

TRAIL TALK

Oak Ridges Trail Association Quarterly

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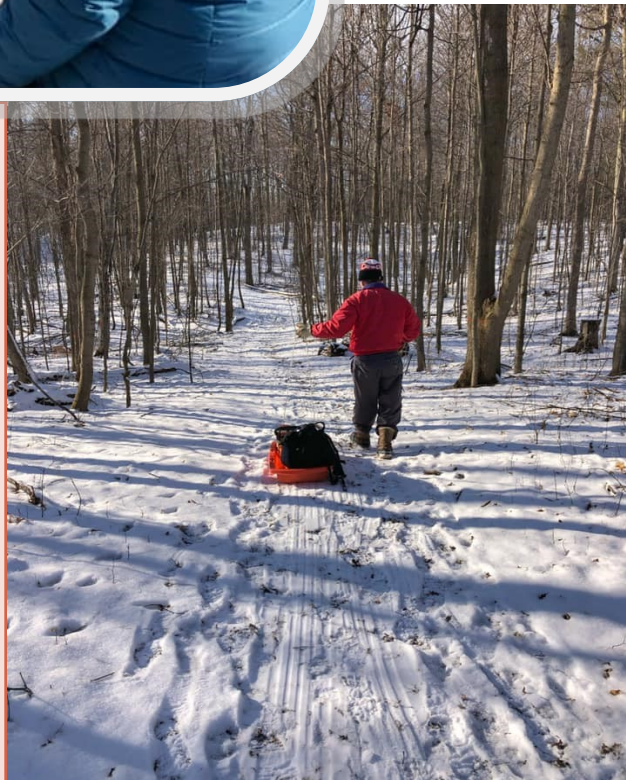


Winter 2022



Photo Credits this page: Cheryl Fisher

From Jan 4, 2022, Cheryl Fishers' post on our Facebook page.
 "Maintenance work on the trails is an ongoing process. Recently many trees fell down, in several storms we had. Dedicated volunteers have worked hard to clear the trails for your enjoyment. Today was some re-routing work, as sometimes that is necessary to keep the trails safe as well."



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BEST WISHES TO YOU FOR 2022

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WHO ARE WATCHING CURRENT CONDITIONS AND WILL GIVE AN UPDATE ON THE AGM SOON.

Annual General Meeting



PRESIDENTS REPORT

This has been a trying year for ORTA as it has for many others. We were able to maintain our hiking program albeit with a reduced number of hikers, hikes and leaders.

We were also able to bring the latest iteration of our guide book to a successful development. Full marks to Vice President Garry Niece for shepherding this project to fruition. Guidebook sales are going very well as many people are discovering the importance of our trail system.

At the current time we are going to move forward with our existing approach to hiking and attendance. If there is any change in the government's position regarding groups and Covid 19 you will be informed via Email.

In the last news letter I informed you that we were looking at ways to reduce costs. With the loss of revenue from the Adventure Relay for two years, potentially three, as well as other unexpected expenditures we find ourselves in a challenging position. In addition due to Covid our donations are somewhat less than in the past. We do have reasonable reserves but they will be depleted in five to seven years at our current rate.

After careful consideration we have informed All Saints church that we will be foregoing our office space effective April 30 2022. This will save us over \$8500 annually. Michele Donnelly will continue as our manager and has agreed to work from home. This will mean that there will be no in person services for members. But Michele assures us that she will continue to serve us effectively and can be reached via email or by calling ORTA's main line number. We are changing up our phone and internet service and will no longer have a 1 800 number. This will save us about \$1500 annually.

We are also looking at alternatives to our database software to further cut costs. It is hoped that these moves will reduce the strain on our budget. More detail will be provided as we move forward.

I also need to acknowledge the service of board members Huw Evans and Carol Dowell who have resigned their positions. Balancing full time jobs with Board commitments was just too much. They will be missed.

Kevin Lowe

President

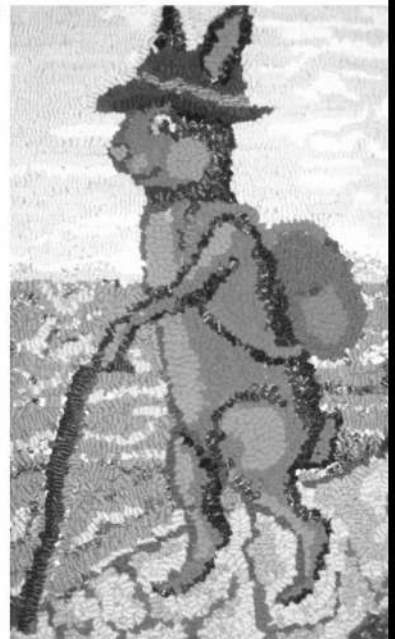
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Do It Outdoors- the Safer Way To Go

