



Great Lakes
Waterfront Trail

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ONTARIO'S CYCLISTS WELCOME BACK THE GREAT WATERFRONT TRAIL ADVENTURE IN THE BRUCE, GREY AND SIMCOE COUNTIES

August 5, 2021—Toronto. On August 6, participating cyclists will kick off the 2021 Great Waterfront Trail Adventure (GWTA). "This year's Adventure not only celebrates the Trail's extension into the counties of Grey, Bruce and Simcoe, it's also a clear and exciting sign that cycle tourists are eager to get out to explore Ontario and support communities and businesses this summer," **says Marlaine Koehler, executive director, Waterfront Regeneration Trust.**

The GWTA is the **Waterfront Regeneration Trust's** annual, multi-day bicycling tour, designed to showcase the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail and the communities that support it. It also promotes the mission behind the initiative—the regeneration of our Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.

"The 2021 Great Waterfront Trail Adventure is a perfect way to experience the spectacular scenery and communities of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron while raising awareness of the importance of protecting our Great Lakes – arguably our province's most important natural resource and the centre of our tourism industry," **said Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.** "As we safely re-open the province, our government is committed to building on the enthusiasm of Ontarians to get back to nature, explore, and rediscover and re-engage with local businesses and attractions."

Cyclists on the GWTA ride at their own pace over six days, travelling over 500 km with overnight stops in Blue Mountain, Owen Sound, Lions Head, Southampton and finishing at Point Clark in Huron Kinloss.

"We are excited to see Grey County participate in the Great Waterfront Trail Adventure. This initiative combines so many values that are important to us in Grey," **says Selwyn Hicks, Warden of Grey County.** These include active outdoor recreation, trail building, healthy waterways, exploration of our cultural assets, and of course, support for the small businesses that continue to adapt to meet the needs of the public throughout the pandemic.

The tour route follows the latest addition to the 3600 km Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, a legacy initiative led by the Waterfront Regeneration Trust charity. With ongoing support since 2012 from the Greenbelt Foundation, this expansion adds 600 kms of Trail in Grey, Bruce and Simcoe County, with much of the new trail in Ontario's Greenbelt. The Greenbelt Foundation actively seeks to invest in initiatives that increase accessibility to the Greenbelt and connect Ontarians with its Tourism and Recreation opportunities.

This addition was achieved over two years working with communities, conservation authorities, Regional Tourism Organizations and the Government of Ontario. It primarily utilizes quiet roads with some trails, and connects 35 beaches, seven provincial parks, two national parks, six lighthouses, 18 conservation areas, and numerous local businesses in 26 communities along the shores of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron.

"The pandemic emphasized the value of our green spaces, as well as the need to continue increasing accessibility to them," says **Edward McDonnell, CEO of the Greenbelt Foundation**. "Trails are essential recreational infrastructure that contribute to the quality-of-life for residents, support local businesses, and encourage safe, active lifestyles. The Greenbelt Foundation is proud to support the Trust's work to expand the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail and establish new connections between it and the Greenbelt Route".

CAA South Central Ontario, is a long-time supporter of the Great Waterfront Trail Adventure. For the 500-km ride, CAA provides participants with CAA Bike Assist, roadside assistance for bicycles. CAA Bike Assist is a CAA Member benefit included in the annual cost of membership.

"We are committed to keeping our Members safe whether they are travelling on four wheels or two," said **Michael Stewart, community relations specialist, CAA South Central Ontario**. "The growth of cycling over the past year and a half means that we will continue to see more cyclists on the roads, and events like the GWTA encourage the local exploration of Ontario's Great Lakes communities in an enjoyable and safe way."

Bicycling boomed during the pandemic, as people realized it was both a safe form of outdoor exercise and a great way to explore their neighbourhood close to home.

The Waterfront Regeneration Trust redesigned the annual event to comply with Step 2 of the Province's Roadmap to Reopen, and local public health unit restrictions. As an outdoor activity that can be pursued in a socially distanced way, touring signed routes such as the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail and Greenbelt Route is a rewarding holiday option this summer.

