

UPDATE #1

Recreation Trails Strategy for British Columbia

Trails Strategy Committee Summary of First Meeting

Vancouver, BC

November 13, 2007

This update provides a summary of the results of the first meeting of the Trails Strategy Committee (TSC). The TSC was formed to develop a Recreation Trails Strategy for British Columbia (BC).

The Trails Strategy Committee 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 of this update.

The objectives of the first meeting were to:

- officially convene the TSC and have committee members introduce themselves;
- familiarize TSC members with the overall Trails Strategy Project (all phases) and the Phase 1 Background Report;
- discuss the proposed process for developing the Trails Strategy (Phase 2);
- begin to develop a Terms of Reference for the TSC and the Phase 2 Work Plan.

Trails Strategy Website:

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



The overall purpose of the Recreation Trails Strategy is to establish clear strategic direction for planning, developing, acquiring, maintaining, managing, promoting and using trails in BC

The Phase 1 Background Report was completed in May 2007. Its purposes were to:

1. Identify existing trails in BC
2. Identify trail related legislation and policy issues
3. Describe recreation trends related to trails
4. Identify successful trail strategies in other jurisdictions and in BC
5. Describe strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the existing trail network
6. Describe and rate key challenges/ issues related to trail development
7. Describe and rate the benefits of trails
8. Identify and rate criteria to assist with the prioritization of trail networks for development and marketing
9. Identify links to other initiatives and how they can be strengthened

Background

The government of British Columbia's Tourism Action Plan has identified the need for a Recreation Trails Strategy. The BC Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts (MTSA), in conjunction with BC Parks, is fostering the development of a Recreation Trails Strategy for British Columbia.

The overall purpose of the Recreation Trails Strategy is to establish clear strategic direction for planning, developing, acquiring, maintaining, managing, promoting and using trails in BC. The strategy is designed to support cooperation among government agencies, communities, not-for-profit and private sectors, and First Nations to work toward a shared vision for recreation trails. Overall, development of the Trails Strategy will contribute to all five of the Government's Great Goals relating to employment, sustainability, health, education and social support; thereby assisting BC in becoming a world leader in these critical areas.

Multi-phased Approach

MTSA has embarked upon a multi-phased approach to the development of the BC Recreation Trails Strategy that includes the development of a Background Report (Phase 1), the subsequent development by the TSC of a Trails Strategy for BC in consultation with stakeholders, agencies and First Nations (Phase 2), the development of an action plan for implementing the strategy (Phase 3), and provisions for monitoring and updating the strategy over time (Phase 4).

The TSC was formed after the completion of the Phase 1 Report with the aim of developing the Trails Strategy for BC (Phase 2).

Purpose of TSC

The proposed purpose of the TSC is to collaboratively develop:

1. An overall vision of how recreation trails may be managed to ensure that they achieve their optimum economic, social and environmental values and benefits to communities and the province as a whole;
2. A set of guiding principles to assist the formulation of the BC Recreation Trails Strategy;
3. Effective objectives and action steps to address the key topics or issues identified in consideration of the Background Report; and,
4. A broadly supported process and budget for the development Recreation Trails Strategy that could be efficiently implemented in a subsequent Phase 3 strategy implementation process.

Initial Steps

The initial task of TSC involves the confirmation of its Terms of Reference and the development of the process for completing the Trails Strategy including a work plan with key deliverables and timelines. The process will involve consultation with communities, local stakeholders, and First Nations.

Introduction of TSC



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

Bill Marshall, MTSA welcomed the TSC members and outlined three main deliverables for the TSC. These include:

1. Create a tool kit for all recreation trail users and trail builders to address the main issues;
2. Build a blueprint for a comprehensive trails system for all users and linking communities and within communities
3. Form an ongoing Recreation Trails Advisory Committee after the Trails Strategy is developed.

It was agreed by the TSC that the Recreation Trails Strategy is intended to serve as the hub of a wheel connecting the broad range of organizations that have historically worked independently, drawing them together to endorse a shared vision to effectively and consistently develop and manage British Columbia's world-class trail network.

John Hawkings, Trails Manager, MTSA reviewed the process to date and indicated that the main outcome of the initial two meetings of the TSC is to design a process to build the Recreation Trails Strategy.

The first order of business was to form the TSC; review the Phase 1 Report; develop the Terms of Reference for the TSC. The second order of business was to set a date for the second TSC meeting; to be held Saturday January 12, 2008 in Richmond, BC.

Phase 1 Background Report Reviewed

The consulting team presented an overview of the results of Phase 1. The full report is posted on MTSA's public website. Members of the TSC made a number of constructive comments concerning the power point presentation. These comments are summarized below and will be incorporated into a revised presentation for future use by the TSC as part of the public consultation process.

