year making accounting to Revenue Canada and other authorities easier.

The planned pace of development meant the Executive Director rather than local Chapter Chairs took the initiative in approaches to landowners. However, it was necessary for local ORTA Members to accompany Harold, especially to public meetings, showing the association had real input in the developments. Trail Maintenance by the Trail Captains and chapter volunteers remained crucial.

Progress, re-routes and new side trails were announced in Trail Talk: The off-road section in Clarington was renewed along The Old Swamp Road; see the story in Chapter Five. Chapter Chair Roy Forrester received an award at the opening attended by local representatives including MP Bev Oder.

A new route was announced through the Long Sault Conservation Area. In Aurora the trail through the Case Woodlot was extended to Bathurst Street.

Our first section of Accessible Trail, The Woodland Passage Trail near Eaton Hall, was opened on October 8th in collaboration with Seneca College. It was marked at both ends by the prescribed UTAP signage.

On Saturday November 6th an Oak Ridges Trail Day was organized with activities in all seven chapters.

ORTA Members were also engaged with development of community trails which connected with the ORT: King City Trails, Uxbridge Naturally and the Nokiidaa Trail.



The Greenbelt Act 2005 and resulting Plan, February 28, 2005, provided for ecological protections similar to the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan to lands to the north and south of the Oak Ridges Moraine. It was not clear how these three plans would be integrated.²

²SGB: This remains an ongoing situation. The Oak Ridges Moraine is defined by geological features whereas the Greenbelt boundaries are the subject of political decisions and more easily changed.

The Second ORTA Retreat - Looking Ahead

Preparing plans for a voluntary association requires consultation with the Members. The Board Retreat in November 2000 had left the association open to embrace the developments leading to the Strategic Plan. The Executive Committee decided in October 2004 to again use the retreat format with an open invitation to Members to participate. Following an announcement at the AGM in April 2004 of the Board's desire to address wider issues, articles in *Trail Talk* invited Members to submit their ideas and concerns to their Chapter colleagues and the President.

A day long retreat was organized on February 26, 2005 at the Howard Johnson Hotel in Aurora to consider the way forward for the association. It was attended by most of the ORTA Board with, regrettably, only a few Members; 23 in total took the opportunity to participate. David Francis, Past President of Hike Ontario set up the day's discussions by likening the process to planning a hike:

We need to determine the Objective: **Where** are we intending to go?

This immediately leads to two criteria: **Which Route?** and **How Fast?**

Having decided the intentions we then need to communicate them to all potential participants.

"For each idea therefore which comes out of these discussions, we need to decide who's going to take ownership and ensure implementation. The owner/leader(s) will need to nurture the idea and then find a group of volunteers who will implement it. Too many ideas fail if attempted by loaners. Some have never been implemented due to not finding a group of volunteers to implement each effectively." To work, the implementation plan must embody the following criteria:

Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Time Frame

There were a good many ideas put forward, including:

Past-President Bob Ellison believed we should grow Membership to 1,500.

The role of "Members" vis-a-vis "Supporters."

More Social Activities.

Develop ideas for the educational curriculum for this region to promote the significance and care of the Moraine.

Stronger relationships with other moraine stakeholder organizations; e.g. cross representation on boards and by shared events.

Updating our Governance.

Should we engage staff beyond the scope required to implement the Strategic Plan? If so, how would they be funded?

Based on the discussions, President Stan Butcher drafted a "**Long Range Plan for the Oak Ridges Trail Association**" to address association's objectives over and beyond the trail development and operation as recommended in *A Strategic Plan for the Oak Ridges Trail*. The document was never formally accepted by the Board, but, with notes of progress being annotated, it remained useful over the next few years, for example when briefing new Directors.³

AGM 2005 at Garriock Hall, King Campus of Seneca College

In addition to the normal reports by Chapter Chairs, Directors and Committees, the meeting considered important changes to our financial operations. ORTA now had two separate accounts:

Operations Budget of around \$40,000 p.a. funded by membership dues, donations, sales and interest on reserves.

Strategic Plan Implementation Budget of around \$240,000 p.a. receives grants and private donations to pay for office, staff and trail developments.

Changes to the Constitution were approved clarifying the Membership categories: Member, Student Member, Life Member and Honorary Member. Each Membership is entitled to one vote at Annual and Special Meetings. Landowners were made Honorary Members by resolution of the Board – *See Chapter Nine*.

³ A print copy of the draft with some notes on implementation can be obtained from the ORTA Office.

"Just in time for summer"



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at time of order
and write "Golf Shirt" on bottom of cheque.
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The President explained that our basic operating costs far exceeded our Membership revenues. We had become dependent on donations. To avoid a deficit in future years the Membership fees were increased:

Membership to \$30.00 p.a.,
Student Membership to \$20.00 p.a. and
Life Member to \$450.00.

Barry Hammerton, who as Treasurer had provided excellent leadership in this year of change, was retiring to Victoria, B.C. He was fittingly given the Outstanding Member Award.

The year ahead would not be easy as the positions of Treasurer, Vice-President, Volunteer Coordinator and Fundraising Chair remained to be filled.

The Guest Speaker was Father Leo Cameron of Mary Lake Monastery; he had opened the property to the ORT in our early days. Father Leo gave a most interesting and entertaining talk about the life of a Friar, including his own as a Friar and Dairy Herdsman; later a Priest in the Order of Saint Augustine, and the property's developments across the years: the lake, church, retreat centre and their pilgrims.



2005 – 2006 EXTENSIONS AND IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS

An important milestone was announced by a Press Conference at Queens Park on June 21, 2005 jointly with the Bruce Conservancy - the 2.9 km extension of the Oak Ridges Trail along the Caledon Trailway to join the Bruce Trail at Palgrave. Sadly it was poorly attended and received little media attention due to other happenings in the Legislature that day.

ORTA's office at The Gatehouse, Seneca College, King City, was staffed five days a week since it was shared with the ORMF. Administrative Assistant, Judy Arsenault, was able to make timely responses to many questions from Members and the general public, thus contributing to the objective of increasing the public awareness of the trail and the moraine. In the fall she was succeeded by Donna Massaar.

Meetings of the Executive Committee became more frequent as the suggested projects and funding applications needed their approval. Linda Tyndall and Ken Kishibe came on board in the vital roles as Treasurer and Volunteer Coordinator respectively. There was a heavy emphasis on Fundraising; in particular *The Adventure Relay* was conceived with a proposed date of September 10, 2006.

