



Do not go where the path may lead,  
go instead where there is no path  
and leave a trail.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

# Annual Report



2016 - 2017

**Get Outside. Get Healthy. Hike.**

Hike Ontario

**Annual Report 2016-2017**

[www.hikeontario.com](http://www.hikeontario.com)

Trails provide meaningful and satisfying outdoor experiences for many users. These experiences reaffirm a sense of connection with the natural environment and provide opportunities for an appreciation of Ontario's natural heritage. With a trails system that traverses many of Ontario's natural regions, trails play an important role in supporting environmental education and building a public commitment to environmental conservation.

*Active2010: Ontario Trails Strategy, 2005*

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## HIKE ONTARIO GOVERNANCE

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Throughout the years Hike Ontario has had one goal – to encourage walking, hiking and trail development in Ontario.

Established in 1974, Hike Ontario is a non-profit, charitable organization governed and operated by volunteers. We are the sole provider of province-wide hiking information and services. Hike Ontario is also unique amongst Canada's provinces and territories in many of the services it provides to this province's hiking associations and citizens. Eighty-five percent of Canadians walk for leisure and recreation. Thus, Hike Ontario acts as the voice for over 10 million hikers and walkers in Ontario.

Hike Ontario recognizes and supports trails throughout Ontario and appreciates that every trail is unique. Every trail can't be all things to all people but all trails can play beneficial roles. Trails play roles in the economy, play roles in the environment and perhaps most importantly, play roles in our health.

While Hike Ontario recognizes the diversity of trails and trail uses, our focus is on the representation and promotion of pedestrian based trails and their benefits, focusing specifically on connectivity, economics, education, environmental, health, heritage, recreation and transportation.

Hike Ontario does not make or maintain trails, nor does it offer organized hiking/walking events, except through its member associations. Hike Ontario is the umbrella organization that provides these province-wide associations with resources and services to build on these long-established local and regional initiatives in a way in which complements and enhances them.

### **Our Core Objectives:**

- To encourage walking for recreation, transportation and health
- To encourage and facilitate trail development for walking and hiking
- To encourage exemplary trail maintenance, hiking and hike leadership practices and the enhancement of walking experiences through courses and the provision of resources
- To encourage and facilitate the development of trail building hiking clubs in Ontario
- To act as an advocate for a club or clubs when requested or when an initiative is deemed necessary
- To encourage education and research into the health benefits and other aspects of recreational walking
- To encourage conservation and appreciation of the natural environment
- To maintain and disseminate information on hiking and hiking trails

### **Our Core Programs:**

- Advocacy and Government Relations
- Ambassador Program
- Best Practices for Increasing Trail Usage by Hikers and Walkers
- Hike Leader Certification Program
- Insurance Provision and Risk Management
- Young Hikers Program
- Safe Hikers Program
- Long Distance Awards Program
- Annual Hike Ontario Summit
- Sponsor of Ontario Hiking Week
- Partnerships and Linkages

### ***Program Descriptions***

**Advocacy and Government Relations:** Hike Ontario is an active voice and resource to our government partners in the Ontario trails community. We play a lead role in promoting, educating about and advocating pedestrian trail experiences through an active presence at local, regional, provincial and national trail events. We do this through strategic planning processes, active communications, conference and workshop participation, information distribution, special events and educational campaigns.

**Ambassador Program:** Hike Ontario Ambassadors provide information on hiking and hiking trails across Ontario by promoting Hike Ontario and our member clubs to new and novice hikers across the province. As the number one source of province-wide information and resources about hiking, walking and pedestrian based trail development and management in Ontario, our Ambassadors provide this resource by doing presentations to clubs and community groups, training individuals and providing materials.

**Best Practices for Increasing Trail Usage by Hikers and Walkers:** Hike Ontario engaged in researching and collecting data on the strategies, methods and opportunities for increasing use of trails by walkers and hikers and was able to then publish a comprehensive manual of Best Practices. This manual is most useful for Hiking and Walking organizations, Parks and Recreation staff, Conservation Area & Parks staff, Municipalities and a broad range of Special Interest groups (Health Units, Resorts, private landowners, trail builders etc.)

**Hike Leader Certification Program:** Hike Ontario has developed standards and training programs for Hike Leaders that are used by our member clubs, community colleges, universities, activity clubs and outdoor training organizations for course delivery. Currently, Hike Ontario offers Certified Hike Leader, Wilderness Day Hike Leader, and Map & Compass certification courses.

**Insurance Provision and Risk Management:** Hike Ontario works diligently with its trail partners and insurance providers to provide the best possible policy conditions to suit the needs of its trail clubs. This in turn is working towards managing for safe and sustainable trails systems throughout Ontario for the pleasure of walkers and hikers. Hike Ontario plays a key role in risk management through our dedication to pursuing best practices, sound advice and proactively engaging in and encouraging safe practices and education.

**Young Hikers Program:** The Young Hikers Program aspires to introduce youth to the joys and benefits of hiking, through a variety of mediums such as Activity Resource Kit, Provincial Youth Advisory Committee, Youth Hike Leader Certification, Youth Risk Management Training and youth volunteer opportunities.

**Safe Hikers Program:** This one day course introduces the new or novice hiker to the joys and benefits of hiking, walking and the trails of Ontario. Special focus is placed on safety, sustainability and enjoyment. Upon completion, participants are armed with the knowledge necessary to keep themselves safe while hiking; how to ensure their hikes are environmentally and socially sustainable and will help them develop the confidence necessary to join hiking groups and/or go on their own hikes.

**Long Distance Awards Program:** Hike Ontario has a mandate to encourage hiking for all ages and all athletic levels throughout Ontario. The Long Distance Hiker Awards celebrate dedicated hikers who have logged long distances on multiple Ontario trails. Hike Ontario offers three long distance hiking awards; the Red Pine Award for 550 kms, the Trillium Award for 950 kms and the Tamarack Award for 1500 kms.

**Annual Hike Ontario Summit:** Held annually in October, our Summit is a weekend long event that features timely workshops, presentations, award presentations, guest speakers, and a full schedule of invigorating hikes.

**Sponsor of Ontario Hiking Week:** Every year from October 1-7, Hike Ontario sponsors Ontario Hiking Week, encouraging people of all ages to get out and hike the many trails of this beautiful province. Ontario Hiking Week demonstrates the many faces of hiking and walking - as a recreational activity that's low impact, affordable to all, and promotes environmental sustainability and ecological awareness.

**Partnerships and Linkages:** Hike Ontario has formed and sustains strong ties with both government and nongovernmental partners related to pedestrian trails. We strive to represent the interests of all hikers and walkers, trail clubs and all pedestrian based trail interests throughout Ontario. Hike Ontario represents the interests of hikers and walkers on the Ontario Trails Council (OTC) Board of Directors and the through a nominated representative to the Hike Canada En Marche Board of Directors.

## **Mission**

To encourage walking, hiking and trail development in Ontario.

## **Vision**

Hike Ontario seeks to maintain and develop its unique position as the number one source of province-wide information and resources about hiking, walking and pedestrian based trail development and management in Ontario.

## **Governance Structure**

Hike Ontario is governed by a board of directors that meets four times per year at various locations across Ontario. Our board consists of approx. 35 people.

80% of the board members are appointed to represent their member club (i.e. the Bruce Trail) with the remaining members being elected at our Annual General Meetings.

The executive committee of the board additionally meets once a month. The executive consists of President, Vice President, Past President, Treasurer and Secretary. Additionally, the Chairs of each standing committee hold a position on the executive committee.

### ***Executive Committee 2016 -2017***

Tom Friesen	Past President
VACANT	Vice President
Roma Juneja	Treasurer
Sharen Yaworski	Secretary
Bill Mungall	Ontario Trails Council Representative
Michael Fleischmann	Hike Canada Representative

### ***Standing Committees 2016-2017***

Lewis Williams	Certification Committee
Mike Bender	Public Education Committee
Bill Mungall	Issues, Policy & Advocacy Committee
Frieda Baldwin	Planning and Development Committee



## ***Board Members – as appointed by our Member Clubs***

Bernard Goward	Avon Trail
Ray Letheren	Bayfield River Valley Trail
Ron Knight	Bighead River Heritage Association (Trout Hollow Trail)
Anne Armstrong	Bruce Trail Association
Coral Petzoldt	Durham Outdoors Club
D.J. Smale	Elgin Hiking Trail Club
Raymond Soucy	Elora Cataract Trailway Association
Bill Gray	Friends of the Trail Inc (Quinte)
Frieda Baldwin	Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association
Charles Whitlock	Grand Valley Trails Association
Mike Curtis	Guelph Hiking Trail Club
Alexandra Brodka	Hamilton Burlington Trails Council
Roland Gatti	Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association
Klaus Keunecke	Lambton Shores Nature Trails
Allison Stoecker	Maitland Trail Association
Peter Schaefer	Oak Ridges Trail Association
Cliff Daly	Ottawa Rambling Club
Sean Leon	Ottawa Wilderness Adventure Club
Sharen Yaworski	Rideau Trail Association
Ian Bailey	Thames Valley Trail Association
Hilda Postenka	Thunder Bay Hiking Association
Carole Blaquiére	Voyageur Trail Association
Ken Reichert	Waterloo 55+ Seniors' Hiking Club

## **COMPASS 2015**

Hike Ontario is the province's most valuable support resource for hiking and walking groups and users.

### **Strategic Themes**

The strategic plan outlines the strategic goals and objectives that will guide Hike Ontario from 2010 to 2015 and prioritizes them as follows:

1. Build a sustainable organization
2. Promote hiking and walking, and pedestrian trails
3. a. Create value for members and non-members alike  
b. Develop and deliver programs for all stakeholders
4. Develop an effective organization and systems.

### **Products and Services**

Hike Ontario offers the following products and services:

Hike leader certification\* Advocacy

Insurance program\* Annual summit

Risk management program\* Best practices report

Safe hiking program\* Long distance awards

Website\* Young hikers program

*\*Services identified as most important to member associations and clubs*

### **Goals and Objectives**

Compass 2015 goals and objectives are two-tiered:

- i) Achieve short to medium-term goals related to strategic theme No. 1 between 2010 and 2012 (prepares for issues 2, 3a, 3b and 4.
- ii) Develop a road map that addresses all of the strategic themes and provides guidance on where Hike Ontario will be in 2015 and how it will get there.

### **Strategy and Action Plan**

Short-term strategy and goals:

#### **1. BUILD A SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION**

Short-term goals:

- Get paid staff
  - Define a job description for the paid staff person
  - Estimate hours and funding requirements
- Focus on improving the delivery of priority services
  - Concerted and planned rollout of services

- Improve volunteer development and recognition activities
  - Develop a volunteer manual
  - Develop volunteer-recognition policies
  - Enhance recognition activities.

