



# Towards a National Trails Policy

A Framework Shaping  
Document. April 2018.



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with  
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and  
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2017 Committee

## **INTRODUCTION**

A strong national trail strategy will positively impact all Canadians - whether a trail builder, advocate, user land manager, or a community looking for healthier happier residents. Recreational Trails, and the activities that people engage in on trails, form the foundation of vibrant communities that bring people together in a most Canadian way.

In 2010 the Canadian trail community saw significant national initiatives take place that began to shape a much-needed national conversation among trail user groups and organizations. A National Trail Leadership Roundtable was hosted by the Trans Canada Trail and Parks Canada, and the National Trails Coalition completed a study to explore the existing trails in Canada.

Additionally, in 2010, the Canadian Trails Federation, a lead contributor in both the National Round Table, and the National Trails Coalition; completed a revitalizing strategic plan process. This process saw the organization define new priorities and objectives such that it was to be the key influencer of national trails policy and processes.

In combination, these initiatives sparked thoughtful discussions and brought to light many of the pressing issues faced by the trail sector. It is now time to take this conversation to the next level- engaging a broader range of stakeholders to ensure that all voices are heard.

This led to the sector calling for a national trails event to bring sector leadership together, this event was Trailhead Canada 2017. A national trails event, through which over 200 delegates endorsed the creation of a National Policy Framework.

Through the National Trails Policy Framework discussion; Trailhead Canada began the process of continued engagement of delegates and their respective organizations to reflect on the past 7 years to: 1) identify areas of success, and 2) identify areas that require improvement and further collaboration at the national level.

This report contains the outcomes of the Trailhead Canada 2017, and a call to action for coordinated federal support, both financially and through policy, of Canada's recreational trail sector through organized government trail consultation and a sector endorsed recreational trails planning processes.

## **BACKGROUND**

Canada is a country of trails, from paddling Canadian Heritage Rivers to cycling, horseback and ATV'ing the abandoned railway corridors that united a country in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, to hiking the ancient footpaths of indigenous Canadians and snowmobiling across the tundra of the north, our country was made for exploring. According to the Canadian Trails Study commissioned by the National Trails Coalition in 2010, there are approximately 360,521 km of trails with 278,576 identified as managed, in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1 – A briefing note on the quantity and type of recreational trails in Canada, from the National Trails Study 2010, published by The National Trails Coalition.

From a sector leadership and trail management viewpoint, these 286,000 managed trails are managed by degree through a largely unsynchronized portfolio type of response. Recreational trail management models include, federal and provincial, local, some local/regional, others nationally, and yet others regionally/provincially/nationally. Others have non-governmental organizations, user groups, economic development, tourism, provincial trail or provincial use federation, local club, land management group or health unit involved.

With no comprehensive trail characteristic, use, or location database at the national level, what we do know, in the absence of hard data, is that there is a complex matrix of inputs and outputs going on, on the land involving outdoor recreation activity through trails.

In Canada, 100,000's of individuals and groups contribute to a richness of community involvement that provides trail experiences like no other sector in Canada. Even though the Trailhead Canada conference affirmed that there is currently no national coordinating body in Canada for trails; delegates affirmed (203 to 2) that the implementation of one will significantly reduce the fractured nature of sector stakeholders.

There are 4 lead national trail organizations, singularly or together, shaping the progress of Canadian Trails. The National Trails Coalition is made up of 3, the Canadian Trails Federation (CTF), Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) and the Canadian Off Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV). Since (2008) they have come together to provide \$86 million of funding to develop 22,000 km of trail.

The 4<sup>th</sup>, the Trans Canada Trail, has provided a significant impact in the development of The Great Trail; a 24,000 km greenway trail (this does include roadways, a small number of mixed use trails and water trails) that spans coast to coast to coast and was fully connected in 2017.

Along with these key organizations, there is a wide variety of major trail user groups including each of the provincial trail associations that make up the Canadian Trails Federation, such as Loisir de Quebec, Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, the All-Terrain Quad Council of Canada and the Ontario Trails Council.

Other partners include the International Mountain Bicycling Association, Canadian Recreational Horse and Rider Association, All-Quad Council of Canada, Cross Country Canada, Canada Bikes, Paddle Canada, Hike Canada En Marche, etc., our estimate would be about 22 activity organizations operating at the national level.

Furthermore, there are a significant number of land management organizations also involved, having major or minor funding influence, such as Infrastructure Canada, Parks Canada, as well as individual landowner and land protection agencies, such as Nature Conservancy of Canada, that impact recreational trails.

Other than Trailhead Canada 2017, there have been few attempts to organize national stakeholders. Since 2004 there are regular meetings of the Canadian Trails Federation, the National Trails Coalition since 2009; and one unique meeting of national impact occurred in Banff.

In 2010 Trans Canada Trail and Parks Canada partnered to host the National Trail Leadership Roundtable in Banff, Alberta. The event brought together 50 trail leaders from across the country and the sector to discuss a multitude of challenges facing the sector.

Through the 2 day event, the delegates spent time discussing their values (emerging values included: respect, accessibility, cooperation and partnership, collaboration, passion, community, profile/stature, sustainability, safety and education), discussed issues and defining some proposed solutions (issues included: user conflict and user experience of the trails, fragmentation of the trails sector, funding, marketing and promotion, trail building and maintenance, government involvement, risk management, education and engagement, land use and management), they broke into groups and spent time coming up with a “vision” for trails in Canada and finally they agreed on the following principles:

#### Collaboration:

- We agree to collaborate
- There is no existing ideal mechanism or organization through which the trails community can collaborate
- We need a mechanism/forum
- We need a representative Working Group to investigate the options for finding a mechanism for collaboration

#### Profile of Trails:

- We agree that there is a problem that trails are taken for granted by government and the public
- We need to raise the profile and public awareness of trails
- We agree that we need to reach out to the broader trails community

#### Funding and Resources:

- We need sustainable funding
- We agree that we need a realistic assessment and location of the resources required to advance our agenda and resolve outstanding issues

