

BRUCE TRAIL – VISION STORY

Original Vision:

The Halton Hills Chapter, an affiliate of the Toronto Bruce Trail Club founded in 2000, provides a limited hiking program and participates in local events to encourage residents to use and support the Bruce Trail. The Bruce Trail has been part of the Halton Hills landscape since the 1960s. Inspired by the late Ray Lowes and artist Robert Bateman, the idea proposed in 1960 of a continuous public footpath following the Niagara Escarpment from Queenstown to Tobermory, became a reality in 1967 as after seven years of dedicated work the cairn at the northern end was unveiled. The first “blaze” marking the trail was painted just off the Campbellville Road in 1962. By 1963 Clubs were established to continue the work of the original pioneer volunteers. The Toronto Bruce Trail Club, one of the largest, was formed to administer and maintain the section from Kelso to Boston Mills Road.

Resources:

It is important to stress that, apart from a small staff at the head office of the Conservancy in Raspberry House in the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, all the tasks above are carried out by volunteers. Hundreds of hours of volunteer work by dedicated members maintain the Trail for the people of Ontario.

In order to conserve the Trail the decision was made to acquire land from willing donors and sellers. To date some 2,500 hectares have been acquired, securing 48% of the Trail. The remaining 52% is vulnerable to development. Funding comes from membership dues, donations and bequests, foundations, special fundraising events and federal, provincial and regional grants.

Achievements:

The Bruce Trail is the oldest and longest hiking trail in Canada at 894 km long with 400 km of side trails. More than 400,000 visits are made to the trail for hiking, photography, watching wildlife and to enjoy the spectacular and unique scenery of the Niagara Escarpment.