Long-term strategies and goals:

## **2. PROMOTE HIKING AND WALKING AND PEDESTRIAN TRAILS**

### **3A. CREATE VALUE FOR MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS ALIKE**

#### **B. DEVELOP AND DELIVER PROGRAMS FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS**

## **4. DEVELOP EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION AND SYSTEMS.**

**EXPERIENCE IT...ONE STEP AT A TIME...**



## PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Submitted by Tom Friesen

I have found that being a Past President is little different than being the President of Hike Ontario. However, it has been a satisfying year for Hike Ontario. You will find reports from other executive members who have worked hard this year on Trainings, Advocacy, Programs (such as Insurance) and Public Education. They have all been active and deserve thanks for their effective efforts on behalf of hikers and trail organizations across the province.

We have engaged in some creative and valuable partnerships with other members of the trails community:

The Mood Walks II project ended early in the year with a Summit in Toronto. A third Mood Walk Project which is organizing currently to support Students in Universities who have mental health challenges has been approved for funding and Hike Ontario will be an active Partner in this project offering training and support for our Safe Hiker and Certified Hike Leader program.

Coleman provided support for our Summit and some of our club events and we have supported their Get Outside Day promotion which took place on July 14.

We also provided hike leaders leading hikes and promotion for Ontario Parks for "Healthy Parks, Healthy People" which took place on July 21.

We supported the Healthy Hikes program of Conservation Ontario with promotion and articles to highlight this program.

The Young Hikers Project section of the website has been updated and workshops to orient the program have been planned. We provided Young Hiker Project Manuals and workshops to Camp counsellors in church camps, Y camps, camps for blind and disabled children. These manuals were paid for by the Maitland Trail Association and the Thames Valley Trail Association. Their members also received manuals. We are updating this document with a view to providing more copies to schools and other

We co-sponsored a workshop on Landowner Relations with the Bruce Trail Conservancy for Trail Associations held at BTC headquarters in Dundas.

We displayed materials and information at "Go Wild. Grow Wild" in London in association with the Thames Valley Trail Association. We similarly provided information in store displays in Toronto.

Hike Ontario bought "Take a Hike Buttons" and have provided them to programs promoting hiking with young people and active hikers.

We have partnered with the Hike Haliburton Festival in this year's festival and appreciate

their coordination to allow us to participate in making presentations and hold our Annual meeting there.

We are taking steps to resolve our financial accounts so that donations can be received and receive a tax credit.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### ***Certification Committee***

Submitted by Lewis Williams

#### **Courses:**

\*Hike Ontario continues to offer the full range of hiking courses, with a focus on hike leadership in the non-wilderness and wilderness fields. Our 5 courses are: Safe Hiker, Certified Hike Leader, Wilderness Day Hike Leader, Wilderness Trip Hike Leader and the new and popular Basic Navigation- Map, Compass, GPS. In addition, the “Wilderness Hiker” course is in development.

\*In 2017 from Jan-June, Hike Ontario instructors delivered 34 courses with 351 participants. There are 3 private courses slated for later in Sept with a possible enrollment of 20-30. In 2016 in total we delivered 36 courses to 504 people. This was up from 2015 with 455 people trained. I am pleased to see that Hike Ontario instructors are delivering courses literally all across this vast province. Congrats to the hiking club members of Hike Ontario for offering courses to their members. If you would like help setting up a course for your hikers please contact us and we'll be glad to help.

\*A number of our Hike Ontario Executive members are delivering workshops at the Haliburton Hike Festival. Thanks to them for that.

#### **Instructors:**

\*Hike Ontario focuses on growing our pool of instructors of all our courses so that we can meet the growing popularity of our hiking courses. Hike Ontario has several new instructors. There are quite a few people on the waiting list for hiking courses and a call has gone out to our instructors encouraging them to try to plan to teach at least 2 courses in 2017. Instructors have also been notified that to remain on the active roster, 2 courses must be taught in 5 years and the annual fee of \$25 is due every January. As an addition to this, please refer to the New Business section of this report. This issue is pending a response from our treasurer- we may have to place 1 instructor on the “Inactive Instructor List” due to non-payment of annual instructor fees.

#### **Website:**

\*Providing info on the website that is clear and easily accessible continues to be a priority. To that end material has been added and courses have been refined in an ongoing manner to assist our Instructors, especially in the Members' Area- Instructors' Area. I invite all Board members to visit our website, especially the expanding photo gallery.

**Community:**

\*I continue to connect with members of the hiking community concerning a variety of issues including those who wish to become instructors and those who have hiking experience and want prior learning assessment so that they can take a course appropriate to their level of experience, skills and knowledge.

\*Please see the new section on the main page of the website entitled “Partners”. With growing community outreach we have connected with community organization as Sponsors and Affiliates to the mutual benefit of both parties and the hikers of Ontario.

**New Business:**

\*Hike Ontario places a high priority on reaching out to members of both hiking clubs and the general public in Ontario so that more people become trained hikers and hike leaders. In the area of professionalism, Hike Ontario, with input from our instructors, is now offering Hike Ontario Instructor T-shirts at a cost of \$25 shipped or \$20 is picked up.

\*Hike Ontario is researching, with the leadership of Instructor Gerry Jean, the translation into French of our Safe Hiker and Certified Hike Leader courses. One translator was approached and the translation was too high so research continues.

\*Hike Ontario, with the leadership of Instructor Charles Whitlock, is investigating the purchase of some GPS units to be used in the new and popular Navigation course.

***Issues, Policy and Advocacy Committee***

Submitted by Bill Mungall

The work of the committee focused on three matters over the past year.

**Landowner Incentives** – we took the opportunity to make a presentation in November to the provincial Ministry of Finance’s 2017 Budget Pre-Consultations, leaving copies of our brief with the Ministry as well as with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Our emphasis was in drawing the link between creating more and improved hiking trails with the resulting health benefits to the populace at large. And therefore in the savings to the health care budget of the Province. The core proposal was a landowner incentive program that would provide an annual property tax credit of \$20 per 100 metres of hiking trail on their property, provided it formed part of a trail system managed by a hiking club. We plan to re-appear to again lobby the Province on this issue for the 2018 Provincial Budget.

In recent weeks, we have become aware that MTCS staff have begun background work on landowner incentives, which is one of the deliverables of the original 2005 Ontario Trail Strategy. We made several suggestions of some research and sources that should be looked at in more detail.

**Landowner Relations Workshop** – in the spring, Hike Ontario partnered with the staff of

the Bruce Trail Conservancy to host an all day workshop on Landowner Relations. All 9 BT clubs and all HO clubs were invited, with 24 in attendance. Emphasis was on the building of a set of ongoing baseline of practices between clubs and landowners, and in sharing ideas on effective measures to get to a “yes” to a new trail from a landowner (or continuance of an existing trail when the ownership has changed). Fundamentals were reviewed such as regular contact by the club, clear contact information for a landowner to get in touch with the club, and prompt attention by the club to problematic issues.

HO and BTC were pleased with the reception and the participation of the deeply experienced landowner relations reps, and we mutually agreed to put on another joint follow-on event of this kind in the near future.

**Trail Classification** – HO was asked by MTCS to take the lead in gathering input from the clubs on the Province’s proposed voluntary classification system for hiking trails. This is part of a broader system that MTCS committed to within the Supporting Ontario Trails Act. The system would classify all types of trails, including motorized and water trails. There have been discussions within the expert committee (BTC has a member, representing the hiking community) advising MTCS that the complexity of the system may not lend itself well to being applied to hiking trails. However, elements of the system may prove more useful in crafting trailhead signage and guidebook descriptions to give hikers a better idea of what lies ahead of them, i.e. level of difficulty.

**Other Advocacy** – we made a presentation to Guelph City Council in support of capital works to create a link from downtown Guelph to the Guelph – to- Goderich rail trail (Kissing Bridge Trail portion) since this is now the longest rail trail in Ontario and will soon be heavily used. As it is also used heavily by local hikers, it seemed appropriate to lobby for a better urban to rural link.

HO also commented on the CycleON plan that was put out for comment by the Ministry of Transportation. This plan would create a province-wide cycling trail system. Again, many of the off road (multiuse path) routes being proposed would prove useful to hikers. HO is beginning a scan of issues that remain to be completed by MTCS under their “Action Plan” that ends in March 2018 for the Ontario Trails Strategy. We will also be canvassing the HO Clubs for matters related to the OTS that they feel should be brought to the attention of the Province as priorities in 2018 and beyond.

## ***Public Education Committee***

Submitted by Mike Bender

### **Summary of Activities and Initiatives**

I have been in the role of Public Education Chair for Hike Ontario for the past 8 months, and during this time I have learned a lot about the organization, as well as getting to know the other participants on the Board and Executive. I have to thank Tom Friesen, Past President of Hike Ontario, for all of his guidance, direction and leadership to orient me and help me learn the role of the organization related to Public Education. It has also been a real pleasure to work with the other members of the Executive and learn about all

of the important work that goes on in support of hiking in Ontario. The other person who has been a great help and support has been David Rosenblun, our staff Program Manager. David works with all the Executive members in support of all the various programs, activities and events that Hike Ontario is involved with.

To date, I have focused my work with David on the Hike Ontario website, which is the public window into the organization. The website provides important information about our programs, hiking opportunities, training, events and affiliated clubs. In looking at the website it was decided that we should undertake a formal review with the help of a volunteer working group, that would make recommendations on how to improve the function, access/use, communication and aesthetic of it. The working group consists of Ian Bailey, Mike Bender, Tom Friesen, Shompa Hai, Cathy Johnstone, Scott Mitchell, David Rosenblun, and Charles Whitlock, who have met on two occasions.

The group started their work by reviewing a Discussion Paper on website design including key development and management principles. They recommended that the key website messages and information should include:

- Courses and programs provided by Hike Ontario
- Where people can Hike in Ontario
- What Hiking Clubs exist in Ontario
- Identification/List of Hike Ontario events

The key next steps include working to incorporate the recommended changes and schedule a review of the content with a target completion by late October/early November. Stay tuned for a new look and more focused messaging on the website. We would also like to hear from you, once you see the changes. Let us know what you think and if you have any suggested changes.

During the spring, I was also pleased to attend the Oak Ridges Trail Association, 25th Annual General Meeting (AGM). The guest speaker for the event was David Crombie, who was the guest speaker at their first AGM. David spoke about the environmental movement over the last 100 years and how trails are windows on the environment. Trails provide people with an opportunity to see, learn about and enjoy the natural experience and that is why he supports trails all across the province.

In closing, I look forward to getting more involved with the other elements of Public Education including promotion and education of Hike Ontario programs, the Annual Summit, Volunteer Awards and the Young Hikers' Program.



## ***Planning and Development Committee***

Submitted by Frieda Baldwin

The planning & development committee has been active in the past year to serve hiking clubs and trail associations across the province of Ontario. The focus has been on the Hike Ontario Insurance and Membership fees.