Executive Director Harold Sellers continued his work to implement the ORT Strategic Plan – getting the trail into the Optimum Corridor, improving access, parking and signage. He encouraged Tim Lawley, who had retired to Cobourg, in his personal "marathon" working towards establishing the trail through the Northumberland County Forest and on to the eastern extremity of the moraine.

Developers constructed the new southern route of the main trail in the Natural Core Area of the Moraine crossing Yonge Street beside Bond Lake in Richmond Hill. *See Chapter Three: Richmond Hill.* In King Chapter the Millar and King City Side Trails were opened. In Scogog a short length of the main trail was moved off-road into the Purple Woods Conservation Area; this was the culmination of an approach two years earlier to the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA.) It also provided the trail's first steps in the City of Oshawa.

At the AGM at the Goodwood Community Centre on April 8th 2006 the Guest Speaker was Andre Flys, President of the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust and a grandson of Charles Sauriol whose advocacy for conservation in the 1950s had led to the creation of the MTRCA. The ORMF provided funds for ORMLT's Land

Securement Officer Alan Stacey to focus on lands for the trail; ORTA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the ORMLT to secure easements for the trail.

Reference to the list of Board Members in Appendix 3.1 will reveal several changes in the Board. Local politician Anthony Reale came on board as Vice-President.

Fiona Cowles launched the 4th Edition of *The Guidebook* with additional, larger, maps than the previous edition to accommodate the additional lengths of trail.

2006 – 2007 TRAIL AND ASSOCIATION DEVELOPMENTS

The Aurora Chapter was sub-divided with 84 Members ceding to form the Richmond Hill Chapter. They participated in community events through the summer and formed a chapter committee in the fall.

Agreements were completed with the University of Toronto and the Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority for a spectacular trail through Jokers Hill, Koffler-Bales Scientific Reserve to the Thornton Bales Conservation Area.

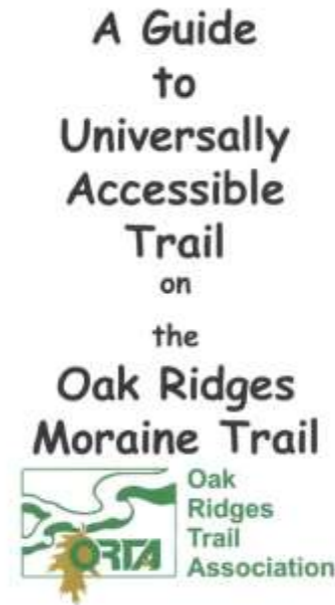
Summer 2006 saw several trail developments by ORTA volunteers and our partners which necessitated updates to the recently published 4th Edition of the Guidebook. The Gate House Side Trail linked our office to the main trail; the Rahmani Tract was acquired by CLOCA with assistance from ORMF; and TRCA constructed a new parking lot at Secord. These were detailed in the Fall *Trail Talk* and sheets were produced for insertions in The Guidebook. See Appendix 8.

Accessible Trails

There were now eight lengths of trail which had been surveyed by ORTA volunteers using the Universal Trail Assessment Process and signs installed.

- Woodland Passage Trail at Seneca College near Eaton Hall
- Sheppard's Bush and Holland River Trail in Aurora – 4 lengths
- Whitchurch Conservation Area
- Secord Pond near Goodwood
- Swamp Road Trail, Village of Leskard, Clarington

A 16 page guide was published with financial assistance from *Active 2010* and the ORMF – selected pages opposite.



This booklet was created to help trail users evaluate sections of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail which have been assessed for accessibility by people with disabilities. The Universal Trail Assessment Process has been used.

In these pages you will find maps and location directions for those portions of trail which have been assessed by the Oak Ridges Trail Association. Also included are UTAP Trail Access Information pages for each trail section.

The TAI pages provide the required information to determine if the trail is useable by the person with the disability.

Comments are welcome to:

Oak Ridges Trail Association
P.O. Box 28544
Aurora, Ontario
L4G 6S6

Acknowledgements:

The Oak Ridges Trail Association acknowledges the support of the Communities in Action Fund, Active 2010 (Ministry of Health Promotion) and the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation.



Woodland Passage Trail
Seneca College - King Campus

Trail Uses

- Hiking
- Cross-Country Biking

Trail Length 0.3 mi (0.5 km)
Linear trail

Cumulative Elevation Change Gain 48 ft (14 m)

Typical Grade is 3.4%
80% of the trail is between 2% and 6%
632 ft (394 m) is between 2% and 6%
5% grade is a standard ramp.

Typical Cross Slope is 2.1%
81% of the trail is between 2% and 6%
794 ft (342 m) is between 2% and 6%

Typical Tread Width is 122 in (310 cm)
Tread Width ranges from 87 in (223 cm) to 138 in (350 cm)

Trail Surface is Aggregate/Gravel
100% of the trail is Firm or better
1555 ft (474 m) of the trail is Firm or better

Trailhead Location

- 1) Parking lot on road to Eaton Hall
- 2) Eaton Hall

Trail Access Information

Warning: Trail conditions may have changed since the last assessment. Temporary site closure (e.g. fallen trees or land slides) may not have been mapped. Maximum grade and cross-slope may vary.

The report is generated by Trailblazer which has been created by Deschamps Design Inc.



Directions: Enter the Seneca property off Dufferin St., approx. 2.5 km north of King Road. There is an entrance fee. Follow the signs for Eaton Hall. Parking instructions on next page.



Our name, *The Oak Ridges Trail Association* had been registered in 2003. In 2006 the Logo was registered as a Trade Mark.

A grant was received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for ORTA to produce a management plan for the **Seaton Trail** in partnership with the City of Pickering and the TRCA. A "Friends of the Seaton Trail" group was to be formed to maintain this trail; however the initial survey revealed that reconstruction works were required which were well beyond the capability of volunteers. See the *Addendum to this Chapter*.

The principals of Life Adventures, Steve Menzie and Stacie Smith, had presented the concepts of **The Moraine For Life ADVENTURE RELAY** and *Scavenger Hunt* at

the AGM. However delays in obtaining sponsors led to their being postponed from September 2006 until June 2007. See *Chapter 11*.

The **Richmond Hill Hikers' Club** program was established in partnership with the Town of Richmond Hill. New hikers enjoyed eight local walks and on completion received a one year ORTA Membership as part of the registration fee.

