



**ELORA CATARACT
TRAILWAY
ASSOCIATION**

Spring 2026 Newsletter

In This Issue

- The View from the Chair - Breathe
- April 12, 2026 AGM
- Detours on the Trailway
- Why the Middlebrook Place Bridge Still Matters
- Snow Poker Challenge
- Where the Trail Meets the Heart
- The Trail Survey - Being Present
- Trail Counter Data
- Where Trails and Woodlots Meet
- From Members to Stewards
- Stewards At Work
- Partner Events
- Memberships
- Donations

The View from the Chair

Breathe



John Tenniel, Down_the_Rabbit_Hole,
Wikimedia Commons

There are days when I feel a bit like the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland*, constantly checking the time and thinking, “*I’m late! I’m late! For a very important date!*” That familiar image captures the pressure so many of us feel—trying to keep up with expectations, deadlines, and the constant pace of modern life. I suspect many of you can relate, especially when even something as simple as meeting a newsletter deadline before the Annual General Meeting starts to feel overwhelming.

When I begin to feel stretched too thin, I remind myself to slow down. One of my favourite ways to recharge is to take a walk among the trees. Being outdoors helps me disconnect from the noise of the world and from my cell phone and simply wander, uninterrupted, enjoying the beauty of nature. At home, I have a favourite chair where I can sit and look out at a beautiful Sunburst Locust tree. I often find myself admiring its mossy bark, delicate pinkish branches, and the birds and animals that make it their home. That quiet view never fails to calm me and restore my energy.

Our Trailway offers that same sense of escape. Winding through several municipalities, it provides a welcome break from the demands of daily life — a place to pause, breathe, and reset, even if only for a short while. It’s no surprise that our trail counts show such strong use; people are clearly seeking out these moments of connection with nature.

This issue of the newsletter reflects just how much is happening within the Association. Our Board is gaining momentum as we explore new opportunities to care for the Trailway and strengthen our connections with the communities it passes through. This year, we’ve been pleased to partner with RTO4, Tailwinds B&B, and the Waterloo–Wellington Woodlot Owners Association.

We’re also proud to support the Save Middlebrook Bridge group in their efforts to replace a much-loved crossing on the Grand River, to raise awareness of Elora Environment Centre’s community events, and to promote a joint fundraising event with Aboyne Rural Hospice—an initiative centred on connection, care, and community.

Inside this issue, you’ll also find a first person account of conducting the trail survey, trail counter counts, insights into the relationship between the Trailway and surrounding woodlots, and a brief overview of our ongoing stewardship activities and interest in switching from a membership to a stewardship model.

I’m very much looking forward to our April 12 AGM, where the Board will share updates on our work and we’ll hear from our valued partner, Credit Valley Conservation. Amid so many stories about land being lost to development, it’s encouraging—and refreshing—to hear about land being protected and repurposed for conservation.

Take care,

Ian

P.S. Please help us to offer articles of interest. Please send your suggestions to info@trailway.org.



Trailway stewardship that protects nature and creates moments that matter.

April 12, 2026 AGM



ELORA CATARACT TRILWAY ASSOCIATION

JOIN US AT VICTORIA PARK SENIORS CENTRE, FERGUSI

www.trailway.org

Annual General Meeting

April 12, 2:00 - 4:00 PM

We are excited to have Natalie Faught, Senior Coordinator, Credit Valley Trail and Indigenous Engagement, Credit Valley Conservation, as our guest speaker.

Victoria Park Seniors Centre, 150 Albert Street West, Fergus, ON

This year's AGM will be held on April 12th at the Victoria Park Senior's Centre, 150 Albert Street West, in Fergus at 2:00 PM. Hopefully, the snow will be gone, the sun will shine, and we will have a large turnout.

We are thrilled to announce that this year's guest speaker will be Natalie Faught, Senior Coordinator, Credit Valley Trail and Indigenous Engagement, Credit Valley Conservation. She will be sharing information about the fascinating projects she and her colleagues are doing in the Credit River watershed. She will be joined by Dyana Gomez, Executive Director, Credit Valley Conservation Foundation.

Detours on the Trailway: When a Beloved Route Goes Missing

On a good day, the Elora Cataract Trailway feels effortless. You step onto the crushed stone, settle into a rhythm, and move—past rivers and towns, coffee shops and conservation lands—without ever thinking about traffic lights or shoulder checks. For walkers, cyclists, and skiers, it is less a trail than a thread, quietly stitching together communities across Wellington County.

Disconnection and frustration

This thread has been frayed for two years.

A key stretch of the 47 km Trailway between Hillsburgh and Erin remains closed for major sewer construction, with no clear reopening date. The result is more than an inconvenience. It is a break in continuity that is reshaping how people move through the landscape and where they stop along the way.

Municipal updates tied to the Erin Wastewater Servicing Project suggest the trail could reopen by late summer 2026. A recent December 2025 update now suggests late December 2026. ECTA is going with early 2027 to avoid further disappointment with a moving schedule. For users planning longer rides or point-to-point trips, these mixed messages make it difficult to know what is realistic and what is not.

Detours that don't feel like detours

When a trail closes, the detour matters. In this case, it often means busy rural roads, longer distances, and signage that assumes local knowledge.

