



NEW DATE! MAY 11, 2024
"I CLOSED THE GAP" HIKE
ON THE MIDLAND AND TINY EXTENSIONS OF THE
GANARASKA HIKING TRAIL

Lace up those hiking boots and join us for the historic "I closed the Gap" Hike along the beautiful Ganaraska Hiking Trail through Midland, Penetanguishene and Tiny. This project has been over 10 years in the making. Get ready to explore the beautiful Georgian Bay shoreline and various forest trails, breathe in the fresh air, and challenge yourself on this scenic trail.

On May 11, 2024, hikers are to arrive and park at Sainte Marie Among the Hurons before being bussed to the start location of the hike on Tiny Conc. 12 and walk back to the Wye River (approx. 18 kms). The hike will take between approximately 4 and 5 hours to complete. A checkpoint, washroom and possible drop out option, if needed, is available at Pete Petterson Park, Midland, approximately 10 km into the hike.

Due to the distance, undulating terrain and some walking on concrete/asphalt, this is described as a moderate hike; however, you will walk at your own pace, by following the white navigational blazes. (see below)

All participants have to register on Eventbrite. During registration, you'll be required to provide your Emergency Contact information, and indicate your preference to receive a "I hiked the Gap" badge. These are free for all hikers who complete the full hike on May 11, 2024.

By registering, all hikers confirm that they have read and acknowledge the Waiver and Assumption of Risks of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association Inc, which reads as follows:

I acknowledge that the activity in which I am participating involves risks. In consideration of being permitted to participate, I hereby assume any and all such risks and hereby release and discharge the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association Inc, its officers, directors and volunteers, the owner of such lands I may cross or find myself upon and my fellow hikers,

their successors and assigns from any and all claims for loss or damage directly or indirectly arising as a result of my participation in this activity. I confirm that I am aware of the nature of the activity, the duration and the degree of difficulty and that I am properly equipped and physically able to participate. I have no medical conditions that might preclude my participation. Each adult accepts full responsibility for all persons under 18 that may be in their care.

Participation is free.

Please register and provide your details including Emergency Contact info on:
<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/i-hiked-the-gap-in-the-ganaraska-hiking-trail-tickets-886743512717>

AGENDA

8:30 AM: Hike registration of "I close the Gap" hike starts.

Meet at: **Sainte Marie Among the Hurons parking**
16164 ON-12, Midland
What 3 words: eardrum.negligible.reports

9:00 AM: Opening ceremony of the extension of the Midland and Tiny sections of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail, to "close the Gap". Dignitaries are invited to bring greetings.

9:30 AM First bus loading starts. Buses will take hikers to Tiny Conc. 12, from where hikers will hike back to their cars at the Wye River. Duration of the ride: 15 min.

All participants MUST PRE-REGISTER on the Eventbrite link above as well as check in upon arrival on May 11. You will be provided with a button which also serves as a bus ticket.

First bus to depart at 9:45 AM, second bus around 10:15 AM. Departure times are approximate. We'll do our best to keep to the schedule and we ask that you do the same.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The hike starts off on the Tiny Trail, a railtrail between Elmvale and Penetanguishene. The trail traverses the scenic valley of the Copeland Creek and crosses the creek several times.



After about 2 kms look for the turn blaze and take the newly built stairs up to the edge of the cliff and **follow the white blazes in the forest**. Do not trespass onto adjacent private property.

The Ganaraska Hiking Trail makes a sharp right turn and ascends up the hill through part of the Thompson Forest owned by Simcoe County Forests.

At Overhead Bridge Road, cross carefully to the east side of the road and follow the path to the parking lot opposite Kingfisher Road. At this point you have done 3.3 kms on the Tiny section of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail. *This location is the new junction between the Tiny and Midland sections of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail.*



At the parking lot in the bend of Overhead Bridge Road, turn left (east) into the beautiful Thompson Forest by following the white blazes, until you exit the forest at Thompson Road West. There may be a short temporary detour here, taking you along Revol Rd and Beausoleil Road to Thompson Road West, which takes you to County Road 93.

Cross CR93 at the lights and immediately turn right on Murray Road, which after 1 km of ups and downs continues on the steep descent of the 2km long paved Mid Pen Link, which connects Midland with Penetanguishene. The Mid Pen Link exits at Harbourview Drive. Walk on the right (west) side of Harbourview Drive, and cross that road just past the apartment building.