On Thursday, January 18, 2007 the first **ORTA Discovery Night** was held at the Ballantrae Community Centre. Elizabeth Stewart gave a spectacular presentation of her visit to the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Raising Public Awareness. ORTA Members had always put a lot of effort into events to publicize the trail and our hiking program as recounted in Chapter Six. This included slide shows and in later years PowerPoint presentations. The ORMF, aware that the wider public needed to see the moraine as a practical reality, provided funds as part of the 2006–2007 grant for an intensified campaign. This included funds for advertising in the local press, and, where necessary, rental of a suitable location. During this period Executive Director Harold Sellers, accompanied by local ORTA Members, conducted 23 speaking engagements at libraries, recreation centres and to community groups. Recorded attendance was 419; an average of 18 per event.

Some 17 public events – including the Aurora Street Festival, Earth Day activities and local festivals – were attended by ORTA Staff and Volunteers. Trail Openings at Secord Pond, Tottenham, Rahmani Tract, Purple Woods Conservation Area and Clarington were attended by community leaders and received local media attention

Under the leadership of Scugog Chapter Chair Elizabeth Stewart, the lakefront clubhouse at Port Whitby Marina was the setting for the **2007 Annual General Meeting on Saturday, April 28th**.



Penny Smith, Executive Director of Windreach Farm was our Guest Speaker. On the moraine and not far from our trail, Windreach Farm strives to enrich the lives of persons of all ages with disabilities and/or special needs by providing opportunities to enjoy experiences in farming, nature, outdoor recreation and other activities and to share those experiences with family and friends.

Certificates of Honorary Membership were presented to Landowners along the trail without whose cooperation there could be no continuous trail. As noted last year there were 21 private landowners, 12 municipalities and 3 conservation areas.

This meeting launched *The Moraine For Life Adventure Relay* with a call for the volunteers required at the checkpoints. Steve Menzie gave a slide presentation of the 160 km route in fourteen stages from Gore's Landing to The Gatehouse. He emphasized that this was to be an annual event to heighten the public awareness of ORTA and for ongoing fundraising. The date was set – Saturday June 16th.

2007 – 2008 THE FIRST ADVENTURE RELAY - AND MORE!

Farewell to Bob Ellison.

In May at a dinner at the Old Mill, Ancaster, we expressed our appreciation to Robert Ellison for his contributions to the association over fourteen years. Maureen and Bob had moved to Dundas – little did we know he was to become President of BTA's Iroquoia Chapter and later the Bruce Trail Conservancy!

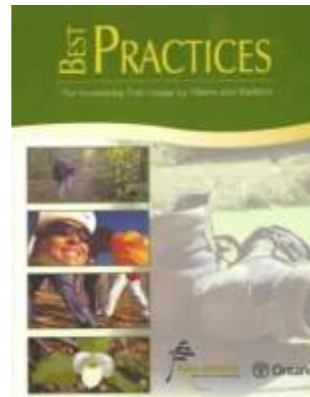


Organizing the First Adventure Relay

Many things required organizing for the first Adventure Relay. Not least was enrolling teams; early May it seemed there would only be two, but the Organizing Committee decided the relay should go ahead on Saturday June 16th 2007 to demonstrate its potential. Shortly before the date five more teams entered making 71 participants. The event was equally enjoyed by the 37 ORTA members and friends who staffed the checkpoints even though some volunteers at The Finish didn't get to go home until 4.30 a.m. on Sunday! The story is recounted in Chapter Eleven; it was considered such a success that planning for June 2008 commenced immediately.

Working with Hike Ontario

27 Hiking Clubs comprise Hike Ontario. ORTA has been an active participant in Hike Ontario's programs throughout our existence including sharing a booth at Canada Blooms several years. Our office at The Gatehouse had previously been Hike Ontario's. (Harold Sellers continued in the same space when he became our ED.) Thereafter for four years Hike Ontario rented a desk in our office with ORTA Member Virginia Johnson volunteering one day a week as their Office Manager. October 26-28 we hosted the First Annual Hike Ontario Summit in Aurora at which HO's *Best Practices Manual* was the major item promoted. Virginia was honoured for several years' service, in particular many hours compiling the manual.



Trail Clean-ups

A trail cleanup near Mosport International Raceway, Point of Interest *17, Map 7, was organized on October 10th 2007 69 (!) vehicle tires and piles of assorted garbage were hauled out of the ditches and between trees which the Municipality of Clarington employees trucked away.

Several workdays were required along the new route between Lakeridge Road and Ashburn Road in Scugog.

An Aurora crew found a home grow-op unit discarded in a ditch near the junction of Vandorf Sideroad and Leslie Street.

The 2008 Annual General Meeting on April 12th. at Wallace Hall, Richmond Hill. Sadly the attendance, 57 Members, was less than previous years despite a full program organized by the Chapter led by Ken Kishibe.

We were honoured by the presence of Dr. Reza Moridi, MPP for Richmond Hill, Mayor David Barrow and several Councilors who presented the ORTA Awards. Dr. Moridi observed that our Planet has a limited area, with the atmosphere having limited volume, whereas the population is growing and the impact enormous – all indications that we must be proactive in its protection. He stressed education towards awareness.

The reports and nominations reflected a healthy number of changes in the board and continuing progress in trail development. Prospects were good for the second Adventure Relay.

Congratulations were expressed to six members who were to receive Provincial Volunteer Awards at a ceremony in May recognizing their many years of community volunteer service through the Oak Ridges Trail Association:

- 15 Year Awards to Peter Attfield, Fiona Cowles, Jill Doble, Bill Roberts and Eric Worsley.
- 10 Year Award to Dennis Trowse.



Jill Doble, Wyn and Eric Worsley with President Stan Butcher at the Awards Ceremony

Guest Speaker Natalie Helferty of Ontario Nature gave a most interesting talk and slide show on the Richmond Hill biodiversity. Her parting words: "Give your heart to nature".

2008 – 2009**ACHIEVING THE MORAINE-WIDE TRAIL**

The Second Adventure Relay on Saturday June 14th 2008 was a great success with over 300 competitors in 22 teams. 68 volunteers staffed the check points. A lesson learned from last year was to start two hours earlier at 8.00 a.m. Times were faster – the Elite 7 Systems team came home in 10 hours 41 minutes and the last team to finish took 16 hours and 25 minutes - so the organizers all got home at a more respectable hour than last year.

Acknowledging a Dedicated Volunteer

Virginia Johnson made significant contributions to Aurora Chapter activities, to the association funds through the creation of the *Meaningful Alternatives* program and to Hike Ontario. Ginny, as those who worked alongside her called her, lost a long battle with cancer. On Sunday September 7th 2008 many friends joined her daughter Carolyn on a hike in her memory from The Gatehouse to Mary Lake.



