



The Ganaraska Forest to Remain Closed until September 30, 2022

For Immediate Release - Port Hope Ontario: The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) continues to focus its efforts on the recovery of the Ganaraska Forest after the May 21, 2022 windstorm that has severely affected the Forest. However, after much consideration, the GRCA has determined that the entire Ganaraska Forest will remain closed until September 30, 2022. This decision has not been made lightly and is based on many factors. It is important to note that the Ganaraska Forest is unsafe for recreational activities and many trails still are impassable.

“The GRCA knows how much the Ganaraska Forest means to the local community and recreational users that come from across Ontario and out of Province.” said Linda Laliberte, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer. “The GRCA is committed to re-opening recreational trails in the Ganaraska Forest to recreational use. Everyone’s continued cooperation, understanding and patience is appreciated.”

The reasons for the ongoing closure include:

- The extent and locations of over 250 hectares (600 acres) of tree blowdown are impacting main trail access points and systems within the West Forest next to Boundary Road and Porter Road; as well as the Central Forest trailhead located at the Ganaraska Forest Centre. In addition, isolated blowdown locations are scattered throughout the West and Central Forests, which impact various trail systems.
- Starting in mid-July and continuing into the Fall, multiple logging operations (salvage and annual harvest) will be occurring throughout the West and Central Forests. The number of operations occurring is more than normal, and some will be operating along trails to support recovery. As is normal practice, trails within and near to logging operations are closed or restricted to recreational uses. *Please note logging trucks will be traveling roads around the Ganaraska Forest.
- Staff have, and continue to clear trails; however, there is still a significant amount of the approximately 600 kilometers of trail to address. Many of the trails are impassable and hazards along the sides of trail and overhead hangers remain.
- The ability to open certain trail sections while others remain closed is not possible given the various recovery operations taking place throughout the Forest.
- The East Forest will remain closed even though it was not as severely impacted by the storm. The East Forest does not have the capacity or the parking areas to support an abundance of recreational pressure.

The GRCA values its Forest members and as such, Ganaraska Forest memberships will be extended as follows:

- Ganaraska Forest memberships (except for cross country ski memberships) purchased between June 1, 2021 and May 21, 2022 will receive a 12-month extension from the original membership expiry date.
- Ganaraska Forest cross country ski memberships that expired during the Ganaraska Forest closure (between May 21, 2022, to the re-opening date) will be given a 6-month hiking membership.

Upon expiry, Ganaraska Forest memberships will be automatically renewed for a year, and an email notification will be sent. Once the Ganaraska Forest is opened, a 6-month hiking membership will be automatically issued to cross country ski members and an email notification will be sent.

The GRCA thanks everyone for their continued patience, cooperation and understanding. To learn more, please refer to the “Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Closure of the Ganaraska Forest”. Continue to follow Ganaraska Conservation on Facebook or by visiting www.grca.on.ca.