#### Conduct:

- We agree to respect our differences in trail use & mandates
- We agree to respect the priorities of the communities we work in
- We agree that the process we use to engage with each other, the government, and the public must be transparent
- We agree that we need appropriate and feasible timeframes & a sense of momentum

#### Information and Knowledge-sharing:

- We need to do more to share best practices and information
- We agree that we need to better understand the trail organizational landscape (mapping stakeholders, needs and priorities)
- We agree that we need a ‘collection point’ for informational resources (e.g. a website)

#### Interacting with Government:

- We would like to achieve a unified voice to government and the public on those issues on which we agree
- We need to engage government in finding solutions
- We need Provincial and Federal governments to develop closer relationships on trails issues
- We agree that we need to identify the specifics of & make a recommendation to the federal government regarding a lead trails agency
- We agree that we need non-financial incentives from government for trails

While the Banff Roundtable was an excellent first attempt to bring the sector together, and it provided considerable insight into the needs of the sector, there was limited follow-through on the commitments and action items.

With that in mind, the Canadian Trails Federation through the Trailhead Canada 2017 Conference Planning Committee, decided it was time to bring this conversation back to the forefront and revisit the issues discussed in 2010.

## **METHODOLOGY**

On Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, delegates at the Trailhead Canada Conference in Gatineau, Quebec came together to discuss a variety of key stakeholder issues. Understanding that this discussion may not include representatives from the entire sector, it was seen as a good first step to get key influencers and leading sector organizations to coalesce to revisit issues and outcomes identified in Banff.

Through Trailhead Canada planning processes, Canada's trail sector identified 6 key Issues that a national trails policy must address. This report identifies the 6 areas, provides a series of discussion notes by domain in Appendix 1, provides a culminating recommendation by section as per discussion, and then details action steps a national trails policy could achieve in relation to the sector and its issues.

### **1. Policy**

- What policy issues need to be addressed at the national level?
- What issues are better handled at the provincial/territorial level? How can they be integrated with a National Trails Policy?
- How do trail groups currently use existing national policies/legislation in their trail planning process? (Fisheries Act, Species at Risk Act, Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, etc.). How could these work better together in the interest of trails? (mechanisms?)

### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Need for a review of existing trail policy, regulation and legislation review, with sector facing inventory
- Assessment of impactful and beneficial policy, legislation and regulation
- Creation of a process of transference and implementation of beneficial policy, regulation and legislation at the national level based on provincial experience
- Inclusivity is a key principle

### **Culminating Recommendation on Policy**

That a lead organization be responsible for the coordination of policy impacts across the variety of user, land management and other trail stakeholders, in conjunction with several government departments and agencies that have impact on trail environments and operations.

## **2. Active Transportation & Trails**

NOTE: There is currently a national active transportation policy being developed- have you been engaged?

- What are some current limitations regarding national transportation policies that you have encountered in active transportation planning processes?
- Have you encountered issues related to trail building that are impacted by existing national policies/acts?
- How do you address conflict on trails (regardless of user groups)?

### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Develop relationship between experts in Active Transportation and Trails
- Develop an understanding of how the two merges and converge, and where they diverge and are distinct
- Define a collaborative process between key stakeholders of both to educate on similarities, differences, policy and practices

### **Culminating Recommendation on Active Transportation and Trails (AT and T)**

That a lead committee of Active Transportation and Active Trail (AT and T) organizations be convened to discuss current and future AT and T transportation policies that affect trail, road and other planning; and 'AT and T environment' management practice, such that infrastructure, timing, space use and other operational factors of road, ROW and road trail intersections; either of infrastructure or activity, be examined and a 'best practice' for this space be put forward by the AT and T Committee for policy inclusion.

## **3. Risk Management**

- What are key risk management issues in your outdoor environment? How do you measure these issues?
- What are the things that you can do to mitigate these risk issues? Who does these things? How do you know these things have been enacted? How do you track your positive impacts?
- How can you remove the impediments to enacting risk solutions?

### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Need for existing risk management policy, regulation and legislation review, with sector facing inventory
- Assessment of effective risk management practice, policy, legislation and regulation
- Creation of a process of transference and implementation of beneficial risk management practice, policy, regulation and legislation.
- Funded education on risk management and implementation of risk management practice

### **Culminating Recommendation on Risk Management**

That a national working group made up of educators, industry, government and trail organizations to refine and consolidate risk management practices into a "What Works in Trail Risk Management" methodology, manuals, on-line and in class learnings; such that this program of risk abatement and

trail management is linked, funded, accredited and supported by both government and industry in the interest of public safety , notwithstanding other regulation or legislation that converts ‘use at own risk” principles to the trail user.

#### **4. Trail Building**

- Do you currently have a ‘go to” trail building approach (Appalachian Trail Standards, International Mountain Bicycling Association, etc.)?
- How are you accommodating a changing trail user? Seniors, disabled, accessibility, technology?
- Where do you turn to find out about standards and practices?
- Are you land-banking?

#### **Key Discussion Points:**

- There is a need for accepted, endorsed and applied trail building standards for quality product
- There is a need for consolidated and coordinated training in practices where graduates could be certified, and their trails accredited
- Other trail stakeholders, marketing, promotion, health and recreation need to pay attention to the seriousness of trail building and design as a professional discipline of equal value to other certifications and recognitions, such as pool safety or landscape design professions

#### **Culminating Recommendation on Trail Building**

That a comprehensive guide to trail building practice, as defined by the nature of the environment and the use, where this complex matrix of urban, wilderness, wetland, town and country, or rural lands are merged with the surface and elemental standards based on local topography, species and material, such that allowed uses for this trail infrastructure best matches the environment in which the trail is located, and that local builders and designers of trail are educated to these practices.

#### **5. Trail Tourism & Marketing**

- What needs to be done to build greater awareness around trails to increase usage- both from a recreation perspective and a tourism perspective?
- Who do you feel should be the lead on promotion of trails in Canada? OR should this be done by respective provinces/territories?
- How do we better educate decision makers on the value and benefits of trails?

#### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Integrated marketing of trail products that provide quality experience in accredited trail destinations
- Linkage between quality of build and quality of experience
- Marketing and promotion technique for qualifying trails
- Branding cannot be unhinged from product quality
- National Trail Tourism Profile? Trail or Destination? Region or Country?

- Off shore market can be developed once national product has a suitable inventory
- WHICH OFF SHORE MARKET?
- Surveys and research into what brings trails tourists to Canada? Individual trail or a package deal, marketing or activity, enthusiast discovery or past trip?
- Wayfinding tools need to be detailed, defined and on landscape

### **Culminating Recommendations on Trail Tourism and Marketing**

Whereas there are numerous organizations promoting specific destinations, experiences, activities and regions, that a national trails tourism policy coordinate existing regions, with existing products, against an inventory of tourism amenities, travel supports, packages and promotions such that a national brand for Canadian Trails is identified by region, activity; and that a national trail suitability for trail tourism product designation, where these tourism products are accredited, reviewed, linked to known industry standard of marketing and package representation, is also enacted.

#### **6. Mixed Use Trails**

- How do you deal with single use trails that have mixed use?
- Did you know there are benefits of mixed use? Please name 3.
- Why are there not more mixed-use environments? Do you think this is truth or fiction? How do you know?
- Is there a process we could enact that would see real resolution to trail use issues?

#### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Communication on mixed, shared, where, and the who and what of mixed use trails
- Strategy to develop broader acceptance of mixed use trails by the sector and in the community
- Mixed means motorized and non-motorized needs to remain in a relationship with all trails
- Motorized needs to join the CTF to create a relationship to all trails and non-motorized.

### **Culminating Recommendation on Mixed Use Trail**

Whereas mixed use trails make up most trails on a provincial basis, we believe they make-up most trails on a national basis, and while problematic for some use groups, we have a proven track record of mixed use trails management practice in Canada. We know that these trails, operated via educated trail managers, with the policy, regulation, funding and user supports in place to do so, can manage these trails and their complex matrix of trail-based activities in a safe and responsible way.

## NEXT STEPS

With the outcomes provided through the discussion at Trailhead Canada, it is clear that a strong foundation has been developed both from the Banff Roundtable recommendations on collaboration, conduct, sector consolidation, and on the specifics of our 6 growth and development areas arising from Trailhead Canada.

We are therefore confident we have established a context for recreational trails, and in our strategic requests to establish a management framework enabling a national discussion regarding a National Trail Policy Framework.

The trail sector, in order to progress towards an ask of the federal government to support “A National trails Policy, must research its approach, consolidate its sector facts, refine its major issues and author a document outlining these against a budget to achieve both an effective request, and the anticipated results through meaningful work on the 6 issue areas over a period of time such that the government knows what our results will be.

Our process to create a trail responsive mechanism to those ends sees the following tasks:

### **Task 1: Development of a Summary Document from Trailhead Canada**

Consolidate data collected at Trailhead Canada (completed)

Cross reference data collected with findings from the 2010 National Trail Roundtable and the 2010 National Trail Coalition Study

Identify issues that continue to persist & any new emerging issues

### **Task 2: Literature Review of Policies/Strategies**

Identification of existing National Policies that would impact a National Trail Policy Framework

Identification of existing Provincial/Territorial Strategies impacting a National Trail Policy Framework

Review of existing National Trail Policies (i.e. Irish Trail Strategy)

### **Task 3: Development of a Glossary of Terms**

Research Best Practices and existing resources

Consult with the various user groups organizations and other necessary stakeholders

Development of a draft document

### **Task 4: “Organizational Structure” of the Canadian Trail Sector**

Inventory of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Organizations

Government Ministries

Regional Trail Organizations

### **Task 5: Development of a National Trail Policy Framework Proposal**

- Framework, purpose, beneficiaries, deliverables
- Outcomes from a policy
- Draft Policy for Government Consideration

## **CONCLUSION**

In summing up, it is the intention of the Canadian Trails Federation to fulfill its mission of being both the lead recreational trail organization in Canada, by bringing the Canadian trails stakeholders together so they can act together.

The Canadian Trails Federation took the lead as the organizer and facilitator of Trailhead Canada to bring groups together to discuss trail issues and the need for a national trails policy.

The Canadian Trails Federation is providing this framework document back to the 205 delegates of Trailhead Canada, to review and consider, with a request that they work with one another through the Canadian Trails Federation to make a National Trails Policy a reality for Canada.

To this end we will develop the constituent-based committees, at both the national level for partnering organizations, and specific working groups and committees to address specific issues for resolution related to the 6 key sector issues.

Therefore, in closing the CTF will:

- Seek a process and policy lead at the federal government level
- Seek funding for trails through this national policy and process
- Reinforce a call for member funding support by each of the provinces
- Circulate Trailhead Canada Outcomes and National Trails Framework Document by March 2018
- Establish a Stronger CTF by April 2019
- Engage sector professionals to work with volunteers of the CTF for a better functioning CTF 2018-19
- The CTF invites delegates from Trailhead Canada 2017 to join us in the planning of Trailhead Canada 2019

Based on these successes our overall Goal is:

### **A National Trails Policy Spring 2019**

On behalf of all the partners that created the Trailhead Canada Event, and the member organization of the Canadian Trails Federation and the National Trails Coalition, I welcome your input and assistance as we move forward into the future.



Patrick Connor, President, Canadian Trails Federation

# Appendix 1: Canadian Trail Inventory 2010

There are trails in each Canadian province and territory. Trails are managed or unmanaged. There are 360,521 trails in total. 278,576 are managed.

Kilometres of Managed Trail in Each Province and Territory of Canada



These are made for:

- 104,783km of snowmobile
- 32,334km of ATV/ORM
- 39,272km Hiking/Running
- 16,700km Cross Country Skiing
- 9278km Mountain Biking
- 5099km Cycling Touring
- 16,291 Walking Cycling Shared
- 6788 Equestrian Shared
- 20,496 Snowmobile Shared
- 27,536 ATV Shared

Trails are single use, mixed or shared use. Single use means one activity, mixed means motorized (M) with non-motorized (NM), and shared use means shared by a group of M or NM activities.