The **Insurance Program** has been a staple service to Hike Ontario clubs and associations seeking insurance coverage for both general liability as well as director's & officer's insurance. Through these two policies, pedestrian trail organizations are protecting themselves from the potential liabilities arising from managing or owning a public hiking trail, and in some cases a shared use trail.

Sanctioned Activities include hiking, training events, sanctioned non-hiking events (such as cycling & paddling), trail building and maintenance, meetings, non-competitive events, etc. Coverage is not provided for the following: horseback riding, dog sledding, motorized vehicles, off road mountain biking, white water kayaking, rock climbing, etc.

Hike Ontario is offering the following:

\$ 5 million with a \$1000 deductible Commercial General Liability (CGL) insurance

\$ 2 million for Director's & Officer's (D&O) insurance.

18 Organizations took out CGL at the same rate as in 2016, i.e. at a cost of \$3.06 (incl. 8% PST), and 14 organizations took D&O at a cost of \$208 per organization. Hike Ontario charges a policy fee for the CGL insurance in the amount of \$75, and covers Hike Ontario's cost to administer the insurance program.

We have also looked into the issue of what represents a "member", as several organizations have "family memberships". Upon consultation with our insurance broker, and discussions at Hike Ontario executive and board meetings, we established that for the purposes of CGL cost calculation, we need to count members on a per person basis, and that in the event of a claim, it is important to have names of all the individuals who are members and have been included in the "member count" for the insurance fee calculation. We therefore ask that all organizations who wish to participate in the Hike Ontario insurance program report member counts by individual. Names do not have to be submitted to Hike Ontario, but in the case of a claim, the organization needs to be able to confirm a certain person was a member at a specific time. This will insure that the organization is covered in the case of a claim.

Special Events insurance is available at an extra cost for events where a significant number of people other than members are present, as well as for competitive events, or for events when hiking is not a component.

More details on the insurance program, as well as a Q&A document, are listed on the Hike Ontario website. [hikeontario.com/programs/program-insurance/](http://hikeontario.com/programs/program-insurance/)

As approved at the last Annual General Meeting, we have adjusted our membership fees to \$100 per club, plus \$1 per person. This made the cost more equitable amongst all clubs and slightly increased the membership revenue amount for Hike Ontario in support of its ongoing operations.

**Closing remark**

I would like to thank D.J. Smale, as well as David Rosenblun (Hike Ontario Program Manager) and Hike Ontario President Tom Friesen, for their assistance with insurance related administration and planning.

## HIKE ONTARIO MEMBER CLUB REPORTS

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Hike Ontario's member clubs and associations fall into three categories:

**Hiking Clubs:** are predominantly urban and offer organized events and excursions to member trails, rail trails, Conservation Authority, Ontario Parks or municipal trails. Membership varies but can be quite large.

**Trail Building Clubs:** are associations who build and maintain recreational hiking trails in various parts of the province. They provide the full range of trail management services, including trail development, maps and guidebooks, maintenance, landowner relations, events, membership and newsletters, as well as promotion and publicity for their particular trails. There are approximately 3500 km of such trails in the province

**Affiliate Members:** are corporations, government agencies and organizations other than non-profit hiking or trail building organizations (commercial or non-profit) that support our mission, vision and values.

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### *Avon Trail*

Submitted by Bernard Goward, President

- Membership 99
- Annual Budget as of July 31, 2017: Revenues \$16,143, Expenses \$14,688
- Newsletter published 3 times per year
- Non-profit status
- 7 person Board of Directors
- AGM: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of November, 7 pm, Kiwanis Community Centre, Stratford
- Members' Meetings: 3 per year
- 113 km foot path – St. Marys to Conestogo
- Number of Landowners: 102

During the past year, we offered 24 hikes, two Go-To-Blazes weekends, two Trail Maintenance Workshops (32 attended), two family hikes and one YMCA Day Camp hike (42 children).

The Tuesday morning hikes remain popular with an average of a dozen walkers every week.

Wildwood Conservation Authority offered its facilities for a Hike Leader Certification Course. Two of our members took the course and one from the Wildwood staff.

We benefited from three significant re-routes resulting in approximately 7 km more trail and approximately 5 km less road walking. The Trail is now 113 km.

Last October was the first annual Wildwood Challenge. Eighteen hikers participated in the 22 km hike around Wildwood Lake. The event will be offered again October 2017.

In July, the Avon Trail sponsored the Canada 150 Challenge – a 150 km hike starting in Bellwood (near Guelph), ending in St. Marys. Twenty-two hikers successfully rose to the challenge of hiking

on average 20 km per day over seven consecutive days.

The brass plaque marking the junction of the Thames Valley Trail and the Avon Trail in St. Marys was replaced after many years absent, this the result of the generosity of the Thames Valley Trail and an anonymous donation of an Avon Trail member.

A \$3000 grant from the Stratford Perth Community Foundation has been dedicated to a re-design of the website, the purpose of which is to create a mobile-friendly experience, as well as to introduce functionalities such as PayPal and self-managed membership. A further \$3000 contribution by RBC Dominion Securities is earmarked toward developing a trail app.

### ***Bayfield River Valley Trail Association***

Submitted by Ray Letheren

The BRVTA celebrates its 10th anniversary, and maintains 16 km of trail in and around the Bayfield area.

BRVTA paid 2017 memberships: 55

#### **Events:**

- ✓ Community Walk at Varna Trails
- ✓ Participated in **Family Day** Hike and **Soup's On** event on Family Day
- ✓ Hike Leader Training Day
- ✓ Community Hike at Mavis' Trail in Varna
- ✓ Birding hike River Flats Trail
- ✓ Earth Day Community Clean-up during the afternoon with 55 volunteers
- ✓ Participate in the Bayfield Home & Garden Show
- ✓ Owl Prowl after Dark hike on the Sawmill Trail
- ✓ Scavenger Hunt hike on the Mavis Trail
- ✓ Woodland Trail Spring Community Hike Woodland Trail
- ✓ Fundraiser tree planting: Woodland Trail and the Bayfield River Flats
- ✓ Hosted SW Ontario Camino Pilgrims
- ✓ Mom and tots hike on our mobility trail
- ✓ Special Canada 150 Walk on Canada Day
- ✓ Rebuilt bridges on the Woodland Trail. Due to a landowner concern we had to reroute the trail.

#### **Issues**

Emerald Ash Borer has created a disaster on the trails as we see this beautiful tree be destroyed. Members are working diligently to eliminate trees impacted by the emerald ash borer. \$1500 has been raised to assist in the work.

#### **Updates**

The Canada 150 walk was very successful as we had 150 participants! A 1-hour hike around the village was organized and we invited everyone to come out with red and white. Special commemorative badges we also handed out for Canada 150 and the trail's

10th anniversary. A mass singing of Oh Canada followed the walk lead by Canadian Idol's first winner, Ryan Malcolm.

We have 12 trained Hike Leaders and organized a series of semi-monthly hikes on BRVTA trails as well as other local trails. These have included snow shoeing and cross-country skiing in the winter months. We also had special events, including a January Hike with a membership drive, Owl Prowl, Geocaching walk, birding scavenger hunt (photo #2) tree identification etc. We were also pleased to host a walk with the Southwestern Ontario El Camino Pilgrims in July

The BRVTA is an active member of the Bayfield Blue Community Project. 37 community groups joined towns and cities around the world in recognizing water as a human right and eliminating single use bottled water in the village. The Association helped provide over 1500 refillable bottles in a community of 900.

[bayfieldbluecommunityproject.com/](http://bayfieldbluecommunityproject.com/)

Several Special Events were also organized such as a spring litter walk in the village was very well received. Some 55 volunteers came out on Earth Day to pick up litter in the village.

We continue to sponsor the Terry Fox Run in September. The BRVTA has sponsored this event for the past 7 years, rising over \$30,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation.

We organized our second annual Fall Harvest Dinner and Dance in Bayfield as a fundraiser. We sold 120 tickets and raised approximately \$2,400 for the trail. This has become a great annual fundraising venture, and covers a significant portion of our costs for the year. It also gives us an opportunity to thank and recognize our landowner partners and professional services that support us.

As part of the trail's work, we have a tree planting committee "the Bayfield Tree Project" to begin the replanting of village trees as existing mature trees die out. Thousands of dollars and hundreds of trees have been planted over the past few years.

### **Major Project: The Bayfield River Flats Acquisition**

The BRVTA launched an ambitious project to raise the funds to acquire almost 5 acres of river side land and pass the ownership to the Huron Tract Land Trust Conservancy. [www.htlhc.ca](http://www.htlhc.ca). The fundraiser, which was an overwhelming success raised almost \$130,000 before the campaign concluded in the fall. The land was purchased and donated to the HTLTC. The BRVTA also signed a 10-year management agreement to manage the property.

### **Bayfield River Flats 2017 Usage Report**

The Bayfield River Flats property was acquired late in 2016 through a community fundraising drive coordinated by the BRVTA.

A BRVTA team of volunteers, (photo #4) working with the HTLTC has worked to clean up and enhance the property by:

- removing truckloads of garbage.
- removing abandoned steel boat cradles and a large barge
- removing dead and dying hazardous trees.
- controlling Hogweed and other invasive species (spraying and posting)
- erecting signage (Photo #3)
- defining the parking area and installing gate controls.
- applying for a Huron Heritage grant (successful)
- chipping walking trails
- creating access for a canoe / kayak launch area
- engaging a volunteer Landscape Architect, Kim McCabe
- initiating a survey

### **Public Usage**

The community is very pleased with the clean-up. There is now an understanding happening that this is a special natural area that can be enhanced and protected. There is a lot of usage by people interested in passive recreation by the river. It is shocking how little public river access there is in Bayfield. One of the largest user groups is anglers and their families. Usually there are 2 to 3 individuals fishing. The Flats is a prime fishing area. The Bayfield anglers club has a major restocking program in the river every year. Fishermen are from across south-western Ontario from Windsor to Niagara. Many have a Bayfield connection, but as well, many do not, they come to fish. There has also been significant interest from canoes and kayakers wanting access to the river. Many people come for bird and wildlife viewing. This is a great area for birdwatchers, and as well, the colony of beaver has created interest in the area for viewing.

The BRVTA would like to thank the board of Hike Ontario for the dedication and commitment to promote hiking and outdoor experiences in Ontario. We would not be the organization we are without your amazing support!

### ***Bighead River Heritage Association (Trout Hollow Trail)***

Submitted by Ron Knight

Trout Hollow Trail (Bighead River Heritage Association) has had a good year even with lots of rain and a multitude of bugs. The poor weather resulted in increased maintenance and a drop in trail use, but in spite of the rain, the river did not flood significantly, resulting in minimal trail re-routing this year. Fishing seemed good, with lots of activity on the river.

