

# Conservation Parklands: Survey Results – Township of Lanark Highlands

April 2025



**This document summarizes survey results for parkland in the Township of Lanark Highlands that also lies within the jurisdiction of Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA.) Facilities outside our jurisdiction are not captured in this report.**

**The survey was carried-out as part of a study of existing facilities to support discussions on how to meet the demands of a growing population while protecting the natural resources we value.**

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## Conservation Parkland

Conservation Parklands are large sites (often >40 ha. / 100 acres) where the public can enjoy walking, hiking, and solitude in a natural setting that contributes to their quality of life and the sustainability of local habitats. Such parkland may also offer picnic areas, a boat launch, or places to pitch a tent.

At Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA), our goal is to provide:

- large natural spaces with walking/hiking trails of varying length and difficulty that allow for at least 1-hour's passive recreation.
- attractive, affordable and safe sites.
- parking, comfort stations, rest spots/shelters, and waste facilities.
- at least one wheelchair accessible trail and comfort station.
- excellent directional and interpretive signage that includes local cultural, Indigenous, and scientific information.
- And, retain at least 90% of a conservation area in a natural state.



## Background

In 1982, MVCA inventoried parkland sites within its jurisdiction to help plan for the future. Last year, MVCA updated the inventory, and conducted a public survey to enable analysis of the demand for conservation parklands in our jurisdiction. The focus



of the survey was on public hiking sites but also included linear trails, boat launches, and campsites.

The 2024 online survey was promoted using social media and signs posted at MVCA's conservation areas. In total, 198 surveys were received over a 52-day period. A summary of survey results can be found [here](#).

## 2024 Survey Design

The survey listed 34 sites within MVCA's jurisdiction and allowed respondents to add sites not listed. Survey questions asked about site usage, favourite features, site satisfaction and needs.

Summary results are provided for questions where at least 25 of the 198 respondents provided answers for the site (~1 in 8).

## Survey Results

The following sites in the Township of Lanark Highlands are included in this report as they met the minimum number of responses for analysis.

- Blueberry Mountain
- Ottawa Valley Rail Trail
- Purdon Conservation Area
- Tay Havelock Trail

## 1.0 Blueberry Mountain

67 of 210 respondents identified that they have gone walking/hiking at Blueberry Mountain within in the past five years.

**Q1.** How do you believe public use of the Blueberry Mountain has changed over the past five years (pre and post COVID-19)? (12 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Stayed the same	6	50%
Increased	4	33%
No Comment	2	17%

**Q2.** How would you rate your overall satisfaction with Blueberry Mountain? (12 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Very satisfied	6	50%
Satisfied	5	42%
No comment	1	8%

**Q3.** Has your satisfaction with Blueberry Mountain changed over the past five years (pre and post COVID-19)? (12 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Stayed the same	8	67%
No Comment	3	25%
Decreased	1	8%

### 1.1 Walking-Hiking

**Q4.** On average, how many times per year do you use Blueberry Mountain for walking/hiking? (12 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
No more than once annually	7	58%
2-6 times per year	5	42%

**Q5.** Identify the six (6) most important features that you value for walking/hiking at Blueberry Mountain. (12 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
1. Drive time from home < 60 minutes	8	67%
2. Quiet/seclusion/privacy	7	58%
3. One or more vistas/look-outs	7	58%
4. Unique landscape	5	42%
5. Dogs on leash permitted	5	42%
6. Easy parking access	4	33%
7. Other wildlife viewing opportunities	4	33%
8. Trails with challenging terrain	3	25%
9. Exclusivity (no other recreational activities permitted such as mountain bikes, skiing, ATVs)	2	17%
10. Outhouses/toilets	2	17%
11. Presence of water features	2	17%
12. Drive from home <30 minutes	2	17%
13. Sense of personal safety	1	8%
14. Birding opportunities	1	8%

**Q6.** Please share with us why your satisfaction has changed with Blueberry Mountain.

- *Crowded at holiday times, which I now avoid.*

## 2.0 Ottawa Valley Rail Trail

83 of 210 respondents identified that they have gone walking/hiking at the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail within in the past five years.

**Q7.** How do you believe public use of the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail has changed over the past five years (pre and post COVID-19)? (50 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Increased	27	54%
Stayed the same	17	34%
No Comment	5	10%
Decreased	1	2%

**Q8.** How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail? (50 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Satisfied	30	60%
Very satisfied	16	32%
Unsatisfied	3	6%
No Comment	1	2%

## 2.1 Walking-Hiking

**Q9.** On average, how many times per year do you use the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail for walking/hiking? (49 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Multiple times per week	15	31%
2-6 times per year	13	27%
2-3 times per month	6	12%
Monthly	6	12%
7-11 times per year	6	12%
Weekly	2	4%
No more than once annually	1	2%

**Q10.** Identify the six (6) most important features that you value for walking/hiking at the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail. (47 responses)