For some users, especially cyclists, the “detour” feels less like a workaround and more like a dangerous downgrade. Riders describe being pushed onto routes that feel exposed and uncomfortable—sometimes outright unsafe. Online trail reviews echo the same sentiment: heavy traffic, confusing navigation, and a sense that the detour was designed on a map, not from a saddle.

The quiet economics of a missing trail

The passage of trail traffic does not announce itself, but towns notice when it is gone.

A coffee here, a lunch stop there, a bike tune-up or an overnight stay—these small transactions add up, especially for communities that are situated just far enough off major highways to rely on visitors who arrive under their own power. When a trail functions like a corridor, closing the middle shifts movement elsewhere, often without fanfare or formal acknowledgment.

For smaller trail towns, that quiet redistribution can sting.

What's still there—and what's missing

Much of the Trailway remains open. Trailheads near Elora, Fergus, Belwood Lake, Orton, Hillsburgh, and Cataract continue to offer access. CVC and GRCA managers stress that conditions can change with weather, restoration work and construction schedules, and encourage users to check official advisories before heading out.

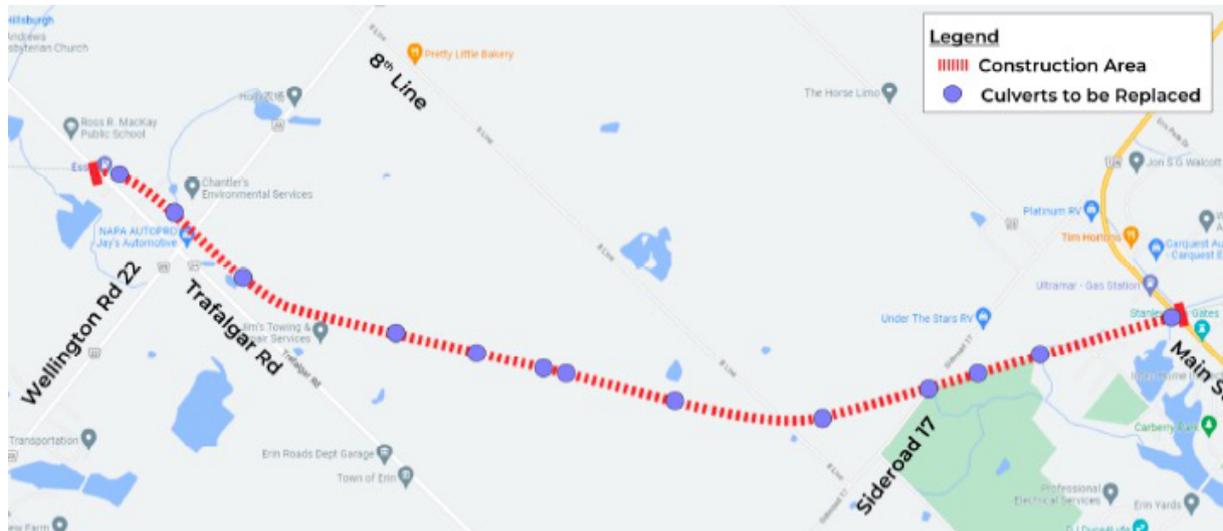
Municipal and conservation authorities frame the work as a necessary part of long-term wastewater servicing with unavoidable short-term impacts. Few users dispute the need for infrastructure. What they question is the cost of uncertainty, pro-longed delays, and the absence of a single, easy-to-read answer to a simple question: *Where can I go today?*

Waiting for the line to reconnect

What trail users say they want most is clarity. With multiple agencies involved, updates are spread across different platforms and are inconsistent in messaging. Signage at construction sites is outdated. Advocates say clearer, segment-by-segment communication, along with better signage and a frequently updated “what’s open now” map, could reduce confusion and improve safety, providing fewer surprises once you are already rolling.

Once the closed section reopens, the Elora Cataract Trailway will once again offer something increasingly rare in southern Ontario: a long, mostly uninterrupted corridor linking communities, watersheds, and green spaces.

Until then, people adapt. Trips get shorter. Routes change. Some riders drift elsewhere.



Map from Erin Wastewater Servicing Project - Project Update December 09,2025 at <https://www.erin.ca/media/5451/erin-construction-liaison-meeting-dec-9.pdf>

Why the Middlebrook Place Bridge Still Matters

A Community Case for Replacement

The Middlebrook Place Bridge (also known as the Chambers or Chalmers Bridge, based on which adjacent land deed you looked at) is more than just an old structure over the river; it is a historic crossing, a valued access point to nature, and a long-used walking and cycling connection between communities. Since its sudden closure in 2021, residents have worked steadily and constructively to ensure that bridge removal does not mean a permanent loss of connectivity but instead leads to a safe pedestrian replacement aligned with modern planning goals.

The story began in March 2021, when residents discovered that the bridge had been barricaded with little public notice, thus cutting off a well-used- active transportation route. Rather than reacting with opposition alone, community members quickly organized. By April 2021, the **Save Middlebrook Bridge** group had formed to seek transparency, collaboration, and long-term solutions



The three photos are courtesy of Save Middlebrook Bridge

Throughout 2021, delegations were made to both Woolwich Township and Centre Wellington councils, ensuring that the issue was formally recognized and discussed at the municipal level. Although early engagement did not immediately change outcomes, it laid the essential groundwork for future progress by fostering relationships among stakeholders and creating a platform for ongoing dialogue about the issue.

In February 2022, the Centre Wellington Council voted to remove the bridge deck while leaving the abutments and centre pier in place for possible reuse. Instead of disengaging, advocates expanded their approach. Partnerships were formed with Green Lanes, the Grand Watershed Trails Network, and RARE Charitable Research Reserve, reframing the bridge as a vital “access to nature” link within a broader active transportation network. Public outreach at local festivals and through media helped raise awareness of both the bridge’s heritage value and its everyday use.

Community advocacy also influenced local politics. During the 2022 municipal elections, multiple candidates across both councils publicly expressed openness to reconsidering bridge options, representing an important shift in tone and understanding.



This shift became tangible in 2023. Between May and July, delegations to the newly elected Centre Wellington Council resulted in a formal vote to reconsider demolition explore alternative funding options in collaboration with the community. Although both townships later decided to proceed with the removal of the existing structure, advocacy efforts strategically refocused on planning integration and long-term- replacement.

This strategy delivered results. In April 2025, citizen-led mapping directly informed Centre Wellington’s Active Transportation and Mobility Plan. Middlebrook Bridge and the Weisenberg Road corridor were officially recognized as a safe active transportation route and included as a designated “desire line”—a clear acknowledgment in policy that this crossing remains important.

The removal of the bridge *without replacement* is scheduled in the 2028/2029 capital budgets, creating a critical window of opportunity. Planning alignment is already in place, community support is well documented, and the next steps are practical and achievable.

Replacing the Middlebrook Bridge with a pedestrian-focused structure would restore an active transportation link, align with municipal and county planning priorities, and honour years of informed public engagement. This is not a call to preserve the past unchanged; it is a call to invest wisely in a connected, accessible future.

For more information or to support the **Save Middlebrook Bridge** group’s advocacy efforts, email them savemiddlebrookbridge@gmail.com or visit their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/355885149172210/?ref=share&mibextid=NSMWBT>



Snow Poker Challenge

January 31, 2026



**ELORA CATARACT TRAILWAY INVITES YOU
TO OUR**

SNOW POKER CHALLENGE

**SATURDAY
JANUARY 31 12:30**

**FOR TICKET
INFORMATION**

PRIZE DONORS

**DEAL YOURSELF
A GREAT DAY
OUTDOORS**

**ELORA CATARACT
TRAILWAY
ASSOCIATION**
TRAILWAY.ORG



Our first event of the year was a wonderful success and a meaningful way to kick off celebrations for our Association’s 30th anniversary. Despite a crisp nip in the air, volunteers, participants, and their furry companions eagerly embraced the outdoors. Everyone was warmly welcomed back with hot chocolate and treats, adding an extra touch of comfort and community to the day.

We extend our sincere thanks to Tim Hortons for generously providing the hot chocolate and treats, and to Nick’s Quick Delivery and Highland Plumbing Services for donating prizes. A heartfelt thank you also goes to our dedicated event coordinators — Bridgett, Pat, and Renée — whose hard work and enthusiasm helped make this event such a memorable start to the year.

Where the Trail Meets the Heart: A Community Ride with Purpose

This fall, two cherished local organizations are coming together for a special event that celebrates both **active living** and **compassionate care**.

On **September 19, 2026**, the **Elora Cataract Trailway Association** and **Aboyne Rural Hospice** will host a **joint cycling fundraising event** that invites the community to ride together in support of what matters most: connection, care, and community.



The Elora Cataract Trailway is more than a scenic route. It's shared space where neighbours walk, cycle, and pause to enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds us. For many, the trailway represents freedom, wellness, and a sense of belonging.

Aboyne Rural Hospice represents another essential part of community life: care, dignity, and support during life's most vulnerable moments. Rooted in the same rural landscape, the hospice relies on community generosity to offer compassionate end-of-life care to individuals and families.

The September Ride brings these two journeys together.

Cyclists of all ages and abilities are invited to participate, knowing that every kilometre ridden helps support hospice care close to home and trailway restoration. The event is designed to be welcoming, reflective, and uplifting—a chance to enjoy the trailway and gravel roads while making a meaningful difference.

For those of you who prefer not to ride but would like to volunteer, we need you, too.

At first glance, a trailway and a hospice may seem worlds apart. Yet, both are built on shared values: stewardship, volunteerism, and the belief that strong communities care for both their places and their people. This collaboration is a powerful reminder that when we work together, we can support one another through every season of life.

Whether you ride to honour a loved one, support local care, or simply enjoy a beautiful day on the trail, this event is an opportunity to be part of something truly special.

Save the date: September 19, 2026.

More details on registration, volunteering, and fundraising will be shared soon; we hope you will join us for this meaningful ride.



The Trail Survey - Being Present

Standing beside the Elora–Cataract Trailway for three hours on a cool October day in 2025, I practiced stillness and observation. The sharp air settled into my hands and feet as I stayed in place. Leaves drifted down intermittently, and the trail hung between seasons—no longer summer, not yet winter. I made myself unobtrusive, committed to watching and sharing brief, friendly acknowledgements.