Memorial Bench alongside the Gatehouse Side Trail

**Harold Sellers Announces his Plan to Leave**

Towards the end of 2008 Harold Sellers advised the Board of his intention to move to British Columbia for family reasons in the summer of 2009. Thus it fell to the ORTA Board to take the lead in discussions over future funding and relationships with our partners STORM and ORMLT, noting that each was facing the need to appoint a new ED during the year. The project outlined below absorbed a lot of our Board Members' time during the ensuing two crucial years.

The Strategic Leadership and Management Project.

There was concern that ORMF's mandate might not be extended beyond 2009 and thus our primary source of Strategic Plan funding would come to an end. ORMF funded, through ORTA, a study by Ruth Armstrong of VISION Management Services of the relationships between us. The Phase I Report confirmed that many individuals, private foundations and government agencies were confused regarding the roles of the four organizations.⁴

Subsequent discussions in June identified a possible way forward: [THE MORAINE. FOR LIFE. - Working Together for the Oak Ridges Moraine](#) - through common branding, publicity and resource sharing. These concepts were approved by each organization's board in August 2008. To develop them a Development Officer was appointed, funded by grants from ORMF and Trillium to 2011. The Addendum to this chapter outlines why this study did not lead to a collaborative organization.

The other outcome of the Phase I Report was a dialogue led by Ruth Armstrong on ORTA's Governance in August. ORTA's "Traditional Working Board," potentially 24 positions, was cumbersome and there were often vacancies, especially for Chapter Chairs. The recommendation was to have a relatively small "Policy Board" with Regional Committees responsible for operations. This change was incrementally accomplished – see Chapter Four.

Extending to the West and East

Led by Harold Sellers work continued at a frenetic pace towards completion of the trail to the extremities of the moraine. It's difficult to mention some volunteers' contributions since there's a risk of omitting others, but new Trail Director Garry Niece, Tim Lawley, Bob Comfort and Brian Millage come immediately to mind as volunteers who contributed many hours of work in the field.

⁴ STORM had initiated the *Monitoring the Moraine* project in preparation for the review of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act due in 2014.

Other organizations with a role in care of the moraine included the Conservation Authorities' Moraine Coalition, Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Moraine Watch – a collaborative project between STORM and Citizen's Environment Watch. Greenbelt's highway signs had added to public confusion.

Going west the trail was blazed through Palgrave Forest and negotiations were in hand for a route in the Optimum Trail Corridor through Simcoe County to a junction with the Bruce Main Trail at Airport Road, Mono Mills.

The Main Trail was extended eastward along Donaldson Road and Beaver Road, then through the western section of the Northumberland Forest to Highway 45 at Morris Road, northeast of Cobourg (Map 11). The Township of Hamilton section from Donaldson Road to our original eastern terminus at Gore's Landing was consequently designated as a Side-trail.

The Northumberland County Forest Advisory Committee had been set up in 2007 to address the complex multi-use recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized users. Some areas needed restoration and our wish for a safe hiking route complicated the issues. There were numerous meetings, workshops, and field trips. In March 2009 the selected routes were presented at a second Open House; not everyone was happy. Beyond the forest plans steady progress was being made for routes to the planned trail heads at Castleton and Warkworth.

Strategic Directions 2009 – 2014

The Strategic Plan Advisory Committee acknowledged the significant achievements over the past five years, in particular that the trail would be moraine-wide by the end of 2009. They noted some significant items in the 2004 – 2009 Strategic Plan had not yet been realized, but accepted that there had been delays beyond ORTA's control.⁵ The updated plan *Strategic Directions 2009 - 2014* was prepared without consultation with the ORTA Board, although Peter Schaefer and Stan Butcher were invited to the final meeting. The plan was based on the assumption ORTA would continue to have a full-time Executive Director and supporting staff.⁶

In receiving the plan the Board accepted the recommendation of Peter and Stan that the key phrase be added:

"Implementation of this strategic plan will be conditional upon availability of human and financial resources."

⁵ For example some rural Municipalities were unhappy about restrictions placed on their development by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act and had yet to update their Official Plans in compliance.

⁶ Print copies are still available from the ORTA Office.

2009 AGM at Ballantrae – a new format

The AGM on Thursday evening April 16, 2009 was at Ballantrae Community Centre which had become a popular time and venue for Discovery Nights. It was preceded by a lunch with bar service giving folk an opportunity to mingle. "*What Lies Beneath*" was the subject of Guest Speaker Judy Gilchrist's presentation on the importance of the Oak Ridges Moraine and our partner the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust.

Five and a Half Stellar Years - the Moraine-wide Trail is Complete

Harold Sellers was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of all he achieved for ORTA as Executive Director and during many hours volunteer service as a Board Member, President and Hike Leader *par excellence*.

His final report as Executive Director noted "all the necessary developments were in hand to complete the trail across the moraine."⁷ When the extensions to Mono Mills, Castleton and Warkworth are completed the Main Trail will be 273 km long. The 5th Edition of The Guidebook to be published later in the year-end will include them."

**Current length of the Oak Ridges Main Trail is 226 km (193 km)
of which 116 km (75 km) are in the Optimum Trail Corridor.**

**68 km (46 km) is now on public lands
114 km (106 km) is located off-road**

Plus there are 28 (18) Side Trails adding up to 72 km (48 km.)

Trail lengths accessible to persons with disabilities: 12 km (0)

There are 23 parking lots in service.

(Values at the beginning of 2004 in parenthesis.)

⁷ See tables from ORMF's closing report at the end of this chapter, page 315.



Harold’s Last End-to-End Walk

At the Second ORTA Retreat in 2005 it had been recommended that association staff should make some personal input towards funding their salaries.

Leaving Palgrave on Friday April 24th Harold set out for a nine day E2E walk Palgrave to Gores Landing. On the Thursday evening his route through Bethany was via a Community Well-being Symposium organized by STORM.

He was accompanied by some thirty members for portions of the walk and Cathy Simpson received her End-to-End Badge for accompanying him the whole way. After pictures at the waterfront twenty of us sat down for a meal at Pitcher’s Place.

This sponsored walk raised \$9,465 for the *Strategic Plan Implementation Fund*.

Farewell to Hiker Harold.

Harold continued to be busy assisting the team of ORTA Volunteers who were assuming responsibility for the Third Adventure Relay on June 20th, “GPSing” the



Seaton Trail as reconstruction was nearing completion and briefing ORTA Directors on the grant funded projects and reports which had to be finalized.

Harold’s five and a half years as Executive Director ended with a Farewell Party on July 23, 2009.

**ADDENDUM TO CHAPTER THREE
COMPLETING THE GRANT FUNDED PROJECTS**

A Crucial Executive Committee Meeting, June 11, 2009

How was ORTA to proceed as Harold Sellers prepared to leave? Inevitably, whilst funds remained to complete projects in progress, some could not be wrapped up by the end of July 2009.

