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For Immediate Release

Geodiversity Education Foundation Releases Hilton Falls GeoHike, Milton Area

October 29, 2026, Toronto, Ontario: Geodiversity Education Foundation and the School of **Earth, Environment & Society at McMaster University** are pleased to announce the release of the **Hilton Falls GeoHike,** just west of Milton, along the Hilton Falls Trail (see Figure 1). This virtual walking tour follows 5 stops in Hilton Falls and highlights local geology and the geological processes that led to the formations you encounter on the tour. All of our GeoHikes can be viewed on our GeoHikes page.



Figure 1. Map showing the location of the Hilton Falls GeoHike (yellow star).

Located less than an hour away from Toronto in Southwestern Ontario, the Hilton Falls GeoHike is an ideal location to learn more about the impressive ways that water can shape the geology of an area. On this GeoHike, you will encounter a vernal pool at Stop #2, which is an ephemeral body of water that serves as a key resource for many endangered species in Ontario. At Stop #4, you will visit the titular Hilton Falls (see Figure 2), a curtain waterfall illustrating the process of undercutting. Finally, at the end of the GeoHike, you will have a chance to see one of most impressive glacial potholes in this part of Ontario (see Figure 3).

The intersection between water and geology is called fluvial geology – an area of geoscience that often concentrates on rivers and streams. This GeoHike, however, focuses on other less well-known aspects of

fluvial geology. In particular, you will understand how groundwater and glacial runoff can profoundly shape the landscape. Finally, you will get a chance to explore the ruins of a sawmill first constructed in the 1830s, showing the role water and water resources play in human development.

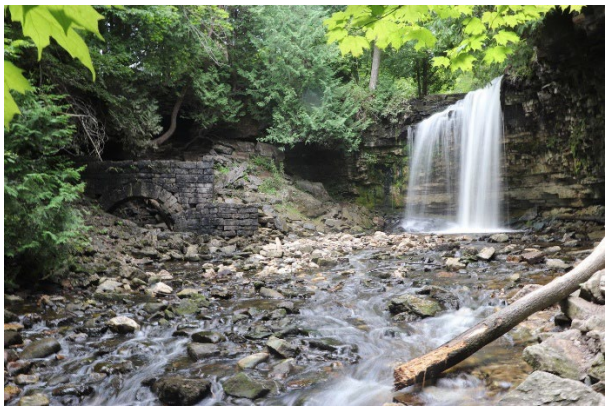


Figure 2. Hilton Falls waterfall at stop #4 on the Hilton Falls GeoHike.



Figure 3. A glacial pothole at stop #5 on the Hilton Falls GeoHike.

The Hilton Falls GeoHike was developed by the Geodiversity Education Foundation team led by Director Dr. Deana Schwarz, P.Geo., and the School of Environmental and Earth Sciences at McMaster University, led by Dr. Carolyn Eyles, Professor Emerita and Dr. Daniel Dick. It is part of a growing series of geoscience-based hiking tours across Ontario that aims to enhance public knowledge of geoscience using a hands-on and virtually accessible approach. We plan to release more GeoHikes in 2027 and subsequent years, throughout Ontario.

GeoHikes are 1-3-hour non-intensive hiking tours on maintained trails in Ontario that highlight local geology and describe the geological and environmental significance of features along the hike. GeoHikes can be used as guides while walking the trail in person, or as a virtual alternative at home or in the classroom. Visiting sites in person is a great way to learn, but virtual tours are also an exciting way to expand one's knowledge when in-person access is not possible. Through the use of ESRI's innovative ArcGIS-StoryMap™ application and the integrated features, GeoHikes provide the user with an immersive experience. GeoHikes typically include:

- 360-degree photos and/or drone videos to provide a detailed overview of each site.
- LiDAR-based virtual 3D models that show locations of key features such as fossils, important structures and other geological features at the buildings or rock outcrops.
- Slide bars to show multiple images or overlays of important features or geologic information.
- Descriptions of geological features.
- Audio descriptions of written content.

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About the Geodiversity Education Foundation

The Geodiversity Education Foundation is a registered charitable organization under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, registration number 84604 5052 RR0001. The purpose of the charity is to advance the education of the public in the area of geoscience – www.geodiversity.ca, developed by the Foundation, is an innovative one-stop spot for the public to gather information about the earth beneath their feet. This website provides interesting information on all facets of geoscience. A particularly exciting feature of Geodiversity.ca is the highlighting of virtual field trips in different areas in Ontario. This enables viewers to experience and learn about the geology of an area in person or while traversing it digitally in ESRI ArcGIS Online™ and StoryMaps™.

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