

Press Release

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Ontario Trails Council
Conseil des sentiers de l'Ontario

Ontario Announces the Ontario Trail Act

With over 2,500 trails of about 80,000 km in length, Ontario has one of the largest trails systems in North America.

Yesterday the Ontario Trails Council was pleased to attend Minister Michael Couteau's announcement of an Ontario Trails Act.

The Ontario Trails Act, if passed by the legislature, will result in changes to other Acts of Legislation to reduce liability exposure for land owners, increase fines for trespass, as well as introduce other changes that will make it easier for groups to hold events, while providing better guidance on issues of risk exposure and liability.

"We attended a number of sessions to determine, at this point, the general direction the proposed Act is going to take," says OTC President Jack De Wit. "Our understanding from our government partners in the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport is that through consultation they have tried to reflect in new legislation changes that will make trail work easier. We await a read of the Act, but at this point we are positive about the suggested changes."

The Ontario Trails Council has over 240 members representing various trail stakeholders that are directly affected by this legislation. Economic Development, non-profit, community clubs, sport groups, tourism offices, health units, provincial and municipal parks, conservation authorities have all worked with the Ontario Trails Council to bring focus to government on trail issues.

"Ontario Trails Council regularly communicates about, negotiates, develops and implements trails throughout Ontario," said Patrick Connor Ontario Trails Executive Director. "The Ontario Trails Act is a positive response to the member surveys, round table discussions and numerous phone calls and concerns people have expressed through OTC to make positive change for trails in Ontario. A "Trails Act" gives trails a place of importance."

Going forward, Ontario Trails Council and its members will work with the Ministry to affect more positive change. The Ontario Trails Act will be posted to the [Ontario Environmental Registry](#) for comment. We encourage all trail users to comment on the Act. A discussion on the Act will be held June 8 2015 at [Trailhead Ontario](#).

For more information on Ontario's trails visit the our website at www.ontariotrails.on.ca