

Barricade Requirements for Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area

General Introduction

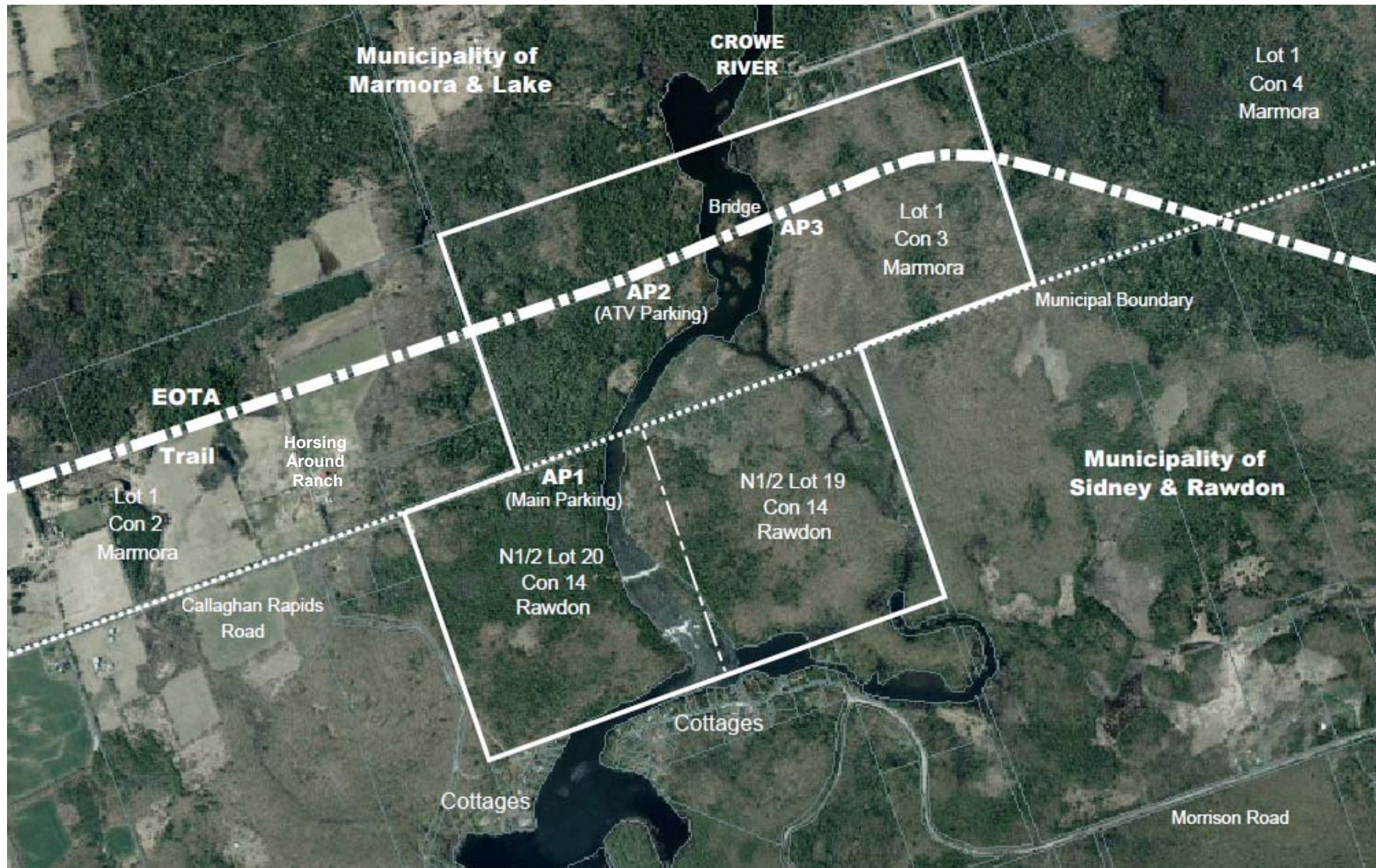
The Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area is a four hundred acre, free access unsupervised daytime recreational facility owned and operated by the Crowe River Conservation Authority (CVCA). In the mid eighties, when sufficient funding was available, plans were made to develop the area. A public parking lot and two privies were built with service roads leading to them from the parking lot. The service roads were gated and locked thus restricting access only to authorized motor vehicles. All unauthorized motor vehicle entry into the Callaghan's Rapids area constitutes trespass, is posted as such, and is sometimes enforced upon request by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP). In the early nineties, a fundamental change took place in the funding model for all Conservation Authorities in the Province of Ontario. The consequence was a major reduction in CVCA revenue, resulting in changes to operational priorities and plans to develop the conservation area were utterly abandoned.

