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## Hike Ontario Announces a New Long Distance Hiking Badge

Hike Ontario's mandate is to encourage hiking for all ages and all athletic levels through Ontario. The Long Distance Hiker Awards program celebrates dedicated hikers who have logged long distances on multi Ontario Trails.

The Certification & Awards committee of Hike Ontario has developed a new hiking badge to encourage all of us to hike on different trails and enjoy the diversity of different hiking areas in Ontario.

This badge has been named the Red Pine Award because the tree of the same name is noted for its two needle clusters. This award is designed to recognize a trek of 550 km or more. The two needles represent one of the basic requirements of the award; to hike over 150 km on each of two or more different member trails of Hike Ontario. There is no time limit to the duration of the hiking and the start of the hiking will be any time after January 1, 2000.



### How to apply for your badge:

- 1) Start a hiking log. Keep track of where you started, where you ended, how many kilometers you have completed and comments about the trail, the weather, the condition of the trail, and anything else that may be interesting. Each hiker will be required to submit a log of the hiking activities and detailing the 550 km trek. Hiking logs dating back to 2000 will be accepted.
- 2) Get an officer of Hike Ontario or of your local hiking club to write a short note in support of your application.
- 3) Send a copy of your hiking log, supporting information and fifteen dollars to Hike Ontario, The Gate House, 13990 Dufferin Street North, King City, Ontario L7B 1B3.

The cost of the award will include the badge, a certificate, postage and will also help support the work of Hike Ontario.

The Red Pine award is the first in a series of three long distance awards provided by Hike Ontario. The second award will be the Trillium Award. The trillium is Ontario's provincial flower with three petals. These three petals will represent three trails and 950 kms that will be required to qualify for the badge. The third award will be the Tamarack Award. The tamarack tree is known for its multiple needles and represents the multiple trails you will need to hike (totaling 1500 kilometres) to meet the challenge of the award. The Trillium and Tamarack Awards will be available in fall of 2005.

We hope the awards will encourage all of us to enjoy some of the 3,000 kms of well-marked trails in Ontario.

## OUR MISSION

To provide support, education and representation while promoting hiking and walking in Ontario.

Hike Ontario is a member of the National Trail Association and the Ontario Trails Council.

# Ontario Trails Strategy

## New Committee To Help Maximize Opportunities For Tourism, Recreation In Ontario

*Hike Ontario is pleased to announce that they will, in addition to the organizations listed below, be sending representatives to the numerous stakeholder and regional meetings of the Ontario Trails Strategy.*

TORONTO, Dec. 6 /CNW/ - The Ontario government has created a Minister's Advisory Committee on Trails to provide advice on the development of an Ontario Trails Strategy, Tourism and Recreation Minister Jim Bradley announced today.

"Our government values the important role played by trails in building recreational and tourism opportunities across Ontario," said Bradley. "The role of this committee will be to help us develop an Ontario Trails Strategy, which will provide strategic directions and set priorities for trails in Ontario."

The members of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Trails will provide expertise and attend consultation sessions in their communities. The committee will provide advice on key trail issues, such as economic sustainability, landowner concerns, safety, road rights-of-way, active living, environmental and cultural heritage impacts, and opportunities and tourism development potential.

The committee comprises 19 members from organizations concerned with recreational trails. Tim Peterson, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, chairs the new committee.

"I look forward to working with committee members and the minister to create a strategy that will help Ontarians get more active and enjoy an extensive, safe and well developed system of recreational trails," said Peterson.

The development of an Ontario Trails Strategy is part of the ministry's ACTIVE2010 initiative, a new strategy to increase participation in sport and physical activity throughout Ontario. Its goal is to achieve higher physical activity rates and increased sport participation to improve the health of Ontarians and their quality of life.

"We appreciate the wealth of knowledge and expertise each member brings to this committee," said Bradley. "We are working toward a unified vision and approach to trails that will help us increase recreational opportunities in Ontario," said Bradley.

### MINISTER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRAILS

The following organizations are represented on the Minister's Advisory Committee on Trails:

- Ontario Trails Council
- Trans Canada Trail - Ontario
- Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
- Ontario Federation of All-Terrain Vehicle Clubs
- Go For Green - Ontario
- Waterfront Regeneration Trust
- Northern Ontario Native Tourism Association
- Trent University - Trail Studies Unit
- Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
- Bruce Trail Association
- Conservation Ontario
- Ontario Heritage Foundation
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- Stewardship Councils of Ontario
- Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability- Ontario
- City of Thunder Bay (municipal trails representative)
- Green Tourism Association
- Ontario Nature
- Wildlands League

## Trail Etiquette

- Stay on existing trails.
- Avoid very wet and muddy conditions.
- Know the local trail rules, regulations and special concerns of the area.
- Obey gate closures and signs.
- Keep the trail clean.
- Slower traffic has right-of-way.
- Keep right, except when passing.
- Get owners' permission on private land.

Do not disturb the wildlife.

## Greenbelt Protection

Ontarians need greenspace because it improves quality of life. A Greenbelt is key to permanently protecting greenspace and containing urban sprawl in the Golden Horseshoe.

Building on the Advice of the Greenbelt Task Force and guided by the input of hundreds of individuals, municipalities, more than a thousand written submissions and the advice of more than sixty stakeholder groups, the Government of Ontario has developed a draft Greenbelt plan.

### The Benefits of a Greenbelt

The proposed Greenbelt covers about 1.8 million acres in total – close to the size of Algonquin Park; greater than the area of Prince Edward Island; and about half the land area of Vermont.

The proposed Greenbelt is about quality of life for people living and working in the Golden Horseshoe. It would have some obvious benefits – trails to hike and parks to enjoy. Protecting agricultural land means we'll have fresh produce to eat, and a secure food supply in an era when getting food across borders from other countries isn't always a given.

The proposed Greenbelt is also about air and water quality – it's about health.

Forests, meadows and wetlands in the Golden Horseshoe help filter water. Water is absorbed by these natural features, filtered through the ground and deposited in the aquifers that provide clean, fresh water for about 7.5 million Ontarians.

Protected areas would also benefit our air quality. The Ontario Medical Association estimates that over 1,900 deaths each year in Ontario are due to poor air quality. An average hectare of corn absorbs about 22 tonnes of carbon dioxide, while cutting down a hectare of trees has the same effect on the environment as emitting 350 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

The proposed Greenbelt will protect about 1 million additional acres in the Golden Horseshoe, more than doubling the total area now protected by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

### **GREENBELT FACTS**

- The proposed Greenbelt contains about 1 million acres of newly protected land.
- The proposed Greenbelt extends about 325 kilometres from the eastern end of the Oak Ridges Moraine, near Rice Lake in the east, to the Niagara River in the west. It is about 80 kilometres wide at its widest point, from the mouth of the Rouge River to the northern tip of Durham Region.
- The Greenbelt Natural Heritage System would provide full protection for about three quarters of the lakes, wetlands and forests within the Greenbelt.
- The Greenbelt would stop urbanization in the remaining undeveloped portions of all major river valleys south of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Niagara Escarpment.
- The Greenbelt would include the headwaters of the major watersheds in the western Greater Toronto Area not currently protected by the Niagara Escarpment or Oak Ridges Moraine

Plans, such as Bronte Creek, Sixteen Mile Creek and the Credit River.

- The Greenbelt would permanently protect more than 100,000 acres of Niagara Peninsula Tender Fruit and Grape Specialty Crop area.
- The Greenbelt would protect the entire Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area of over 15,000 acres, located in York Region and Simcoe County.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing wants to know what you think!

[Protecting Our Greenspaces and Planning for Growth E-consultation Survey](#)

To complete the E-Survey visit [www.mah.gov.on.ca](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca)

*Deadline for submissions - December 20, 2004*

#### HO Executive Committee

Todd Bardes,  
President

David Francis,  
Past President

Wendy Hoernig,  
Secretary

Stephen Kamnitzer,  
Treasurer

Mike Kirby,  
Director-at-Large

Terri LeRoux,  
Vice President

Bill Mates,  
Director-at-Large

## Hiking Hints

Through our outdoor adventures, we've met many interesting situations. From the back pain caused by carrying too much food, to the stomach rumbles that result from carrying too little. We've pieced together a short list of our favorite things to have during an adventure.

- lightweight, weatherproof jacket
- hat
- water
- rope
- good hiking boots
- extra socks
- insect repellent
- sunscreen and sunglasses
- first aid kit
- Moleskin for blisters
- compass and map
- field guides
- trail food (enough to last the duration of the hike in well-sealed containers with at least one extra ration)
- flashlight
- fire source
- whistle (one on each person)
- emergency blanket

Remember, this is just a general guide for beginners. Hikers should always research their planned location, and pack with the local weather and terrain in mind. It's a good idea to speak with your local trail club or experienced local hikers, because they are likely to know exactly what you will need to survive an exploration of the wild.

**Individual Memberships are available for only \$25.00!**

## Membership in Hike Ontario

Subscription benefits include receipt of our quarterly print newsletter, receipt of our electronic newsletter, *Trail Mail*, notice of special events and our Annual General Meeting, discounts on publications, and the opportunity to support the voice of hiking in Ontario.

**It's easy to join!**

**Just send a cheque with your name and full mailing address to Hike Ontario.**