

Charting a Path: Recommendations for the Confederation Trail

October 2024

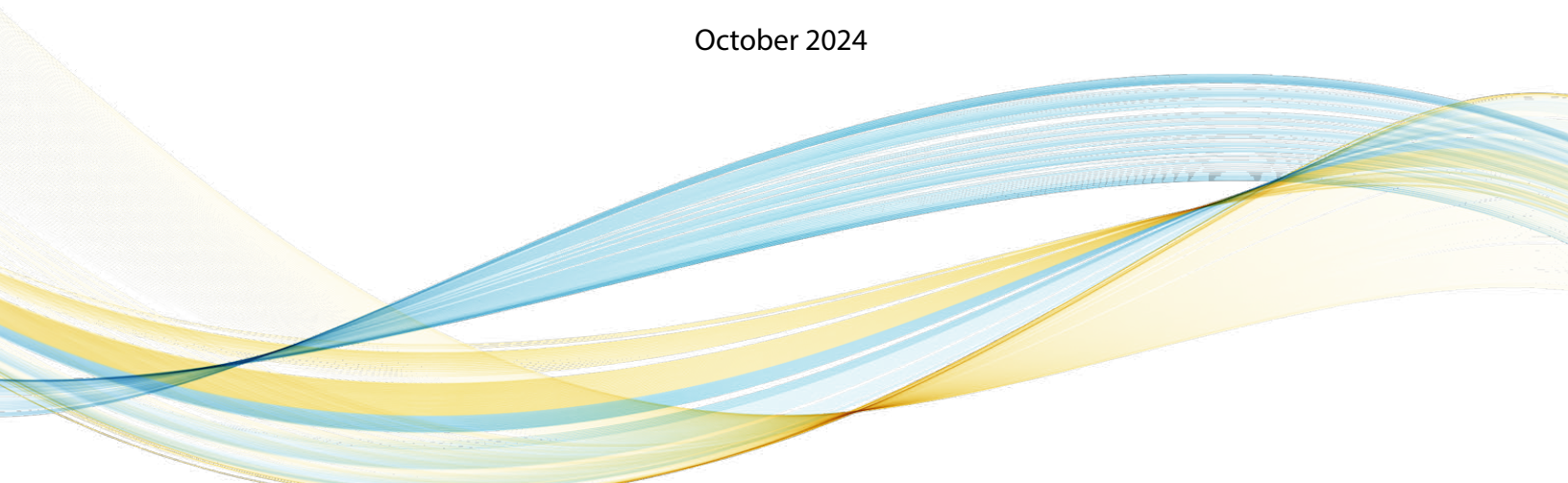


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Land Acknowledgement

The land on which we work is the ancestral land of the Mi'kmaq and we respect the Mi'kmaq as the Indigenous Peoples of PEI.

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2023, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure initiated a comprehensive review of the current and future use of the Confederation Trail. The user group review was conducted by the local strategic communications firm VOLUME18 and included three key components:

1. Public engagement and the development of a What We Heard report
2. A cross-jurisdictional analysis
3. A final report with recommendations for the provincial government to consider

The [What We Heard report](#), released in January 2024, summarized the feedback collected during the consultation phase and highlighted a consensus on the guiding principles of environmental stewardship.

The Province also confirmed that the Confederation Trail will remain motor-free to ensure safety for all permitted users. To address safety concerns presented by all-terrain vehicle users, the Province will work with the PEI ATV Federation to develop a [separate, designated ATV trail system](#).

The recommendations in this report are developed for the provincial government to consider for future improvements to the Confederation Trail. The recommendations are based on input from the Island-wide consultation, best practices from other regions, and lessons learned from their experiences. The primary objective is to enhance the Confederation Trail experience for all permitted user groups.

The recommendations are organized into three main themes:

1. **User Group Categories:** Define and promote user group categories to clarify permitted access.
2. **Collaboration:** Foster increased collaboration among user groups to improve information sharing and trail etiquette.
3. **Communication:** Enhance communication through better signage, maps, and promotional efforts.

These themes will guide infrastructure enhancements and provide data on usage, including trip planning, maintenance, safety, and enforcement. Priorities also include making the trail more accessible, with improvements for people with mobility needs using aids such as wheelchairs and canes.

Additionally, strategic partnerships and marketing initiatives for the Confederation Trail will highlight its tourism and economic benefits, both within the province and beyond, while ensuring the preservation of its historical, cultural, and ecological significance.