Visitor access to the property is via Callaghan Rapids Road. At the east end of the road is a cul-de-sac and a visitor parking lot. Two abandoned service roads start at this parking lot. The original design of the rectangular parking area included a barricade and gates. At some point in time, the gates were breached and additional large stone boulders were added to completely enclose the parking area. Later, part of the barricade was pushed back to create an alcove to allow two point turns for authorized motor vehicles such as snowploughs, school buses, garbage trucks, etc. Regrettably, the alcove was never adequately lined with additional large boulders to complete the barrier. ATVs can and do enter illegally through this breach, although not nearly as often as those that enter from the EOTA Trail.

In addition, a section of the non-operational Canadian Pacific railway bed and two bridges cross the Crowe River in the north end of the property. It was re-purposed to serve as a recreational vehicle motor trail. The Eastern Ontario Trail Alliance (EOTA) maintains this section of the Hastings Heritage Trail. With time, ATV traffic intensified and some riders were descending off the trail onto the riverbed. To deter such activity, EOTA installed 2'x'2x'4' concrete barriers and created a barricade between the two bridges and slightly beyond. In order to stage the said barricades prior to installation, an off loading area complete with an access ramp was created on the west side of the river. Unfortunately, after the installation of the barriers, the ramp itself was not barricaded. An effort to maintain trespass signs at the ramp has proved to be very difficult. There is a small concrete barrier below the off loading area. This barricade may have been installed when the privy was built, to prevent access to the riverbed. This barricade was also eventually breached. ATVs and pickup trucks, in spite of signs that prohibit unauthorized motor vehicles, continue to enter upon the riverbed via this small barrier bypass and some ATVs are causing progressive damage to riparian zones.

The number of ATVs and pickup trucks that continue to breach the barricades and enter illegally, causing some damage, has reached a critical point. Modifications and additions to the existing barricades are highly recommended, if not essential. This specification proposes a project and budgetary requirements of work necessary to accomplish this goal.

A needs analysis for this project was done in consultation with managers responsible for roads maintenance, school bussing, garbage pick-up, equipment operators, EOTA, CVCA, municipal officials, OPP, ATV riders, and naturalists or visitors that frequent the area. This specification represents the most responsible approach to a cost effective solution. It does not guarantee that ambitious interlopers will not find a novel way to breach the new barricades. Trespass signs remain an important and integral part of securing the area. In the future, if and when unlawful activity takes place, it is recommended to use the OPP upon request as in the past.



Overview of the Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area showing three access points (AP).

AP1 requires additional barrier boulders and **AP2** requires an entirely new barrier. Boulders can be freely obtained within the area. **AP3** requires the procurement of concrete or limestone barriers because no local boulders are available on the east side of the river. They must be hauled in from Morrison Road because the bridge structure cannot support heavy equipment. The barrier requirement for **AP3** is beyond the scope of this specification, but requires further consideration.



Materials

1. An ample supply of free large 500 lbs to 2,000 lbs boulders are scattered throughout the property. Most of the main parking lot is currently lined with this material except for the alcove breach. Many very large boulders are located within the reach of a 15-ton excavator along the two service roads. This material shall be used to construct the barricades at AP1 and AP2.
2. The proposed enlargement of the existing main parking lot will also require about 20 yards of gravel to bring the enlarged periphery up to grade. This material will have to be hauled in, spread, graded and compacted. The Municipality of Marmora & Lake could provide this material.

Equipment & Cost Estimate

1. A mid-sized (~fifteen ton) excavator equipped with blade and large hydraulic thumb is recommended. Budget \$1,000 per day for this equipment and operator.
2. One dump truck shall be required to haul gravel. The Municipality could provide this equipment.

Labour

1. Volunteer labour shall be required to rake and grade the gravel towards the end of the AP1 Main Parking Lot Project. Compacting can be done with the excavator.
2. In addition, some branches and fallen tree debris along the access roads shall require clearing by volunteers to keep the path clear for the excavator.
3. Volunteer labour shall be required to assist as flagmen and access control for both projects.
4. Marc Forget will demarcate the barrier centrelines with 2x2 pickets for the contractor.
5. Marc Forget will be on site for the entirety of the projects to act in an advisory capacity and to ensure that the work is done in compliance with the specification (and do odd jobs).
6. Marc is also available for contractor site visits prior to quoting for feasibility assessment.