Initially, the task seemed simple: observe, record, stay attentive. But as time passed, my awareness sharpened. Standing still slowed time and heightened attention. I noticed how the light changed, the temperature dropped, and the trail's rhythm shifted from quiet to bursts of activity.

Watching people pass sometimes created distance, yet it also created connection. Individuals used the trail differently: some walked with purpose, others strolled and talked; some cyclists passed quietly, others announced themselves. Dog walkers adjusted routines, families navigated carefully, and many shared brief greetings. These small exchanges revealed how people negotiate shared space, something easily missed if viewed only through numbers.

As hours passed, standing still became uncomfortable. The cold crept in, my posture shifted, and it took effort to remain attentive. This discomfort underscored an important lesson: trail use is shaped by factors such as weather, season, and comfort. Seeing this firsthand clarified how these factors influence who uses the trail and how they use it.

At the end of three hours, the experience felt less like data collection and more like listening. Patterns emerged not just through counts, but in repetition and rhythm. The trail became a living corridor, shaped by its users. This perspective added depth to the data and reinforced the value of visual observation, offering insight into how the trail feels during the fall shoulder season.

Note: Our survey teams were typically groups of two or three but on one occasion it was a single person stationed at Mississauga Road. A heartfelt thanks to our Board Members and volunteers who braved the fall weather to listen and observe.

We are completing our analysis of last fall's survey and preparing a report to be distributed when ready.



Trail Counter Data

 ELORA CATARACT TRAILWAY ASSOCIATION Trail Counter Data 2024 - 2025					
Trail Counter Locations					
	Gerrie Road Elora	Gartshore Street Fergus	Skeen Street Belwood	Trestle Bridge Trail Beatty Line	
Totals	95,382	77,630	23,000	39,597	
November		2,223	866		
December	1,220	2,237	483		
January (2025)	3,262	2,127	52		
February	2,171	1,879	176		
March	3,108	1,979	522		
April	7,269	5,587	1,282		
May	9,655	7,627	2,442	2,854	
June	11,193	8,803	2,976	6,090	
July	13,350	11,978	3,105	6,390	
August	12,276	9,773	3,696	6,353	
September	11,778	9,343	3,545	6,047	
October	8,209	6,600	2,329	5,166	
November	4,449	2,974	788	2,932	
December	2,964	1,359	280	1,361	
January (2026)	2,120	1,342	226	1,086	
February	2,358	1,799	232	1,318	
Note: A new Gerrie Road counter was installed Dec 21, 2024					
The Beatty Line counter was installed May 16, 2025					
Data counts represent individuals passing through the counter's beam that may include return journeys.					

Our trail counters confirm that the Trailway between Elora and Belwood and the Trestle Bridge Trail between Elora and Fergus are heavily used and valued community assets. The Association shares the data with our conservation authority, municipal and provincial partners.

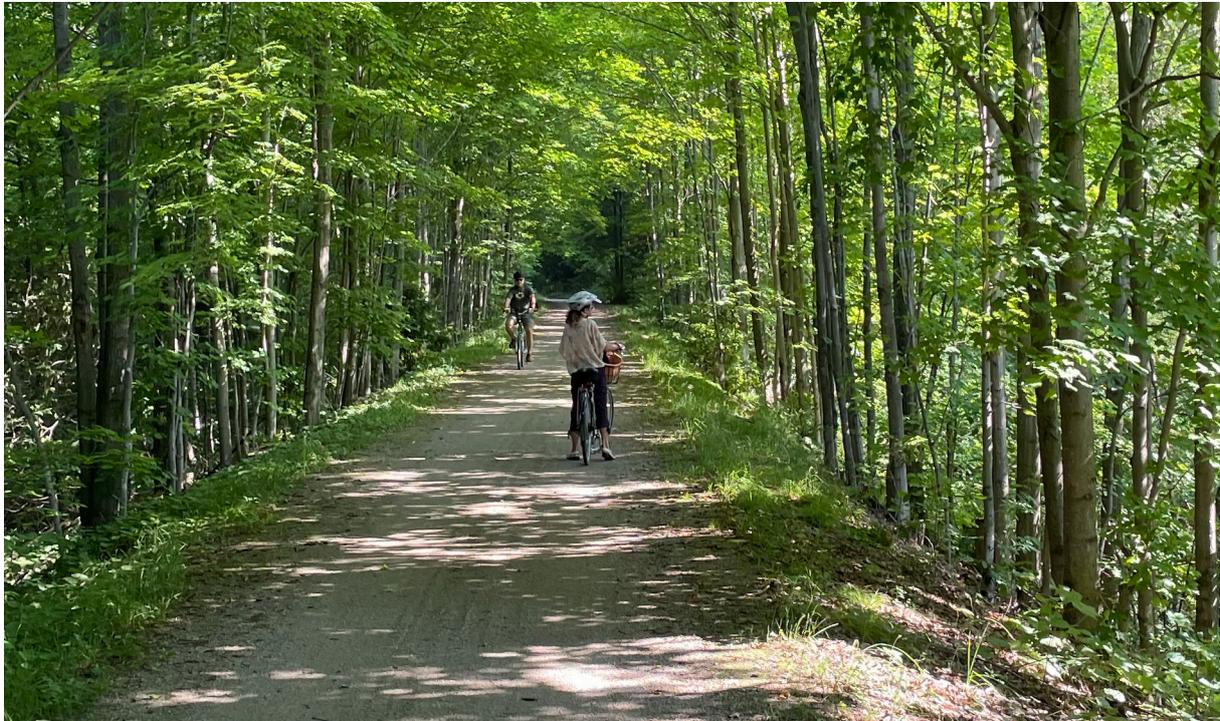
Where Trails and Woodlots Meet: A Win-Win Corridor

How a trail can strengthen the forests it passes through—and why that matters for wildlife, water, and community.

