

From: Carolynne Jewett <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, June 11, 2023 5:56:32 PM
To: council <council@thebluemountains.ca>
Subject: Gravel Road race

Dear Councilors,

I am writing to complain about the irksome and unsafe bicycle races which have taken place on sideroad 12 this past Sunday June 11th. These races impact us negatively both financially and personally. It also causes a traffic hazard during our busy farming season. We are currently in the hay season, making high moisture hay. This is a time sensitive feed to make, so we simply cannot afford to let it sit in the field while cyclists commandeer the roadways for their recreation. The 12th sideroad, as a gravel backroad, was obviously never designed for this type of traffic. Gravel is a naturally less stable surface than asphalt, making stopping times longer. There are no shoulders on these roads, meaning there is little room to maneuver safely. The persons who are in these races are more interested in how fast they can go, than on road safety. So, in allowing and promoting these races, you have mixed farm equipment, cars and rude cyclists onto narrow back roads. This is clearly unwise.

Furthermore, the race organizers placed three portable washrooms in the ditch. This ditch leads directly into a stream. That stream supports fish. I am frankly disgusted that anyone would think that was a good place to put a plastic pot of human waste, let alone three of them. There was a forecast for 26mm of rain, which, at the time of writing we have luckily not received, but had that amount fallen, we would seriously be jeopardizing the local environment, and a call to the Ministry of Environment would be necessary. Rather obviously, there is not sufficient room on a narrow back road to accommodate the infrastructure for these types of events.

My family members needed to use our roads to go to Collingwood. They were stopped no less than 6 times (3 times coming, 3 going). There were loud speakers used during the race, clearly audible half a concession away. We could not walk the dog down the road for fear of interference by racers and organizers. My sister planned to visit, but felt she could not. There are cars parked on both sides of the roadway on the 12th sideroad and intersection of the 10th line, with barriers across the road. This is very disrespectful of the local residents who should be able to access and use the road as they normally do. It causes an unnecessary, tedious aggravation.

Having allowed this race on our backroads means there will be downstream consequences, as we are now "on the map" for cyclists, who might otherwise choose safer roadways (roads with shoulders and bike lanes). We have already seen a significant number of vehicles parked randomly along the road (on both 12th sideroad and 10th line). These are obstacles which can be difficult to navigate large farm equipment around.

Additionally, another race will be taking place in our area again next week, which will impact our farm business again. Two back to back weekends of bike races, in close proximity, disregards the needs of the residents who pay taxes.

Thank you, in advance, for taking the time to address my concerns.

Sincerely,

Carolynne Jewett