The recommendations in this report are centered around the preservation and enhancement of the Confederation Trail, a unique non-motorized pathway that serves as a vital link, connecting communities across the Island.

History of the Confederation Trail on PEI

The Confederation Trail was built on railway tracks that once crossed PEI as part of the Canadian Pacific. The process began in the 1990's with a dedicated group of volunteers and partners to create a world-class recreational trail. The original goals of the Confederation Trail were:

- To be a world-class tourism resource for the province.
- To provide a non-motorized continuous multi-use trail across PEI and to increase recreational opportunities for all people.
- To provide a renewed link connecting Island communities and to provide direct access between urban and rural areas.
- To serve as an east-west spine by connecting regional and local trails and trail organizations.
- To enable trail users to experience the spectrum of Island landscapes, from urban to rural, and to provide access to Island heritage.
- To create opportunities for people to meet, communicate with and appreciate others from around the province and beyond.
- To be a stimulus for increased national, provincial and local business and non-profit activity and partnership.
- To stimulate conservation of important scenic, historic, natural and cultural areas.

The Confederation Trail was the first provincial route of the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) to be completed in Canada. It spans over 430 kilometres and seamlessly connects the entire Island, providing a safe and accessible venue for individuals to engage in summer activities like walking, hiking, running, and cycling.

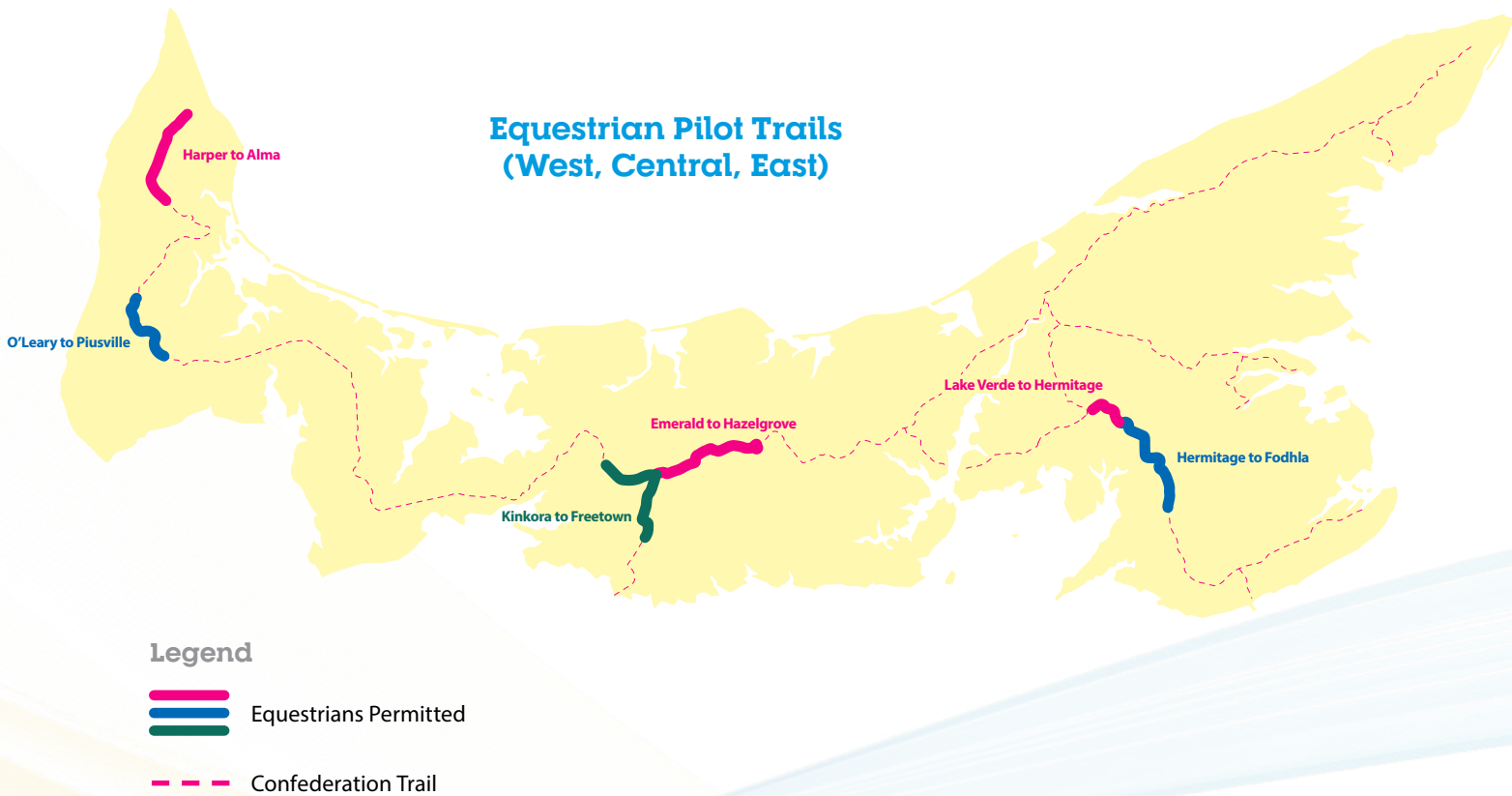
The trail is primarily reserved for snowmobiles in winter, except for inner-urban trails. Since 1996, the PEI Snowmobile Association and its members have maintained and operated the trail during the specified time period. This seasonal lease agreement reduces government maintenance expenses while ensuring continuous recreational access to the Confederation Trail throughout the year.