We did manage to install new trailhead signs on the trail, along with six historical interpretive signs at the sites of the remains of an old hydro dam and powerhouse, the Trout sawmill and cabin where John Muir lived and worked for a few years in the 1860's and a couple of grist mill ruins. The local museum and the municipality helped with finances and information.

We are looking forward to a busy Fall on the trail.

## ***Bruce Trail Conservancy***

Submitted by Anne Armstrong

### **Highlights**

- An unprecedented 1,102 acres of Escarpment land preserved, with 10 new nature reserves created and 1 easement acquired, the first easement under the new Ontario Trails Act
- 14 kilometers of Bruce Trail secured, 9 km of main Bruce Trail and 5 km of side trails
- Single largest acreage of land donated this year, the 231-acre Cape Dundas Nature Reserve
- Membership catapulted to a record high of 9,698
- Over \$4.7 million contributed by donors, granting agencies and sponsors in support of our mission, the highest amount raised in a year in the Bruce Trail Conservancy's history.
- 1,500 volunteers now contribute \$4 million in labour to the Bruce Trail Conservancy, the equivalent of 80 full-time positions
- 64.3% of the Bruce Trail's Optimum Route is now permanently secured

### **50th Anniversary of the Opening of the Bruce Trail – June 10, 2017**

The Bruce Trail was officially opened at a ceremony in Tobermory on June 10, 1967. Hand crafted and donated for the occasion by a volunteer, a special baton was carried the length of the Bruce Trail in time for arrival at the June 10, 2017 50th Anniversary celebration in Tobermory. Volunteers coordinated the passage of the baton through each club section, engaging members, the public, local dignitaries and the media.

The 50th Anniversary event in Tobermory featured a stirring address from Dr. Philip Gosling, a founding member of the Bruce Trail, and all eyes were on the young volunteers who brought the ceremonial baton to the event. More than 300 people came to Tobermory to celebrate the Bruce Trail.

### **Membership**

The Bruce Trail Conservancy has experienced four consecutive years of membership growth, reaching an all-time high of 9,698 memberships at the fiscal year end.

### **Trail Development and Maintenance**

The spring and early summer of 2017 were very wet, leading to excessive growth of grass and weeds in open areas. Our volunteers put in many hours with lawnmowers and weed whackers to keep the Trail open and comfortable for hikers.

Land acquisitions have led to trail improvements in a couple of areas, notably in the Sydenham section. Near Woodford, a trail section that was lost last year was re-established after securement of the land. A spectacular new section of trail was opened on the newly-secured Kemble Rock Nature Reserve. More improvements are coming in this area as we work to secure another property nearby.

Unfortunately several trail sections had to be closed in the past year at the request of landowners. Our biggest losses were in the Iroquoia section: near Webster's Falls in Dundas and near Kilbride. This highlights the urgent need to secure our Conservation Corridor as quickly as possible. Development pressure and rapidly increasing land prices are most acute in the southern half of the Trail, but are having an impact on the Trail throughout its length.

Monitoring of social media shows that a large number of people are attempting to "through-hike" the Bruce Trail, and many are looking for acceptable places to camp overnight. There is a serious lack of Overnight Rest Areas, especially on the southern portion of the Trail. This leads to frequent instances of "stealth camping", which could have serious consequences with landowners. The Trail Development and Maintenance Committee, with input from Land Stewardship, is working to remedy this by opening more official Overnight Rest Areas (ORAs). Two new ORAs have been established in the Caledon Hills section in the past year.

### **Land Acquisition**

This past year the Bruce Trail Conservancy protected an unprecedented 1,102 acres of Niagara Escarpment land, secured 14 kilometres of Bruce Trail (9 km of main trail and 5 km of side trails), and received our single largest acreage of donated land. More than 11,100 acres of Escarpment land have now been preserved through the efforts of the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

### **Land Stewardship**

Stewarding and nurturing the Niagara Escarpment land in our care is a growing responsibility for Bruce Trail Conservancy volunteers and staff ecologists.

Staff ecologists continue to explore the diversity of habitats on our new and existing nature reserves, and this year added 77 occurrences of rare species, including Grasshopper Sparrow, Narrow Leaved Wild Leek, Eastern whip-poor-will and Least Bittern, to our growing database of rare species. Several proposed new trail sections and reroutes were inspected by staff ecologists this year to ensure the routing of the Trail does not negatively impact rare species.

Volunteers and staff continued to work together to address multiple encroachment issues including all-terrain vehicles, horses, bikes and even the odd herd of cattle. A growing issue is managing the steadily increasing number of visitors to scenic natural attractions on or near Bruce Trail properties. This will continue to be a challenge as Ontario's population increases.

### ***Durham Outdoors Club***

Submitted by Carol Petzoldt, President

Durham Outdoors Club (DOC) is a small non-profit member-driven organization, totally run by volunteers. The type, number and scope of activities are determined by the will of



the members. The club sponsors and participates in various activities throughout the year, including, but not limited to: nature hikes, urban/neighbourhood walks, snowshoeing, day canoe trips and weekend canoe/camping trips, cycling day trips, ski days, weekend or snowshoe ski trips, and winter camping.

DOC has an elected executive committee and a number of activity coordinators for the various events. A key strength of DOC is the variety of activities offered by the members, resulting in a broader appeal and relevance to outdoor enthusiasts. There were 110 members at quarter-end. DOC membership includes family, student and individual adult membership.

#### The 2017-2018 Executive

President: Deborah Corbett

Secretary: Coral Petzoldt

Treasurer: Kaja Batinic

Membership: Jeannie Shanks

Website: Catherine Shearer-Kudel

Newsletter: Chris Potvin

#### The 2017-2018 Event Coordinators

Canoeing and Camping: Mike Thomas

Hiking: Mary Perkins

Walks: Coral Petzoldt

Biking: Elinor Major

Urban Events: Ray Bartodziej

DOC total activities September 2015 to August 2016 were as follows:

- 54 wilderness and urban hikes
- 6 hiking trips
- 14 bicycle trips
- 4 day paddles
- 5 canoe trips
- 10 urban events
- 4 executive committee meeting
- 10 general membership meetings

The newsletter is published 4 times a year at the start of each season of activities. It is available on [www.durhamoutdoorsclub.ca](http://www.durhamoutdoorsclub.ca) and includes the list of upcoming events. Monthly meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month except December and July, when no meetings are held. These meetings are an opportunity to update members on club business and activities, as well as provide social time to swap stories. Most meetings also feature a guest speaker in a specialized area of interest such as canoeing or camping. Hikes can be urban or rural, and typically last from 2-4 hours. The length varies by difficulty, weather, and terrain and are run all year. We walk every Wednesday evening from April to August and almost every weekend. We make good use of Durham Region conservation areas and parks and other such areas within reasonable driving of Oshawa. Bicycle trips happen either Saturday or Sunday during cycling weather, with the length and difficulty increasing each week during the season. There is a small but dedicated canoeing/kayaking contingent for day and weekend trips. Weekends are in Provincial Parks and day trips happen all over Southern Ontario within a 2-hour drive from Oshawa. Winter activities typically include skiing and snowshoeing. Longer hiking, bicycling and

skiing/snowshoeing trips may be to Federal or Provincial parks or areas of interest across North America. Urban events include activities such as trips to museums, historic cemeteries and buildings, theatre, pool, golf and music festivals.

### ***Elgin Hiking Trail Club***

Submitted by DJ Smale

The Elgin Hiking Club operates consistently with 75 to 80 registered club members.

Throughout the last year, club members organized and lead more than 30 hikes.

The Club has been diligent in reviewing its risk plan annually to ensure safe and enjoyable practices are in place for hikers on the trail.

The Elgin Club continues to be a co-organizer with the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority to offer the annual Christmas Spirit Walk through Springwater Forest the first Saturday evening in December.

A very successful Annual General Meeting was held in April with 50 people in attendance.

Club members also volunteered and supported the St. Thomas Kinsmen Club at the Pinafore Park gates during Canada 150 Celebrations in early July.

The club provided resources to train 7 new hike leaders from club members in July 2017.

This fall hike leaders have organized an end to end on the Avon trail and are completing those hikes over a series of Saturdays throughout the fall hiking season.

Come and explore the Elgin Trail. All are welcome.

### ***Elora Cataract Trailway Association***

Submitted by Raymond Soucy

The Elora Cataract Trailway is a 47-km (29-mile) linear trail that links parks, watersheds and Communities in south-central Ontario. The trail is routed along the abandoned railway corridor of the 1879 Credit Valley Railway and runs from Elora to Cataract, passing through the Communities of Elora, Fergus, Belwood, Orton, Hillsburgh, Erin and Cataract. From there users can access the Forks of the Credit Provincial Park and join up to the Bruce Trail.

The Elora Cataract Trailway Association (ECTA) focuses on Promoting, Improving and Protecting the Elora Cataract Trailway. Below is a partial list of activities carried out in the past year.

Some of our activities this year including our continued partnership with Communitrees

for planting trees and the removing invasive species on the Trailway. This year we again participated in Ontario Heritage Trust's Doors Open program for Township of Centre Wellington. We also participated in a Canada 150 event called Festival Faire held on July 8th.

The next phase of The Founder's Project was to mount an exhibit at the Wellington County Museum and Archives called "Rails to Trails". The exhibit developed by Volunteers from the ECTA focused on the past (Railroad history), the transmission years from Rails to Trails and the current ongoing efforts and value of having such a beautiful trail in our community. The opening reception was on June 4th with over 100 people attending. The Exhibit was to run from June 2017 to November 2017 but was extended to January 2018 and then extended again to April 2018.

Our 2017 AGM was held on Sunday March 19th at the Victoria Park Senior Centre in Fergus. Our guest speaker this year was Doug and Lynda Wilson who walked the entire length of the G2G trail and wrote a book about it called "Walking Home".

We are always on the lookout for individuals who would be interested in making a difference by joining our board. Anyone interested can email [info@trailway.org](mailto:info@trailway.org) for more details.

### ***Friends of the Trail (Quinte West)***

Submitted by Bill Gray

What a difference a year makes. The unusually wet spring and summer proved to be a challenge for many recreational facilities in our area but the Lower Trent Trail with its limestone crusher dust and good drainage remained in fair shape throughout. The number of users has steadily increased and with the added benefit of a lot of local trails being flooded for most of the spring and early summer the LTT was the venue of choice for several community activities and family recreation. Our membership has remained steady and although we continue with a core group the age and physical capabilities seem to be on a divergent path. We will try a membership drive later this year pending a positive outcome of our lease renewal application. The City of Quinte West Mayor has expressed some interest in buying the Trail with an eye to removing the Non-motorized designation we have applied to renew our current lease which expires next spring.

The cup is half full.

### ***Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association***

Submitted by Frieda Baldwin

The nine member clubs of the Association maintain the Ganaraska Hiking Trail from Port Hope on Lake Ontario to the Bruce Trail near Collingwood, with side trails to Wasaga Beach and Midland.

