

Nashville Conservation Reserve Trail building off to a great start

By Susan Beharriell

This past fall, some 30 people came out in a light rain to help build a trail and experience for themselves the beauty of the new Nashville Conservation Reserve (NCR) near Nobleton.

Four members of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) staff led the event while volunteers added their expertise and enthusiasm. From several naturalists, an expert in mountain bike trail building and five board members from the Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association, to local riders, reps from the nearby riding ranch and a number of local residents, everyone was eager to see the new reserve and help with clearing a trail.

TRCA staff provided a safety briefing and distributed tools and the participants broke into two groups to each work on sections of the trail. The work consisted mostly of cutting underbrush clogging the one-kilometre loop trail following a sweeping bend in the Humber River and the area around the historic bowstring bridge built in 1923. The next stage of development for this portion of the planned trails will be completing proper grading and mapping.

Near the bridge is a lovely older growth forest, featuring a number of giant sugar maples, red oaks, hemlocks and beech trees dating from pioneer days and earlier. This patch of older growth forest is one of many small forest stands within NCR that are remnants of the ancient forest which has survived and adapted over the past 10,000 years, since last ice age in southern Ontario (some selective logging occurred in pioneer days).

The latest news about the reserve is that land has been purchased that adds a ?missing link? to NCR by closing a gap in public ownership just west of Concession Road 11 (former Dalton property) that will allow for a continuous hiking trail from current trailhead to Bolton.

You can get involved by checking out the website (www.trca.on.ca/nashville) and by contacting Adam Dembe at the TRCA ? adembe@trca.on.ca or 416-717-9159. Learn more about this significant conservation and nature reserve right in King Township and Vaughan.