Funding was anticipated from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the next phase of the project linking STORM, ORMLT and ORTA - *Working Together for the Oak Ridges Moraine*. ORTA needed to have an Executive Director to fulfil its responsibilities as lead agency. There were candidates interested in the Executive Director position, but there did not appear to be any prospect of receiving new funding which would allow this to be continued full-time.

Past-President Stan Butcher offered to be Interim Executive Director for a twelve month period, working as necessary about half-time; this was gratefully accepted.

Previously the association had been “of no fixed address” and some things may have gone astray with the various Presidents’ residences being used as the corporation’s Registered Address. ORTA had seen great benefit over the preceding five years of having an office and the part-time services of an Office Manager. There were operating funds available to continue this at least until the next financial year; the decision was made to continue the Gate House arrangement.

As the year progressed Stan noted he’d been Chair as ORTA began five years’ development led by an Executive Director; now he would participate in assisting the return to our roots as a volunteer led “Trail Association and Hiking Club.”

The Seaton Trail Project

This 11 km long spectacular hiking trail, created in the 1970s was in need of major renewal – in fact it was dangerous. This project was a carry-over of ideas from Harold Sellers’ work as Executive Director of Hike Ontario. Assisted by group of interested ORTA Members, Harold produced *A Report on the Condition of the Seaton Hiking Trail* in May 2004.



Ownership of the trail lay with the City of Pickering and the Ontario Realty Corporation; the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority also having an interest as it ran in the valley alongside West Duffins Creek.

This trail is not on the moraine but the project was a potential source of funds for ORTA by employing the expertise of our Executive Director to prepare the Management Plan for a safe trail, constructed to acceptable standards and guidelines for committed local volunteers who would take responsibility for trail maintenance and environmental protection.

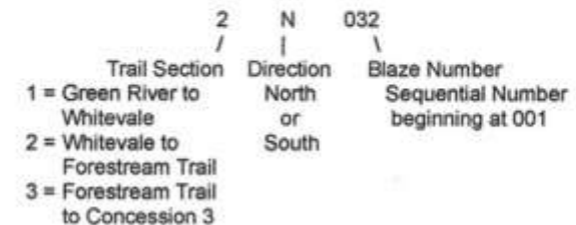
A committee was struck by the owners with Harold Sellers as Chair. An application in 2006 to the Ontario Trillium Foundation resulted in a grant of \$21,700 to undertake the above scope of work "over 18 months" i.e. to April 2008.

As things developed Harold became in all except title the Project Manager. The significant amount of re-construction work required the services of an appropriate commercial contractor. Ontario Heritage Foundation provided the funds – some \$800,000 – and Del Construction was appointed. All this took over a year longer than originally planned with construction nearing completion in May 2009.

Blazing is maintained by the Friends. Metal blazes have been used on the Trail, following the standard practices of the Oak Ridges and Bruce trails, amongst others. Examples of straight path and turn blazes are shown below.



Unique to the Seaton Hiking Trail, each blaze is serialized and its location has been GPSed to aid in identifying specific locations on the trail. The numbering scheme follows the format of the example below.



Harold Sellers completed the blazing and GPS inventory of the trail in July 2009; each of the blazes is numbered as shown above. (Can the ORMT ever adopt this fully documented model?) **The Seaton Trail Management Plan**, finalized the following year, is a substantial document.⁸

⁸ Print copies are available through the ORTA Office.

A Friends of the Seaton Trail group was established with local volunteers; at one stage it looked as if this would become an "off the moraine" chapter of an extended ORTA. However, this did not fit with either the owners' or ORTA's plans.



Trail Keys in York Region

Trail Keys were installed in March 2010 at 15 intersections of the trail with principal roads in York Region. The project had been delayed from 2008 in the hopes we could attract matching funds to afford 15 keys in Durham Region. See a detailed explanation of the keys and their locations in Appendix 5.2

Agriculture Hits the Trail

Harold Sellers had contributed to the concept of this Greenbelt Foundation project. However, only a few landowners along the ORMT expressed interest to us; others had been contacted by other means. The

project contractor was only capable of completing installations located close to vehicular access. Peter Schaefer assisted a summer student engaged by the foundation to progress some installations in 2010.



The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Guidebook – Fifth Edition

The Fifth Edition delivered from the printers on December 31st, 2009 marked the designation of the trail moraine-wide. East of Highway 45 the designation of a route had awaited a management plan for the Northumberland County Forest. The protracted process is summarized in Chapter Five in the section on development of the Northumberland Chapter. The route through and beyond the Northumberland Forest shown in Maps 11 and 12 had been approved but at this time some lengths remained to be scouted out in detail and blazed.

Opening of the Eastern Trail Gateways

The Official Opening of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail into the Northumberland Forest was celebrated on July 29th 2010 with an event organized by County Staff at the parking lot beside Highway 45 at Morris Road.⁹ Gateway sign below.



A short hike was enjoyed to the spectacular lookout, Point of Interest #6, Map 11.

⁹⁹ SGB: ORTA's original objective (Chapter Two) had been to create a trail "to the Northumberland Forest." Highway 45 at Morris Road may well have been the location originally in mind for the Eastern Terminus. Extending further east through the forest and across Rice Lake Plains became ORTA's responsibility as we engaged in implementation of the ORCP's requirement for a moraine-wide trail.

A new and much larger parking lot has since been constructed a few hundred metres to the north.



On August 15, 2010 the Trail Gateway in Warkworth, in the Municipality of Trent Hills, was officially designated as one of the two Eastern Terminals of the ORMT.



Each of these events was organized by local town staff with the ORMF team of Kim Gavine, Lisa Turnbull and Fred Johnson, and ORTA's Northumberland Chapter Chair Tim Lawley. They were well attended by municipal leaders and local guests and featured, in addition to speeches, a BBQ of hamburgers and hot dogs followed by a short hike.



Learning the extent of the moraine.



Welcome by ORMF Executive Director Kim Gavine

Dedication of the Western Trailhead: The Bruce Trail and Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Kiosk at Mono Mills. Yes, at 20 years old we're there!

The gateway designating the junction of the Bruce Trail and Oak Ridges Moraine Trail planned in 2009 at the BTA's parking lot adjacent to Airport Road shown in Map 0; 5th. Edition was changed to avoid conflicts with a local property owner. The Town of Mono provided a new parking lot where the Bruce Trail crosses No. 5 Sideroad (Map 0; 6th Edition.) Re-blazing of the route had been completed with only hours to spare by Trail Director Garry Niece assisted by Frank Alexander - - they had travelled from Scugog and Stouffville respectively.

