

UPDATE #2 DRAFT

Recreation Trails Strategy for British Columbia

Trails Strategy Committee Summary of Second Meeting

Vancouver, BC

January 12, 2008

The following report is a summary of the results of the second meeting of the B.C. Trails Strategy Committee formed to develop the Recreation Trails Strategy for British Columbia.

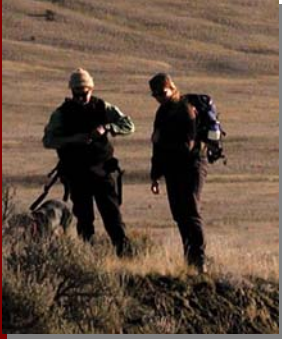
The Trails Strategy Committee (TSC) is comprised of individuals representing a wide spectrum of interests in recreation trails in BC. A list of TSC members and attendees at the meeting is provided on the last page.

The objectives of the second TSC meeting were to:

- Develop a work plan for Phase Two of the Trails Strategy;
- Determine how TSC members will consult with, and inform, constituents;
- Begin to identify and describe Key Issues, including the root causes, goals and strategies; and,
- Prioritize the key issues using a collaborative approach.

Trails Strategy Website:

www.tsa.gov.bc.ca/sites_trails/managing/recreation_trails_strategy.htm



Update on Current Government Direction re: ORVs



The Recreation Trails Strategy is intended to serve as the hub of a wheel connecting a broad range of organizations in a shared vision for British Columbia's world-class trail network

Vision

A world-renowned network of sustainable trails, accessible to all, which foster social, cultural, health, economic and environmental benefits for trails users, communities and the province.

Bill Marshall, MTSA and Chair of the Steering Committee that acts as project manager, welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the TSC. Bill outlined recent government direction with regard to recommendations put forward by the ORV Coalition in January 2006 (see www.orvcoalitionbc.org).

- In December the government outlined its current direction that ORV management will address improved safety measures, compliance & enforcement and a requirement for one-time registration of ORV's. This would be addressed via regulatory changes to the existing *Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act*.
- Other key trail-related Coalition recommendations, such as amending regulations for crossing roads and establishment of a trust fund tied to registration and licensing will not be implemented at this time.

Representatives of motorized recreation expressed their strong disappointment over government's decision not to endorse all of the recommendations given that they represent the consensus of a wide range of organizations. TSC members emphasized that it took 5 years and over \$100k to develop the recommendations. Given that one of government's goals is to increase tourism, a province-wide system of inter-connected trails would play a substantial role.

The Trails Strategy Committee (TSC) was assured that it is free to make recommendations in the Recreation Trails Strategy, if it so chooses, that are similar to the trail-related recommendations made by the ORV Coalition. Government may consider additional changes to ORV management in the future.

Review of TSC Decisions

TSC members confirmed the following decisions made to-date:

- Adoption of the revised Terms of Reference
- Adoption of the Vision and Guiding Principles as described in the Phase Two Strategy Process document titled *A Collaborative Approach to Developing a Trails Strategy for BC, November 2007*

The following principles will help guide development of the Recreation Trails Strategy:

Visionary yet pragmatic	Accountable
Collaborative	Timely
Consultative	Community-level implementation
Responsive to existing legislation and authorities	Guided strategically by existing policies and plans
Adaptive to changing social values	Provides Implementation Toolkit

Results on the Definition of Recreation Trails

TSC members discussed the importance of recognizing the multiple or “layered” role of recreation trails, including transportation, tourism, and leisure. Trails are increasingly utilized by commuters and are being raised as a priority for transportation planning. Having recreation trails that reduce the number of cars also allows funding to be accessed for reduction of greenhouse gases.

Revised Definition for Recreation Trails

“A recreation trail is a path or route solely or partly used for one or more recreation functions.”

- After discussion TSC members agreed to revise the definition of recreation trails for the purposes of the Trails Strategy as follows: “A recreation trail is a path or route solely or partly used for one or more recreation functions.”
- Members also agreed that a new paragraph was needed in the Draft Phase Two Strategy Process document to explain the notion of dual purposes and the role some recreation trails possess to encompass transportation purposes.

Results on Communication and Public Participation

TSC members discussed the importance of maintaining open and transparent communications to inform the public of its actions. Although government has not issued a formal news release on the Trails Strategy, it is mentioned in government’s Tourism Action Plan and MTSA’s Service Plan. In addition, the ORC published an article by Bill Marshall about the Trails Strategy initiative in its Outdoor Recreation Report (Summer 2007) (see www.orcbc.ca/research_pub.htm).