This seems to be our mantra as we close in on the second year mark for Covid restrictions. I have to compliment the hike leaders that have stepped up to lead outdoor walks and allow for social connections, and the trail maintenance crews that have continued to monitor our trails and keep them safe for everyone. I can't think of a better way to get exercise, stay socially connected and keep safe, than by getting out on the trails in the fresh air with friends. How many new trails have the leaders introduced you to? Do you follow up later, guidebook in hand, to introduce a friend to the newly discovered route? Mother Nature certainly provided us with some warmer than usual weather in the fall to make it all more enjoyable- of course the two major windstorms did introduce a major wrinkle in that perfection. On the optimistic side, the trail crews worked off more calories clearing dozens of fallen trees across the trail thus making room for holiday feasts. The chainsaws were busy.

Last December Wilma and I celebrated our eighteenth wedding anniversary on the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail, at the same location in Uxbridge where ORTA hikers helped us with the original ceremony south of Coppins Corners. With restrictions in place, the numbers were considerably reduced but joyous as the annual tradition continues. Our thanks to all our trail friends who provide the cheer and make this a special day.

Some of our most beautiful trails are at the west end of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail in the Caledon region. If you are one of those frequent walkers in the Palgrave Forest and areas east and west, you could help us a lot by putting your name on the list of trail monitors or even becoming a trail captain. A trail monitor would make a point of walking the area several times a season and reporting any problems (and perhaps throwing aside a few stray branches), while a trail captain would be prepared to monitor the trail, check it after storms and cut and remove small trees that have fallen across the trail. In either case, in the event of larger trees having fallen, or a boardwalk in disrepair, a special team would come out shortly to set things in order. You can be the Eyes on the Trail.

One new trail to look forward to in 2022 will be the northernmost segment of the Rouge Valley National Urban Park. Parks Canada has been constructing a link just south of the Goodwood tract of TRCA in the Uxbridge area and it should be complete by spring, I expect that hike leaders will showcase the new route as it will provide numerous options for local walks- I know we will. More updates to follow in the spring Trail Talk.

May Your New Year Be A Safe One Among Friends,
Brian and Wilma Millage
Regional Director and Past President

MEANINGFUL ALTERNATIVES

As part of ORTA's program to Celebrate Life's Milestones or in Memory of friends or family, gifts were received.

In Memory of Beatrice Fanning

In memory of my mother's love for
Mono Centre, her birthplace, and the
Mono Cliffs.

Neil Steim!

A very happy birthday to a dear
friend and great person!
....L.&G. Blackman

Winter hiking can be challenging but still a lot of fun, whether attending one of our guided hikes or out on your own. Follow our stories, pictures and adventures through our Facebook page: Oak Ridges Trail Association, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/8968359093>

Led by members who donate their time, pictured below are from recent guided hike. Pictures courtesy of Heather Cooper and Cheryl Fischer



Looking for a video or pictures that show the challenges of winter hiking? You can check out Danielle Belangers Facebook, Instagram or youtube videos. It will make you feel as if you're out there with them!

“Just getting to the trail was an adventure this time! [#dancynadventures](#) had a blast on the ORMT a couple weeks ago. Check it out if you like.... <https://www.facebook.com/104716771717840/posts/281088550747327/?d=n>”

“Our second section of the Oak Ridges Trail got derailed due to re-routes which would have resulted in a whole day of road walking. So, we chose to repeat our Part 1 Hike starting at Palgrave instead of the 0.okm marker. Join us as we explore this section which is now beautifully covered in snow, quiet and very lightly travelled. We also share some of the gear we used, at least as much as we could before we got too cold... [#DanCynAdventures](#) [#OakRidgesMoraineTrail](#) [#ORMT](#) [#OntarioHiking](#) [#Hiking](#) [#MotherDaughterTeam](#)”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xnRwVBjhwg>



We are a mother daughter duo.. our website is www.dancynadventures.ca

End To End—Congratulations

CONGRATULATIONS TO JAMIESON HATT FOR COMPLETING THE END TO END OF THE OAK RIDGES MORAINE TRAIL IN THREE AND A HALF DAYS!

In October of 2021 Jamieson Hutt set off on an unsupported effort across the Oak Ridges Trail where he carried all his food and a lot of water. Base weight was roughly 26 pounds. When Jamieson submitted his End to End report he had lots of great things to say.