The official opening on Saturday, April 21, 2012 was our last public event with the ORMF. It also cemented our relationship with the BTA. The plaque on the knoll opposite marks the spot where the founders of the Bruce Trail commenced their first exploratory hike: 50 years earlier to the day, on April 21, 1962!

Despite the chilly day over 50 people gathered for the unveiling of the kiosk by local MPP Sylvia Jones, Beth Kummeling, Executive Director of The Bruce Trail Conservancy, Kim Gavine of the ORMF and ORTA President Peter Schaefer.

Finally the southeast branch to Castleton was opened on a rather chilly day in October 2010 with a celebration at its terminus, the Castleton Sports Ground.



The kiosk marking the junction of the ORMT with the Bruce Main Trail was designed by the BTA and funded by the ORMF.

Note the small map in the bottom row detailing the local area - designed to be replaced when there were revisions to the trail.

THE MORaine. FOR LIFE. - Working Together for the Oak Ridges Moraine

At the beginning of 2009 STORM, ORMLT and ORTA were each facing the need for new Executive Directors. With Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation’s mandate coming towards its conclusion, ORMF sought to encourage the moraine’s voluntary NGOs into a closer and financially stable relationship. A funding application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) was prepared, rather hurriedly, for a two year study of the way this could be implemented with ORTA nominated as the lead applicant. The appointed Development Officer had worked for the ORMF. ¹⁰

The arrangement placed a considerable burden on ORTA as the pace of the study could not be sustained by our volunteer based structure. The differences between the three organizations became more apparent: for example the STORM Coalition was a Political Advocacy and thus, unlike ORMLT and ORTA, could not be a Registered Charity. Thus a “merger” between the three organizations would require significant constitutional changes.

After a year it did not appear to the ORTA Board that the study would lead to a useful solution. After some months’ delay awaiting direction from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, ORTA and STORM withdrew, but the study was continued by the ORMLT. Some potentially useful detailed documents were produced in addition to lengthy reports to OTF. It may be noted that over the ensuing years the ORMLT has received substantial funding from other sources.

Whilst Stan Butcher as Interim Executive Director had been kept busy tidying off the grant funded projects, the Executive Committee, in particular Peter Schaefer and new Treasurer Kim Aagaard, took on more responsibilities. This included the negotiations with the ORMLT and STORM. Peter formally became President at the January 2010 Board meeting.

The MOU between the Land Trust and the Association has recently been updated.

¹⁰ SGB: The ORMF was unsuccessful in obtaining from the Province an extension of its mandate.

ORMF had made significant contributions in the belief that ORTA would be able to obtain funds to continue employing an Executive Director and supporting staff. This did not prove to be the case.

In retrospect the ORTA Executive Committee Members involved in these capacity deliberations do not feel the time and monies were well spent.



Loop hikes encompassing both trails were followed by delicious hot lunches served from a sophisticated food truck.

Maggie Cowles, Stan Butcher, Rhys Beak and Fiona Cowles visited the BT Founders’ Plaque on the knoll opposite the new Parking Lot.



Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation Accomplishments and Closure

The Foundation’s closing report was published in eight volumes in 2011 and also as a CD. “Improvements to the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail since the Adoption of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan” formed Volume 8. Two tables are reproduced below; the data having originated in the project reports from ORTA.

The Province’s care for the moraine and interest in the trail continues through the nine authorities forming the Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition. ORTA continues to enjoy their support.

Table 3 — Summary of the Status of the Main Trail in October 2010

Chapter/ Area of the ORM	Main Trail Length in Km	Trail Length on Public Land in Km	Trail Length on Private Land in Km	Trail Length on Public Road in Km	Trail Length on Unopened Road Allowance in Km
Humber Headwaters	13.4	3.3	0	10.1	0
Caledon	15.2	9.0	0	4.8	1.4
King	33.9	0	17.1	12.3	4.5
Aurora	13.9	3.6	0.7	9.6	0
Richmond Hill	5.1	5.1	0	0	0
Whitchurch- Stouffville	27.5	10.5	0	16.3	0.7
Uxbridge	21.1	14.6	0.6	4.0	1.9
Scugog	32.5	2.5	0	17.3	12.9
Clarington	39.9	22.0	1.7	6.2	10.0
Hope/Hamilton	36.7	0.7	0	21.4	14.6
Alnwick/ Haldimand	18.0	13.5	0	0	4.5
Cramahe	9.5	0	0	5.0	4.5
Trent Hills	7.0	0	0	7.0	0
Total	273.1 (100%)	84.8 (31%)	20.1 (7.3%)	114.0 (41.6%)	54.8 (20%)

Table 5 — Summary of Ancillary Services along the Main Trail in October 2010

Chapter/ Area of the ORM	Number of Side Trails	Side Trail Length in Km	Number of Parking Lots*	Number of Roadside Parking Opportunities*	Number of Gateway Sites
Humber Headwaters	1	5.0	2	5	0
Caledon	2	2.8	3	7	0
King	6	12.5	4	9	0
Aurora	0	0	3	1	1
Richmond Hill	0	0	2	0	1
Whitchurch- Stouffville	9	21.8	8	4	0
Uxbridge	6	18.5	8	7	0
Scugog	2	1.9	3	9	0
Clarington	3	5.5	6	7	0
Hope/Hamilton	1	6.0	3	12	0
Alnwick/ Haldimand	1	2.0	2	2	1
Cramahe	0	0	1	0	1
Trent Hills	0	0	1	0	1
Total	31	76	46	63	5

From paragraph 3.2.7: Membership in the Oak Ridges Trail Association:

“The creation of the Oak Ridges Trail Strategy and the collaboration with the ORMF has helped make the Trail better and longer. However, executive members of the ORTA believe that these activities have also created the impression in many people’s minds that the Trail is now looked after by the Province, a circumstance that convinces some that membership in the ORTA is no longer necessary.”

(Peter Schaefer, President of ORTA, personal communication.)