A small path between the apartment building and a wetland brings hikers to Pete Petterson Park, with its beautiful view of Georgian Bay, the marinas, playground, baseball field, washroom and your Checkpoint. Make sure to check in with a volunteer and have a snack on us or fill up your water bottle!

Please note: Pete Petterson Park is the drop-out point for hikers who'd like a ride back to their car.



Continue the hike on the Midland Rotary Waterfront Trail, which takes you through downtown Midland and its harbour. Nearby are restaurants, coffee shops, etc. Stay on the paved trail until you pass the playground and look for blazes leading you to a dirt path, which stays below the hillside.

At Midland Bay Landing with its benches, washroom, and boardwalk, continue on the multi-use recreational trail on the south side of the blue houses. Follow this waterfront trail, enjoy the views.



Continue until you pass a water retention pond. Take the path that goes into the wooded area, and along the Wye River where you will see the Martyrs' Shrine. Continue along this path to Sainte Marie Park and via a series of bridges to your car at Sainte Marie Among the Hurons.

Please check out with our volunteers and receive your "I hiked the Gap" badge (for those who requested one).

DURATION OF THE HIKE

Everyone walks at their own pace, so we expect that it may take 4-5 hours, depending on your pace.

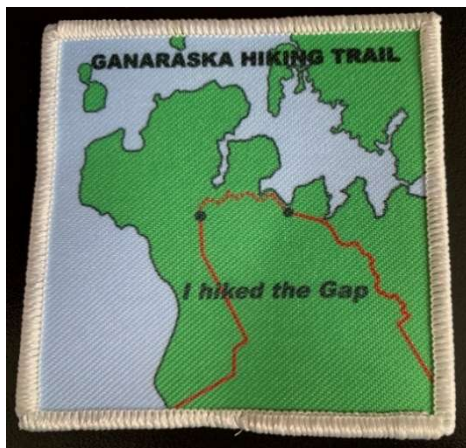
CHECKPOINT

A checkpoint will be set up at Pete Petterson Park, approximately 10 kms from the start of the hike. There will be refreshments (but bring your own lunch), washroom, first aid, and if needed, an opportunity to drop out.

FEE

No cost to the hikers

COMPLETION OF THE HIKE



Please make sure to checkout with our volunteers at the end of the hike, so we know you are safely off the trail.

All hikers will be provided with a commemorative "I hiked the Gap" badge upon completion of the hike, if they wish to receive one. (Please indicate your preference on whether to get a badge or not on your Eventbrite registration for the hike).

Anyone interested in hiking the “gap” at a later date, can do so at their own convenience. Note that the badges will be on sale after May 11, 2024 for \$7 and can be ordered on the Ganaraska Hiking Trail’s Merchandise Form. <https://ganaraska-hiking-trail.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/GHTA-Merchandise-Order-Formrev030324-for-website.pdf>

WHAT SHOULD I BRING

- Hiking shoes or boots with good support
- The following are recommended but not essential: hiking poles or walking sticks for the hills and uneven terrain but note that some of the trail will be hard surface (asphalt, concrete) so also bring the rubber booties for the poles. You may also want to bring extra socks & shoes; braces if you have knee issues.
- Water bottle. Some hikers simply require more hydration, and warm temperatures can increase everyone’s needs. Water bottles can be re-filled at the Pete Petterson checkpoint.
- A cell phone for safety reasons and so we can reach you, if needed.
- A sun or rain hat, sun screen, bug repellent, after-bite, band-aids suitable for blisters, lunch, a small first aid kit with any particular items you may require, e.g. an asthma puffer or epi pen. Don’t forget your preferred analgesic.
- We suggest you put your name on your gear (hats, keys, poles, etc.) in case they are lost.

CAN I BRING KIDS?

Sure! Hikers under 18 years of age are absolutely welcome, but they must be accompanied on the hike by an adult. Note however that the hike is considered moderate in difficulty, and definitely not easy.

CAN I BRING MY DOG?

No, unless it is a service dog, in which case you need to contact president@ghta.ca so special transportation arrangements to the start of the hike can be made.

IS THE TRAIL WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE?