<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>RESPONSES</b>	<b>%</b>
1. Drive from home <30 minutes	35	74%
2. Dogs on leash permitted	19	40%
3. Variety of trail routes and distances	18	38%
4. Quiet/seclusion/privacy	15	32%
5. Presence of water features	13	28%
6. Easy parking access	12	26%
7. One or more vistas/look-outs	11	23%
8. Birding opportunities	9	19%
9. Unique landscape	8	17%
10. Other wildlife viewing opportunities	6	13%
11. Sense of personal safety	4	9%
12. Wheelchair accessible trails	3	6%
13. Drive time from home < 60 minutes	2	4%
14. Picnic opportunities	1	2%
15. Dogs off leash permitted	1	2%
16. Drive time from home <90 minutes	1	2%

## 2.2 Boating-Hiking

One respondent uses the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail more than 10 times per year during the open season for boating/watercraft activities. The respondent identified important features when using the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail for boating/watercraft activities including islands or other interesting landscapes, the waterbody is not over used, and the drive time being less than 30 minutes.

**Q11.** Please share with us why you are unsatisfied with the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail.

- *ATV wear on my trail is eroding the stone dust. They are in compatible with walking, particularly for persons with disabilities.*
- *Dust. ATVs have it tore up. Very few Police patrols ever seen. Reckless stunt driving and many without helmets.*
- *Lots of recreational vehicles absolutely hotdogging it and going way too fast, safety concerns due to this.*

## 3.0 Purdon Conservation Area

60 of 210 respondents identified that they have gone walking/hiking at the Purdon Conservation Area within in the past five years.

**Q12.** How do you believe public use of Purdon CA has changed over the past five years (pre and post COVID-19)? (6 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
No Comment	3	50%
Increased	2	33%
Stayed the same	1	17%

**Q13.** How would you rate your overall satisfaction with Purdon CA? (6 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Very Satisfied	6	100%



**Q14.** Has your satisfaction with Purdon CA changed over the past five years (pre and post COVID-19)? (6 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
No Comment	3	50%
Stayed the same	3	50%

### 3.1 Walking-Hiking

**Q15.** On average, how many times per year do you use Purdon CA for walking/hiking? (6 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
No more than once annually	5	83%
2-6 times per year	1	17%

**Q16.** Identify the six (6) most important features that you value for walking/hiking at the Purdon CA. (6 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
1. Quiet/seclusion/privacy	6	100%
2. Drive from home <30 minutes	5	83%
3. One or more vistas/look-outs	4	67%
4. Exclusivity (no other recreational activities permitted such as mountain bikes, skiing, ATVs)	3	50%
5. Outhouses/toilets	3	50%
6. Easy parking access	2	33%
7. Presence of water features	2	33%
8. Picnic opportunities	1	17%
9. Unique landscape	1	17%
10. Birding opportunities	1	17%
11. Wheelchair accessible trails	1	17%
12. Dogs on leash permitted	1	17%
13. Drive time from home < 60 minutes	1	17%

#### 4.0 Tay Havelock Trail

20 of 210 respondents identified that they have gone walking/hiking at the Tay Havelock Trail within in the past five years.

**Q17.** How do you believe public use of the Tay Havelock Trail has changed over the past five years? (2 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
No Comment	1	50%
Increased	1	50%

**Q18.** How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the Tay Havelock Trail? (3 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Very satisfied	2	67%
Satisfied	1	33%

**Q19.** Has your satisfaction with the Tay Havelock Trail changed over the past five years (pre and post COVID-19)? (3 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Improved	2	67%
Stayed the same	1	33%

#### 4.1 Walking-Hiking

**Q20.** On average, how many times per year do you use the Tay Havelock Trail for walking/hiking? (3 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
2-6 times per year	2	67%
Monthly	1	33%

**Q21.** Identify the six (6) most important features that you value for walking/hiking at the Tay Havelock Trail. (3 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
1. Easy parking access	3	100%
2. Drive from home <30 minutes	3	100%
3. Quiet/seclusion/privacy	2	67%
4. Other wildlife viewing opportunities	1	33%
5. Presence of water features	1	33%
6. One or more vistas/look-outs	1	33%
7. Variety of trail routes and distances	1	33%
8. Dogs off leash permitted	1	33%
9. Dogs on leash permitted	1	33%

**Q22.** Please share with us why your satisfaction has changed with the Tay Havelock Trail.

- *Many improvements to the bed of the trail - multi use*

## 5.0 General Site Survey Results

The following is a selection of results, the complete results can be found [here](#).

### 5.1 Walking-Hiking

Q23. Where have you gone walking/hiking within the past 5 years? (210 responses)

RECREATION SITES	RESPONSES	%
1. Mill of Kintail CA, Mississippi Mills	133	63%
2. Riverwalk Trail, Carleton Place	92	44%
3. Ottawa Valley Rail Trail, Lanark/Renfrew	83	40%
4. Riverside Trail, Almonte	79	38%
5. Trans Canada Trail, Ottawa	76	36%
6. Blueberry Mountain, Lanark Highlands	67	32%
7. Morris Island CA, Ottawa	66	31%
8. Purdon CA, Lanark Highlands	60	29%
9. Other Crown land	59	28%
10. Urban Paths and Parks	56	27%
11. Fitzroy Harbour Provincial Park	53	25%
12. K&P Trail	52	25%
13. High Lonesome Nature Reserve, Mississippi Mills	51	24%
14. NCC Greenbelt	43	20%
15. Silver Lake Provincial Park	33	16%