Canadian Trail activities include:

all-terrain vehicle, off road motorized vehicle, hiking, walking, motorcycle (dirt bike), road cycling, mountain biking, assisted electric vehicle, e-bike, snowmobiling, sight-seeing, bird-watching, snow-shoeing, climbing, bouldering, ice climbing, cross country skiing, dog sledding, skijoring, equestrian, carriage, active transportation (bike or walking), running, canoe, kayaking, geo-caching.

Table 1. Canadian Managed Trails

by Number of Kilometres per Province / Territory as of 2010

Province / Territory	Single Use Trails		Shared-Use Trails		Total Km Trails	% of Total Managed Trails	Water Routes	Roads	Total Km
	Non Motorized	Motorized	Non Motorized	Motorized					
NL	1,602	4,600	152	1,086	7,440	2.7%	0	0	7,440
NS	1,217	2,600	192	3,868	7,877	2.8%	263	89	8,229
PE	325	605	98	354	1,382	0.5%	0	62	1,444
NB	1,496	9,901	306	697	12,400	4.5%	94	0	12,494
QC	23,460	48,927	3,943	700	77,030	27.7%	38,642	5,190	120,862
ON	13,438	36,204	5,703	3,650	58,995	21.2%	22,447	7,500	88,942
MB	2,138	15,166	1,036	295	18,635	6.7%	0	705	19,340
SK	3,627	9,500	1,564	210	14,901	5.3%	351	220	15,472
AB	10,658	9,614	3,525	11,499	35,296	12.7%	830	200	36,326
BC	11,697	0	6,064	24,060	41,821	15.0%	0	1,269	43,090
YT	856	0	300	965	2,121	0.8%	0	1,269	3,390
NT	30	0	0	505	535	0.2%	2,239	574	3,348
NU	0	0	0	143	143	0.1%	0	0	143
Totals:	70,544	137,117	22,882	48,032	278,576	100.0%	64,866	17,078	360,521
% of Total:	25.3%	49.2%	8.2%	17.2%		100.0%			

There are trails in urban, suburban, town a

Table 7. Number of Kilometres of Urban Trails in Canada as of 2010

Province / Territory	Single Track / Use					Shared Use			Sub-Total
	Hiking / running	Mountain Biking	Cross Country Skiing	Cycling (touring - off road)	Equestrian	Walking & Cycling	Equestrian	ATV / ORM	
Newfoundland & Labrador	60	0	15	0	0	133	0	0	208
Nova Scotia	63	20	0	0	0	110	0	68	261
Prince Edward Island	10	0	0	0	0	53	0	0	63
New Brunswick	160	0	52	0	0	85	6	0	303
Quebec	40	0	708	370	0	273	0	0	1,391
Ontario	463	32	216	24	0	1,987	155	0	2,877
Manitoba	0	0	174	110	0	420	0	0	704
Saskatchewan	24	0	21	100	0	154	0	0	298
Alberta	300	500	71	425	0	2,243	0	0	3,539
British Columbia	492	0	0	231	61	2,212	0	0	2,996
Yukon Territory	200	150	0	0	0	300	0	0	650
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals:	1,812	702	1,257	1,260	61	7,970	161	68	13,290
Percentage of Total:	0.7%	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	2.9%	0.1%	0.0%	4.8%

- Trails are managed by parks, municipalities, conservation areas, heritage sites, tourism offices, economic development, private lands, first nations, recreation departments, crown land managers, and use groups.
- 13,290km of trails are in urban areas, focused largely on non-motorized use.
- Over 347,231km of trail are in suburban, rural and wilderness areas.
- For every dollar invested in trails, trails return a \$1: \$9 from tourism
- For every dollar invested in trails, trails return a \$1: \$4 from healthcare savings.

Please join us at Trailhead Canada, so we can develop policies and best practices at the national level to support trails in your riding. Thank-you.

## **Appendix 2: Trailhead Canada 2017 Business Delegates List**

<b>Stephen</b>	<b>Aiabens</b>	Trails Coordinator	Wikemikong Development Commission
<b>Shane</b>	<b>Archibald</b>	Trail Crew Foreman	Elk Island National Park - Parks Canada
<b>Ashley</b>	<b>Arrowsmith</b>	Community Recreation Worker	Town of Riverview
<b>Daniel</b>	<b>Barrette</b>	Executive Director	Rainbow Routes Association
<b>Mary</b>	<b>Benjamin</b>	Visitor Experience Product Development Officer	Parks Canada, Banff Field Unit
<b>Carole</b>	<b>Blaquiere</b>	President	Voyageur Trail Association/Blaq Bear Eco Adventure Routes Prescott-Russell
<b>Eric</b>	<b>Boisclair</b>		
<b>Andrew</b>	<b>Boyd</b>	Park Maintenance Officer	Nunavut Parks/Gov Of Nunavut
<b>Nick</b>	<b>Chronopoulos</b>	Senior Policy Advisor	Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport
<b>Patrick</b>	<b>Connor</b>	President	Canadian Trails Federation
<b>Evan</b>	<b>Croskery</b>	Director	OF4WD
<b>Colin</b>	<b>Crowell</b>	VEPDO	Parks Canada
<b>John</b>	<b>Cushing</b>	Past President	Canadian Trails Federation
<b>Jack</b>	<b>de Wit</b>	President	Canadian Recreational Horse and Rider Association
<b>Steve</b>	<b>Demmings</b>	Executive Director	Trails Manitoba
<b>Michael</b>	<b>Elliott</b>	Councilor	Town of Nipigon
<b>Denise</b>	<b>Erickson</b>	Admin Assistant	OFATV
<b>Micha</b>	<b>Fardy</b>	Community Economic Development Officer	Town of Riverview
<b>Dion</b>	<b>FitzPatrick</b>	Coordinator Park: Operations	Nunavut Parks/Gov of Nunavut

