

# MPP walking instead of talking

Liberal will trek across Oak Ridges Moraine

BY MIKE ADLER  
Staff Writer

Mike Colle, the Liberal MPP who has talked a lot about the Oak Ridges Moraine, is going to walk it from one end to the other.

His private member's bill to preserve the moraine defeated, Colle announced last week he intends to make the 200-kilometre hike to raise awareness.

The MPP plans to start the morning of Aug. 21 on the Ganaraska Trail near Cobourg, tripping through the regions of Durham and York and ending up in Caledon.

He'll stay in the homes of moraine residents along the way and hopes others will join him on his quest.

"I hope I can make it past Scugog," Colle said Friday, standing on Stouffville Road in Richmond Hill, wearing hiking shoes and a backpack.

"I have run three marathons in my younger days so I hope I can get some of those muscles working again."

The moraine, source of all rivers in the Greater Toronto Area, is 160 kilometres long. Colle's route through it would be 200 kilometres. The party's municipal affairs critic said he would try to finish the distance in a week.

"If my feet hold out I'll do it until the end," said Colle, who is 55. "I'll give it a week for sure and see how it goes."

Experienced hikers in the area, though willing to help, thought it may take longer. "It's probably going to take several weeks to do it," said Harold Sellers, who leads hikes for the Oak Ridges Trail Association.

Following the Oak Ridges Trail would take Colle 120 kilometres from east of Port Perry to Caledon. With the exception of Aurora, the often-hilly path tends to avoid towns along the way.

Twelve kilometres a day may be all Colle has time to do, said Sellers, who called the journey a commendable idea that will give the MPP a good understanding of the moraine's topography. "He'll see all the features that are worth preserving."

Such a trek should not be taken lightly, said Fiona Cowles, a King resident and trail association founder who has promised to accompany Colle through part of the King section.

Colle said he may leave the trail's more difficult sections and walk on local roads, which will give him a chance to meet more area residents.

In June, the MPP promised a "Save, Don't Pave" summer sign campaign, but it has been delayed.



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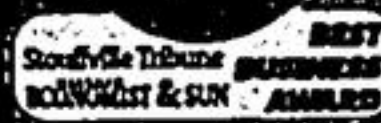
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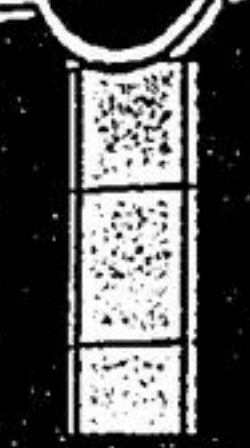
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