Most of the trail would be accessible, and is hard surface, however, there is also a section that includes stairs, as well as uneven ground (roots, rocks) and the forest paths can be muddy and have loose sand.

WASHROOMS

Washrooms are open at the Sainte Marie Among the Hurons visitor centre from 8 AM till 5 PM on May 11, 2024.

Port-a-Potties will be set at the checkpoint at Pete Petterson Park, and at Midland Bay Landing (bottom of William Street).

FIRST AID

For minor first aid, there will be a First Aid responder at the checkpoint at Pete Petterson Park or call 705-937-1005. For more serious cases, call 911.

WHERE CAN I GET A MAP OF THE TRAIL?

You will be able to download the latest version of maps 31 & 32 from the Ganaraska Hiking Trail website just prior to the event. Maps are available for free. You may also

want to download the Trail Description for the newly extended Tiny and Midland sections of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail.

https://ganaraska-hiking-trail.org/?page_id=26

We are working on uploading the new trail to our free Ondago trail map for your mobile device, but unfortunately it may not be ready by May 11.

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR THE HIKE?

Please enter your details including Emergency Contact info on:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/i-hiked-the-gap-in-the-ganaraska-hiking-trail-tickets-886743512717>

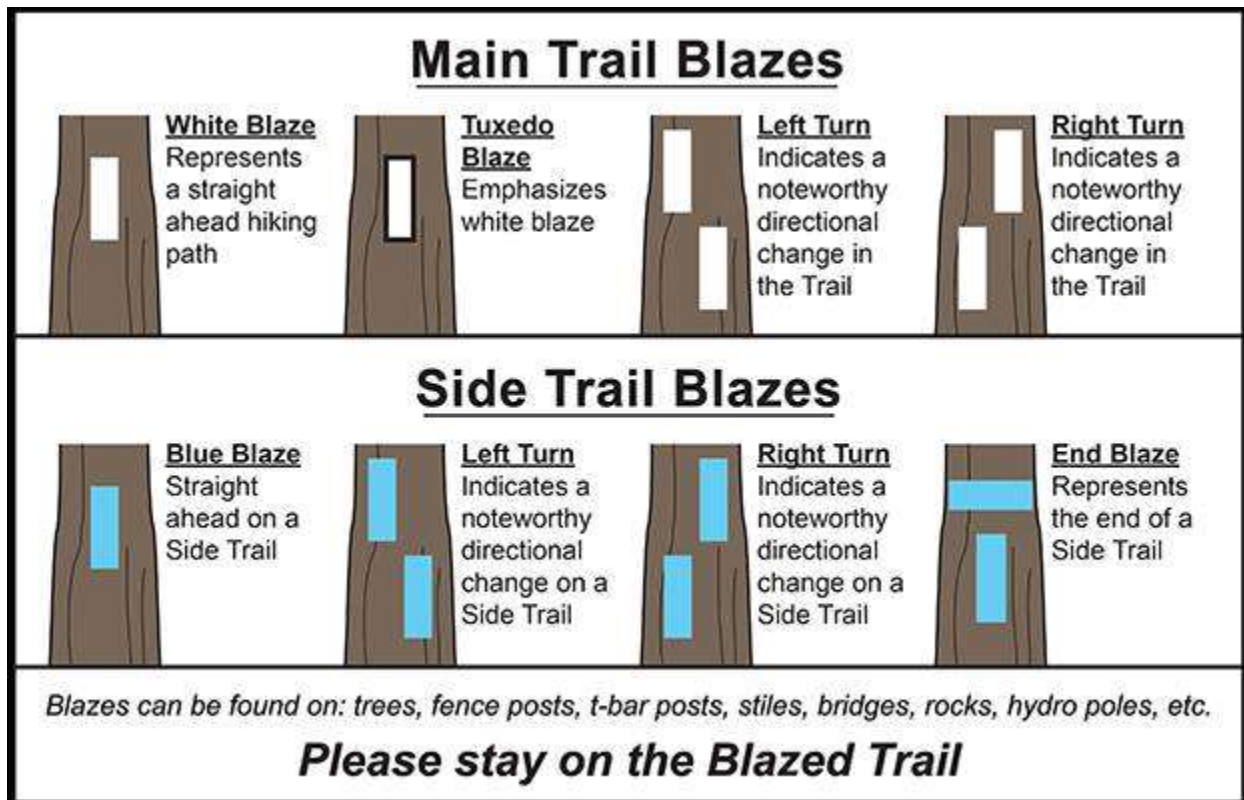
Please register early as we can only accommodate 100 hikers max. on the buses.