<b>Kristen</b>	<b>Gabora</b>	Trail Development Manager	Trans Canada Trail
<b>Pier-Luc</b>	<b>Gagnon</b>	Trail Development Manager	parcs canada
<b>Kim</b>	<b>Goodman</b>	Recreation Coorindator	Twp Leeds and the Thousand Islands
<b>Michael</b>	<b>Goodyear</b>	Trail Development Manager, Eastern Canada	Trans Canada Trail
<b>Caitlin</b>	<b>Harrigan</b>	Senior Project Manager, Greenspace Planning	Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
<b>Jon</b>	<b>Heshka</b>	Associate Professor	Thompson Rivers University
<b>Rob</b>	<b>Hingston</b>	Visitor Experience Officer	Gros Morne National Park/Parks Canada
<b>John Paul</b>	<b>Jackson</b>	Councilor	Twp Leeds and the Thousand Islands
<b>Poul</b>	<b>Jorgensen</b>	Executive Director	New Brunswick Trails Council Inc.
<b>Marlaine</b>	<b>Koehler</b>	Executive Director	Waterfront Regeneration Trust
<b>Marie-Noëlle</b>	<b>Lanthier</b>	Board member	Prescott-Russell Recreational Trail
<b>Peter</b>	<b>Leblanc</b>	sales	sportechnic 2000
<b>Marc</b>	<b>Leger</b>	Trails Project Manager	Parks Canada
<b>Saul</b>	<b>Lipton</b>		Saskatchewan Trails Association
<b>Blaise</b>	<b>MacEachern</b>		Nova Scotia Trails
<b>Andrew</b>	<b>Macpherson</b>	Manager, Environmental & Parks Planning	City of London
<b>Alex</b>	<b>Man</b>	Geological Engineer/Trail Designer	Scatliff+Miller+Murray
<b>Chris</b>	<b>Mark</b>	Director Parks Open SPace	Town of Oakville
<b>Jeremy</b>	<b>McCall</b>	Executive Director	Outdoor Recreation Council of BC
<b>Geoff</b>	<b>McVey</b>	Forest Manager	United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
<b>Mike</b>	<b>Muldoon</b>	Forest Trails Coordinator	Northumberland County

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Munghall</b>	Board Member	Ontario Trails Council
<b>David</b>	<b>Naulls</b>	Councillor	Wollaston Township
<b>Monica</b>	<b>Osterhout</b>		Parks Canada
<b>Beth</b>	<b>Pattillo</b>		NS Trails
<b>Sharon</b>	<b>Pickthorne</b>		Horse Council BC
<b>Mathieu</b>	<b>Roy</b>	National Director of Trail	Trans Canada Trail
<b>Neil</b>	<b>Shuttleworth</b>	Trail Project Manager	Trails BC
<b>Al</b>	<b>Skucas</b>	Rockies/Kootenays Director	Trails BC
<b>Brett</b>	<b>Smith</b>	Product Development Officer	Parks Canada
<b>Juanita</b>	<b>Spence</b>		City of Edmonton
<b>Linda</b>	<b>Strong-Watson</b>	Executive Director	Alberta TrailNet Society
<b>Wayne</b>	<b>Terryberry</b>	Outdoor Recreation Coordinator	McMaster University
<b>Steve</b>	<b>Vines</b>	Trails Consultant	Communities, Culture and Heritage
<b>Luke</b>	<b>Wassegijig</b>	Tourism manager	WDC
<b>Dennis K.</b>	<b>Webb</b>	Treasurer	CTF
<b>Loren</b>	<b>Winnick</b>	Board Member/Director CTF	Alberta TrailNet
<b>Peter</b>	<b>Wood</b>	President	OF4WD
<b>Lora</b>	<b>Woolner</b>		Independent
<b>AJ</b>	<b>Strawson</b>	Executive Director	IMBA Canada
<b>Barb</b>	<b>Szychta</b>	VP, Risk Management Services	Frank Cowan Company
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<b>Dave David</b>	<b>Millier Miller</b>	Chair Executive Director	Motorcyclist Confederation of Canada Algonquin to Adirondack Collaborative (A2A)
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<b>Dennis</b>	<b>Burns</b>	Executive Director	Snowmobiling
<b>Garth</b>	<b>Potruff</b>	Owner Operator	Grand River Rafting
<b>Holly</b>	<b>Woodill</b>	Volunteer	NSTrails
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<b>Michael</b>	<b>Haynes</b>		none
<b>Michel</b>	<b>Blais</b>	Trail Specialist	Parks Canada
<b>Oksana</b>	<b>Buhel</b>	Manager Rider Federations	Canadian off Highway Vehicle Distributors Council
<b>Paul</b>	<b>Ronan</b>	Executive Director	Ontario Parks Association
<b>Robert</b>	<b>Ramsay</b>	President	COHV
<b>Serge</b>	<b>Joly</b>		Prescott-Russell Recreation Trail

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<b>Wayne</b>	<b>Daub</b>	General Manager	All Terrain/Quad Council of Canada
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<b>Akaash</b>	<b>Maharaj</b>	Presenter	
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<b>Bill</b>	<b>Goulding</b>	Principal	Sustainable Trails
<b>Bruce</b>	<b>Devine</b>	Manager	National Capital Commission
<b>Dave</b>	<b>Read</b>		East Coast Greenway USA
<b>Jamie</b>	<b>Stuckless</b>	ED	Share the Road
<b>Jeff</b>	<b>Jackson</b>	PhD	Algonquin College Faculty
<b>Jesse</b>	<b>Schnobb</b>		
<b>Michael</b>	<b>Nadler</b>	VP Externa Rekatons	Parcs Canada
<b>Randy</b>	<b>VanDerStarren</b>		
<b>Alex</b>	<b>Brodka</b>	RPN	McMaster University
<b>Krupesh</b>	<b>Patel</b>	Business Development	McMaster University
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<b>Judi</b>	<b>Varga-Toth</b>	ED	Cycle Canada