Logistics

AP1 Main Parking Lot Project

1. The duration of the project at AP1 (main parking lot) is estimated at a maximum of five working days or less. ***Budget about \$5,000 for this project.***
2. During this time, heavy equipment will require unobstructed access to the parking area and the interior of the conservation area along the service roads only.
3. This means completely shutting down the parking lot and the conservation area for a week.
4. This also means that a closure notice sign at highway 7 and Tiffin road, Tiffin Road and Callaghan's Rapid Road is necessary.
5. Furthermore, road closure barricades will be required at the parking area.
6. It is recommended to time the AP1 project for mid-October, after Thanksgiving Weekend, but prior to the start of the hunting season. This ensures the impact of a closure will be minimal.

AP2 EOTA Trail Project

1. The duration of the project at AP2 (EOTA Trail) is estimated at a maximum of ten working days or less. ***Budget around \$10,000 for this project.***
2. Road barricades shall be required along the trail at the ramp to deter entry, and a notice that construction is underway and not to enter, also emphasizing the danger.
3. No other notice of closure is required because trespass is the status quo otherwise.
4. The project area can be safely secured from the general public during construction, thus not requiring any specific time to begin this project, except during the AP1 project.
5. The main parking area shall remain open along with access to most of the recreation area.

Main Visitor Parking

Entry to the property is via Callaghan's Rapids Road. At the end of the road is a parking lot. As shown on the previous page, the parking area is barricaded, but a breach in the north east portion serves as an alcove for two point turns for large authorized municipal and commercial vehicles. This alcove requires additional boulders to completely enclose it.

Furthermore, the existing parking lot dimensions do not allow a double row of vehicles to park. To create sufficient width for double row parking, the existing east and west barricade boulders shall be pushed about nine feet to create a wider parking area. These boulders lie above a small depression or swale that acts as a drainage ditch. Some material from this swale shall be removed and deposited beyond the expanded periphery and back filled with gravel as mentioned in the section on materials. An excavator equipped with a blade shall level out and compact the gravel. Final levelling, grading and filling in between boulders shall be done by volunteers (rake and shovel).

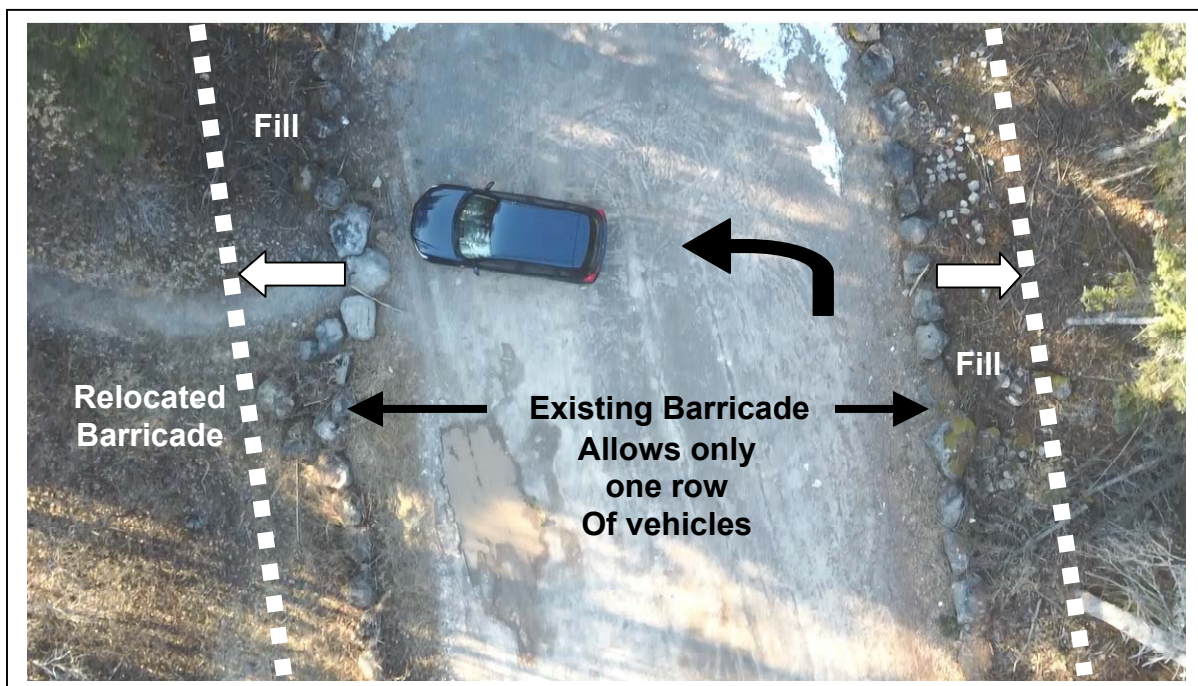


Figure 3: Proposed expansion of parking lot.