PEI's Island Walk was introduced in 2021 as a community-led event. This 700-kilometre walking route loops around the Island, primarily following the Confederation Trail. Since its launch, this unique hiking experience has attracted hundreds of participants, with many even traveling internationally to complete it.

In 2021, the Equestrian pilot project was launched in response to equestrians wanting access to safe public trails. The initiative implemented a 3-month horse-friendly period on strategically located sections of the Confederation Trail, including Prince, Queens, and Kings County. The pilot project was designed to offer a safe place for trail equestrians to distance ride and was accompanied by comprehensive guidelines on riding etiquette and trail maintenance.

In 2013, the W. Garfield Weston Foundation donated \$1 million to the TCT in PEI, and the TCT contributed \$400,000 to finish it by 2014, the 150th Anniversary of the Meetings of the Fathers of Confederation. At that time, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure had declared that the trail would be a greenway in perpetuity. "Greenways" are sections of the TCT reserved in the summer for walking, hiking, running, cycling, horseback riding and canoeing.

In 2020, PEI began allowing ATVs to cross the Confederation Trail at designated crossings. The crossings are available all year and are managed and maintained by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, and the PEI Snowmobile Association in the winter months.



Methodology for Confederation Trail Recommendations

The Confederation Trail User Group Review undertook a comprehensive community engagement process (See Appendix 1) and jurisdictional scan to inform recommendations (See Appendix 2).

The primary method for data collection from residents was an online survey designed to engage a wide-ranging audience, covering various aspects of trail usage, values, and potential improvements. Complementing the online survey were four community engagement sessions that facilitated direct interaction with local stakeholders. The sessions were held in Mill River, Borden, the Capital Region, and St. Peters, as these areas have higher user group populations and crossover. These sessions allowed participants from various user groups to share their perspectives, fostering community dialogue in shaping the trail's future. Lastly, an open call for written submissions allowed individuals and organizations across PEI to offer detailed and insightful perspectives and suggestions for trail enhancement and safety protocols.

A jurisdictional scan examined legislation frameworks, policies, and practices governing trail management and user group interactions in Canada and the Northeastern United States. Data to help inform the scan was collected from government websites, legislative regulations, relevant third-party documents, and direct correspondence. The scan provided valuable insights into the approaches adopted by different regions regarding trail usage and access rights, maintenance and infrastructure, conflict resolution mechanisms, enforcement regulations and policies.

Summary of Findings from Jurisdictional Scan

The approaches between Canadian jurisdictions for managing trail users range from Québec's (QC) segregation of motorized and non-motorized users to British Columbia's (BC) permissive approach to trail use, where any use is permitted until it is problematic.

Governance and ownership approaches to trails differ by province from government owned and managed to non-governmental management. In addition to this, the potential for safety concerns of conflict amongst user groups was apparent throughout the scan. Many jurisdictions focused on education, shared governance models, and developing best practices and etiquette to combat conflicts. Consistent enforcement was cited as a weakness for the success of these approaches.

It should also be noted the variance in range when comparing each province and state's environment and geology. Some recommendations for PEI depend heavily on the environment and geology of the trail bed.

A Vision for the Confederation Trail

Participants in the consultation played a crucial role in shaping and validating the vision.

The vision for the Confederation Trail emerged from a collective desire to create a community space that preserves natural beauty and sustainable living on PEI, focusing on safety, environmental stewardship, and the celebration of local heritage. This shared vision will lay the groundwork for the development of a trail that resonates with both residents and tourists.