<b>Lori</b>	<b>Spence</b>		Trans Canada Trail
<b>Wesley</b>	<b>Little</b>		Trans Canada Trail
<b>Allen</b>	<b>MacPherson</b>		Trans Canada Trail
<b>Chantal</b>	<b>Ladouceur</b>		Trans Canada Trail
<b>David</b>	<b>Batchelor</b>		Trans Canada Trail
<b>Jean-Francois</b>	<b>Girard</b>		Trans Canada Trail
<b>Jonathan</b>	<b>Allen</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Kelly</b>	<b>Williams</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Lesley</b>	<b>Cassidy</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Marie-France</b>	<b>Lajeunesse</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Nathalie</b>	<b>Beaulieu</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Norm</b>	<b>Ruttan</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Simon</b>	<b>Rozon</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Visnja</b>	<b>Zaborski</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	
<b>Jason</b>	<b>Davis</b>	<b>County Forest Management</b>	Renfrew County, Ontario
<b>Carmen</b>	<b>Goold</b>	Regional Advisor	Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration
<b>Don</b>	<b>Watson</b>		

## **Appendix 3: Trailhead Canada 2017 Discussion Notes**

### 1. POLICY:

What Policy Issues Need to be addressed at the National Level

- Funding
  - A funding model for trail management organizations
  - Proportional funding mechanism
  - Sources declared and sustained
  - Non-competitive based on known services and characteristic need profile, i.e. 10km of hiking same as 10km of canoe? Explanation chart(s).
  - Consistent Funding (dedicated budget), long term (sustainable)
  - Ongoing maintenance and operating funding (not just initial capital)
  - Ability for smaller groups to apply for infrastructure funding (more accessible and more regular).
  - Resources for smaller groups to help apply for funding (help with applications so that they have the same advantages as larger groups).
  - Emergency infrastructure funding pool (ie for extreme weather/ flooding)
  - Tie trails into the complete economic package so that they understand the value of dedicating funding (toolkit with key messaging)- this would really help people on the ground or volunteers having these conversations.
  - Better quantify/ monetize ecosystem services
- Collaboration
  - Ability of national trails stakeholders to work together (cooperation)
  - Broader range of user groups
  - Including and engaging new Canadians
  - Advisory group of users (not just professionals)
  - National trail system (different groups can work towards and feed into) for example, we have a national highway system
  - Discussions on understanding the differences in needs and realities across various regions
- Access
  - Access to public lands (many customary user groups have been using specific lands and will no longer be able to do so)
  - Right to roam legislation (rights for land owners)
  - Negotiating / re- negotiating leases (for example trails on via rail land), support so that we can maintain access
- Planning
  - Local/ regional planning that aligns with provincial and then national planning
  - mechanisms for planning should be consistent at the national level
  - ability for all voices to be heard at the national level
- Liability
  - Incentive for landowners to keep trails open
- Volunteers
  - Consistent approach to recruit/ engage, train, and retention

What policy issues are better to be handled at the provincial/ territorial level

- Access to crown land and property
- Liability
- Education and training
- Municipal conferences: get trails on the agenda
- Designation of provincial trails (i.e. Bruce Trail), certification/ recognition of specific trail (legislated as provincial trails)
- Consistent signage etc. across province then harmonize at the national level
- Funding
- Explore rail trails on a national level
- Municipalities with dedicated staff for trails development

How can they integrate with a National Trails Policy?

- Align other national plans (ie parks, transportation etc.) and policies with the National Trails Policy
- Trails on the agenda at other national conferences
- If they are, i.e. roads and Active Transportation these groups need to fit and support both the National Trails Policy and the Canadian Trails Federation
- Consistent approach to taxation / disposition for land owners

How do trails groups currently use existing policy/ legislations in their planning? How could these better serve us in the interest of trails?

- Inventory of existing policies (align provincial and national)
- Policies need to be reviewed under the light of expanding and emerging trails issues
- Greater awareness of environmental impacts
- Healthy living policies (tap into that)
- Connecting Canadians (to their landscape and country)
- Getting trails onto the national infrastructure list
- Greater awareness and education to government officials on ecosystem services (so they understand the importance)
- Enable policies under emergency situations
- Federal youth policies
- First nations engagement
- Elect people who are already “trail friendly”
- Marketing and promotion overlap considerations (competing organizations)
- **Organize our national voice at the trails level (who is the leader?)**
  - This leader needs to help identify the gaps
- Tourism policies (what is our voice on trails and tourism)
- Policies need to be future driven (based on upcoming trends, not past or current trends)- preparing (based on trends) for increased use down the road (long term vision)
- Ensuring trails are incorporated into all official master plans/ strategic plans
- Federal government relations strategy (at the national level)

## PRIORITIES

- Inventory of all Provincial/Territorial and Federal policies/legislation related to trail development
- What are the gaps in the existing policies/legislation that would facilitate the development of trails?
- Determine efficiencies that can be developed to allow for a more streamlined approach to dealing with policies/legislation?
- Provide assistance to trail organizations on how to navigate the various policies/legislation and to determine whether they to do an assessment or get a permit (a screening tool perhaps?)
- Bring a wide-variety on non-traditional stakeholders to be engaged in the development of a national trail policy: Indigenous, LGBTQ2, tourism professionals, economic development agencies, health and wellness sector, youth, new Canadians, priority communities (poverty reduction), etc.
- Create strategic alliances with organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, CN, CP, Canadian Tourism Commission (Destination Canada?), etc.

## 2. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

What are the common limitations regarding national transportation policies that you have encountered in active transportation planning process?

