

Media Release

CONSERVATION ONTARIO MAKES IT EASY FOR ONTARIANS TO STEP INTO NATURE!

NEWMARKET [June 20, 2011] - With summer fast approaching, you are likely taking every opportunity to get outside, soak up some sun, and get moving. In Ontario, nature provides us with the perfect backdrop for year-round family fun! Cascading waterfalls, the Niagara Escarpment, endless loops of diverse trails, abundant wildlife, sandy beaches, ecologically rich wetlands, lush forests, and thousands of lakes, rivers, and streams are begging you to step outside and spend some time exploring.

Conservation Ontario recognizes the importance of family time spent in the great outdoors, and has made sure it couldn't be easier for you to decide where to spend your precious 'nature time' this season (and in seasons to come). Representing the province's 36 Conservation Authorities, Conservation Ontario has just released a revised updated version of its popular *Your Guide to Conservation Areas in Ontario*, featuring over 270 Conservation Areas.

"The Guide is a helpful tool that puts an abundance of information about unique and captivating natural areas from across our province into the palm of your hand" says Don Pearson, Conservation Ontario's General Manager, "our hope is that Ontarians will use the Guide as a map to help them explore these 'green gems', and really, just discover all that Ontario's landscape has to offer".

The 2011 *Guide to Conservation Areas in Ontario* is a 68 page, full-colour guide that includes maps, beautiful images from across the province, charts that list activities available at each conservation area, and information about services offered through Conservation Authorities such as flood protection, education programming, and species at risk protection. It also provides info about interesting activities such as geocaching and about geological features like the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine.

A great way to find additional information about conservation areas is through Conservation Ontario's social media pages. Join Conservation Ontario's Facebook page where you can get advice on the best conservation areas to visit just by asking other members, and post your own photos and suggestions. Follow Conservation Ontario's Twitter feed (@conont) for up-to-the-minute information on events taking place throughout the year at conservation areas.

Located just steps from your front door, Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities collectively own and operate 400 conservation areas with a total area of 143,000 hectares. These Conservation Areas play important environmental, educational, and recreational roles in Ontario, and contribute to the physical and mental health of more than five million visitors each year.

There is no end to the year-round activities available at conservation areas, with most offering hiking, biking, boating, wildlife viewing, swimming, fishing, skiing, snowshoeing, and in some cases snow tubing, rock-climbing, and downhill skiing.

To get your copy of the new Guidebook, contact your local Conservation Authority or Conservation Ontario. You can also find information about Ontario's conservation areas online, and download a copy of the Guide by visiting Conservation Ontario's Conservation Areas search site at www.ontarioconservationareas.ca.

Conservation Ontario represents Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities – local, watershed-based natural resource management agencies who work in partnership with all levels of government, landowners, and other environmental agencies.

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