

Grand reopening ceremony of non-motorized trails in North Hastings to be held Sept. 24

By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On Sept. 7, Hastings Destination Trails Inc. sent out a press release about the grand reopening ceremony for 18 kilometres of non-motorized trails in North Hastings on Sept. 24. This event is a celebration of the completion of project made possible by a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, so that residents and non-residents of all abilities can access the outdoors on these trails throughout the area. Many special guests will be in attendance including Hastings County Warden Rick Phillips, MPP Daryl Kramp and the Ontario Trails Council's CEO Patrick Connor.

On Sept. 24, Hastings Destination Trails Inc. will be welcoming Hastings County municipal council members, public health officials and special guests to commemorate the completion of the 18-kilometre refurbishment of non-motorized trails in Limerick (McGeachie Conservation Area) and Wollaston (The Gut Conservation Area) Townships and the Town of Bancroft (Eagles' Nest Park). It will be an outdoor event held at Eagles' Nest Park with all public health protocols in place for those in attendance, including social distancing and mask usage when the former is not possible.

Commemorating the completion of a project made possible by a \$145,800 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant, these 18 kilometres of non-motorized trails being refurbished cannot be underestimated, according to the chair of HDTI Inc. Dora Trimbee.

"This grant has increased the capacity for safe outdoor activities and provides opportunities to reduce health care costs and increase new economic activity on our trails," she says.

The event will begin at 11 a.m. with an introduction of the NHEDC and HDTI members, a welcome to the launch of the trails, a land acknowledgement, a smudge and prayer ceremony from the Algonquins of Ontario, an introduction of the emcee and the honoured guests. Speakers and presentations will commence at 11:21 a.m. while the ribbon cutting will be at 11:45 a.m. Following this, a park tour will go from 11:50 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with the park officially opening to the public right after that.

Invited guest to this special event are Kramp, North Hastings Economic Development Designate Chair (and Mayor of Tudor and Cashel Township) Libby Clarke, Trimbee, members of the HDTI Inc. committee, Phillips, Bancroft Mayor Paul Jenkins and Connor, all of whom have played an important role in shepherding this project forward to completion.

Connor is looking forward to continue working with all of their partners on this project.

"[We're going] to bring top quality trails that secure our heritage, improve our health and wellness and promote economic prosperity to the great people of North Hastings!"