GTA distances by club Kms	
Pine Ridge	63.3
Kawartha	76.7
Wilderness	65
Orillia	69.2
Barrie	48.1
Mad River	50
Wasaga Beach	48.6
Oro Medonte	18.5
Midland	14
Tiny	13.3
TOTAL	466.7

The trail is maintained by volunteers, and the association is run by a Board of Volunteers drawn from the member clubs.

Each club runs scheduled recreational activities in their local area.

### **Membership**

As of August 24, 2017, we have 500 paid members.

The GHTA membership structure consists of a family membership of \$25 per year.

**Annual Meetings:** The GHTA holds 2 Board of Directors Meetings annually: a Spring Director's Meeting and an Annual General Meeting in the fall. The meetings are held at Regent United Church in Orillia.

**Hikes and individual Club Activities:** The GHTA nine member clubs host numerous guided hikes throughout the year. Hikes are posted in our newsletter distributed in the Fall, Winter and Spring, as well as on our webpage ([ganaraska-hiking-trail.ca](http://ganaraska-hiking-trail.ca)). Beside hikes, clubs also organize snowshoe and cross country ski outings, as well as biking, canoeing & kayaking, and camping events.

### **Risk Management & insurance**

GHTA acknowledges that accidents and misadventures can and will happen; people can be injured, property can be damaged, and injured persons can launch a lawsuit against GHTA and/or its individual hiking clubs. To this end, the GHTA has developed a comprehensive Risk Management plan which was based off of the framework provided in Hike Ontario's document "The Key Elements of Risk Management for Ontario Hiking Clubs and Associations." The GHTA Risk Management Protocol was adopted at the 2012 AGM.

The Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association purchases its General Liability insurance through Ontario Nature.

## **Trail Management**

Ganaraska Hiking Trail maintenance standards differ from those of e.g. the Bruce Trail, as it maintains a “minimum impact” trail, i.e. volunteers refresh the paint blazes annually, and trim away branches that obstruct the view of the blazes. There are very few man-made structures, such as bridges, boardwalks, etc. You will however find stiles over property fences.

## **Challenges**

### **Wire Fraud Scam**

The Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association suffered a significant loss early in 2017, as a result of a phishing scam in which the treasurer was purportedly asked by the “president” to wire \$10,000 to a bank account abroad. Unfortunately, the organization was not able to recover these funds, but has since put more stringent financial controls in place.

### **Vacant Positions**

A few executive member positions remain vacant in the GHTA. We are looking for volunteers to fill the duties as Vice President, Trail Director and Landowners Relations Director.

### **Mad River section of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail**

The Mad River club maintains a 50 km section of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail, however, their membership has dwindled to a mere 5 members. As a result, the trail has not been maintained since the fall of 2015. In addition, note that the 11.9 km section from County Road 90 to New Lowell Conservation Area, where the trail follows an abandoned railline, is totally overgrown, and remains closed until further notice.

### **Wilderness section**

One of the nine Ganaraska Hiking Trail sections is the Wilderness section, which crosses the Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands (east of Orillia, and more specifically from Sadowa to Moore’s Falls). While this is an exceptionally beautiful section, it is also very rugged and very remote. Because of the challenges posed by this 65 km of wilderness terrain and the need to backpack multi-day hikes, the club organizes a limited number of hikes and one or two maintenance weekends each season. Please refer to the [www.ganaraskawilderness.wikifoundry.com](http://www.ganaraskawilderness.wikifoundry.com) for the club’s hike schedule as well as the latest notices and warnings.

## **Other**

### **Ganaraska End to End**

The Ganaraska Hiking Trail meets the Bruce Trail main trail as well as the BTC’s Mad River Side Trail (blue blazes) high above Glen Huron (south of Collingwood) on Conc. 15-16. This location represents the most westerly terminus of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail, with a stone cairn. The eastern terminus cairn at Port Hope, 600 km further to the south east on Lake Ontario, also received a new plaque in 2015.

Each hiker who completes the Ganaraska Hiking Trail End-to-End Challenge will – upon request - be presented with a Special End-to-End Badge and a Certificate of Completion with compliments of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association. Section Badges are also available. [http://ganaraska-hiking-trail.org/?page\\_id=713](http://ganaraska-hiking-trail.org/?page_id=713)

## ***Grand Valley Trails Association***

Submitted by Charles Whitlock

The Grand Valley Trails Association is a volunteer organization committed to establishing footpaths within Ontario's Grand River Watershed in order to promote the protection and public enjoyment of the natural environment and human history of this Canadian Heritage River. The Grand Valley Trail is a 280-kilometer marked footpath starting at the mouth of the Grand River in Haldimand County and ending in the Town of Alton, near Orangeville.

Membership as of April 2017 was 283. Generally, April membership numbers are the highest within a calendar year.

GVTA members volunteer to develop and oversee the care of the trail. Help is received from nonmembers like Scout troops. This year the 1st Elmira Scouts built a bridge on May 27/28, 2017. The planning and building was completed under the guidance of one of our trail directors. The project was funded through a donation made in recognition of a GVTA family member.

Re-blazing has been completed north of Brantford and some parts of the trail in the south. Trail captains are in place for much of the trail in and around Brantford. Despite the wet spring it appears flooding is not an issue in the Carolinian Crest Section.

GVTA continues to do presentations to the general public. Three presentations focusing on "Healthy Hiking with the GVTA" at a couple of library branches, were well attended and well received.

The Annual General Meeting took place on Tuesday, 30th April 2017 in Kitchener. Approximately 50 people attended. Although the meeting was well attended, the Board elected only three people to its ranks. In his closing comments, the Chair noted that the Association remains strong despite the small size of the Board and the absence of volunteers in some key roles such as Managing Director for its newsletter, Trail Markings. The Board continues to work on filling the gaps and would appreciate referrals to anyone who is willing to help out in any areas.

The Grand Trail is a project aiming to connect existing or future trails along the Grand River watershed. Under the tutelage of the Grand River Conservation Authority this project started in 2015, when trail groups and other interested parties met to discuss the creation of an integrated trail network. Its aim is to connect to other major trail networks

such as the Guelph-to-Goderich Trail, the Waterfront Trail and the Trans-Canada Trail. Long-term initiatives to improve and link hiking trails would benefit all hikers. GVTA, through its past president is well represented on this exciting project. GVTA supports this initiative.

The GVTA became incorporated as a charitable organization on January 23, 1973, that is 44 years ago. We look forward too many more years of maintaining trails and hiking.

### ***Guelph Hiking Trail Club***

Submitted by Mike Curtis

The Guelph Hiking Trail Club has had a good year attracting many new members, while retaining former members. We do have a turnover rate of about one third, which has been usual. Our three main trails, the Guelph Radial Line Trail, the Speed River Trail, the Kissing Bridge Trailway, and their side trails are in good condition and are well used by our members and members of the general public.

As well as our usual hiking schedule, we also had special hikes this year, including our popular kids' hikes, a bridge to bridge hike, and magnificent magnolia bike ride. Our trek and tell shows, winter party and summer solstice party were popular with our members. Our 'stretch and stride' programme which includes walking and yoga, remains popular with several of our members. We have been using a 'meetup' site which has been well used by newer members.

Our use of 'pay pal' is proving quite useful with new and returning members.

We have purchased a new feather banner to advertise our club and have a shelter to protect us from the elements when we set up our display panels.

Another very popular hike attracting 31 hikers was a bus hike to the Kolapore highlands of the Bruce Trail, lunch and a cidery tour and tasting! Our bus driver did not taste!!

Once again, we participated in the Ontario Trails Open on our Radial Line Trail section one and had over a hundred people participate in a short interpretive walk, including an area where the city of Guelph used as a landfill site in the last century.

### ***Hamilton Burlington Trails Council***

Submitted by Alexandra Brodka, Title Project Manager

Hamilton Burlington Trails Council (HBTC) is comprised of 13 primary stakeholders in the Hamilton Burlington Region. This includes trail user groups, land owners, tourism organizations, municipal staff, and even an educational institution, McMaster University. In 2017 HBTC came to the end of a 2 year Ontario Sport and Recreation Community Fund grant which allowed for a dedicated Project Coordinator to drive initiatives that are representative of stakeholder goals and priorities. This included:

- Hosting the 2015 Trailhead Ontario conference in Hamilton, including a community “Celebration of Trails” event.
- Developing a website and comprehensive online map of all official trails in Hamilton and Burlington. Recently enhancements have been made which include a featured trails section with interpretive information and images: <http://hamiltonburlingtontrails.ca/featured-trails/>
- Executing a year long trail survey which collected trail user feedback as well as demographic information from over 1000 trail users. This included recruitment of over 30 volunteers
- Starting up a working group and project charter for our Regional Greenway Network Project (an outdoor active transportation network consisting of multi-use paths, pedestrian walkways, and cycling lanes for both commuter and recreational use in Hamilton and Burlington).
- Helping to found the Hamilton Burlington Mountain Bike Association to bring riders together for recreation, education and relationship building with landowners.
- Receiving the MEC Staff Choice grant for youth engagement.

Additional funding from the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport in 2017 allowed us to launch our Y.E.S. Trails Program (Youth Engagement Strategy). This includes

- ✓ Workshop sessions for organizations that work with youth (including a guest speaker from Back to Nature Network). We present opportunities and strategies for getting their youth outdoors
- ✓ Participation opportunities for youth to come out and engage in trail related activities (glow hikes, bike rides, biosphere workshops)
- ✓ 500 Nature kits distributed to children and youth across Hamilton and Burlington. These kits include a workbook of activities and items for engaging kids (ie a step counter, compass, sidewalk chalk, maps)

Looking forward, HBTC is excited to be hosting a Hike-a- Thon on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 to raise additional funds for projects in the community.

## ***Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association***

Submitted by Roland Gatti, President

2017 has been a great hiking year for us at the Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association. We organize one guided hike every month with an average of 15 hikers attending. The total membership of the TJVHTA is currently 93, including the Kleinburg and Bolton chapters. Although we attract new members each year membership has dropped slightly (8 hikers) since last year and we are struggling with member retention. The two greatest reasons for the loss of members is due to health concerns of an aging group and that members are relocating outside of the GTA.

As a club we are getting involved in community events in order to raise the awareness of our hiking association. Our largest involvement is with the Bindertwine Festival taking place in September of every year. In this country fair, which is our largest fundraiser, we sell apple pies and manage auto parking.



We are in the midst of a trail development plan between Kleinburg and Bolton building new hiking trails on the east side of the Humber River and new cycling trails on the west side of the river. Trail construction has begun but is being delayed by Trans Canada Pipelines which is installing a gas pipeline under the Humber River and across much of the terrain through which we hike. Trail construction is expected to be completed within three years.

We have in the valley lands of the Humber River many ash trees which had to be cut down to prevent the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer. This is a non-native insect that lives on the sap of the ash tree eventually killing it. Since the borer doesn't fly, it will stay in the section of the felled tree and will not spread to adjacent trees.