“Awesome Trail!I lucked out and had pretty great weather except for rain the last day. The trail gave me memories that will last a lifetime and I am very grateful! I bought the guidebook and it obviously came in handy. Thanks to all those who made this trail possible! We are very lucky to have it. I learned so much on this adventure. Every time it's different. And what works one time, may not work the next. You really have to take care of yourself out there. Being unsupported, there's obviously no one that can help you out. I love seeing new things and places for the first time. I love not knowing what's around the next corner. I love going through a cute little town that I probably never would have ever seen if it wasn't for doing the trail. I also love getting home and taking my first shower in 3.5 days. Thanks to the ORTA for memories that will last a lifetime!!!”

To read more of Jamieson's adventure and for more pictures visit: <https://fastestknowntime.com/fkt/jamieson-hatt-oak-ridges-moraine-trail-canada-2021-10-09>



City of Toronto Beare Hill Park

Many of you will be familiar with the old City of Toronto landfill site just east of the wetlands in the Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP). I know some have hiked the hill over the years and enjoyed the magnificent views from the top – it is possible to see tall chimneys on the US side of Lake Ontario, especially on clear, winter days. I've lived in the area long enough to remember taking garbage to the dump, I even remember the concept of it becoming a ski hill, and it was my go-to place to see Eastern Meadowlarks.

Some of the information in this article is from the City's website (see www.toronto.ca/bearehillpark), but the more specific information about work still under way and possible opening date have been very kindly provided by Lisa McLean, a Natural Environment Specialist with City of Toronto Urban Forestry.

The Beare Road Landfill was operational until 1983, when it was capped. It is still managed by the City Solid Waste Management Division as a closed landfill. Since that time, natural regeneration and volunteer tree planting have created rich, natural areas of forest, meadow and wetland habitats used by wildlife, including four species at risk. With its expansive natural areas, capacity for a host of different recreational trails, and the spectacular view from the top of the hill, the former landfill site has great potential as a park destination.

The Park is not yet open to the public. The anticipated opening date has been pushed back several times since the trail construction work was completed in summer 2020.

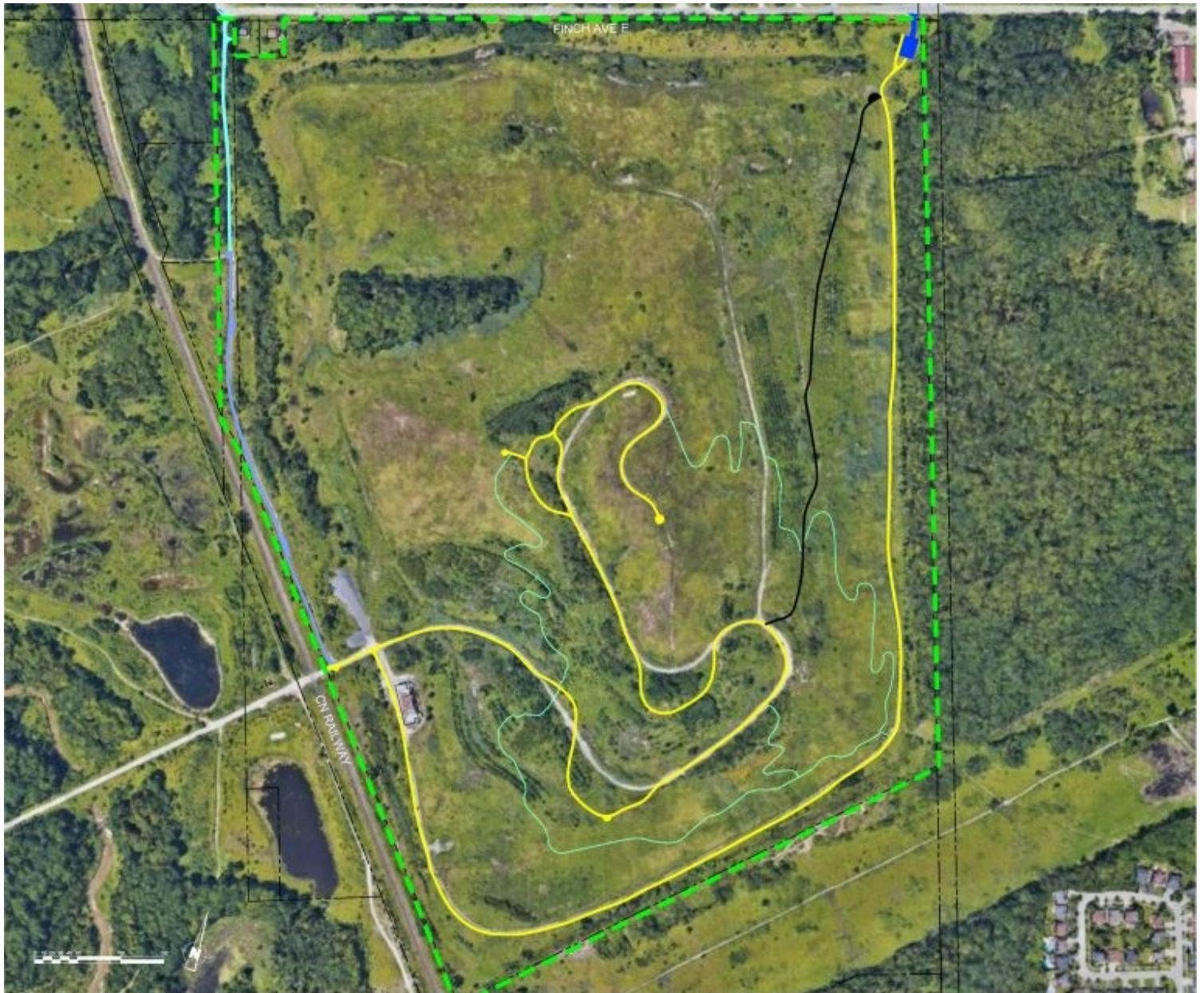
All closed landfills in Ontario are regulated by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The City of Toronto requires their approval in order to open the site as a public park. While the first round of trail construction is complete, the City's Solid Waste/ Closed Landfill Operations continue to perform remedial work as required by MECP. This work largely consists of removing remnant infrastructure, augmenting the cap in specific locations, and finalizing the Environmental Management Plan. It is presently hoped that the park will be able to open in spring 2022.

