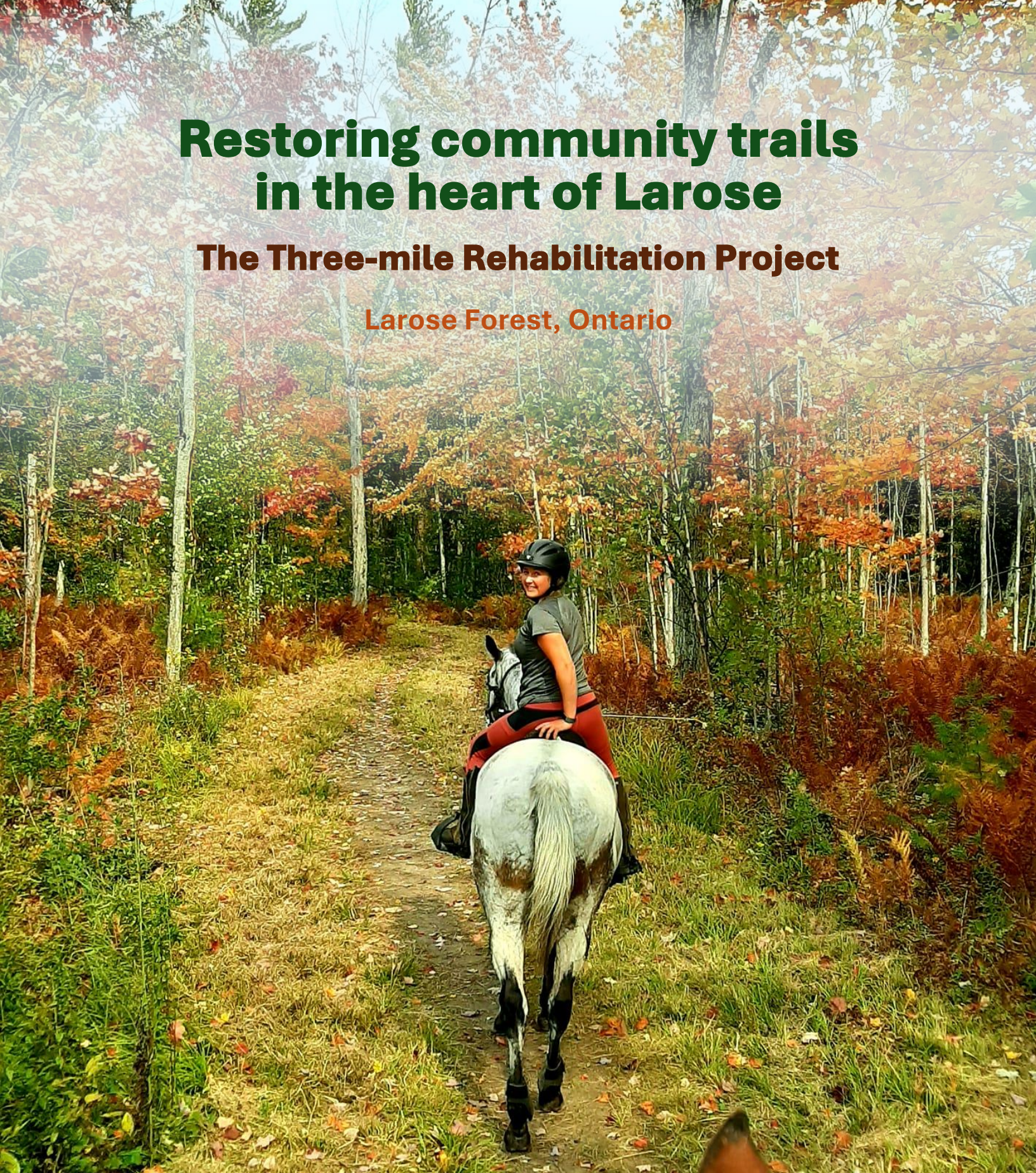


Restoring community trails in the heart of Larose

The Three-mile Rehabilitation Project

Larose Forest, Ontario



Ottawa Area Trail Riding Equestrian Community (OATREC)
Communauté de randonnée équestre de la région d'Ottawa (CRÉRO)
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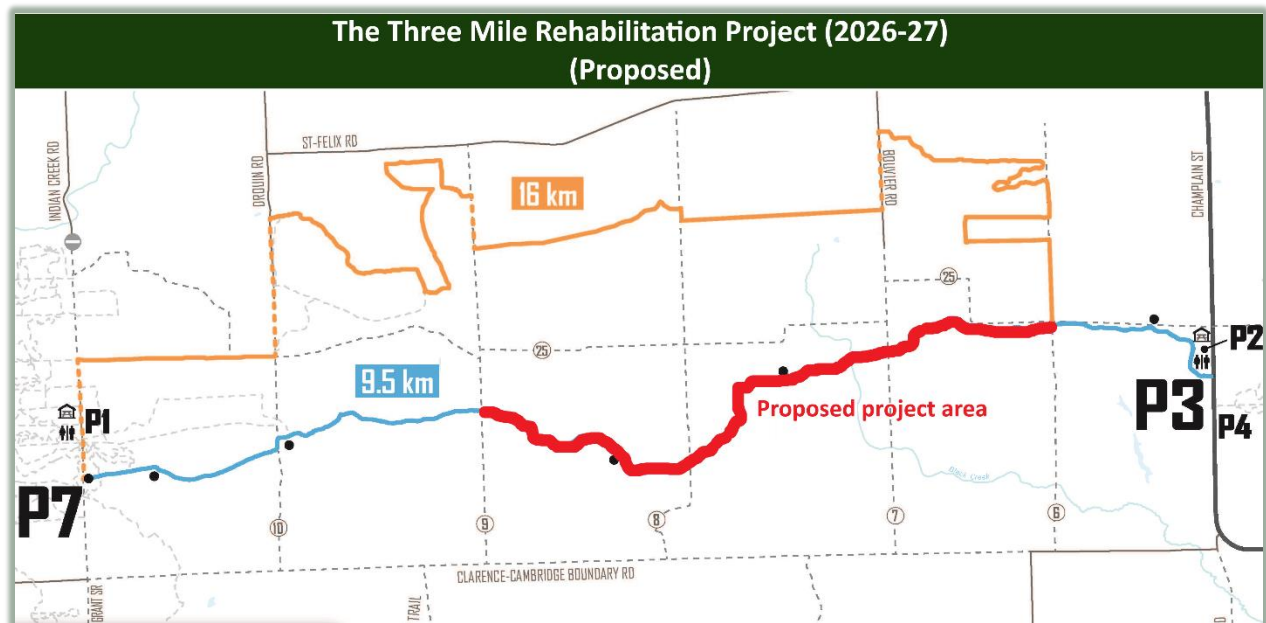
The Three-mile Rehabilitation Project

The Larose Forest equestrian trail network consists of two trails linking the eastern (Bourget) and western (Limoges) parts of the forest. The trails are owned and managed by the United Counties of Prescott Russell, while the Ottawa Area Trail Riding Equestrian Community (OATREC) officially represents equestrian users.

A three-mile section in the middle of the blue equestrian trail is currently in poor condition and continues to deteriorate each season. OATREC anticipates that within a few years, travelling from one side of the forest to the other via the blue trail will no longer be consistently safe. To address this, **OATREC is fundraising \$20,000** for the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project to repair the trail, with the work to be completed by the United Counties of Prescott Russell and take place between 2026 and 2027.

OATREC has already allocated \$3,000 towards the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project and is **seeking donations and sponsorships** to make up the rest of the needed funds.

For more information, please email info@oatrec-crero.ca.



Frequently asked questions

Who and what is OATREC?

The Ottawa Area Trail Riding Equestrian Community (OATREC) is a **registered not-for-profit organization run by a group of passionate volunteers**. OATREC has been dedicated to maintaining and developing equestrian trails in the Larose Forest for the past 20 years.