Vision: To cultivate and enhance the Confederation Trail as a non-motorized trail connecting Prince Edward Island's communities while promoting connectivity, recreation and nature.

Safety and Well-being:

Promote well-being and outdoor recreation on the Confederation Trail.

Unwavering commitment to ensure safety and foster activity through regular evaluations and maintenance.

Advocate for responsible conduct on the trail and offer comprehensive safety training.

Environmental Stewardship and Conservation:

Safeguard and nurture the natural habitats, plants, and biodiversity.

Utilize eco-conscious practices in areas of trail development, upkeep, and use.

Collaborate closely with environmental organizations to identify and mitigate detrimental environmental impacts.

Community Engagement and Collaboration:

Actively involve local communities, Indigenous communities, and stakeholders in decision-making.

Forge meaningful partnerships with community entities to organize events, conduct maintenance activities, and provide educational initiatives.

Work collaboratively with partners to enhance the economic prosperity of the trail and the neighbouring communities.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage:

Honour the historical and cultural significance of the trail's legacy.

Work collaboratively with Indigenous communities and cultural groups to safeguard and honour ancestral heritage.

Host engaging cultural workshops and events to showcase the trail's cultural and historical significance.

Recommendations for the Future of the Confederation Trail

The following recommendations for the use and development of future enhancements of the Confederation Trail are grounded in extensive research, including a jurisdictional scan, a series of user group workshops and other feedback collection methods. This approach ensures that the insights drawn from similar trails, as well as the needs and feedback from all user groups, shape these recommendations. Prioritizing safety, accessibility and ecological preservation are integral to the trail's usability while maintaining its unique natural beauty.

USER GROUPS OF THE CONFEDERATION TRAIL

The research and public engagement feedback indicates that the Confederation Trail users would benefit from greater certainty and clarity about permitted users. Other jurisdictions noted that education, shared governance, as well as publication of best practices and etiquette would reduce conflict between permitted users and non-permitted users.

Several other provinces require permitting systems for snowmobiles and ATVs, enabling a cost-recovery system for the government or respective associations to build and maintain existing trails. PEI established this model for the PEI Snowmobile Association to work with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to issue permits and collect fees for the maintenance and development of snowmobile trails.

The Government of PEI also established this model for the PEI ATV Federation in 2024. It is committed to developing a standalone, provincial ATV trail system outside the Confederation Trail.

To provide certainty and clarity about permitted user groups, the *Trails Act* should be amended to reinforce permitted users and reduce the need for further consultation about groups permitted on the trail.

Permitted Users

To prioritize safety, enhance environmental enjoyment, and promote recreational activities, the Confederation Trail is and will continue to be exclusively reserved for non-motorized recreation, with the exclusion of snowmobiles.

Individuals using the trail with their dogs will require dogs to be kept on a leash, contributing to a safe experience and preventing potential conflicts between pets and other trail users while upholding responsible pet ownership principles.

By maintaining this restriction, the trail can offer a peaceful and secure environment for individuals to engage in physical activities such as walking, jogging, or cycling. This approach ensures the safety of trail users and fosters a sense of community and connection with nature. People can fully immerse themselves in the surroundings without the noise and pollution associated with motorized transportation.

Outside of winter months, activity on the Confederation Trail is limited to walkers and hikers, wheelchairs, cyclists, runners, and equestrians who can use some sections of the trail on a trial basis. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the Confederation Trail except for:

- motorized wheelchairs and scooters for people needing mobility support,
- emergency response vehicles,
- power-assisted bikes,
- snowmobiles in the winter, and
- ATVs at designated legal crossings in rural areas.

Preserving the Confederation Trail for non-motorized use aligns with the province's environmental conservation efforts. By limiting access to pedestrians, cyclists, and wheelchair users, the trail can minimize its ecological footprint and preserve the natural habitats and landscapes. Additionally, promoting non-motorized modes of transportation will support PEI's sustainability goals by reducing carbon emissions.

Furthermore, maintaining the Confederation Trail's exclusivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and wheelchair users enhances the overall recreational experience for visitors and locals alike. By prioritizing these modes of travel, the trail remains more accessible to individuals of all ages and abilities.

Goal #1: Ensure that permitted users of the Confederation Trail can safely enjoy the entirety of the trail.

Recommendations:

- Create guidelines for speed limits that classify different user groups, encompassing current users and those utilizing emerging technologies like mobility aids and e-bikes.
- Post speed limits through the trail and enhance enforcement.