On a map, a trail looks like a simple line. On the ground, it becomes a living corridor. When a trail passes through woodlots, it can do more than provide a place to walk or ride—it can strengthen forests, support wildlife, and deepen people’s connection to the land.

What “synergy” looks like on the trail

Woodlots and trails each bring value on their own. Together, they amplify it. A well-designed trail concentrates use on a durable surface, reducing informal paths that fragment habitat. In return, the shade, shelter, and seasonal beauty of a woodlot turn an ordinary trail into a place people want to visit again and again—building long-term support for conservation.



Benefits for forests and wildlife

Connected habitat: Linked woodlots and trail corridors can act as stepping stones for birds, pollinators, and small mammals moving between patches of cover.

Healthier edges: Careful trail placement, buffers, and native plantings reduce drying, invasive species, and other edge impacts.

Better water outcomes: Forested sections absorb rainfall and slow runoff, while good trail drainage reduces erosion and keeps water cleaner.

Eyes on the land: Regular use helps spot dumping, storm damage, or invasive outbreaks early, when they’re easiest to fix.

Benefits for people and community

Trails through woodlots offer easy access to nature close to home and that access matters. Communities protect what they know. When the forest is part of a weekly routine—an after-dinner loop, a school outing, a weekend ride—support grows for sustainable forestry, habitat restoration, and long-term land protection.

By the numbers (Ontario/Canada context): Research shows that spending at least 120 minutes per week in nature is linked to better health and wellbeing. Ontario is about 66% forested, highlighting how closely recreation depends on healthy woodlands. Locally, 94% of residents report taking part in outdoor recreation, with nearly half walking trails more than once a week—exactly the kind of use supported by nearby, shaded trailways. Forest cover also plays a role in reducing peak flows at the catchment scale, reinforcing the value of keeping woodlots intact along trail corridors.

Four-season wellbeing: Shade in summer, wind protection in fall, and shelter in winter make forested trails comfortable year-round.

Outdoor learning: Woodlots serve as living classrooms for ecology, forest management, and land-based knowledge.

Local pride and tourism: Memorable woodland sections help define a trailway and support nearby communities and businesses.



What makes the partnership work

The best results come from treating the trail and woodlot as one system:

Keep users on the durable line with clear wayfinding, good maintenance, and boardwalks where needed. Respect property rights by staying on the designated trail.

Manage invasives at trail edges through regular monitoring and quick response.

Respect wildlife timing with seasonal guidance or short reroutes when necessary.

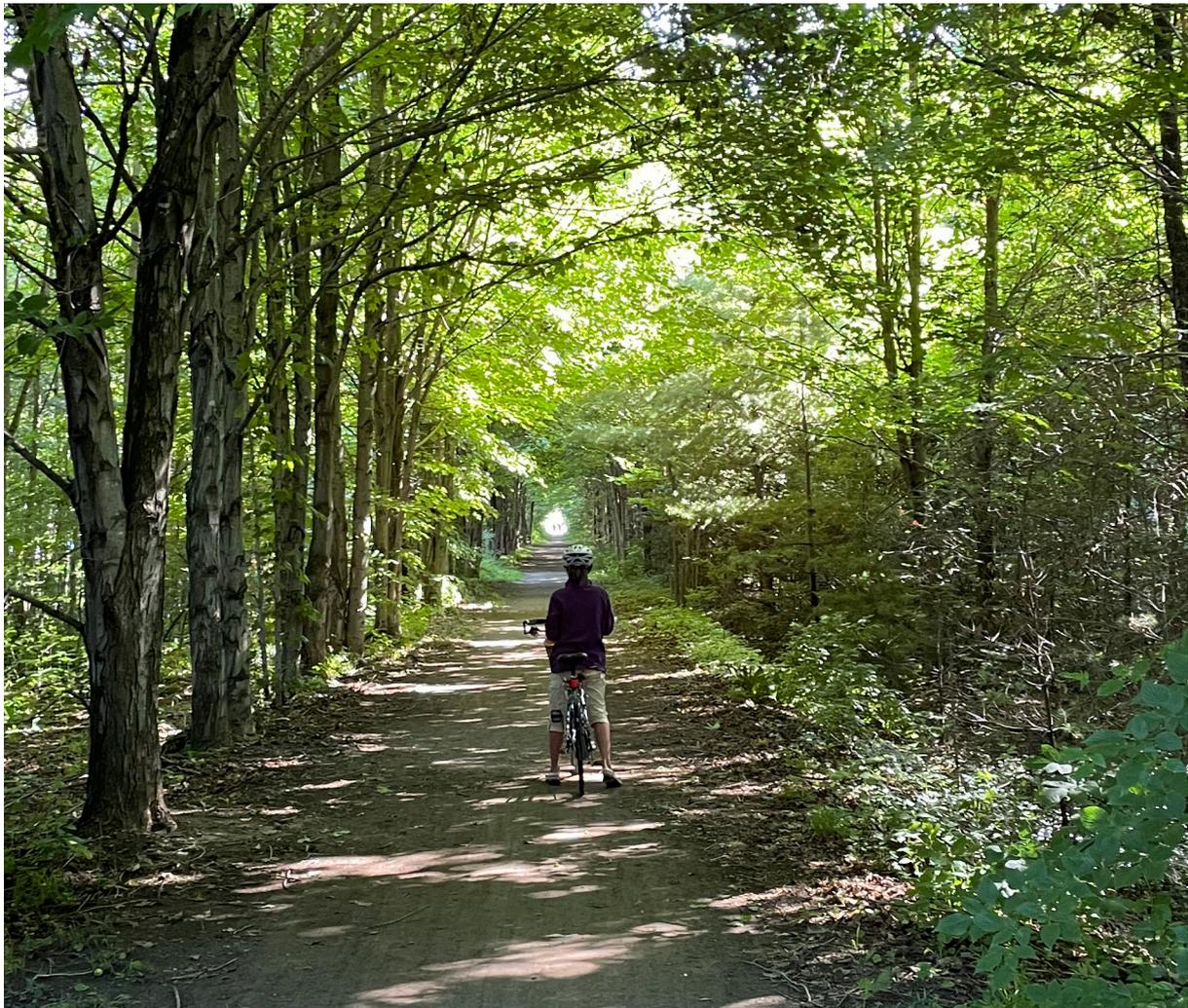
Coordinate with landowners and stewards on pruning, hazard trees, and sustainable management.