We are the **official representative for equestrians** in Larose Forest, with a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the United Counties of Prescott-Russell, who own and manage the forest.

For more information, please visit our website: <https://www.oatrec-crero.ca/>



What does OATREC do?

To empower our equestrian community, OATREC:

- **Encourages equestrian trail use**, including for competitions and special events (e.g., Ontario Competitive Trail Riding Association (OCTRA) endurance riding competitions). *
- **Promotes safe trail use by coordinating and providing insurance** for members and day pass holders to comply with UCPR requirements.
- **Spearheads ongoing maintenance and future development** of equestrian trails by actively collaborating with the United Counties of Prescott-Russell (UCPR).
- **Manages funds** responsibly, effectively and transparently.

* Special events in Larose Forest are often run under the OATREC insurance, as most other organizations do not carry the level of insurance required by the UCPR to use forest trails.

How is OATREC funded?

As a volunteer-run organization, OATREC's initiatives are funded entirely through annual memberships and day passes.



Why is the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project so important?

The blue equestrian trails have become increasingly muddy, rooty, and difficult, resulting in a steep decline in annual memberships, daily trail passes, and special events. With ongoing costs for mandatory insurance and banking, OATREC will soon be operating at a loss.

Given that the United Counties of Prescott-Russell will **only support equestrian use of Larose if there is an official organization** representing it, both the viability of OATREC as an organization and the continued presence of equestrians in Larose Forest are in jeopardy.

Why is the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project so urgent?

OATREC anticipates that within a few years, it will no longer be consistently safe to get from one side of the forest to the other using the blue equestrian trail. This also means the loss of a contiguous 9.5 km (almost 6 mile) trail segment in the Larose Forest.

The longer we wait to act, the more expensive the project will become as trails continue to degrade.



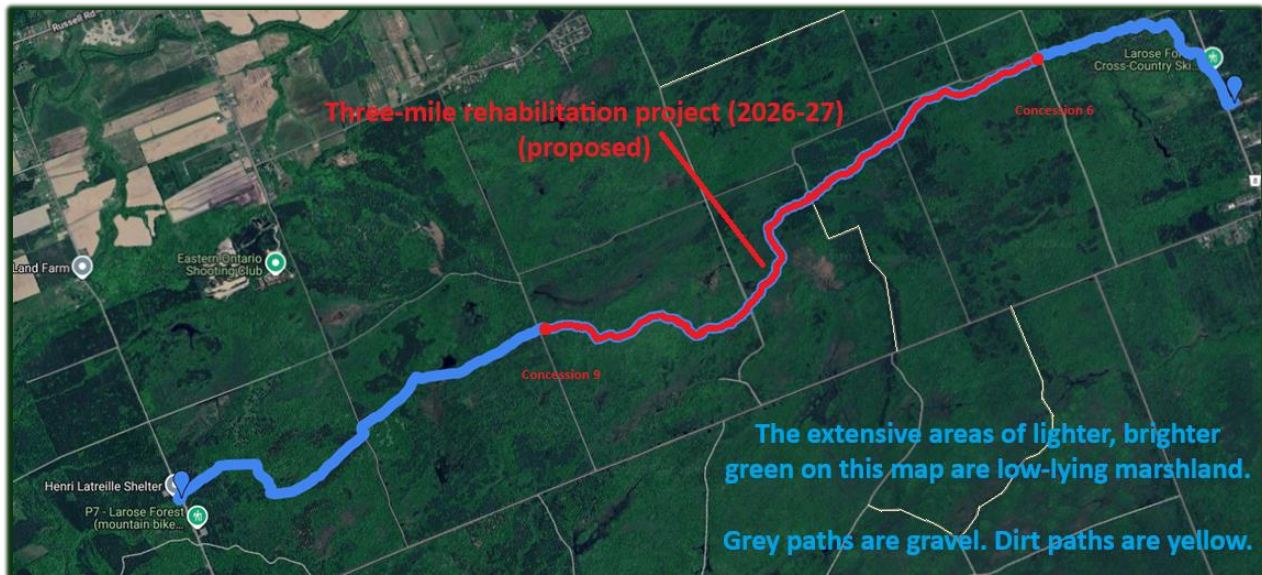
Why is the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project area a problem?

