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# Champion COMMUNITY Page

*About 55 per cent of Bruce Trail lands privately owned*

## Association sets out to secure entire route

By LISA CARTWRIGHT  
 The Champion

The Bruce Trail Association wants to 'Realize the Dream' by securing unprotected lands by 2015.

While about 45 per cent of the trail is secured (land either owned by the association, the government or conservation areas), the rest of the trail — approximately 440 km or 55 per cent — is still privately owned.

In Halton, the Bruce Trail winds across more than 90 km of land, with 19 km of it still unsecured.

And while most of the landowners have given the association permission to use their lands, contracts have never been signed.

"It's the grace of the landlords or landladies," that people are allowed on their property, said Richard Boehnke, president of the Bruce Trail Association. "It's usually a handshake deal which makes it a little tenuous."

### Making deals time-consuming

The problem with a verbal agreement is that the deal often has to be renegotiated when owners change.

To help fund initiatives to secure the entire trail, the Bruce Trail Association has launched its 'Realize the Dream by 2015' program.

The program works by selling footsteps of land. The association figures there are approximately 1.5 million footsteps left to secure along the Bruce Trail.

When a person purchases one footstep for \$25, the association will purchase three more.

"The Niagara Escarpment is a rich ecological system," said Roger Taylor, a member of the Bruce Trail Association and former chair of the group's environmental committee. "It's also fragile and easily destroyed. It definitely needs protection."

### Several options for securing lands

The association has several options. It can buy the property outright, buy access to it or have the landowners donate the land.

And the goal is to have the trail completely secured by 2015.

"It took 30 years to get 45 per cent of the land tightened down," Mr. Boehnke said. "We didn't want it to take another 30 to 40 years to get the rest. We set a tight target that is realistic and keeps us moving."

The Bruce Trail is a path that runs 800 km along the Niagara Escarpment.

In 1990, it was designated a World Biosphere Reserve by the



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

About 45 per cent of the land located along the Bruce Trail is secured (either owned by the conservation areas, the government or the association). By 2015, the group hopes to secure the rest of it. Richard Boehnke, president of the association, strolls along the access to the trail at Kelso Conservation Area.

United Nations on Education and Scientific and Cultural Organization.

It has the same importance as the Galapagos Islands and the

Florida Everglades.

"The Niagara Escarpment offers some unique features onto itself and some unique features onto Southern Ontario," Mr. Boehnke said.

"People don't realize how significant the escarpment really is. It has pretty heavy company."

The Bruce Trail Association formed in 1961 after members of the Ontario Naturalist Association wanted a walking trail along the Niagara Escarpment.

The group set out to provide public access to the escarpment so people could enjoy its beauty and promote conservation in the process.

People can help the Bruce Trail Association 'Realize the Dream by 2015' by calling 1-800-665-HIKE (4453). Corporate as well as individual donations are accepted.

## Quick facts on Bruce Trail Association

- The Bruce Trail Association has 8,500 members.
- There are nine clubs in Ontario.
- Half of the members are from the Toronto club, a third come from the Iroquoia club (Hamilton area) and the rest are from other clubs.
- People who join the association can do as much or as little as they want. They can hike the trail by themselves, join group hikes and attend meetings. Members also get a copy of the newsletter and magazine.
- The goal for most association members is to hike the entire trail. Many do it in several sections over a number of years. When complete, they receive a badge.

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### COGECO 14 Programming Schedule — February 15th, 2000 - February 21st, 2000

Tuesday, February 15th	Wednesday, February 16th	Thursday, February 17th	Sunday, February 20th	Monday, February 21st
10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	4pm, 5pm, 6pm Plugged In! Week In Review	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	4:30pm The Local Scene	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!
6:00pm Seniors Showcase	6:00pm Cable in the Classroom	6:00pm The Local Scene	5:30pm Seniors Showcase	6:00pm Living on the Edge
7:00pm Money week	7:00pm Swap Talk - Live!	7:00pm The issue is..		7:00pm To Be Announced
8:00pm Halton hills Council - Feb 7th	8:00pm 'Sail or Jail' Merchant Seamen's Claim for benefits	8:00pm Halton Region Council - Feb 9th		8:00pm SportsZONE Live

Feature this week: Your daily news & info program on Cogeco 14 - Mon-Thurs, 5:30, 6:30 & 7:30pm.