CLARKE TRACT LOOP
by David Tuley

This forest tract, combined with Dainty Tract across the street, should have enough capacity to provide few interactions of any kind. But on this day, with only seven cars parked, all the walkers had leash-free dogs. Many of the dogs charged me and other hikers, and the German Sheppard was downright mean on approach.
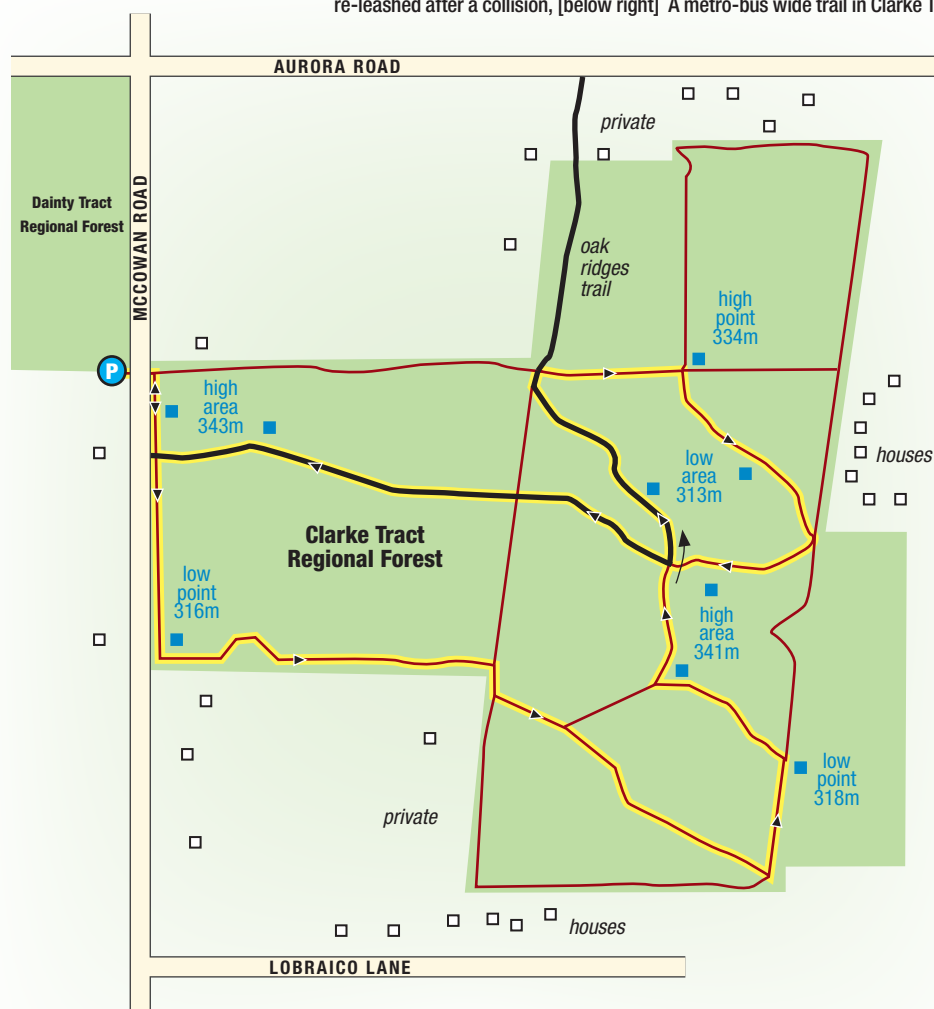
I have friends from countries that would seize up if the tiniest dog took a run at them. But, on this day all the dogs were big. Happy dogs or not, it is not cool. This behavior could result in forest closures for all people and pets.

The Clarke Tract Forest is a good forest. There are some impressively large trees and little background noise. I chose a route to avoid close contact with neighbouring houses, and was successful. However, the loops are tight, and in this case - I ran across our unleashed friends multiple times within the span of an hour.

The trails in Clarke Tract are all metro-bus width. If it weren't for many little blind hillocks and turns, there would be little left to the imagination. The ice pack on the trail was thicker than in other forest tracts, which is an indication of high traffic volumes.

This forest has the advantage of being absolutely family-friendly. It is beginner level walking with gentle hills and room for a large group to walk together. I haven't seen it in summer, but a 3-wheel drive stroller would probably do just fine. Horses and bicyclists also enjoy the trails in Clarke Tract.

My highlight on this trip was meeting a very friendly couple from Newmarket. Their enthusiasm for the forest carried the day. Although I didn't enjoy this forest tract much, 76 reviewers have given it 4 out of 5 stars, so maybe I'm all wet. [I]

AURORA ROAD

Dainty Tract Regional Forest

MCCOWAN ROAD

private

oak ridges trail

high point 334m

high area 343m

low area 313m

houses

Clarke Tract Regional Forest

low point 316m

high area 341m

low point 318m

private

low point 318m

houses

LOBRAICO LANE

Trail: Clarke Tract Loops
Time: 1.0 Hours
Distance: 4.2 km
Difficulty: Easy
Starting Elevation: 321m
Elevation Gain: 105m
Forest: Mixed
Highlight: Kind Strangers
Traffic: Moderate