The Larose Forest is in a very marshy, low-lying area of Eastern Ontario with several waterways draining into, or through, the Three Mile Rehabilitation Project area (see topographic map, below). Trails naturally deteriorate over time; however, over the last decade, increased rainfall and extreme weather events have accelerated and worsened these effects, meaning that several segments of the blue trail are consistently wet or flooded, very susceptible to damage from hooves, and unable to rebound from wear and tear.



Can we detour around this area?

The Larose Forest is comprised predominantly of low-lying marshland (see satellite map, below) particularly in the proposed Three-mile Rehabilitation Project area. Other than gravel concessions and roads to the north and south, shown as grey on the map, the blue equestrian trail is the only passage through these marsh areas. Repairing the existing blue equestrian trail would be significantly cheaper than creating a new raised path through these marsh areas.



Where did the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project's \$20,000 cost come from?

The United Counties of Prescott-Russell has provided the \$20,000 figure as what they need to complete the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project. Funding could be provided as it becomes available (i.e., work split over several seasons). The \$20,000 covers heavy machinery, staff time, and materials (e.g., culverts). The vast majority of the sum is for time and machinery, as most material used on the trail is sourced from further along or beside the trail, where available.

What is OATREC contributing towards the project?

OATREC is contributing \$3,000 towards the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project, representing almost the entirety of our trail fund.



Why does OATREC have to provide funding, and can other user groups assist?

The United Counties of Prescott-Russell requires that all user groups in the Larose Forest (e.g., ATV, snowmobile, dirt bikes, mush, bikes) contribute funds and manpower to maintain their trails to a safe standard.

The blue equestrian trail is a dual-use equestrian and ski trail, and the Counties maintain ski trails for the community free of charge. The blue equestrian trail in its current condition is acceptable for winter use and the Counties do not need to improve the trail for their purposes. Therefore, as the official equestrian organization for Larose Forest, OATREC is the only user group who needs the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project, and the burden of fundraising falls on us.

Could someone else do the work more cheaply?

The United Counties of Prescott-Russell has agreed that an external contractor could be used to complete the work. This would be a formal agreement with the Counties, with several stringent stipulations including extensive commercial insurance, supervision, and quality control. OATREC is actively pursuing the option of a lower-cost alternative to using the Counties for the project.



How do other equestrian trail networks deal with similar situations?

OATREC has spoken with representatives and users of several other key forest equestrian networks in Ontario and Quebec, and Larose Forest is unique in several ways. Other forest equestrian networks are located on higher ground, where damage from hooves and extreme weather events is significantly minimized. Maintenance is often subsidized by local authorities or able to be done by hand by volunteers, and collaboration with other user groups is key.

Unfortunately, these are not applicable to the Three-mile Rehabilitation Project.

How will OATREC raise the money?

OATREC will be raising money through a variety of methods, including (but not limited to):

- Soliciting aid (resources and volunteers) from equestrian groups and organizations who use the forest
- Canvassing local businesses and equestrian businesses for corporate sponsorship
- Hosting a fundraising ride in 2026
- Providing links on our website for direct donations

More details on fundraising will be on our website and Facebook page when available.



How will OATREC recognize donors and sponsors?

OATREC will be offering several tiers of recognition, and will use several mechanisms to show our gratitude, including (but not limited to):

- Naming sponsors on our website
- Adding sponsor names to trailhead maps
- Adding signage along the trail identifying sponsors

More details on sponsorship recognition will be on our website and Facebook page when available.

How will donors and stakeholders track the project's progress?

OATREC will be updating its website and Facebook page throughout the project's lifecycle to provide progress reports and engage with the equestrian community.





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