

**Ministry of Tourism,
Culture and Sport**

Minister

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**Ministère du Tourisme,
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Ministre

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May 31, 201

Dear Member of the Trails Community,

As you are aware, this week marks the first Ontario Trails Week under the recently passed Ontario Trails Act, 2016. With your help, we were able to pass this important legislation to improve and sustain Ontario's urban, suburban, rural and remote land and water trails. We hope that you are joining in on the celebrations and invite you to help us raise awareness about Ontario's great trails system!

To coincide with Ontario Trails Week, I am pleased to inform you that we are also launching the new Ontario Trails of Distinction (OTD) Program. The OTD Program is a legacy initiative of the 150th anniversary of Ontario and is designed to showcase and celebrate distinctive trails in the province. The OTD Program will also help promote Ontario trails as a premiere tourist destination.

In addition to announcing the launch of the OTD Program, I also announced the inaugural Ontario Trails of Distinction, which include:

- The Trans Canada Trail Ontario;
- The Bruce Trail;
- The Great Lakes Waterfront Trail;
- The Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs Trans Ontario Provincial (TOP) Trails; and
- The Greenbelt Route.

These inaugural Ontario Trails of Distinction exemplify the best of what Ontario has to offer and are distinctive for a combination of connectivity, recreational experience, heritage features, and environmental and Indigenous importance.

There are many exciting possibilities ahead as we continue our efforts to build strong communities across the province that are exciting, creative and healthy places to live, work and play. We will be releasing guidelines for the OTD Program shortly with an anticipated application window opening in the fall 2017, which will allow additional trail operators to apply for Trails of Distinction status. For more information on this, please visit the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's website at www.mtc.gov.on.ca or send an email to trailsofdistinction@ontario.ca.

I look forward to our continued collaboration implementing the Ontario Trails Strategy and the Ontario Trails Act, 2016, and I wish you all a successful Ontario Trails Week.

All my best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eleanor McMahon".

Eleanor McMahon
Minister
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport