

# Why are Trails Being Closed at Fanshawe Conservation Area?

Currently, there are a number of trails along the Fanshawe Lake Trail that were illegally made by the public. The UTRCA is closing these trails because:

- they are damaging natural habitats in sensitive areas,
- they are not maintained by staff and may be a liability from a health and safety stand point.

The UTRCA has taken a number of actions to stop people from using these unmanaged trails, including covering the trails with debris, installing "No Trespassing Signs," and installing page wire fencing. A video was also created in 2012 to educate the public about why these trails are unsuitable (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1a5vbeJgM6Q>).

Of specific concern, are the illegal trails in the mature upland forest spanning from Emergency Marker 4 to 10 (see map on back). This significant woodlot has old growth characteristics, with locally uncommon Carolinian species and a wide diversity of flora and fauna.

Due to the number of illegal, unmanaged trails in this small area, the native plants that once covered the forest floor have been displaced. As well, the next generation of tree saplings and native herbaceous species has been negatively affected.

Another concern is the introduction of non-native invasive species (i.e., Garlic Mustard and Buckthorn) that have become established. These species are brought in as seeds on bike tires or hikers' footwear. They can tolerate the hard, compacted soils along the trails and spread aggressively, out-competing native plants.

***Please help us conserve the special habitats within Fanshawe Conservation Area by staying on the official managed trails.***

## For More Information:

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UPPER THAMES RIVER  
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

## About the Fanshawe Lake Trail

The Fanshawe Lake Trail is a single track, multi-use trail roughly 20 km long. The trail is located on land owned by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA). The trail provides visitors with an opportunity to enjoy a variety of natural ecosystems including:

- Pine plantations
- Lowland forests
- Flood plains
- Sugar bush
- Hardwood forests
- Meadows
- Wetlands

## Why are Natural Areas important:

- Aesthetics
- Human health (forest bathing)
- Recreation
- Flora and fauna biodiversity
- Climate regulator
- Wildlife habitat



**Legend**

- Fanshawe Conservation Area Boundary
- Area targeted for trail closures
- Emergency Response Station (500 m)
- Permit Parking
- Restricted Access

- International Mountain Bicycling Association Difficulty Rating
  - Blue Square (Intermediate)
  - Black Diamond (Advanced)