Q24. Identify up to three (3) sites that you visited most frequently for walking/hiking over the past 5 years. (193 responses)

RECREATION SITES	RESPONSES	%
1. Mill of Kintail CA, Mississippi Mills	83	43%
2. Ottawa Valley Rail Trail, Lanark/Renfrew	51	26%
3. Riverwalk Trail, Carleton Place	48	25%
4. Riverside Trail, Almonte	42	22%
5. Morris Island CA, Ottawa	38	20%
6. Other Crown land	32	17%
7. Urban Paths and Parks	23	12%
8. Trans Canada Trail, Ottawa	17	9%
9. K&P Trail	16	8%
10. High Lonesome Nature Reserve, Mississippi Mills	14	7%
11. Fitzroy Harbour Provincial Park	11	6%
12. NCC Greenbelt	12	6%
13. Blueberry Mountain, Lanark Highlands	12	6%
14. Palmerston-Canonto CA, North Frontenac	10	5%
15. Carp Hills, West Carleton	7	4%

Q25. Do you think more facilities are needed in the watershed to support walking/hiking activities? (204 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Yes	108	53%
No	71	35%
No Comment	25	12%

## 5.2 Boating-Watercraft

Q26. Where have you gone boating or participated in other watercraft activities within the past 5 years? (172 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Other Location (Not on list)	80	47%
Municipal Boat Launch	55	32%
Morris Island CA, Ottawa	32	19%
Other Crown land	27	16%
Mississippi Lake National Wildlife Area/Bird Sanctuary	22	13%
Riverwalk Trail, Carleton Place	19	11%
Palmerston-Canonto CA, North Frontenac	18	10%
Sharbot Lake Provincial Park	15	9%
Fitzroy Harbour Provincial Park	16	9%
Provincial Boat Launch	12	7%
Silver Lake Provincial Park	10	6%
Pinhey's Point, West Carleton	8	5%
Riverside Trail, Almonte	8	5%
K&P Trail	9	5%
Ottawa Valley Rail Trail, Lanark/Renfrew	5	3%
Tay Havelock Trail, Lanark/Frontenac	3	2%
Hydro Corridors	1	1%
NCC Greenbelt	2	1%
Shiela McKee Park, West Carleton	1	1%

Q27. Identify up to three (3) sites that you visited most frequently for boating or other watercraft activities over the past five (5) years. (144 responses)

<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>RESPONSES</b>	<b>%</b>
1. Other Location (Not on list)	53	37%
2. Municipal Boat Launch	37	26%
3. Morris Island CA, Ottawa	20	14%
4. Other Crown land	18	13%
5. Riverwalk Trail, Carleton Place	17	12%
6. Mississippi Lake National Wildlife Area/Bird Sanctuary	16	11%
7. Palmerston/Canonto CA, North Frontenac	15	10%
8. Fitzroy Harbour Provincial Park	9	6%
9. Riverside Trail, Almonte	8	6%
10. Provincial Boat Launch	7	5%
11. Silver Lake Provincial Park	6	4%
12. Sharbot Lake Provincial Park	5	3%
13. Pinhey's Point, West Carleton	4	3%
14. K&P Trail	4	3%
15. Hydro Corridors	3	2%

Q28. Please list up to three (3) other locations that you visited for boating or other watercraft activities.

LOCATION	MENTIONS
1. Mississippi River	15
2. Ottawa River	6
3. Clayton Lake	5
4. Mississippi Lake	5
5. Clyde River	4
6. Tay River	3
7. Britannia Beach	2
8. Lake Clear	2
9. Pakenham	2
10. Blakeney	2
11. St. Lawrence River	2
12. Calabogie Lake	1
13. Centennial Park Carleton Place	1
14. Appleton	1
15. Addington Highlands Denbigh	1

Q29. Do you think more facilities are needed in the watershed to support boating and other watercraft activities? (184 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Yes	81	44%
No	75	41%
No Comment	28	15%

### 5.3 Tent Camping

Q30. Where have you gone tent camping within the past five years? (67 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
1. Other Camping Location (Not Listed)	44	66%
2. Other Crown Land	22	33%
3. Sharbot Lake Provincial Park	14	21%
4. Silver Lake Provincial Park	13	19%
5. Fitzroy Harbour Provincial Park	12	18%
6. Hydro Corridors	1	1%

Q31. Identify up to three (3) sites that you visited most frequently for tent camping over the past five (5) years. (56 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
1. Other Camping Location (Not Listed)	34	61%
2. Other Crown Land	15	27%
3. Fitzroy Harbour Provincial Park	9	16%
4. Sharbot Lake Provincial Park	8	14%
5. Silver Lake Provincial Park	8	14%
6. Hydro Corridors	1	2%

Q32. Do you think more facilities are needed in the watershed to support tent camping? (74 responses)

ANSWERS	RESPONSES	%
Yes	42	57%
No	21	28%
No Comment	11	15%