When the Park first opens, the only point of entry for visitors will be from the parking lot at 8145 Finch Ave E, adjacent to Pickering Townline (upper right corner on the map). Eventually, it is hoped to add more entrances, but this will be a work in progress over some time. There is a long-term plan to open an access point at the west gate, but that can only exist only once a safe crossing over the railroad tracks has been established. At present, the railroad crossing is not adequately signed or signalled for public safety, but a plan to improve the crossing is being discussed. Today, visitors to RNUP's Orchard Trail and Cedar Trail are naturally drawn towards the hill, but must be reminded that the CN Rail corridor is private property and is not authorized for public use. The City, Parks Canada, and CN Rail are working together to establish a safe and legal crossing over the tracks, so that one day, Beare Hill Park will be accessible via Zoo Rd. It is anticipated that any such crossing will take several years to formalize, but with any luck, the timing will coincide with the 2025 grand opening of RNUP's Welcome Centre on Meadowvale Rd. In the meantime, watch for the future opening of Beare Hill Park, and be sure to use the north-east entrance to enjoy the trails and the views.

The accompanying map on Page 7 shows the parking lot (blue), the wide granular-surface trails (yellow and black), and the narrow natural-surface trail system (thin cyan line).

The coloured map is only available as an e-copy. To view it visit <https://oakridgestrail.org/trail-talk/> and select the Winter Trail Talk 2022 edition.

Beare Hill Park—cont'd



Beare Hill Park
As-built

- | | | | |
|---------|--------------------|---|---|
| ----- | Property Parcels | ■ | Constructed Asphalt Portion of Service Access Road |
| — — — — | Park Boundary | ■ | Constructed Granular Portion of Service Access Road |
| — — — — | 3.0 m Wide Trails | ■ | Asphalt Parking Lot |
| — — — — | 2.4 m Wide Trail | | |
| — — — — | 0.75 m Wide Trails | | |

Did you Know?

ORTA has listed 30 guided hikes during the month of January so far. We welcome all to explore and appreciate the Oak Ridges Moraine with us. We hike mostly on the Oak Ridges Trail, but visit other trails too. We try to offer a variety of outings - short, long; flat, hilly; fast, slow; hike, ski and snowshoe.

Hikes are currently open only to members. Due to current restrictions hike attendance is limited. (at the time of this printing the maximum is 10).

All activities are led by members who donate their time. I would like to thank all our hike leaders for their dedication and patience. Continue to keep yourself and others safe whether you are currently leading hikes or not. ORTA appreciates YOU!

To get more information on HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HIKE visit : <https://oakridgestrail.org/hikes/>



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FOR THIS EDITION

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