- Trails Access as it relates to First Nations Territories is a primary issue
- Environmental impacts on trails must also be augmented by addressing cultural impacts on trails
- Need to consider how best to consult with First Nations on a formal basis
- Must distinguish between stakeholders, federal, provincial, regional, municipal governments, industry, First Nations especially as it relates to the governance models
- Education of all parties is very critical to dealing with resolution of issues and is also tied to the marketing of the recreation trails
- The marketing of trails must be added as a key success factor. The

These comments will be incorporated into a revised presentation for future use by the TSC as part of the public consultation process

marketing of recreation trails is a delicate balance at present since there is a demand from consumers to use trails yet there are many issues such as liability, trail use and governance that need to be addressed before the marketing can begin

- There are some self funding mechanisms that relate to trails and compliance and enforcement such as proposed off-road vehicle (ORV) licensing that must be pushed ahead as a part of the process
- The government must recognize its role to insure local volunteer groups. There is current case law that may make volunteer groups liable and this risk has to be insured by the landowners or there may be a requirement for legislative change
- The resolution of conflicts needs to be partly managed through trail use designation and enforcement and partly defined by the trail use experience that will be promoted.

Phase 2 Process - Design a Process for Developing a BC Recreation Trails Strategy

The committee agreed that there is a need to develop an appropriate vision and guiding principles. Objectives are required and they should be based on a prioritization of issues raised in the Phase 1 Background Report.

Results on Vision

The TSC is tasked with the development of a Trails Strategy including the creation of a vision for the BC recreation trails. The “vision” should be for the desired future condition of recreation trails in BC.

After discussion, the TSC developed three (3) alternatives for the vision as follows:

Vision Option #1

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

Vision Option #2

BC Recreation Trails’ system provides exciting opportunities for all its citizens to participate and enjoy the beauty of the outdoors.

Vision Option #3

An exciting and comprehensive trail network providing the BC outdoor experience for the public.

The consensus of the TSC was that the members preferred Vision Option #1.

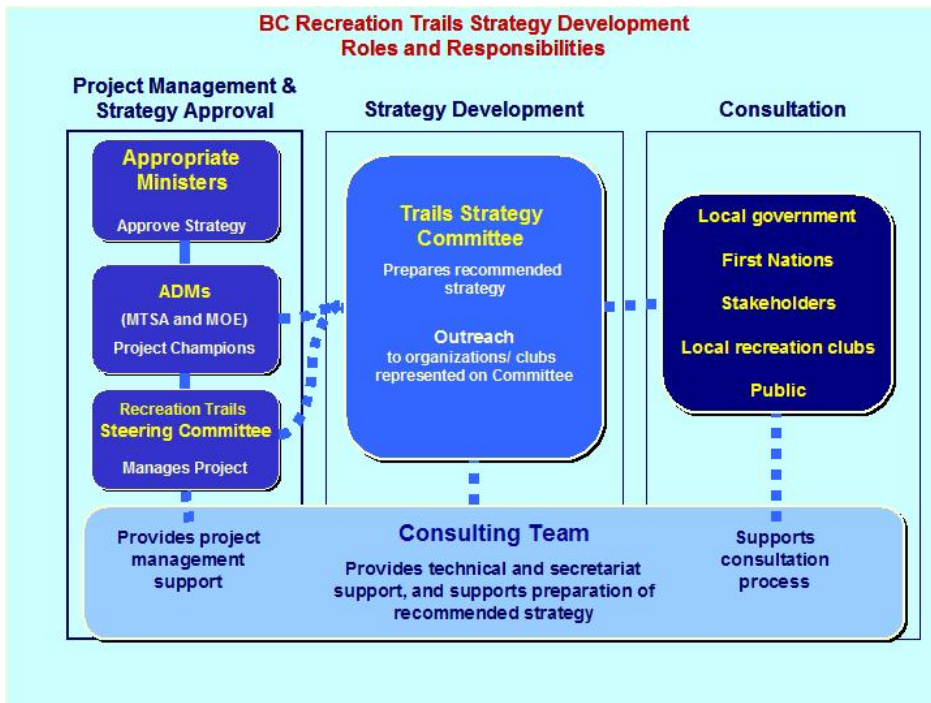
VISION

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

Presentation and Discussion of Phase 2 Process

The consulting team made a second presentation which outlined:

- a possible model for the Phase 2 process, including Guiding Principles and sought the comments and approval of the TSC in these areas, and
- the proposed Terms of Reference for TSC.



Key components of the proposed process include:

1. An appropriate overall structure to guide and lead Phase 2 where roles and responsibilities are clear (see Figure);
2. An inclusive, consultative, and collaborative approach;
3. An opportunity for targeted research on key tasks needed to support the strategy; and,
4. An established timeline for developing the strategy, including key milestones.