**APPENDIX 3.1
ORTA DIRECTORS and STAFF
2004 - 2009**

2004 - 2005

Executive Committee

President	Stan Butcher
Vice-President	vacant
Past-President	Robert Ellison
Secretary	Peter Attfield
Treasurer	Barry Hammerton
Trails Director	Peter Schaefer
Membership Coordinator	Bob Hughes
Publicity Director	Wilma Millage

Chapter Chairs

Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Bruce Chambers
Aurora	Bill Smith
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Charlie Atkinson
Uxbridge	Brian Millage
Scugog	Garry Niece
Clarington	Rick Patterson
Hope-Hamilton	Gary Ford
Northumberland	vacant

Directors

Guidebook	Fiona Cowles
Hike Coordinator	Gail Morris
Fund Raising	vacant
Trail Talk Editor	Brian Logan
Volunteers Coordinator	Audrey Fullerton
Webmaster	Susan Sellers
Representing ORMLT	Tom Atkins
Director-at-Large	Marilyn Mussell

Executive Director	Harold Sellers
Administrative Assistant	Judy Arsenault

2005 - 2006

As at October 2005 - some changes were made after the AGM in April

Executive Committee

President	Stan Butcher
Vice-President	vacant
Past-President	Robert Ellison
Secretary	Peter Attfield
Treasurer	Linda Tyndall
Trails Director	Peter Schaefer
Membership Coordinator	Bob Hughes
Publicity Director	Wilma Millage

Chapter Chairs

Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Aurora	Bill Smith
Whitchurch-Stouffville	vacant
Uxbridge	Brian Millage
Scugog	Elizabeth Stewart
Clarington	Martha Coady
Hope-Hamilton	Gary Ford
Northumberland	Tim Lawley

Directors

Guidebook	Fiona Cowles
Fund Raising	vacant
Trail Talk Editor	Brian Logan
Volunteers Coordinator	Ken Kishibe
Webmaster	Susan Sellers
Representing ORMLT	Tom Atkins
Director-at-Large	Audrey Fullerton
Director-at-Large	Marilyn Mussell
Hike Coordinator	Gail Morris

Executive Director	Harold Sellers
Office Manager	Judy Arsenault to end of November; from February - Donna Massaar

2006 - 2007

Executive Committee

President	Stan Butcher
Vice-President	Anthony Reale
Past-President	Robert Ellison
Secretary	Petra Hartwig
Treasurer	Linda Tyndall
Trails Director	Peter Schaefer
Membership Coordinator	Bob Hughes
Publicity Director	Wilma Millage

Chapter Chairs

Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Aurora	Eric Slater
Richmond Hill	c/o Stan Butcher
Whitchurch-Stouffville	John Saringer
Uxbridge	Brian Millage
Scugog	Elizabeth Stewart
Clarington	vacant
Hope-Hamilton	vacant
Northumberland	Tim Lawley

Directors

Guidebook	Fiona Cowles
Fund Raising	vacant
Trail Talk Editor	David Wells
Volunteers Coordinator	Ken Kishibe
Webmaster	Susan Sellers
Representing ORMLT	Andre Flys
Director-at-Large	Audrey Fullerton
Director-at-Large	Peter Attfield
representing Hike Coordinator	Gail Morris

Executive Director	Harold Sellers
Office Manager	Donna Massaar to end of July; from September: Judith Reda

2007 – 2008

Executive Committee

President	Stan Butcher
Vice-President	Ken Kishibe
Acting Past-President	Wilma Millage
Secretary	Petra Hartwig
Treasurer	Linda Tyndall
Trails Director	Peter Schaefer
Membership Coordinator	Bob Hughes
Publicity Director	Diana Smyth

Chapter Chairs

Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Aurora	Eric Slater
Richmond Hill	<i>c/o Ken Kishibe</i>
Whitchurch-Stouffville	John Saringer
Uxbridge	Brian Millage
Scugog	Elizabeth Stewart
Clarington	<i>c/o Pauline Assinck-Wallen</i>
Hope-Hamilton	vacant
Northumberland	Tim Lawley

Directors

Guidebook	Fiona Cowles
Fund Raising	<i>c/o Peter Schaefer</i>
Trail Talk Editor	David Wells
Volunteers Coordinator	vacant
Webmaster	Susan Sellers
Representing ORMLT	Andre Flys
Director-at-Large	Audrey Fullerton
Director-at-Large	Tom Atkins
Director-at-Large	Alan Wells
Director-at-Large	Peter Attfield
<i>representing</i> Hike Coordinator	Gail Morris

Executive Director	Harold Sellers
Office Manager	Judith Reda

2008 – 2009

Executive Committee

President	<i>vacant**</i>
Acting Vice-President	Wilma Millage
Past-President	Stan Butcher
Secretary	Jill Doble
Treasurer	Linda Tyndall
Trails Director	Garry Niece
Membership Coordinator	Bob Hughes
Publicity Director	Diana Smyth

Chapter Chairs

Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Aurora	vacant
Richmond Hill	Rhys Beak
Whitchurch-Stouffville	John Saringer
Uxbridge	Brian Millage
Scugog	Elizabeth Stewart
Clarington	<i>c/o Grace Moores</i>
Hope-Hamilton	Petra Hartwig
Northumberland	Tim Lawley

Directors

Guidebook	Fiona Cowles
Fund Raising	Peter Schaefer
Hike Coordinator	Malcolm Hann
Trail Talk Editor	David Wells
Volunteers Coordinator	vacant
Webmaster	Susan Sellers
Representing ORMLT	Andre Flys
Director-at-Large	Audrey Fullerton
Director-at-Large	Alan Wells
Director-at-Large	Kim Aagaard

Executive Director	Harold Sellers
Office Manager	Judith Reda

** Vice-President Ken Kishibe had declined to become President.

Since there was no appointee Stan Butcher therefore remained the "President of Record" and the work was shared with Wilma Millage and Peter Schaefer until January 2010. See Appendix 4.

APPENDIX 3.2**OAK RIDGES TRAIL STRATEGIC PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Stakeholder Group	Representative	(Participants at May 10, 2004) (Changes – January 2009)
ORTA	Peter Schaefer	
ORMF	Kim Gavine	<i>Kim Gavine and Lisa Turnbull</i>
ORMLT	Don Prince	<i>Susan Walmer</i>
Conservation Authorities	David Burnett, CAMC, eastern ORM	
	Mike Bender, TRCA, west and central ORM	
Province	Fred Johnson, MNR	<i>Tracy Smith, MNR</i>
	Carol Oitment, MTR in a liaison role only.	
Regions	Ian Buchanan, York Region	
Municipalities	Ingrid Svelnis, Town of Uxbridge	
STORM Coalition	Anna Tilman	
Community & Environmental Groups	Brian Buckles, Uxbridge Naturally	
Other Trails	Bob Short, Ganaraska Trail Association	
Accessibility	Patti Longmuir, Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability	
Convenor and Secretary	Harold Sellers, Executive Director, ORTA	

The Terms of Reference of this committee was approved by the ORTA Board July 12, 2004 following their first two meetings.