Use simple interpretation to explain forest practices and invite users to help.

Take action this year: Enjoy the trail and help it stay healthy. Choose one simple step:

1. **Join the next tree planting or invasive removal** (even one hour makes a difference);
2. **Report problem spots** like dumping, downed trees, or widening “social trails” to the trail group or municipality;
3. **Learn and share**—bring a neighbour or family member and talk about what you notice in the woods; or
4. **Volunteer for invasive monitoring** (a short walk with a checklist). When local residents show up, woodlots stay resilient and the trailway stays welcoming—season after season.

Sources: White et al., *Scientific Reports* (2019); Government of Ontario forest statistics (reported 2021); Township of Centre Wellington Parks & Recreation Plan engagement results; Systematic review, *Journal of Flood Risk Management* (2024).



From Members to Stewards

Rebranding our membership program is more than a name change — it's a declaration of who we are and what we stand for.

For decades, being a “member” of the Elora Cataract Trailway Association has meant something special to hundreds of trail users across Wellington County and beyond. In our early years, that membership translated directly into hands-on trail work — clearing brush, planting trees, fixing trail surface imperfections, and tending to the corridor we all love. Growing liability concerns, however, have moved physical maintenance out of the hands of volunteers and into those of conservation authority staff. Despite this loss of responsibility, your Board recognizes an evolved role, that reflects other activities important to the Trailway's sustainability. We are proposing to rename it the “Stewardship Program.”

“A membership pays for access. A steward invests in a legacy.”

The word “member” implies a transaction: pay a fee, receive a card. But that has never been the full story of who you are. Today, ECTA's supporters are the eyes and ears of 47 kilometres of historic rail corridor — the people who notice a washed-out culvert, a downed tree, or an unsafe surface and make sure it gets reported to conservation authority staff who can act on it. You are wildlife observers, community ambassadors, and the voice that keeps this trail on the public agenda. You cannot swing a shovel on the trail today, but you can — and do — watch over it. That is stewardship, and it's time our program said so.

Why it matters. The benefits of this change extend well beyond a sense of identity. Many provincial and federal conservation grant programs — including streams through the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Environment and Climate Change Canada — explicitly require applicants to identify as stewardship organizations. Renaming our program positions ECTA to access funding that is currently beyond our reach, potentially unlocking tens of thousands of dollars annually to invest directly back into the trailway.

Growing our community. Stewardship language also broadens our appeal to people who haven't yet found us: conservation-minded newcomers, younger trail users motivated by environmental purpose, and partner organizations seeking cause-aligned collaborators. In a world where physical volunteering on public land is increasingly restricted, a stewardship model — rooted in observation, advocacy, and community voice — is exactly what a modern trail association looks like. Every new steward strengthens our reach and our relevance.

What stays the same. The name of your annual contribution would change. The value of your support — and the experiences the trail provides — would not. Current members would automatically transition to steward status, with no changes to benefits, renewal dates, or fees. A phased rebrand across our print materials, website, and signage would follow over the coming year.

The Board will bring this proposal to a formal vote at the Annual General Meeting. We invite you to share your thoughts in advance by emailing us at info@trailway.org or speaking with any Board member. This is your association — and this decision is yours to make.

Stewards at Work

The ECTA may no longer swing a shovel on the trail, but our stewardship work has never been more active.

From monitoring trail conditions and advocating for active transportation to partnering with regional tourism agencies and promoting shared trail safety, ECTA's activities touch every dimension of the Trailway's role as a natural, recreational, and transportation corridor. Here is a look at what your support makes possible.