- Inconsistent funding and funding in just short spurts. Often there is time constraint (tight funding deadlines) and not sustainable (ongoing).
- Getting message out to smaller rural communities that need to be engaged through education of local communities.
- Limitations in terms of railways which are a real barrier to trail connectivity. Its near impossible to get crossing across railways unless you really know who to talk to and is federally connected
- No representation at federal – get on FCM agenda so its brought to their notice
- Funding infrastructure is urban oriented. You can't reduce carbon foot print in rural like in urban area
- Cannot find matching funds
- Lack of resource capacity and knowledge to access the funding. Things coming in stay at high level, people working at smaller centers don't see that. Or the process is so difficult that the average person has trouble navigating it
- Nobody wants to take responsibility on trails.
- If you make active transportation on multi use transportation a given requirement, it's a new risk management issue and a fuzzy line on how to effectively do that?

Have you encountered issues related to trail building that are impacted by existing national policies/acts?

- Environmental assessments
- National building codes trying to force it into trail building
- When bridges are being replaces its federal or provincial money, but if you want a bike lane across it the money needs to come from local communities. So the federally isn't investing in active transportation cus they are saying that you need to pay for it as a local community group
- Default position is that active transportation is designed into the structure – especially international connections

How do you address conflict on trails (regardless of user groups)?

•

### **PRIORITIES**

Distinguish differences/similarities (commonalities) between Active Transportation and Trails- where do they overlap and where are they completely independent of each other

Develop relationships with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and other provincial/territorial municipal organizations

Develop relationship with planners associations and professional engineering associations (to name a few)

### 3. RISK MANAGEMENT

What are the key risk management issues?

- Cell phones don't always work in remote areas
- Medical attention is not as quick in some places (how do we communicate this to people and also connect to emergency services better)
- Inexperience
- Not knowing personal limits
- User behaviour (feeling entitled)
- User unawareness of other users' needs
- Occupiers liability act (some provinces have it, some don't)
- Water management
- Infrastructure guidelines (realistic) that can guide small trail groups
- Understanding managing risk for volunteers (and duty of care)
- Multi use trails (can be risky)
- Trail user etiquette (off leash dogs)
- New technologies (false sense of security), apps having updated information online
- Disconnect between how trail is promoted and what the reality of the trail is
- Newcomers (etiquette)

What can we do to mitigate these risk issues? Who does these things? How?

- More tradeshows that cross over user groups
- Education (national policy to push it at all trailheads- standardize nationally)
- Running signage through groups that are NOT trail users (to ensure our signs are easy to understand for everyone)
- Better processes between transportation systems
- Province helping to provide insurance (partnership for recognized groups)
- Help people understand WHY certain trails are closed
- Need to quantify things like (dogs off leash, EMS calls etc) and find a way to keep a count
- Leveraging other information collectors (ie hospitals, ems, insurance companies)
- Create heat maps of risk exposure
- What can we do to capture rates of incidents?
- Know your data and how you plan to use it
- Identification and assessment of risk on trails (not necessarily through counts of incidents)

- Need to investigate risk from the perspective of kids- delivered through education system (because occupiers liability act doesn't cover children)

How can you remove the impediments to enacting risk solutions?

- A coordinated funded, education plan for trail managers and user groups identifying and resolving trail risk
- Pre-education process included, the why people should engage in risk abatement education, the how and then the completion of the education process
- An enactment process, those that have been educated are enabled to implement risk management, funded assessors, funded maintenance and repair, a call for dedicated budgets with the national policy funder providing 1/3, matching 1/3 local,, 1/3 provincial
- Collaboration, sharing information across provinces, on legislation and regulation that reduces risk exposure for trail and trail activity organizations
- One consolidated accredited process
- Better understanding legislative processes, and encouraging all provinces to adopt supportive legislation, such as Occupiers Liability Acts in each province, by each province as demanded by a national policy framework

#### **PRIORITIES**

- A national policy directive on risk management
- Research and education on the true risk involved in building, managing, using and volunteering on trails.
- Better understanding on the protections builders/managers have from legislation and insurance in different provinces/territories (i.e. Occupier's Liability, BC (and NS, NB) insurance coverage for member organizations) and who is the most exposed
- to focus energies- so as to not let fear and paranoia drive actions
- Environmental Scan of all risk-related legislation and protection, and to develop and education program targeted at groups that manage trails. (this is definitely an opportunity for CTF to take the lead and contract out to experts)

#### **4. TRAIL BUILDING**

How should the role and value of trail professional be utilized more in trail development and training> legal requirement to include, better access to training in college, professional designation in Canada, etc.

- Don't need a designation, as its too much of a burden. But should have some form of education piece, more of a looser association so you can create a common knowledge so its easier for non trail people so you know what it is and how it is different
- Should have a certification through the association. It is not really cumbersome, but creates a standard.
- At PTBA (Professional Trail Builder Association) in US they have a 3 year mentoring process so that new members are mentored through the initial startup because there is such a strict code of standard that they want to make sure they properly learn it
- Bring trails professionals into the conversations to everyone else so that their perspective is understood. Few people outside of trails are doing trails the way we (trail builders) see trails.
- There needs a core certification to create a base standard. i.e. IMBA

- IMBA is the standard for mountain biking but not for all trails, need to create that overarching standard

Does your organization currently adopt any recognized trail standards?

- Changing from standard to guideline so it is not forced on groups. It's about educating people on how to do it right
- Sustainability should be the number one priority, if you waste all money on maintenance and can't expand trails it is pointless
- Be able to adapt to new innovations and trail user types
- Informative and appropriate signage that is uniform within sectors of trail users and nationally. Especially key signs that mark safety and big issues
- You have to educate people that use the guideline, they need to understand the guideline and how to use it
- The guidelines should go to the foreman of the groups not the manager. The guys that actually there. Because managers change all the time or they don't have on the ground knowledge. It's the guys that are on the ground, the foreman, that need to be taught these guidelines
- Trails needs to be a full-time job
- Distribution would have to be free so that its accessible

How are you accommodating a changing trail use with respect to accessibility, aging demographics and technology?