An ongoing threat that we need to monitor constantly is the new road development and housing development encroaching on our valley lands. Given that we are within the GTA, developers are acquiring whatever open spaces are available. So far we have been able to halt a major highway (#413) bridging the Humber River cutting through environmentally sensitive land, and caused land developers to cede valley lands to the TRCA as a condition before development approvals were granted for the table land of that particular property.

We look forward to another safe and healthy hiking year.

### ***Lambton Shores Nature Trails***

Submitted by Klaus Keunecke

LSNT maintains 40 km of hiking trails in six(6) environmentally sensitive areas (ESA's) ranging in size from 69 to 570 acres in partnership with landowners such as the County of Lambton, the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA), the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), and private landowners in the Ausable River Valley. Over 1300 acres of special lands are now well protected from further abuse by off-road motorized vehicles. The 11 km hiking trail on the Middlesex County side of the Ausable River is temporarily closed pending removal of dead ash trees along its sides. In future this trail will be co-maintained with members of the Lambton Outdoor Club (LOC). Unfortunately LSNT lost access to a spectacular 75-acre Hidden Valley sugar bush property in the Ausable River Valley on the Lambton County side. The next generations, avid ATV enthusiasts, pressured the elderly conservation-minded owner to cancel future collaboration with LSNT. On the positive side, LSNT was able to build a 3 km 'Connector Trail' to connect the trails in the Ausable River Cut Conservation Area to the trails in the Lambton County Forest. All the trails developed and maintained or co-maintained by LSNT are located in beautiful natural settings including oak savannah, forested dune-lands, provincially significant wetlands and river valleys with steep forest ravines.

**2017 Highlights include the following:**

- Carried out ongoing Trail Development & Maintenance
- Engaged a University of Waterloo Team of Engineering Students to design a suspension bridge for Mud Creek in Port Franks
- Held the Kineto Film Festival attended by 150 in Forest to view the premiere of the
- 'Pacific Crest Trail' film produced by adventurer Andy Laub & and a LSNT Promo
- Installed a trailhead map display and two memorial benches on the Mystery Falls Trail -
- unfortunately the trailhead display was removed by a vandal
- Manned a LSNT Display at the Open House sponsored by the Municipality of Lambton Shores and the
- Kettle & Stony Point First Nation at the Legacy Centre in Thedford
- Welcomed a new Director to the LSNT Board to represent Thedford & Arkona
- Held seven(7) formal Board of Directors Meetings
- Continued the slow process of cutting dead ash trees along the Ausable River Valley Trail
- Established a 3km 'Connector Trail' through an oak savanna area owned by the Nature Conservancy
- of Canada, Oakridge & Parkridge Resorts and the County of Lambton
- Started discussions re 'Connector Trails' on their respective lands with representatives from the Kettle & Stony Point First Nation, the County of Lambton and the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority
- Installed a ladder and security chain at a steep ravine on the Ausable River Valley Trail at McDonald
- Planted a mix of 80 native trees on Earth-Day to create a 'Green Tunnel Trail' around the perimeter of the Port Franks Community Centre property in partnership with the Lakeshore Eco-Network, the Municipality of Lambton Shores, the Port Franks Garden Club & the Ausable Port Franks Optimists
- Combined forces with the Grand Bend Chamber of Commerce to produce and distribute thousands of LSNT Trail Maps as part of the area's 2017 Tourist Guide
- Created & distributed a handy one-page LSNT Trail Guide
- Participated for two days at the Ausable Port Franks Optimist's 'Arts & Nature Youth Camp
- Installed the first of two impressive Trailhead Log-Structures on municipal land in Forest (a similar structure is scheduled to be installed in Port Franks in 2018)
- Hosted the 'Youth Conservationists' of Lambton Wildlife Inc to participate in an LSNT Workday
- Conducted a formal winter, spring, summer & fall 'Nature Appreciate Hike and one hike with students from the North Lambton Secondary School
- Continued Community Outreach Efforts (active participation in 'Collective Impact' Conference sponsored by the Grand Bend Area Community Health Centre – active participation in Lambton Shores 'Consistent Municipal Signage' Workshop – active participation in Lakeshore Eco-Network Meetings and their Ausable Heritage Tree Festival)
- Published a number of articles to promote LSNT in the Forest Standard Guide Advocate.

### ***Maitland Trail Association***

Submitted by Allison Stoecker

The Maitland Trail Association maintains a variety of different trails totalling 84 km. The largest of which is the Maitland Trail, which is a 49 km hiking trail that follows the beautiful winding Maitland River in Huron County.

**Membership:**

We have 245 paid memberships (this includes both individual and family)

**Activities and Successes:**

We offer over 100 hikes and events every year.

There is usually one scheduled hike every weekend as well as every Tuesday, we have our Tuesday Trompers.

We also offer cross country skiing, birdwatching, photography opportunities, a variety of workshops, as well as cycling and paddling events.

There is a great team of volunteers diligently working on the trails, and we are happy to have a few more trained grass cutters available as well.

We have recently hosted a Young Hikers Project Workshop, with Glenda Collings and Tom Friesen. We did this in conjunction with a local church youth camp, Camp Menesetung.

We also have a team working on mapping out all emergency access points on the trail.

**Currently Underway:**

This weekend (Sept. 23-24) is also our big event! The Maitland's own El Camino

The International Plowing Match is also happening at the moment in our area, in Walton. The G2G Trail runs right through this, making it the first plowing match accessible by trail. MTA will be represented there.

**Challenges:**

Our trail crew is always working on drainage issues, especially on our section of the G2G (GART), as well as erosion issues on our trails.

We are also dealing with areas of poison ivy.

After 23 years, the leader of our very successful lantern-making workshop has stepped down. We are hoping to find a volunteer to keep this tradition going.

Plans are underway for our November Membership meeting, where we will hear about some of our member's hiking trip to Switzerland.

***Oak Ridges Trail Association***

Submitted by Peter Schaefer

On Thursday, April 27, 2017, we hosted our Annual General Meeting at the Goodwood Community Centre. At the same event, we also celebrated our 25th Anniversary. The turnout was excellent and the business meeting proceeded smoothly and quickly through the various board member reports, the discussion of the Financial Statements, the award presentations and the introduction of the new Board. There had been no board members resigning and we added one new member who has for years been a tireless advocate for

trails. Our guest speaker was the Honorable David Crombie who had addressed our members at the initial meeting of what would become ORTA, provided the keynote address at our 10th Anniversary meeting and now presented at our 25th Anniversary. He gave a powerful and at time humorous address, reflecting on the development of trails in the GTA over the years and ORTA's role in having with its trail development contributed enormously to the quality of life for so many.

As part of our 25-year celebration, we are having a 25-hike challenge through the course of this year, which after successful completion will earn a special crest. There will be a hike rendezvous on Sunday, October 1st, where several hikes of different speed, length and starting time will all meet up at 4 PM for a pot-luck dinner.

Our 11th Annual Adventure Relay was held on June 13, 2017. We had 26 participating teams, most of them back from previous years. There were again about 120 enthusiastic ORTA volunteers at the 14 check points and along the 160-km route, cheering on the competitors and assisting them and their friends. The race was won again by the TRCA racers, led by their team captain Mike Bender(!). Once again, the event was a modest financial success from the entry fees and sponsorships, helping us to keep our financial statement balance in a sustainable position.

We are having a couple of challenges along the trail: The proposed Metrolinx rail way corridor crossing in Aurora will require a substantial reroute and our input in the planning process has been lacking. The proposed extension of the underpass where the 16th Side Road passes under Highway 400 in King Township will result in some dangerous narrowing of the path to be used by hikers, as well as a temporary 4 km reroute of our trail.

Our president, Kevin Lowe, is a Hike Ontario certified hike leader instructor. He earlier in the year delivered a training session for 16 prospective hike leader candidates. Fourteen of those attending are ORTA members who will certainly now add to our substantial number of excellent certified hike leaders (33 listed). This enables us to lead more than 340 organized group hikes each year, offering a wide variety of hikes each week.

Our membership has stayed just above 600 for several years now, but has slightly increased towards the end of last year to 626. We are for over a year now in a strategic planning mode which has, and still is, taking a long time. In the process of it, we will also address whether or not we must, and if so how, substantially increase our membership. The planning process has been aided by a branding workshop which was provided through the sponsorship of IBM.

### ***Ottawa Rambling Club***

Submitted by Cliff Daly

The Ottawa Rambling Club's primary activities are hiking; while in the winter months members enjoy snow shoeing and cross country skiing - mostly undertaken in Gatineau

Park. Over the course of July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 there were approximately 110 outings – with an average of 9 per month held on Saturdays and / or Sundays, including one 30 / 40 km challenge and a bird watching outing. During that 12 month period there were a higher than usual number of cancelled outings due to inclement weather.

In addition to the usual weekly activities the Club offered a variety of other events. Members enjoyed out-of-town trips to such places as Spectacle Lake Lodge close to Algonquin Park, the Adirondacks and the White Mountains. Or they participated in social activities including an evening Harvest Moon Hike and potluck, a Hallowe'en dress-up potluck, a New Year's Eve ski / snowshoe to ring in the New Year in one of Gatineau Park's cabins, and pub nights.

To support our members' development the Club also conducted two wilderness map & compass navigation clinics, two leader development clinics, 1 beginner GPS session and several personalized map & compass navigation practice sessions.

At the governance level, the Club approved changes to its Constitution at its AGM held in March 2017; and the Executive updated the Club's By Law to reflect the Constitutional amendments.

### ***Ottawa Wilderness Adventure Club***

Submitted by Sean Leon

Ottawa Wilderness Adventure Club is a member driven, non-profit group in its third as a group and with Hike Ontario. Our groups site is hosted on the Meetup platform.

Our group activities are limited to hikes, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing.

Membership Total: 130 (to date)

Our club membership mainly consist of individuals in the late twenties to mid forties age range.

The club is run by three organizers (Sean, Ala and Dave) for the last two years. We generally have 4 hikes a month, generally on the weekends. We hike on NCC trails in the Ottawa and Gatineau region.

Attendance for hikes was good for 2017. Generally 6 to 10 members RSVP and participate on hikes.

In previous years we tended to mostly post hikes between 15km to 20km however this year we decided to scale back on the distances and have admit hikers with less hiking experience and have them attend hikes in the 5km to 10 km range. We plan to continue and expand on this 2018.

## ***Rideau Trail Association***

Submitted by Sharen Yaworski

Our 46 AGM was held in May and Brian Grant came forward as our new President. Brian lives in Ottawa with his wife Margaret. Brian is a retired government executive who came to the Board of Directors as a Club representative just last year. We have had many changes of our Board this year with many of our long standing members stepping down and new members replacing them.