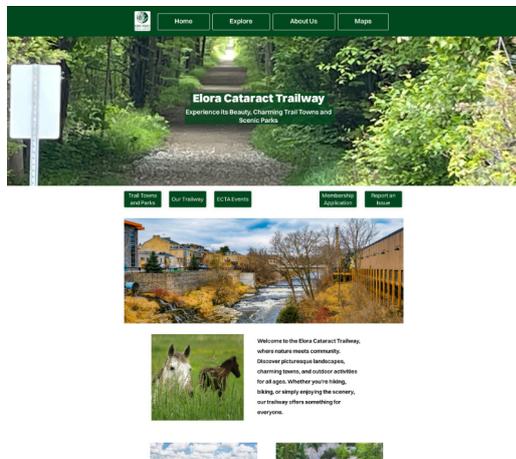


Knowing the Trail. We conduct regular visual inspections along the Trailway and supplement these with online trail surveys that gather condition reports and user feedback from the broader public. Trail counters installed at key points along the route provide objective data on use patterns — helping us make the case to municipalities and funders for continued investment in the corridor.



www.beneficialdesigns.com

On the Map — Literally. In partnership with RTO4 (Regional Tourism Organization 4), ECTA is bringing Google Street View imagery to the entire length of the Trailway, allowing prospective visitors to explore the route virtually before they arrive. Building on this, CVC will be deploying specialized equipment (HETAP) to conduct objective trail assessments — providing people of varying abilities with the information they need to determine whether sections of the Trailway are suitable for their use.



Promoting the Route. Our new website, dedicated to the communities and experiences along the Trailway, brings together trail towns, local events, and route highlights in one place — making it easier for visitors and residents alike to discover everything the corridor has to offer.



Widening the Way. With financial support from the Township of Centre Wellington and private donors, ECTA is helping address one of the trail's most persistent maintenance challenges: vegetation encroaching on the trail surface. Our trail widening program works to restore and maintain a clear, safe corridor for all users.

“Meetings with a Technical Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from Wellington County, the Elora-Cataract Trailway Association, Wellington-Dufferin Public Health, and the Grand River Conservation Authority;”

Chapter 1: Vision & Goals, Section 1.6, P 10. Township of Centre Wellington Active Transportation and Mobility Plan July 2025

Advocating for Active Transportation. ECTA engages regularly with municipalities along the route to advocate for greater investment in active transportation infrastructure and to ensure that local planning studies and transportation reviews recognize the Trailway's value as a genuine transportation corridor. We also participate in municipal active transportation studies that examine how the trail integrates with broader community mobility networks.



Share the Trail. ECTA will again distribute complimentary bike bells to trail users as a practical tool for promoting safe, courteous shared use. Paired with our ongoing "Share the Trail" campaign, these efforts encourage the respectful interactions between cyclists, walkers, and equestrians that keep the Trailway welcoming for everyone.



Events. Building on our successful Snow Poker Challenge, we are planning several more events for 2026 to celebrate the Association's 30th anniversary. Our largest will be the September 19th **Ride Remember Renew** cycling fundraising event with Aboyne Rural Hospice.

Environment. ECTA promotes citizen pruning, invasive species removal and tree planting. Our environmental advocacy extends beyond trailway initiatives to surrounding communities. We still find ways to wield a shovel and extract a buckthorn through our partners CVC and the Elora Environment Centre (Neighbourwoods, the Food Forest, Tree Trust and the Centre Wellington Native Plant Group). Watch for notices of their upcoming events on our social media and website and sign up to help.



Photo courtesy of Credit Valley Conservation



Photo courtesy of Neighbourwoods

Join Us - The Trailway Needs Your Voice

The survey showed that **69% of respondents want our newsletter** and **31% want to become members**. If you're already a member, thank you — your support makes all of this possible.

If you're not yet a member, now is the time. The more members we have, the stronger our voice with county roads, municipal planning, and provincial funders. Every membership directly supports trail maintenance, safety improvements, and the advocacy work that keeps this corridor open and safe for everyone — from the youngest families to our oldest regular walkers.

Full survey results will be available at www.trailway.org when our QA review is finished. Questions? Contact us at info@trailway.org.



Reporting Trailway Issues



The Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) and the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) are dedicated to keeping the Elora Cataract Trailway safe and secure for all users.

You may help in this process by reporting any safety concerns you encounter, such as a fallen tree, a stretch of washed out trail, etc.

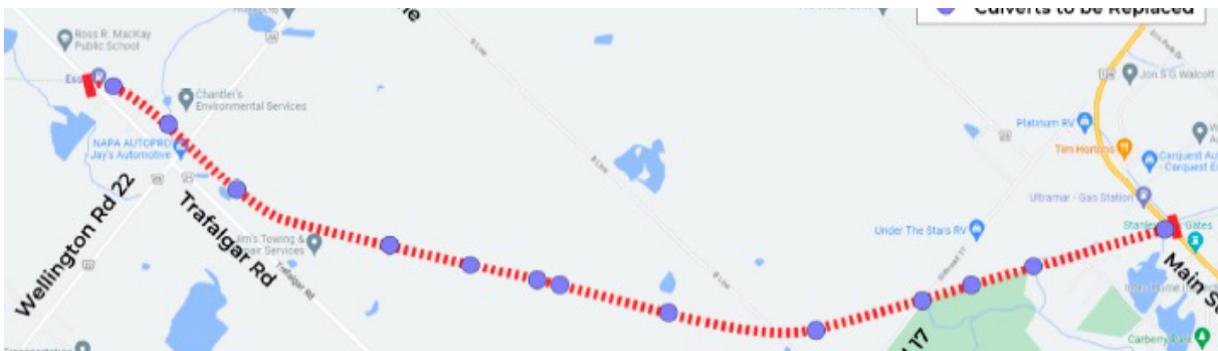
Gather the following information and send it to info@trailway.org. Your observation will be registered and forwarded to the appropriate conservation authority.