- In Ontario there is a standard that applies to new trails and rebuilding or upgrading old ones.
- Managing expectations of trails through technology, signage, education

Other

- What is a trail – definition?
- There is a discussion going on about standardizing terminology

#### PRIORITIES

- Awareness of the need for trail building professionals by trail stakeholders
- Existing Trail building standards require a process of rationalization
- Education in these standards is needed
- Application of accepted standards and practices by educated practitioners in needed
- Once educated a certification or accreditation process is needed
- Professional education in trail building is needed for other professional builders with non-specific trail building certification
- Funding for education is needed
- National and provincial applicability is required

#### 5. TOURISM AND MARKETING

What needs to be done to build greater awareness around trails to increase usage?

- Wayfinding (signage, apps but also information to locals – like gas stations)
- Tapping into a way to educate Airbnb's
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party consultation for the region (assess tourism needs)
- educating businesses near trails so they know trail user needs

- shifting how we access visitors (i.e. its hard if you aren't a service provider that is recognized on a place like trip advisor)
- better programming/ events that reach youth (art installations, partnering with universities to bring areas with less footpath alive so that we can re-distribute people away from the more concentrated areas)
- education for hotels, tourism groups etc. to help fund trails that increase visitation
- encourage hotels to advertise proximity to trails
- social media influencers (create a nationwide # for twitter and then partner with influencers)
- leveraging colleges and universities (they can be innovative and resourceful)

Who do you feel should be the lead on promotion of trails in Canada? Or should this be done by respective provinces and territories?

- Destination Canada
- Communities with trails (promote their story and their trails- this passion shows through)
- Municipalities back up the marketing and promotion of trails (tools for municipalities to market trails)
- Groups like UNESCO, ParticipAction etc. who need trails to meet their goals should partner to promote trails
- Work with local destination marketing organizations to build a product that destination Canada can market internationally
- Promoting the activity (i.e. the snowmobiling, biking etc.) THEN the trail- people identify as a user first

How do we better educate decision makers on the value and benefits of trails?

- Toolkits
- Money for familiarization (FAM) tours
- marketing tools (i.e. availability of props for events)
- engaging ALL stakeholders, make trails everyone's issue (have policy makers and decision makers from health, economics, etc. AT our trailhead conferences)
- organize the trails voice
- leveraging tourism data from regional tourism organizations
- engaging real estate professionals
- consistency/ standardized glossary of trails terms

General Comments

- Not marketing the trail but the experience/use on the trail
- Trail builders are tourism operators
- Need to capture the excitement/passion of the trail experience
- need to know what we are messaging of the product
- Connect marketers to market the trail but need to know what information to bring forward

Key Action items from tourism section:

- education for marketers
- include tourism in planning process for trail building and promotion (right from the start)
- capacity building within the service industry at large

#### **PRIORITIES**

- develop a toolkit of existing apps/platforms for collecting trail metrics data

- a checklist of information required to effectively market your trail.
- A platform to share resources - a live library for the trails community
- Development of FAM Tours and business familiarization tours for trails and trail activities
- pool marketing resources through regions working with current platforms through provincial organizations like Ontario's RTO's.
- Increase communication between non-traditional partners
- development of a glossary of terms to standardize the Trail Community's language

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## 6. MIXED USE TRAILS

What is the proper terminology?

- Distinguish between motorized and non-motorized use
- Distinguish between what is an actual planning term and what is used by the user (internal versus external/lay terms)
- Multi Use Vs. Shared Use Vs. Preferred Use

What are the benefits of mixed use trails?

- funding, community building, healthy active living, life-long accessibility, higher use and appeal to larger population
- funding more accessible for multi-use
- recognizing needs and requirements of different groups
- surface construction / infrastructure
- good and bad impacts on experience
- Great use of infrastructure, best value out of it
- Shared responsibility and shared costs and shared opportunities

Most portions of trail are not mixed use: WHY?

- Origin and history – who was there first
- Local policies
- Design of trail
- Community and peoples preferences
- Costs and liabilities
- Evolution of new technologies or recreational vehicles
- Capacity
- It is easy to say no, user density, experience, surfaces, perceived conflicts, lack of understanding are reasons for not a lot of mixed use.
- Insurance constraints
- We don't need everything to be multi-use. It's good to have preferred use trails to enhance experience of specific user types. But then having multi-use trails that can act as conduits to connect the preferred use trails to create large trail networks.
  - I.e. snowmobiling / hiking / mountain biking specific trails in a region connect to multi-use trails that bridge the gaps between the specialized sections.

What would be necessary in a nationally adaptable process and framework for trails?

- Appropriate and adaptable planning process to facilitate cooperation in creation of mixed use trails
- Standards and policies around insurance on trails

- Acknowledging and including the different user groups
- Understanding others, their needs, their impacts on things, and what others have to offer. Not look at the negatives all the time, especially when there are conflicts
- Building standards so that everyone is accommodated. Maybe different groups can contribute so that all groups can utilize the same infrastructure.
- Common shared signage for all user groups so you don't have a totem pole of signs from 20 different groups. This would also help with clear communication so it's the same where ever you went
- Need to identify all users and ensure there is representation for them all
- Look at design concerns:
  - how do you design for it
  - how to manage that
  - Capacity
  - experience
- Education, signage
- Funding incentives – for some – not all trails should be mixed use though, having specialized trails is good.
- Going forward, best practices can be identified
- National framework – classification system defines what these terms means that we can agree on, what is mixed use, what kind of trails to expect. – create a play book of what we can start with. Take something that is there, likes Parks Canada trail classifications and signage, and adapt and standardize them to be multi-user groups. \*\*\*\*\*
- Assessment of what exists, an inventory of what is there. The sector currently does not have a way to capture all that information.

## PRIORITIES

- Development of a glossary of terms that would provide consistent language throughout the sector
- Develop stronger communication, collaboration and a respect based model (perhaps a “code of conduct”) between all user groups in the sector
- Develop an education series aimed at both users and trail builders/managers (could be a national initiative supported/developed by CTF) this could include signage and informational brochures, videos, etc
- Development of a national classification system (perhaps use Parks Canada as a model)