



Canada's Largest Network of Walking Paths Established in Ontario's Greenbelt Area

**Important linkage of Oak Ridges Moraine Trail and Bruce Trail completed
- over 2500 km network of walking paths now in place**

(Queen's Park, June 21, 2005) Today's announcement of the connection of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail with the Bruce Trail in Ontario's Greenbelt area makes it an important day in Ontario recreation history. You can now hike from Rice Lake (south of Peterborough) to either Queenston or Tobermory (north of Owen Sound) without stepping off the now connected Oak Ridges Moraine Trail and the Bruce Trail.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail and the Bruce Trail are part of Ontario's recently announced Greenbelt area, which extends 325 kilometers from the eastern end of the Oak Ridges Moraine near Rice Lake, to the Niagara River in the west. The total area of land under protection in the Golden Horseshoe is now 1.8 million acres.

The Queen's Park media conference marked two major accomplishments.

- Harold Sellers, Executive Director of the Oak Ridges Trail Association announced that they have completed the alignment of a now continuous 200 km hiking trail stretching west to east from Palgrave in the Caledon Hills to Gores Landing on the south side of Rice Lake (north of Cobourg and Port Hope). Future plans include an eastward extension.
- Beth Kümmling, Executive Director of the Bruce Trail Association revealed that cooperation between the two trail associations and Town of Caledon has resulted in a connection between the 800 km long Bruce Trail and the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail. The connection is at the Caledon Trailway, in the village of Palgrave.

Michael Scott, Executive Director of the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF) outlined how more than \$250,000 of funding from the Foundation allowed the ORTA to make rapid progress in developing this important recreational resource. Scott stated, "The Foundation funded the trail because we believe that it will increase the awareness of why the Greenbelt and the Oak Ridges Moraine deserve and need protection. There can also be no doubt, that the trail will rapidly become a premier recreation resource and destination for hikers and walkers from across the GTA."

The media conference was followed by a technical briefing held at the Ontario Legislature attended by Minister of Tourism and Recreation Jim Bradley (MPP for St. Catharines), municipal politicians, planners, land owners and representatives of Conservation Authorities and other trail organizations.

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**To arrange interviews or to obtain reproducible maps or digital photos, contact:
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The **Oak Ridges Moraine** is a prominent geological landform located just north of Toronto, and extending from the Trent River to the Niagara Escarpment. The Moraine's rivers and streams drain south to Lake Ontario and north into Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe, and the Trent River. The unique concentration of environmental, geological and hydrological features makes the ecosystem of the Oak

Ridges Moraine vital to southern Ontario. The Moraine is more than 90 percent privately owned, with a population of more than 100,000. It crosses 32 municipalities, supplies drinking water to more than 250,000 people, and supports related agricultural, industrial, commercial and recreational uses. The Oak Ridges Moraine Protection Act was passed on May 17, 2001, and The [Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act](#) on December 13, 2001. The [Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan](#) was released in April, 2002.

The Greenbelt Area – 1.8 million acres in size – is an area larger than Prince Edward Island and includes protected land of the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine. Ontario's Greenbelt Act was passed by the Ontario Legislature on February 24, 2005. The Greenbelt Plan was released in February, 2005, and was effective December 16, 2004. (www.greenbelt.ontario.ca)

The core purpose of the **Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation** (www.ormf.com) is: To provide funding support and encouragement for activities that preserve, protect, and restore the environmental integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine and support a trail along it.

The Oak Ridges Trail Association (www.orta.on.ca) has built the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail, a continuous 200 km recreational walking trail along the Moraine, from the Niagara Escarpment in the west to Rice Lake in the east. Formed in 1992 as a volunteer organization, the Oak Ridges Trail Association has 700 members. The placement of the trail in publicly-owned natural areas is a key component of ORTA's strategic planning for the future.

The **Oak Ridges Moraine Trail** passes through or near the Town of Caledon, Twp. of King, Town of Aurora, Twp. of Whitchurch-Stouffville, Twp. of Uxbridge, Twp. of Scugog, Municipality of Clarington, Twp. of Hope, and Twp. of Hamilton. Future connections will bring the trail to other Oak Ridges Moraine communities.

The **Bruce Trail** (www.brucetrail.org) is the oldest and longest continuous footpath in Canada. It runs along the Niagara Escarpment from Niagara to Tobermory, spanning more than 800 km of main trail and 400km of side trails. The **Bruce Trail Association** is a charitable, membership based, volunteer organization working to preserve public access to the [Niagara Escarpment](#) while restoring its natural habitat. The Association is supported by 750 active volunteers and 8,400 members.