1. What? Describe the issue.
2. Location? (for example, between KM marker x and y, between gates x and y (every GRCA gate is numbered) or approximate distance and direction from nearest road. See GRCA map showing gate locations on our website <https://trailway.org/trailway-safety-elora-cataract-trailway.html>
3. Include a photo as these typically include map coordinates to assist conservation staff in locating the issue.



Trailway Closures

Reminder: The CVC-owned section of the Elora Cataract Trailway between Trafalgar Road in Hillsburgh and Main Street in Erin is closed until early 2027 due to the Erin Wastewater System project. More information and up-dates at <https://cvc.ca/park-advisories/> and <https://www.erin.ca/town-hall/corporate-initiatives/wastewater-treatment-plant/wastewater-updates>



Courtesy of WSP Elora Cataract Trail Gravity Sewer
<https://www.erin.ca/media/5451/erin-construction-liaison-meeting-dec-9.pdf>

GRCA service disruptions are listed at:
<https://www.grandriver.ca/who-we-are/service-disruptions/>

Partner Events

Neighbourwoods is hosting an interesting talk on the importance of native plants and how to design a beautiful garden that feeds pollinators. The event will be followed by a native plant sale on May 23 at the Elora Centre for the Arts, organized by the Centre Wellington Native Plant Group.

Note: Both organizations are part of the umbrella organization Elora Environment Centre, along with the Food Forest and Tree Trust.



neighbourwoods

The Beauty and Benefits of a Natural Garden

Do you want to see more birds and butterflies in your garden? Interested in how to design a gorgeous garden that maximizes biodiversity? Then this talk is for you!



Shaun Booth
Shaun is owner of In Our Nature, a natural garden design firm and native plant nursery based out of Alton, ON.

April 9th at 7:30 pm
Elora Centre for the Arts - Atrium
\$10 per person (free for members)
Questions? WalksAndTalks@treetrust.ca



Native Plant Sale



May 23 / 8am - 12pm

Elora Centre for the Arts
(Next to the pollinator garden)

35 SPECIES AVAILABLE

1 plant \$5 • 3 plants for \$10
5 plants for \$15 • 7 plants for \$20

CASH ONLY

Memberships

Application Form

Membership applications can be done online through our website or via this link: <https://trailway.org/membership-application.html>.

Paying by Cheque or e-Transfer

Our bank will only accept cheques made out to **Elora Cataract Trailway Association**. Please ensure the full name is used.

You can also pay by e-transfer to payment@trailway.org. Please state your full name in the note section.

Membership Expiry

Your membership expiry date appears in our official communications (e.g., newsletters) under **Membership Expiry**. For example, 12/31/2023 indicates your membership ends on that date.

Renew Your Membership

Renewing supports our advocacy and trailway improvements, including trail widening and new signage. Membership is **\$25 per year** or **\$100 for five years**. You can pay by e-transfer to payment@trailway.org.

Newsletter

Our newsletter is now digital only and available on our website, featuring expanded content and images. To receive email notifications, register at info@trailway.org. Current and past newsletters are available at <http://trailway.org/about-us/newsletters/>.

Donations



Before trail widening



After trail widening

The Elora Cataract Trailway Association acts as the eyes and ears of our conservation authority partners, Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) and the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA). We monitor trail use, conduct user surveys, advocate for maintenance and capital upgrades, and work with municipalities along the trailway, including ongoing discussions with Centre Wellington Township to connect the Fergus trail sections.

We fundraise for capital improvements such as trail re-widening and infrastructure replacement, projects like signage, kiosk maps, and Google Street View, and safety initiatives including bike bell giveaways. Last fall, we reclaimed 5.3 km of trail from encroaching vegetation. This year, we are assisting CVC with a \$600,000 culvert replacement in Hillsburgh and fundraising for additional work along the GRCA section.

As a non-profit (not a charity), donations are directed to either the Credit Valley Conservation Foundation (CVCF) or the Grand River Conservation Foundation (GRCF), depending on the project. All funds designated for the Elora Cataract Trailway directly support its improvements, and tax receipts are issued by the foundations.

Donations can be made by cheque payable to either foundation and mailed to the Elora Cataract Trailway Association, P.O. Box 2931, Elora, ON N0B 1S0, or online at <https://cvcfoundation.ca/donate> or <https://www.grandriver.ca/who-we-are/grcf/make-a-donation/>. When donating, please indicate "Support for the Elora Cataract Trailway" in the appropriate notes or comments section.

Please consider supporting this invaluable community resource.

Partners and Supporters



Orton Community Association



Waterloo-Wellington Chapter