To Celebrate Canada's 150 we are offering a 150 challenge in which anyone member or nonmember who hikes or runs 150 km of any part of our trail they are eligible to receive a special edition commemorative badge. Also as an added bonus any non member will get a free membership for one year. Our way of saying thanks for coming out on our trail. By Mid year we have had over 50 challenge completions.

Our Marketing and Communications member Paul Gallipeau is ensuring we are very visible on social media with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Our new Improved Website which easy to maneuver through is also seeing a lot more hits. Our Maps are available on line and are constantly updated, one just has to print them off. Our on line maps also include a great deal of information about the area one is hiking, nature as well as historical information it is on the same page as the maps on website and can be printed off as well. We still have a great set of waterproof maps but last printing was 2013 so online info is more accurate.

The Board has agreed to have a strategic planning committee formed to review the Associations objectives, structure and plans for the future. This committee with report to the board this fall.

Our Quarterly Newsletter continues to be a very professional thanks to the hard work of our Editors. Members can have this mailed or sent digitally per their preference.

Our membership is maintaining around the 1000, It is always a challenge to increase and retain our memberships in this fast paced world when people's lives are changing.

We continue to offer Safe Hiker and Hike Leader courses at all three of our clubs, and plan to do more this year to keep high quality hiking on our trail.

## ***Thames Valley Trail Association***

Submitted by Ian Bailey

Our membership is at approximately 700 members, rising from 620 this time last year. We hope this interest in hiking continues.

We continue to offer approximately 5 hikes per week, from one hour moderate Mondays and Saturday morning walks, to 2 hour Tuesday and Thursday Ramblers, and 2-4 hour weekend hikes. Fast paced hikes are generally offered weekly. We have run a comprehensive range of hikes during the year including a series of end to end weekend

hikes commencing in June. We also partnered with Reforest London to lead interpretive hikes in our Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs).

Regular trail maintenance work has been carried out over the summer and heavy in a number of places after another mild winter. We have focused on refreshing trail blazes as well as participated in trail maintenance with our partners (Ontario Parks and Upper Thames Conservation Authority). We have requested Fall trail maintenance reports from our section leaders and will use these to identify and prioritise trail work. We generally have good coverage for maintenance volunteers across the trail. We see increasing numbers of Giant Hogweed in our northern trail sections and aim to tackle these in the Spring.

Our PR committee has been very busy: to date in 2017 TVTA has been out in the public eye in the following events:

- Trails Open (working with the City of London and the London Environmental network),
- REXPO (for about to be retired and recently retired folks giving them different recreation opportunities to remain active),
- the Carolinian Forest Expo,
- as well as the upcoming Gathering on the Green where there are over 100 exhibitors.

Our website still consumes significant time to fix some aspects and update content. We have made great inroads into utilising automation in Membee to provide various membership reports and mail-outs (renewals etc.).

TVTA's Don't Miss A Step Event: 2017: Thames Valley Trail Association in celebration of Canada's 150 year anniversary is offering a special draw for those hikers who complete an E2E of our trail within this year. Canada has a long legacy in preserving natural areas for us to enjoy and appreciate. TVTA continues to support this with the development and maintenance of its own trail that runs from Delaware to St. Mary's, about 118km. Draw prizes: 10- \$15 MEC gift cards plus an E2E badge for the winners.

We held our annual Trail Maintenance Potluck in February and our TVTA Annual Picnic in June.

"The Trekker" editions continue to be well received and complemented, produced by its editor Kathy Vendrig.

The newly revised trail guide (Version 4) was published and distributed to our various selling locations in February.

We continue to host the meet up site and plan to use other social media sites such as twitter and facebook. We provide regular updates to ensure our information is current.

TVTA is an affiliated member of London Environmental Network. We're able to participate in workshops and networking with other similar organizations within our city.



We still have vacancies for President, Vice President and Trail Development Director. Judy Kwasnica is, in the interim, still leading the Board as Past President. Our Board is strong but we will be seeking to fill these positions in the upcoming months. The list of our Board is available on our website at <http://tvta.ca/Board-of-Directors.htm>.

## ***Thunder Bay Hiking Association***

Submitted by Hilda Postenka

The Thunder Bay Hiking Association is a vibrant organization that actively promotes hiking in Thunder Bay, Northwestern Ontario, and Northern Minnesota. We have a strong presence on social media through Facebook and our website. In the past year we updated the website to be more user friendly on mobile devices. Since then we have seen increased traffic to the site, which receives several hundred hits a month. Check it out!

Over the past year, we experienced a decrease in our number of memberships, from 178 to 162. However, we did continue to experience increased numbers of hikers coming out on our hikes. Again this year our numbers on many hikes topped 20 participants, and a few were over 40! A mild winter helped those numbers, as did good weather for most of our outings over the year. The majority of events on our schedule were hikes, with a maintenance hike and some hike/snowshoe, cross-country ski, paddle, and bike outings providing the remainder of the outdoor opportunities.

We offer at least one hike and/or other event most weekends, and have a good variety of hikes at each difficulty level each season. We try to offer a choice of either an easier or more challenging event on weekend days. The Thunder Bay Hiking Association is now seeing the payoff from the investment last May in offering the Hike Ontario Certified Hike Leader and Wilderness Day Hike Leader courses in Thunder Bay. In addition to weekend events, the newly certified leaders have also added some weekday hikes to our schedule. This year we have planned a Hike Leader workshop for the fall, to refresh Leader knowledge and give our Hike Leaders the opportunity to connect with others and reflect on practice.

The Thunder Bay Hiking Association was pleased to partner with Path of the Paddle in organizing their events in celebrating Canada 150 and the grand opening of their section of The Great Trail. Over the next few years we will also be partnering with the Nature Conservancy of Canada to help them develop a trail on their newly acquired land at Big Trout Bay on the shore of Lake Superior. This past spring, the TBHA showed its civic pride in partnering with EcoSuperior to clean up a local park.

A project under consideration for the year ahead is to start on a revision and update of our Trail Guide. If commenced, we expect that this project would take several months to complete.

We are grateful to Hike Ontario for their work in obtaining and offering affordable



insurance coverage for our club, and we appreciate their support.

For more information about the Thunder Bay Hiking Association, access our website at [www.tbha.ca](http://www.tbha.ca), or check out our Facebook page “Thunder Bay Hiking Association”.

## ***Voyageur Trail Association***

Submitted by Carole Blaquiere

The past year has had its ups and downs like every year. On a good note, we have had much activity in our western section with the addition of a new club executive in Marathon and the continued activities in both the Casque Iles and Norwester Clubs. In the east, the Coureurs de Bois have continued their excellent work with both the community of Elliot Lake and on various trails in the area.

We had to say goodbye to one of our most committed volunteers in the Saulteaux Club. Gayle Phillips has been involved with both the club and the Voyageur Trail Association for more years than we could count. When she stepped down as President of the Saulteaux club, she left a void that has yet to be replaced. The board of the Saulteaux club is in need of new volunteers in all areas.

The VTA was able to complete its ambitious strategic plan which will be presented to the membership at this years AGM which will be held in Gros Cap, just west of Sault Ste. Marie. There are several topics we need to address to modernize and refresh the organization. These are to;

- Increase Promotional Activities
- Increase Land and Water Trail Usage
- Build and Leverage Strategic Partnerships
- Engage Youth as Trail Users
- Enhance Trail Maintenance and Restoration
- Develop Volunteers and Expertise
- Promote Environmental Stewardship

Gros Cap has been one of the beneficiaries of trails this year with the opening of both the Lake Superior Water Trail and the Lake Huron North Channel section of the Great Lakes Waterfront Cycling Trail. This was possible with the support of the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) as well as the Lake Superior Watershed Conservancy. Of course, the VTA has supported the development of these trails as they complement the existing hiking trails in the area.

We have re-established communications with the TCT, through work with the Lake Superior Watershed Conservancy, so that we could establish connections between both the Watershed Trail and the Voyageur Trail along the shores of Lake Superior. This has led to having the land based trails indicated on the posted maps of the Water Trail, everywhere that they meet.

The overall membership has dropped over the past year by about 10%, most of who were from the largest communities of Elliot Lake and Sault Ste. Marie. Many of the small

communities along the north shore of Lake Superior have increased their memberships showing the overall interest in trails in that region. This interest is a result of hard work done through economic development of a number of communities that see the value of trails for both locals and tourists alike.

### ***Waterloo 55+ Seniors' Hiking Club***

Submitted by Ken Reichert

The Waterloo 55+ Seniors' Hiking Club continues to follow the format of providing a 10-14km hike once a week for its members. Depending on local festivals, extra hikes can be added during the year.

The hike locations are usually in Waterloo Region. Social activities after hikes are strongly encouraged and well supported.

We do not create trails or maintain trails. We use existing trails and have about 100+ tracks on file.

This club has been operating under the leadership of two coordinators (Raymond and Liz Ramshaw) for the past several years. The club coordinator position is presently being transitioned from Raymond and Liz Ramshaw to Ken Reichert. Raymond and Liz will continue to be club members and their hiking experience will be invaluable to the new coordinator as the club moves forward.

The procedures followed for all hikes are similar to that which HFholidays Inc. uses. These are associated with safety, liability, risk management etc. HF is one of the largest hiking organizations in the world and operates worldwide. Raymond and Liz Ramshaw are members of HF and each of them has over 80 weeks of experience hiking with HF over the last 20 years. Most of the procedures followed by HF can be read in their brochure (see on line at [www.hfholidays.co.uk](http://www.hfholidays.co.uk) or email Teachers' Travel at [info@teacherstravel.co](mailto:info@teacherstravel.co) in Toronto).

The number of Waterloo 55+ club members is capped at 50. Members pay a small subscription, enough to pay for membership of Hike Ontario and Hike Ontario's insurance plan. This year's subscription was \$10 p.p.

Hike participation over the past year was good. The average attendance was 15 (max. 25, min. 8).

We continue to try to develop more hike leaders within the club. We currently have 5 leaders. Some members do not like to use a GPS and this device is at the centre of designing new tracks and leading existing hikes. Every leader and back marker carries a GPS device with the track of the day loaded. Most of our members like to be led; however, we encourage members to use a spare GPS and hike with the leader of the day. This is working well.

We have a formalized risk management plan that is on file with Hike Ontario.

**Hike Ontario**

**Financial Statements**

**(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)**

**Year ended 30 June 2017**



*Richard E. Hamilton & Associates Accounting Inc.*  
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**Hike Ontario**

**Financial Statements**

**(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)**

**Year ended 30 June 2017**

**Hike Ontario**  
**(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)**  
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**Unaudited - see Notice to Reader dated 24 August 2017**

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### **Notice to Reader**

On the basis of information provided by the management, we have compiled the financial position of **Hike Ontario as at 30 June 2017** and the statements of operation and changes in fund balances for the year then ended.

We have not performed an audit or a review engagement in respect of these financial statements, accordingly, we express no assurance thereon.

Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Ingersoll, Ontario**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Registered Professional Accountant**

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**Unaudited - see Notice to Reader dated 24 August 2017**

**Hike Ontario**  
**Statement of Operations and changes in Fund Balances**  
(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)  
**Year ended June 30, 2017**

	General Fund \$	Programs	Administration	Senior Hike Fund	2017	2016
<b>Receipts</b>						
Retail Sales	\$ 245	\$ -	\$ 245	\$ -	\$ 245	\$ 130
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,452
Insurance	\$ 16,887	\$ 14,000	\$ 2,887	\$ -	\$ 16,887	\$ 13,640
Memberships	\$ 11,083	\$ -	\$ 11,083	\$ -	\$ 11,083	\$ 8,836
Other Income	\$ 3,587	\$ -	\$ 3,587	\$ -	\$ 3,587	\$ 1,000
Programs	\$ 27,056	\$ 27,056	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,056	\$ 26,982
	<b>\$ 58,858</b>	<b>\$ 41,056</b>	<b>\$ 17,802</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 58,858</b>	<b>\$ 66,040</b>
<b>Expenditure Allocation</b>						
Awards	\$ 370	\$ 370			\$ 370	\$ -
Mood Walks	\$ 167	\$ 167			\$ 167	\$ 305
Safe Hiker Program	\$ 54	\$ 54			\$ 54	\$ 3,251
Senior Hike Program	\$ -			\$ 171	\$ 171	\$ 1,562
Hike Leader Training	\$ 2,169	\$ 2,169		\$ -	\$ 2,169	\$ 4,590
Insurance	\$ 14,505	\$ 13,571	\$ 934	\$ -	\$ 14,505	\$ 13,750
Interest & Bank Charges	\$ 1,075	\$ 1,062	\$ 13		\$ 1,075	\$ 859
Membership Fees	\$ 428	\$ -	\$ 428		\$ 428	\$ 328
Office Supplies	\$ 1,410		\$ 1,410	\$ -	\$ 1,410	\$ 4,367
Payroll Expense	\$ 28,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 28,000	\$ 28,000
Professional Fees	\$ 3,500		\$ 3,500		\$ 3,500	\$ 1,950
Occupancy Costs	\$ 7,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 5,500	\$ -	\$ 7,000	\$ 3,600
Travel	\$ 85	\$ 85	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85	\$ 404
Telephone	\$ 720	\$ -	\$ 720		\$ 720	\$ 320
	<b>\$ 59,483</b>	<b>\$ 45,978</b>	<b>\$ 13,505</b>	<b>\$ 171</b>	<b>\$ 59,654</b>	<b>\$ 63,285</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of receipts over disbursements</b>	<b>\$ (625)</b>	<b>\$ (4,921)</b>	<b>\$ 4,296</b>	<b>\$ (171)</b>	<b>\$ (796)</b>	<b>\$ 2,755</b>
Fund balances, beginning of year	\$ 9,221	\$ (7,738)	\$ 14,428	\$ (3,936)	\$ 5,285	\$ 2,530
<b>Fund balances, end year</b>	<b>\$ 8,596</b>	<b>\$ (12,659)</b>	<b>\$ 18,724</b>	<b>\$ (4,107)</b>	<b>\$ 4,489</b>	<b>\$ 5,285</b>

The explanatory notes form an integral part of these financial Statements

**Hike Ontario  
Financial Position**

(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)

**Year ended 30 June 2017**

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
Bank Account - General	\$ 22,407	\$ 34,492
Accounts Receivable	\$ 1,223	\$ 13,925
Prepaid Accounts	\$ 11,696	\$ 12,737
<b>Current assets</b>	<b>\$ 35,325</b>	<b>\$ 61,154</b>
	<b>\$ 35,325</b>	<b>\$ 61,154</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accrued Accounts Payable	\$ 14,352	\$ 1
Deferred Revenue	\$ 16,484	\$ 15,750
	<b>\$ 30,836</b>	<b>\$ 15,751</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>		
Restricted Funds		
Seniors Hike Grant Funds (Note 3)	\$ -	\$ 40,118
	\$ -	\$ 40,118
	<b>\$ 30,836</b>	<b>\$ 55,869</b>
Unrestricted accumulated surplus	\$ 4,489	\$ 5,285
	<b>\$ 4,489</b>	<b>\$ 5,285</b>
	<b>\$ 35,325</b>	<b>\$ 61,154</b>

**Director**\_\_\_\_\_ **Director**\_\_\_\_\_

The explanatory notes form an integral part of these financial Statements

*The accompanying summary of significant accounting policies and notes are an integral part of these financial statements*



## **1. Purpose of the Organization**

Hike Ontario was incorporated on January 16, 1975 in the Province of Ontario as a not-for-profit corporation. The objectives of Hike Ontario are to advance hiking and walking trail use in the Province of Ontario and to provide related educational services. As a not-for-profit corporation without Share Capital, it is exempt from income taxes under section 149(1)(t) of the income Tax Act.

## **2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

Hike Ontario follows the accrual basis of accounting whereby revenue is recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when goods and services have been received.

Hike Ontario receives a significant amount of donated services from members as volunteers the fair market value of which is difficult to determine. Accordingly, the value of donated services are not reflected in the Financial Statements.

This summary of the major accounting policies is presented to assist the reader in evaluating the financial statements contained herein. These policies have been followed consistently in all material respects for the periods covered:

### **Fund accounting**

Grants are recognized in revenue when reasonable assurance exists with respect to its amount and collectability and in proportion to authorized and related expenditures incurred as Hike Ontario fulfills the requirements of the grant. Grants received in advance of fulfillment are reported on the balance sheet as deferred revenue.

## **3. Senior's Hike Grant**

In 2015, Hike Ontario received a grant from the Province of Ontario for \$ 65,200 to promote hiking for individuals 55 and older. The grant expired March 31, 2016. Hike Ontario has submitted the final financial summary detailing total expenditures of \$ 25,082. This may result in a repayment of \$ 40,118.

Grants are recognized in revenue when reasonable assurance exists with respect to its amount and collectability, and in proportion to authorized and related expenditures incurred at Hike Ontario fulfills the various requirements of each grant. Grants received in advance of fulfillment of related terms and conditions are shown as deferred revenue on the Balance Sheet.

Insurance program fees are levied at the beginning of the year to participating clubs and invoiced accordingly. Unpaid fees at Hike Ontario's fiscal year end are shown on the Balance sheet as Accounts Receivable and deferred revenue until recognized is shown as revenue.

*Unaudited - see Notice to Reader dated 24 August 2017*

**Hike Ontario Trust Fund**  
**Financial Statements**  
**(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)**  
**Year ended 30 June 2017**



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**Hike Ontario Trust Fund**  
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**Year ended 30 June 2017**

**Hike Ontario Trust Fund  
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### Notice to Reader

On the basis of information provided by the management, we have compiled the financial position of **Hike Ontario Trust Fund as at 30 June 2017** and the statements of operation and changes in fund balances for the year then ended.

We have not performed an audit or a review engagement in respect of these financial statements, accordingly, we express no assurance thereon.

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**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Ingersoll, Ontario**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Registered Professional Accountant**

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**Unaudited - see Notice to Reader dated 24 August 2017**

**Hike Ontario Trust Fund**  
**Statement of Operations and changes in Fund Balances**  
(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)  
**Year ended 30 June 2017**

	<b>General Fund \$</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Receipts</b>			
Receipted Donations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3
Programme Fees	\$ 41,100	\$ 41,100	\$ 41,100
	<b>\$ 41,103</b>	<b>\$ 41,103</b>	<b>\$ 44,580</b>
<b>Expenditure Allocation</b>			
Interest & Bank Charges	\$ 45	\$ 45	\$ -
HST Expense	\$ 441	\$ 441	\$ 415
Office Supplies	\$ 9,114	\$ 9,114	\$ 11,248
Payroll Expense	\$ 28,272	\$ 28,272	\$ 27,503
Professional Fees	\$ 3,700	\$ 3,700	\$ 1,911
Telephone	\$ 738	\$ 738	\$ 314
	<b>\$ 42,309</b>	<b>\$ 42,309</b>	<b>\$ 41,391</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of receipts over disbursements</b>	<b>\$ (1309)</b>	<b>\$ (1309)</b>	<b>\$ (288)</b>
Fund balances, beginning of year	\$ 22,423	\$ 22,423	\$ 22,712
<b>Fund balances, end year</b>	<b>\$ 21,114</b>	<b>\$ 21,114</b>	<b>\$ 22,423</b>

The explanatory notes form an integral part of these financial Statements

*The accompanying summary of significant accounting policies and notes are an integral part of these financial statements.*

**Financial Position**

(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)

**Year ended 30 June 2017**

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
Bank Account - General	\$ 4,230	\$ 34,009
Accounts Receivable	\$ 14,351	\$ -
HST Recoverable	\$ 3,268	\$ 2,254
<b>Current assets</b>	<b>\$ 21,849</b>	<b>\$ 36,264</b>
	<b>\$ 21,849</b>	<b>\$ 36,264</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accrued Accounts Payable	\$ 735	\$ 13,841
	<b>\$ 735</b>	<b>\$ 13,841</b>
Unrestricted accumulated surplus	\$ 21,114	\$ 22,423
	<b>\$ 21,114</b>	<b>\$ 22,423</b>
	<b>\$ 21,849</b>	<b>\$ 36,264</b>

Director\_\_\_\_\_ Director\_\_\_\_\_

The explanatory notes form an integral part of these financial Statements

*The accompanying summary of significant accounting policies and notes are an integral part of these financial statements.*

## **1. Purpose and Objectives of the Trust**

The following sets out the purposes and objectives of the Trust.

- a. To promote and fund educational conferences, open to any member of the general public who is interested in hiking and a recreational activity.
- b. To fund the preparation, production and distribution of information dealing with concerns of hikers and available to any person interested in hiking.
- c. To fund the planning and operation of educational programs dealing with hiking, hike leadership, trail management and other concerns of hikers, and
- d. To fund volunteer awards to recognize service to hiking.

## **2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

This summary of the major accounting policies is presented to assist the reader in evaluating the financial statements contained herein. These policies have been followed consistently in all material respects for the periods covered:

Hike Ontario Trust is a registered charity with a singular objective of funding Hike Ontario's educational activities. The Trust Fund is a separate legal entity from Hike Ontario a not-for-profit Corporation and therefore the revenues and expenditures the Not-for-Profit are not reflected in the financial statements of Hike Ontario Trust Fund. Transfers from the Trust Fund are provided to Hike Ontario to defray Hike Ontario eligible educational and certain program expenses. The President, Treasurer, and a Director of Hike Ontario are the trustees of the Trust Fund.

*Unaudited - see Notice to Reader dated 24 August 2017*



**“I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees.”**

***-- Henry David Thoreau***



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