WHAT IF I HAVE TO CANCEL?

You can do so on Eventbrite or let president@gha.ca know, preferably before May 10 11, 2024. Once the 100 participants are registered, there will be waitlist, so please let us know if you wish to cancel.

HOW WILL I KNOW HOW TO NAVIGATE THE TRAIL?

The Ganaraska Hiking Trail uses the same navigational trail blazes as many of the other long distance hiking trails, such as the Bruce Trail. Here is an explanation.



We also recommend that you download the What 3 Words app to your phone which will pinpoint your exact location in case of an emergency or you get lost. Emergency rescue services such as the OPP etc. encourage the use of What 3 Words in emergency situations.

WHAT IF I WANT TO ALSO HIKE THE ORIGINAL 13.5 KM OF THE MIDLAND SECTION TO GET MY MIDLAND END TO END SECTION BADGE?

On Sunday May 12, 2024 volunteers of the Midland club of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail are willing to be Trail Angels and offer free car shuttles to the start of the Midland section at Vasey Road and Reeves Road, i.e. to km 0. From there you can walk back at your own pace to your car. This hike is all off road, mostly through forests and pasture lands, and the terrain is undulating, and the ground can be uneven. The trail also follows two old railway lines. One is unpaved and owned by the local snowmobile club. Once you cross hwy 12 you will be on the paved Tay Shore Trail, owned by Tay Township, but the Ganaraska Hiking Trail veers off onto an adjacent dirt path a few times. The trail ends at the Wye River. Some parts of this trail can be wet or muddy, especially after significant rainfall.

No hike leaders will be provided, but volunteers will sweep the trail to make sure everyone got back to their cars safely. Map 32 shows the km 0 – 13.5 Midland section of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail. See https://ganaraska-hiking-trail.org/?page_id=26 to download the map and Trail Description. Also download the Ondago app and map of the Midland section.

By adding this additional hike on the Sunday, you will qualify for your Midland section End to End (E2E) badge. Badges can be ordered for \$7 using the Merchandise Form mentioned above.

Bring lunch, hiking poles, water, etc.

Meet at 10 AM at Sainte Marie Among the Hurons, 16164 ON-12 in Midland. What 3 words: eardrum.negligible.reports

Please register at <https://teamup.com/event/show/id/LsWP2viiKnmMTRRQhyR54ChPWYCKgu> if you wish to take advantage of this "Trail Angel" offer.

SPECIAL OFFER FROM SAINTE MARIE AMONG THE HURONS

<https://saintemarieamongthehurons.on.ca/>

On the occasion of the "I closed the gap" event, Huronia Historical Parks which operates Sainte Marie Among the Hurons, is offering a discounted admission fee for the park.

- HHP is offering a reduced admissions rate to Sainte-Marie among the Hurons for all participants, volunteers and members of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association on **May 10, 11 and 12**
 - Admission rate will be **\$6.50** for all visitors over the age of 5 (regular price is \$13 for adults and \$10 for Seniors during this time of the season)
 - Visitors will need to identify themselves at Admissions by indicating they are a member of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association Inc. or indicating that they are participating in the "I closed the Gap" event. Family members and friends are welcome too.
- The Visitor's Center will also allow access to HHP washroom facilities (AODA compliant and baby change table included) and access to the Gift Shop where coffee and refreshments are available.

NEED ACCOMMODATIONS?

While there are lots of hotels and B&B's in Midland & area, hikers may want to take advantage of the special Ganaraska Hiking Trail rates: \$60 for a room with a single bed and \$80 for a room with 2 beds at the King's Inn, managed by one of Midland club's members Jaz Patel. <http://kingsinn.ca/Midland/Gallery.aspx>

WHAT IF I NEED TO CONTACT THE ORGANIZERS DURING THE HIKE?

Please call:

- Prior to the event: Frieda Baldwin 705-245-1005
- On April 13: Jacqui Woods 705-241-8848

OTHER QUESTIONS?

Email your questions to president@gha.ca