A collaborative approach to developing the strategy is considered imperative for long-term success in developing a world-class system of trails in the province.

The following points capture the essence of the results of discussions on public participation and communication with stakeholders:

Public Participation

- TSC endorsed the consultative/ collaborative approach in general outlined in the Phase Two Strategy Process document.
- TSC recognized the need to get input from private landowners on the trails strategy. No action is needed until TSC has a draft document for their feedback.

Communication with Stakeholders and Public

- Maintain the summary of meetings (i.e. the “update” format of this document).
- In addition, develop a one or two page punchy ‘bulletin’ as soon as possible for distribution by TSC members to constituents and/or use by TSC organizations in their respective newsletters (such as ORC’s Outdoor Recreation Report).
- The TSC would like MTSA to consider issuing a media release about the Trails Strategy process.
- TSC members representing motorized recreation will provide recommendations on how copies of the bulletin could be most efficiently distributed to a wide range of retail dealerships.
- TSC members are encouraged to work with their respective organizations to utilize internet “blogs” as a means of obtaining feedback as the strategy develops.

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- TSC members will work with MTSA to develop an up-to-date distribution list, noting, in particular, any potential gaps with respect to organizations that should be added.

Results on Community Meetings

The TSC agreed on the following points, recognizing the importance of community meetings in key locations throughout the province:

- The TSC recommends a two step process to community meetings:
 - First, the Recreation Trails Steering Committee (as project manager) consider budget, hub locations, driving distances, and regional geographic coverage to create a draft list of community meetings for presentation to the TSC
 - Second, TSC will review the draft list and make recommendations on the locations of community meetings as well as how to best organize the meetings themselves (e.g. when they should occur and who should be contacted about attending)
- Based on feedback from the TSC, a revised communication/consultation approach is to be outlined prior to the next meeting at the end of February 2008.

Top 10 Issues:

1. Access (e.g. securing motorized & non-motorized opportunities, private land limitations, deteriorating roads)

2. Limited funding to develop and maintain trails

3. Insurance/ liability

4. Environmental impacts (e.g., ORV impacts; soil erosion)

5. Limited resources (e.g., volunteers)

6. Legislative gaps (e.g., need for ORV legislation)

7. Trails information (e.g., limited funds)

8. Signage (e.g., educational signs)

9. Increasing trail use

10. Compliance and enforcement

Overview of Key Issues

The discussion revolved around the Top 10 issues cited in the Phase One Background Report (listed to the left). John Hawkings, TSC Chair, outlined some of the challenges and tasks ahead with respect to key issues:

- Need to define the key issues in more detail and to elaborate on their nature;
- Need to understand their causes in order to develop strategies; and,
- Need to initiate discussions on potential strategies that address the issues.

The TSC agreed to discuss as many of the Top Issues in detail as time permits during the meeting, including both causes of issues and suggested strategies.

During the discussion, TSC members made the following points:

- Recommend addressing motorized and non-motorized use opportunities as a critical issue under “Access”; identifying what BC and other jurisdictions have already done can assist the TSC in the formulation of strategies
- The ‘access’ issue will need to be split into separate issues while some other issues can be lumped (like information and signage)
- Some issues will overlap and can be consolidated into categories such as: Information & Signage; Funding & Resources; and Legislation, Compliance & Enforcement.
- Marketing of trails, trail inventory, increased demand/use of trails, and rails-to-trails issues, including railway right-of-way abandonment, need to be further considered as potential priority issues.

Results on Key Issues Discussed

Access-related Issues:

This update is designed to provide an overview of TSC discussions and decisions made.

Issue of Motorized and Non-motorized Trail Designation

TSC members recognize the sensitive nature of this issue. The shared view is that most motorized (M) and non-motorized (NM) trail use conflicts are caused by increasing use of recreation trails by a multitude of users who have different values. Different values may be compatible in some cases and may not be in others; therefore multiple use trails should be considered where possible, but not in all cases.

- A set of principles could help guide consideration of appropriate application of M and NM trail designations, where needed. For example, guiding principles for multi-use trails could include feasibility, safety, and avoidance of user conflicts.
- Recognizing that there is no ‘one shoe fits all’ solution to M and NM trail designation, the TSC plans to develop a tool kit of considerations that can be used to assist those involved in addressing these issues at the local/regional level, rather than trying to develop one standard formula for all situations.
- The tool kit could include criteria for evaluating options; best models solutions for approaching M and NM trail designations; types of support available from government to legislate trail designations and enforce them; and a range of approaches for funding capital development of trails and trail maintenance.