Participation in the 2021 GWTA has been filled for some time, but cyclists can plan their own adventure on the Waterfront Regeneration Trust website. (<https://waterfronttrail.org/>).

Join us in the Fall for our Farm Fresh Tours, also supported by Greenbelt Foundation. Click [HERE](#) to learn more!

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Quotes

"Surrounded by Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, Bruce County is home to some of the most beautiful waterfront views. It's a cyclist's dream to have long stretches of trails covered with trees overhanging the paved road. We are proud to be part of the newly expanded Great Lakes Waterfront Trail. Cyclists will enjoy exploring our restaurants that offer farm-to-table experiences and downtown shops where you can get made-in-Bruce souvenirs. We hope our visitors will journey safely while discovering all Bruce County has to offer on their adventure."

Janice Jackson, Warden Bruce County

"As one of Ontario's top cycling and tourist destinations, one of the best ways to experience Simcoe County is by bicycle. The Great Lakes Waterfront Trail is a wonderful way for our communities to tell their stories, while supporting local tourism and our economy. Through Tourism Simcoe County and Cycle Simcoe, we're thrilled to be part of the inaugural Grey Bruce Simcoe expansion of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail event in 2021, and further support the growth of biking tourism as cyclists return safely to experience Simcoe in the years to come." ~

George Cornell, Warden Simcoe County

"The Great Waterfront Trail Adventure provides welcome support to the reopening businesses and communities along its route."

Bill Sullivan, CEO, Regional Tourism Organization 7.

"Our family is very involved in our community. With the support of my wife, Sue, I have been able to combine a commitment to community with a passion for cycling. Promoting cycling brings health, ecological and economic benefits to our communities. I'm thrilled to have played a role in bringing the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail to Bruce, Grey, and Simcoe and look forward to sharing the route with cycle tourists on the Great Waterfront Trail Adventure. Working with Waterfront Regeneration Trust on the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail initiative has become an important way for me to contribute to a legacy of bike-friendly Ontario."

Bill Abbotts, Honorary Tour Director, Great Waterfront Trail Adventure

“Involved with trail development and healthy active living in southwestern Ontario for more than 25 years, I have been looking forward to cycling this leg of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail through Simcoe, Grey and Bruce Counties since 2016 when I was Warden of Lambton County. Cycling the exquisite beauty and contrast of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron coastlines ‘up and then down the Bruce Peninsula’ will be an experience like no other. Our incredible Great Lakes System and regeneration of its shorelines with multi-use trails - connecting uniquely local communities across our province is an Ontario legacy to be guarded and protected for future generations - not to mention a North American tourism asset, to be shared with the world when cycling has never been more popular.”

**Bev MacDougall, Honorary Tour Director, Great Waterfront Trail Adventure,
Sarnia-Lambton**

“Our city is already a great trails community. Connecting to the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail made it even better. The Trail connects us to shoreline communities all along multiple Great Lakes throughout Ontario. We’re proud to be a part of it, to be connected to a bigger system, and to connect more Ontarians with Owen Sound.”

Ian Boddy, Mayor of Owen Sound

Event partners: CAA South Central Ontario, the Greenbelt Foundation, Grey County, Bruce County, Simcoe County, Visit Grey Bruce Simcoe-RTO 7, Creemore Springs Brewery, Town of Clearview, Town of Blue Mountains, Meaford, Tom Thomson Trail Association, Owen Sound, Georgian Bluffs, South Bruce Peninsula, Northern Bruce Peninsula, Saugeen Shores, Kincardine, Kincardine Trails Association, Huron-Kinloss, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, and Ontario Parks.

The expansion of the Trail into the counties of Bruce, Grey and Simcoe was supported by 26 waterfront communities, the Ontario Government through the Ministry of Heritage Sport Tourism Culture Industries, the Greenbelt Foundation, and Visit Grey Bruce Simcoe-RTO 7.