The alcove essentially created an "L" shape out of the original rectangular parking lot (see Figure 1). It requires additional boulders to seal up the perimeter barrier. Once complete, a sign in the alcove that prohibits parking at any time is required to permit exclusive use for authorized long vehicles that require a place to start a two-point turn. This type of turnaround is common in Marmora and Rawdon Townships where there is a Cul de Sac. These kind of signs prohibiting parking already exist, including a tow away notice at these types of dead ends.

EOTA Trail & ATV Parking

This area is very problematic because access via the ramp is outstanding and self-evident from the EOTA trail. Prohibition and trespass signs are constantly being torn down. The area is unsupervised unless the OPP have been asked to patrol the area. A workable compromise could be to provide the ATV rider with a place to park their vehicles and then walk several hundred feet down an existing path to the rapids. This would function like the main visitor parking lot. Perhaps the ATV community could help the CVCA monitor undesired activity simply by being present more often. The remoteness and minimum supervision of the area creates a window of opportunity for illegal activity such as camping, open pit fires during fire bans, garbage dumping, etc.

An attempt to prevent entry to the rock bed was made by constructing a concrete barrier along an existing footpath. This was eventually bypassed and there is good evidence that a backhoe or farm tractor with a bucket was used to create this bypass. It is wide enough to accommodate pickup trucks. If there is enough material and time, this bypass should be barricaded as well.

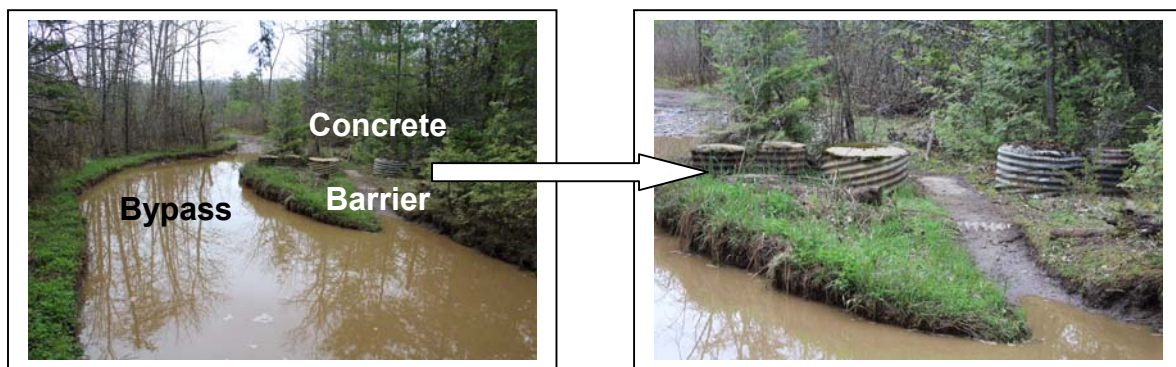
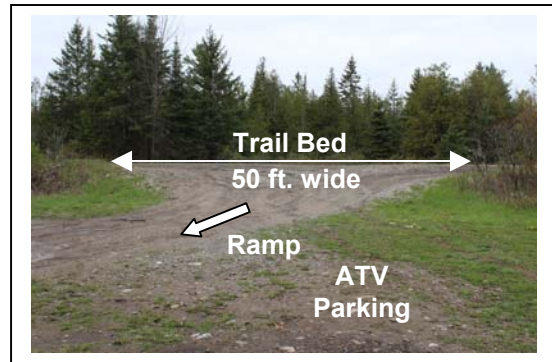
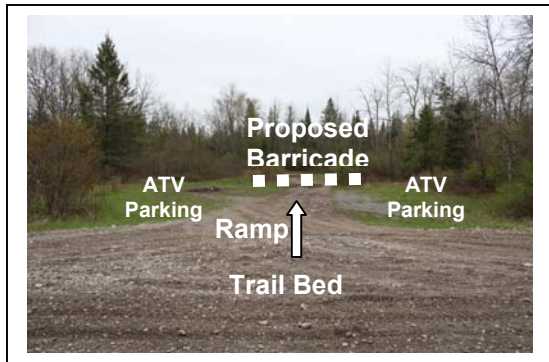


Figure 10: Satellite overview of the proposed ATV Parking Lot & New Barricade

As previously mentioned, there is a significantly wide and shallow ramp that was ostensibly used to allow construction vehicles to enter the area during remediation and enhancements of the two bridges and perhaps construction of the aforesaid concrete barrier.