Issue of Private Land Limitations

The TSC recognizes at least two aspects to this issue: first, ensuring long term access across private lands for a trail; second, instances where there is a change in land use for private lands (going from vacant to residential as an example); issues are caused by limitations on land use since a trail is going through private lands. In order to address this issue, the TSC made the following points:

- Strategies are needed that address private landowner concerns such as liability.
- Need to investigate innovative options such as tax credits to offset economic losses to landowners.
- Need to review the adequacy of the *Occupiers Liability Act* (OLA) to see if changes are needed.

Issue of Deteriorating Resource Roads

As part of this discussion, Alan Callander, Transportation Policy Branch, outlined pending legislation called the “Resource Road Act Initiative” (RRAI). RRAI will streamline the administration of resource roads and will address who is managing and has responsibility for a road. One RRAI objective is to allow resource roads to continue to be managed (i.e. facilitate the transfer of responsibilities) when the original administrator no longer needs a road, provided another industrial user does need the road and is willing to take on management responsibility.

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- TSC members would like to have the chance to comment on the proposed Resource Road Act as soon as possible.

Issue of Limited Funding

Several possible causes were discussed for this issue, including lack of an overall strategy; no user fee policies; no government monies similar to other best model jurisdictions; lack of corporate sponsors, and lack of marketing funds. Members raised the idea of a sustainable user-funded mechanism, such as the trust fund proposed by the ORV Coalition, to raise funds for education and safety programs, trail development including maintenance and enhancement, enforcement, and conservation and stewardship.

- TSC agrees on the need for a base-funding program from government augmented by user fees (e.g. ORV Coalition recommendation re: trust fund), corporate sponsorships, and events.

Other Issues

The TSC agreed that other issues needed to be discussed at the next meeting. To support this the TSC chair will work with consultants to further describe the issue (e.g. causes), and identify possible strategies and desired outcomes if issue were resolved.

Action Items For Meeting #3

The TSC discussed the actions to be taken after this meeting and the following was agreed upon before the next meeting to be held in Richmond, BC on Friday-Saturday, February 29 – March 1, 2008:

Action Items:

1. Suitable arrangements are to be made for the TSC to meet on Friday Feb. 29 and Saturday March 1 for 1.5 days, in Richmond BC.
2. The TSC Chair will work with the consultants to implement the direction provided by the TSC, as noted during the meeting (and reflected in this update)
3. The Trails Steering Committee is requested to provide feedback on proposed timelines presented below for key process steps (recognized the possible need to tighten the proposed timelines)

Next meeting to be held in Richmond, BC on Friday – Saturday, February 29 – March 1, 2008

Proposed Work Plan for Developing the Trails Strategy

- TSC develops draft strategies for key issues (January to April, 2008)
- TSC develops draft Trails Strategy report (May – June)
- TSC circulates draft report to communities and organizations (July-August)
- TSC launches community meetings starting with UBCM AGM (Sept – Nov)
- TSC reviews feedback received on draft report (Dec-Jan, 2009)
- TSC prepares final Trails Strategy report (Feb-March)

Trails Strategy Committee

Attendees at the January 12th TSC Meeting:

Non-government

Les Auston	Snowmobilers	BC Snowmobile Federation
Jack Becker	Transportation Cycling	BC Cycling Coalition
James Brown	Off-road Cycling	International Mountain Biking Association
Bev Felske	ATV'ers	Quad Riders Association of BC (ATV/BC)
David Lock	Off-Road Motorcyclists	BC Off-Road Motorcycle Association
Evan Loveless	Hiking/Pedestrians	Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC
Jeremy McCall	Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Recreation Council of BC
Isabel Pritchard	Equestrians	Horse Council BC, and Back Country Horsemen of BC

Government

Lynn Bremner	Environment	BC Parks
Alan Callander	Transportation	Transportation Policy Branch
Brian Farquhar	Union of BC Municipalities	Cowichan Valley Regional District
John Hawkings, TSC chair	Tourism, Sport and the Arts	Recreation, Sites and Trails Branch
Bill Lux	First Nations	Kaska Dene

Recreation Trails Steering Committee

Bill Marshall	Tourism, Sport and the Arts	Chair, Recreation Trails Steering Committee (project manager)
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Regrets:

Wendy Magnes	Tourism BC	Regional and Sector Programs
Jon Heshka	Academia	Thompson River University

Membership Updates:

- Brenda Baptiste, Chair, Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC, has indicated she is interested in being involved in the Provincial Trail Strategy at the Steering Committee level.
- Evan Loveless is also willing to represent adventure tourism interests on TSC (i.e. Wilderness Tourism Association)

Consulting Team

Terje Vold	Warren Mitchell
Blair Baldwin	George Sranko