

How You Can Help

The Oak Ridges Friends of the Environment has formed a partnership with the Town's By-law staff and the York Regional Police to assist in reducing the illegal use of natural areas in the community. Individuals can assist by reporting the use of motorized vehicles in parks and on trails by providing the following information:

- Date, time and location of the sighting
- Identifiable marks (i.e. bike/ATV licence, trailer licence, car/truck licence)



If individuals have any other comments that may be helpful to By-law Officers and Police patrols, the information can be sent via e-mail to the Oak Ridges Friends of the Environment at sbradley@aci.on.ca. The data will be compiled and sent to the Town to assist patrols and to send warnings to those who can be identified.



For more information, contact:

By-law Enforcement

Planning & Development Department

Phone: (905) 771-0198

Fax: (905) 771-5445

E-mail: bylaw@richmondhill.ca



MOTORIZED VEHICLES AND NATURE DON'T MIX

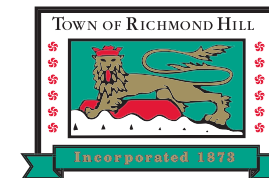


*Find out how to help protect the
Town's valuable natural areas.*



Town of
RICHMOND HILL
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Protecting Richmond Hill's Natural Heritage System

Within the borders of Richmond Hill one can find numerous unique and valuable natural features including, kettle lakes, headwaters and tributaries of the Don, Rouge and Humber River systems; significant wetland complexes; forest communities; and a portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Due to the diversity of landscapes and species, it has become a high priority for the Municipal Government and Town residents to preserve these ecological systems. Not only is it essential to protect these spaces for future generations to enjoy, but keeping them intact ensures that essential ecological functions are maintained; the value of surrounding properties is increased; unique educational resources are provided; and the available spaces for recreational opportunities, such as hiking, walking, and cycling are increased.



Parks and trails are places for residents to enjoy the natural surroundings, engage in healthy physical activity and learn more about native plant and animal life. They also provide important habitat for all kinds of wildlife. Motorized vehicles disturb the peaceful enjoyment for other park users and their speed along trails poses a safety risk for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, the constant traffic harasses wildlife, potentially driving them from their natural habitat. Off-trail riding also damages natural features and wildlife nesting areas.



What Areas are Protected?

Natural spaces are protected under the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* and *Plan*, as well as other environmental regulations.

These places have been designated as sensitive areas that have healthy and diverse plant and animal habitat, often including habitat for rare or endangered species. These areas have distinctive and attractive land forms and



are a significant source of our drinking water. Considerable areas of these natural spaces are under private ownership, but



the legislation still prohibits the use of motorized vehicles on these properties. The damage to landscapes and wildlife habitat is evident wherever these vehicles have been active. The noise scares wildlife and disturbs any resident within ear-shot

of these chosen “playgrounds.” It is important to note that trespassing and vandalism charges can also be applied to BMX riders and other cyclists who damage these natural spaces.



Are there Laws Prohibiting the use of Motorized Vehicles in Natural Areas?

The use of motorized vehicles is prohibited by the Town of Richmond Hill By-laws in parks and on trails. If charged under the Town's Noise By-law, Chapter 1055 of the Town of Richmond Hill Municipal Code, the individual(s) may be fined up to \$5000 for each offence upon conviction. Charges can also be laid under the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* and *Plan* for those caught in protected natural spaces. Riders who are trespassing on private property can also be charged on this account and can face legal action for vandalism damage, as well.



Anyone who trespasses on private property and uses a motorized vehicle (ATV's, motocrossbikes, snowmachines) may be arrested, the vehicle(s) confiscated and charged with Trespass to Property under the *Trespass to Property Act, RSO, 1990, c T.21*. Upon conviction of the charge(s), the Court may fine the individual(s) up to \$2000 for each offence and charge them for all costs for the damages caused to the property, as well as the legal fees.

Where Can I Ride?

Many opportunities exist for the legal use of off-road vehicles on designated trail networks that are outside of protected areas. Protected wilderness areas must be maintained in a natural, wild state, as the law intends. For more information about off-road vehicle legislation, visit www.mto.gov.on.ca. For information about designated trails, visit www.ofatv.org.