The best location for a barricade is at the entry to the service road below the existing clearing. This clearing would make an excellent parking area for ATVs because it is flat, open and no additional work is required. Relevant signs would need to be posted at the ramp and at the new barricade. This new barricade could also be easily breached within minutes if heavy equipment like a farm tractor was brought in, as was the case (it is suspected), for the breach at the concrete barrier. This is a consequence of four factors:

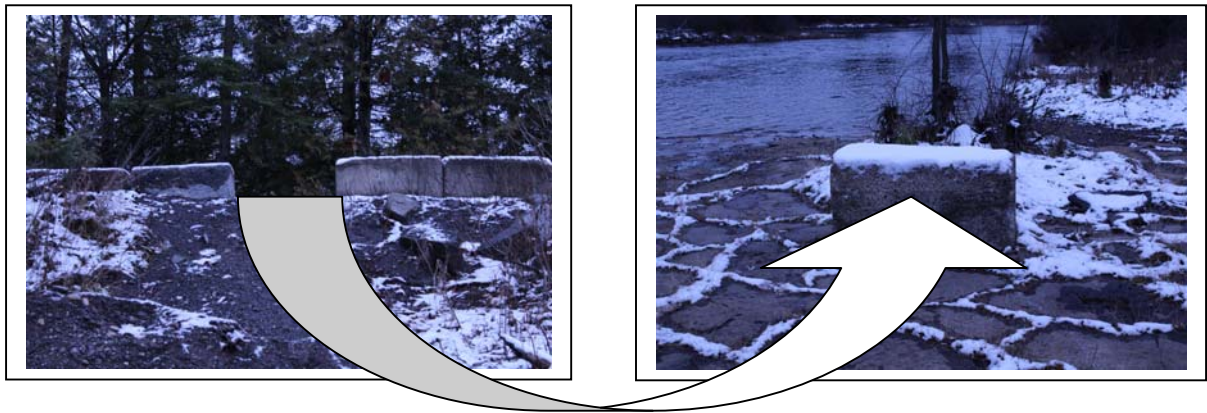
1. The EOTA trail, like the conservation area, is for the most part unsupervised,
2. The EOTA trail and ramp are designed to take heavy equipment,
3. The person or persons that carry on this activity want access to the riverbed because they firmly believe that they have a traditional right to do so.
4. The person(s) is probably a local resident.

Since the OPP can only provide on site monitoring for one or two days out of a year at most, the window of opportunity to carry out such an undertaking is huge. Therefore a means to thwart any attempt to move barricade boulders quickly with heavy equipment is essential.

Caveat

As mentioned above there are four inherent vulnerabilities at the EOTA trail. A tractor or backhoe can easily displace enough boulders in minutes to create a significant breach. The main access to this area is at Tiffin Road and then along the EOTA trail. The total time required for an operator to drive to, remove enough boulders to create a breach and return to Tiffin Road is less than one hour. This has already been done in two instances as shown below:

1. A one-ton concrete block (2'x2'x4') was dragged or lifted from the rail bed and moved down to the riverbed some time within the last year. The writer concludes that the only purpose this activity served was to remind the CVCA that this could be easily accomplished. It is most likely an "in your face" response to the OPP blitz last fall. This also re-enforces the notion that it is a local person that did this.
2. The by-pass at the concrete barrier has been there for many years. However, co-incidentally with the displacement of the concrete block in 1) above, the by-pass was widened with a blade equipped tractor or backhoe because it left behind a clean vertical cut through the side wall as shown in the photo below. This activity is indicative of their resolve.



The fact that interlopers have proven they have the resolve, time, equipment and knowhow to systematically breach just about any barricade the CVCA erects, a plan to plug the breaches on an ad hoc basis must be put in place (along with a contingency budget), otherwise the expenditure on the proposed project will be a waste of time and money. This battle can only be won through determination and attrition and may be intractable in the long run.

PS: The OPP was scheduled to patrol the area on Saturday, May 22, 2021. They did not show up. Marc Forget erected two signs that prohibited unauthorized motor vehicles. They were destroyed. The pictures below show ATV activity at Callaghan's at noon on Sunday May 23, 2021.