Results on Proposed Governance Model

The TSC agreed in principle on these components and the governance model. Comments on the proposed process and governance model which need to be addressed include:

- The Trails Strategy approval will involve a process whereby the Province consults with First Nations
- Need to inform the First Nations Leadership Council on a government-to-government basis that the TSC is building a process to develop a Trails Strategy, so that First Nations have an opportunity to provide input
- There is a need for consultation with First Nations as part of the Trails Strategy development and approval process in order to receive First Nations support for implementing the strategy. Effective consultation when developing the Trails Strategy will aid its implementation

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- Other organizations do not need to be members on TSC, but TSC supported the need to keep other potential sector groups informed, including the forest industry, trappers, commercial recreation operators including guide outfitters, and the 2010 group
 - The TSC should consider developing the Trails Strategy in consultation with existing Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) tables.
 - Have TSC meetings in different communities and invite local groups

The TSC also discussed the need for consultation and research as essential elements in the process to be followed;

- Need to explore past BC history in developing a recreation trails strategy along with other jurisdictions so we can learn from lessons of the past
- Need to set an agreed-upon date for a completed Trails Strategy (perhaps use a date of 2015 since that is already in place in the Tourism Action Plan with respect to doubling tourism revenues and the plan mentions the need for a Trails Strategy)
- Need to design a strategy for the future considering available technology
- Need to add timelines to our process
- Before we can set objectives, we need to agree upon which issues we want to tackle

Results on Guiding Principles

The TSC generally accepted the proposed guiding principles and provided the following comments:

- Need to add First Nations land use plans in addition to provincial land use plans
- Don't link guiding principles too specifically to current government goals as they may change. If we are too specific, we may shorten the life of the strategy as government goals can change from year to year
- "Recreation trails" need to be defined up front (check definitions in Phase 1 Report)
- Need to recognize that the TSC has to connect with non-government organizations and not just government
- Guiding principles should address accountability
- Recognize that destination tourism potential is huge and there is a place for it in the Trails Strategy. Communities can utilize the Trails Strategy for marketing purposes and also market recreation trails to destination tourists
- Identify the need for consultation and engagement as part of the process (including First Nations and others such as forest industry)

Results on Terms of Reference

The TSC generally endorsed the Terms of Reference and provided the following comments:

- General Purpose - #1 add “cultural”
- Add reporting back to each member’s constituents
- Vision for BC recreation trails needs to be identified before we talk about management
- Number of meetings under term? Start with two meetings to get the process accepted and then the TSC will determine the number of subsequent meetings that may be needed

Action Items For Meeting #2

The TSC discussed the process after this meeting and the following was agreed upon before the next meeting to be held in Richmond, BC on Saturday January 12, 2008:

1. Minutes – detailed minutes from the meeting to be sent by November 16 to all TSC members who will review them and send comments by November 23
2. The consulting team will then finalize the minutes and prepare a summary that would remove all name references and be available for distribution and posting on TSC members’ websites. Aim for early December.
3. Terms of Reference will be revised by the consulting team and distributed back to TSC by early December.
4. The Phase 2 Process Overview document will be revised, based on TSC comments, and distributed back to TSC (e.g. this will include proposed vision statement and revised guiding principles).

The Terms of Reference will be revised to reflect feedback received at the meeting

Next meeting to be held in Richmond, BC on Saturday January 12, 2008

In addition to the action items above, the TSC was asked to think about the following questions which will require preparation on behalf of all members:

1. The TSC will need to recommend a strategy process that involves an outline of the steps required for consultation and research and to also identify timelines.
2. In order to do this, the TSC will need to prioritize issues to identify the nature of consultation and research and to set objectives. These issues are set out in the Phase 1 Background Report sent to each member. Each member will need to review these issues, and all main trends and key success factors to then prioritize the top issues (no number was discussed but 10 would be one target).
3. The TSC at the 2nd meeting will need to bring forward the top issues, agree upon them and then discuss the objectives stemming from these issues and the process to address these issues through research and consultation and build a rough budget and timelines.

Attendees at the November 13th TSC Meeting:

Members of the Trails Strategy Committee

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)
Jon Heshka	Academia	Thompson River University
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 Arts	Recreation, Sites and Trails Branch
Bill Lux	First Nations	Kaska Dene
Wendy Magnes	Tourism BC	Regional and Sector Programs

Recreation Trails Steering Committee

Bill Marshall – Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts – Chair, Recreation Trails Steering Committee

Consulting Team

Terje Vold

Warren Mitchell

Blair Baldwin

George Sranko (not in attendance)