Harold Sellers provided a detailed report to the Board, see opposite. This brought together in one document developments to the trail system which had already been initiated by ORTA's Volunteers and additional ideas envisaged in the 2004 – 2009 Strategic Plan and its interpretation by the SPAC.¹¹

The SPAC's last action was the preparation of the 2009 – 2014 Strategic Directions report, Appendix 3.4.

¹¹ *SGB. As far as I'm aware this committee only met quarterly through an initial period. It was a typical "government" approach. How much did the committee members actually convey to the stakeholder groups they were appointed to represent? The ORTA Board did not become aware of actions resulting from its deliberations other than through the ORMF Staff and our Executive Director.*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO THE BOARD, June 26, 2004

My report will focus on the goals and recommendations contained in the Oak Ridges Trail Strategic Plan (February 2004) and activities to date. Reports by others to the Board may also include details on some of the following initiatives, because Chapters or Directors may be taking the lead on them.

Oak Ridges Trail Strategic Plan Advisory Committee

The first quarterly meeting was held on May 10th. The attached table shows the committee makeup. The next meeting will be held in Uxbridge on July 26th.

Optimum Trail Corridor

The following activities are helping us to move more of the trail off road and into public and/or Natural Core and Natural Linkage lands.

1. Bathurst Street access to Case Woodlot in Aurora. Town installed culvert. Opening planned for Fall. Replaces about 100 meters of sidewalk with Natural Core forest.
2. Main trail re-route off road allowance and through Long Sault Conservation Area (Clarington Chapter) with connection to parking lot. Agreement reached with C.L.O.C.A. and work underway. Official opening in Fall. News release will be issued by ORTA next week.
3. June 29th, Stan and Harold attending a second meeting of parties concerned with lands west of Yonge Street in Richmond Hill.
4. Clarington: John Windatt is talking to private landowners to move the trail off road east of the Hwy 35/115 tunnel and into Natural Core.
5. Clarington Chapter has moved the trail off road north of Leskard, replacing 3 km of road with 1.5 km of forest and field (Natural Linkage) trail. An opening ceremony took place June 6th.
6. Scugog: Garry Niece has been provided with Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority contact to explore trails through the Easter Seals Property east of Lake Ridge Rd and north of Chalk Lake and the Rahmani property on Coates Road west of Simcoe St.
7. Whitchurch-Stouffville: Charlie Atkinson has completed re-route on Calandra Property north of Ballantrae. ORMLT facilitated Region of York purchase of 60 acres, which will be planted with trees. This secures another portion of trail in public Natural Core lands.
8. King: Nature Conservancy of Canada obtained an easement on property of Dr. Barnett in Happy Valley Forest. King Chapter has been assisted to make contact to explore routing trail off road into this Natural Core land.

Side and Loop Trails

1. New side trails within Long Sault Conservation Area (Clarington Chapter) will be included in partnership with CA, connecting main trail to parking lot and also connecting to a loop trail in east section of CA.
2. Puck's Farm (King Chapter) is planning an interpretive trail system. Continuing to try to assist them by involvement of King Chapter.
3. Side trail from Seneca to King City trail system. Assisting King Chapter and Seneca to achieve trail link during 2004.

Adjoining Trails and Other Trail Users

1. Support has been offered to Transport Canada concerning the federal lands north of Pickering to link the ORT to the planned trail system in the Federal Green Space Lands and on to the Seaton and Rouge River trails.
2. King City Trails connection (see above)
3. Dufferin Marsh Committee in Schomberg-Lloydtown expressed interest in connection to ORT. ORTA has appointed a rep to their trails committee.
4. Working with Nokiidaa Trail, through Aurora Chapter, to complete trail connection from Aurora to Newmarket and East Gwillimbury. Presentation made to Nokiidaa Committee on May 4th.
5. Working with the Ontario Realty Corporation and Toronto Region Conservation Authority to improve the Seaton Trail. A future link to the ORT is a possibility. Virginia Johnson and Harold met with ORC and TRCA. Virginia coordinated a detailed written presentation to ORC/TRCA on current condition of Seaton Trail. Several ORTA members contributed to the report.

Gateways to the Trail

1. Western Gateway: Meeting scheduled for June 30th with Caledon Chapter and Caledon Trailway. Have also had discussion with Caledon Bruce Trail Club president about future of their trail in area.
2. Eastern Gateway: Meeting has been requested with Gary Ford and Tony Holmes to review options. Have also requested a meeting with Lower Trent Conservation Authority.
3. Yonge Street gateways will be considered during discussions with Richmond Hill stakeholders (see above)
4. Advisory Committee has recommended that ORT consider more gateways, identifying key access points from communities and other trails be considered gateways.
5. Comments have been received from trail users that signage would be desirable at present eastern and western termini indicating start/finish points of the trail. Signs that could be relocated as the trail expands would be recommended.

Disabled Access

1. Woodland Passage Trail, Seneca College King Campus, 0.5 km, has been assessed. Signage under development. Seneca to take lead on fund-raising. News release issued in May to generate contacts. Planned October opening.
2. Portion of new route north of Leskard in Clarington Chapter will be UTAP-accessed this summer.

Trail Securement

No change yet to December 2003 Oak Ridges Trail stats: 40% of the trail located on public roads, 18% on road allowances, 33% on public lands, and 9% on private lands
Several properties under negotiation between ORMLT and private landowners have trail potential. Harold is a member of the OMLT Land Committee as well as their Board and is assisting them to identify properties on moraine and trail maps.

Financial Sustainability

1. Ontario Trillium Foundation has provided \$79,500 two-year grant
2. Trail Strategy Fund Raising Committee has met twice. Funding options and sources are being investigated.
3. Trail development and management for others is being explored as a source of funding. Meetings with Seaton Trail and Nokiidaa Trail owners have had this in mind. A meeting has also been held with person responsible for University of Toronto Jokers Hill property and this subject was discussed. UofT stated money would be available.

Other Initiatives and Activities

1. UNESCO Biosphere Reserve working group has met twice. Target for application for designation is April 2005.
2. Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt Task Force: Two workshops attended in May and June. Written submission will be made.
3. North Pickering Lands Workshop organized by province was attended on June 22nd.

Respectfully submitted, Harold Sellers, Executive Director, June 22, 2004

Final Meeting Issues *Strategic Directions 2009 – 2014*

The SPAC's final meeting in the fall of 2008 approved the draft report which had been prepared by correspondence between committee members, although Peter Schaefer was unaware of this process. The final report was presented to the ORTA Board and conditionally accepted in February 2009. See page 309.