Expected Outcome: The Confederation Trail will provide a safe and enjoyable experience for pedestrians, cyclists, and wheelchair users, regardless of new technological advances or recreational activities that would be considered motorized or above a permitted speed limit.

Seasonally Permitted Users

Maintaining the current lease agreement between the Government of PEI and the PEI Snowmobile Association for using the Confederation Trail during winter ensures safe snowmobile recreation and efficient winter trail management. By allowing the Association, on a date determined by the Association due to snow cover, to assume maintenance and control of operations from December to March, the government can leverage the dedication of a specialized organization to continue to manage the trail's upkeep during the winter. This arrangement relieves the government of the logistical and financial burden of winter trail maintenance and ensures that the trail is used recreationally in the winter.



This continued relationship during the winter on the Confederation Trail will benefit snowmobilers and contribute to the region's economic vitality by attracting visitors and supporting local businesses dependent on winter tourism. Preserving the current lease agreement aligns with the government's objectives of promoting outdoor recreation and rural economic development in PEI.

The participants of the user group consultations (see Appendix 1) noted that they would like some access to the Confederation Trail for snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and hiking in the winter. Since the Association does not use the Confederation Trail in Charlottetown, Summerside, or Montague, the municipality could assume the winter maintenance of the trail in these areas to promote winter outdoor recreation, if appropriate.

Goal #2: Provide the PEI Snowmobile Association access to the Confederation Trail for permitted snowmobiles with an agreement that the association assumes responsibility for maintenance, trail grooming, and signage during the permitted time of access.

Recommendations:

- Renew the lease agreement with the PEI Snowmobile Association for the continued permitted use of the Confederation Trail for snowmobiles.
 - Access for snowmobiling will be maintained from December to March, with the PEI Snowmobile Association assuming responsibility and providing notification.
- Collaborate with the municipalities of Charlottetown, Summerside, and Montague to maintain and groom the respective segments of the Confederation Trail during the same period for alternative winter activities like snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and hiking.
- Encourage further discussion with multiple stakeholders on winter maintenance responsibilities with municipalities where snowmobiles don't have winter access (Charlottetown, Summerside, and Montague).

Expected Outcome: Permitted snowmobile users can continue to enjoy the Confederation Trail and build upon the economic and tourism benefits for the winter season.

The other three segments of the Confederation Trail not utilized by the PEI Snowmobile Association continue to allow Island residents to increase their physical activity and recreation during the winter months with the support of the municipalities and recreational organizations.



Section-Specific Permitted Users

Equestrians require off-road trails that provide access to other regions and a way to connect with nature to increase recreational and tourism opportunities for the sector.

Goal #3: Provide recreational equestrian opportunities for riders across the province.

Recommendations:

- After completing a trail user count over two years, determine portions of the Confederation Trail most suitable for equestrian use.
- Collaborate with equestrians to consider a process that mirrors the snowmobile licensing to develop a source of revenue for trail maintenance and education for equestrian users of the Confederation Trail.

Expected Outcome: Equestrians will have access to a trail appropriate to their use across the province that provide safe areas to enjoy and increase the potential for equestrian tourism development.

Non-Permitted Users

The recreational vehicle sector of PEI is growing in terms of ATVs, quads, side-by-sides, 4-wheelers, and dirt bikes. Through consultations with user groups for the Confederation Trail, enthusiasts requested these sports have a connected trail system on PEI. However, it was also highlighted that mixing non-vehicle users with recreational vehicles is not safe due to the structure and layout of the Confederation Trail.

Goal #4: Ensure that off-highway and motor vehicles are not accessing the Confederation Trail except at the designated crossings.

Goal #5: Work with the PEI ATV Federation to develop a plan for a network of ATV trails for recreational vehicles to use safely.

Recommendations:

- Increase signage to explicitly outline the permitted users on the Confederation Trail.
- Provide more public-facing information to increase awareness for ATV access routes across the Island outside the Confederation Trail.
- Review provisions to restrict motorized vehicles on the Confederation Trail, mainly where violations are more likely to occur.
- Increase trail surveillance and enforcement, i.e., through trail enforcement officers, where violations are more likely to occur.

Expected Outcome: Reduce the number of non-permitted users accessing the Confederation Trail while increasing permitted users' safety and lowering maintenance costs.

Having a separate ATV network of trails outside the Confederation Trail will allow recreational vehicles to safely access our province off-road, tip-to-tip, and promote the industry to residents and visitors without impacting the safety and enjoyment of Confederation Trail users.

Trail Etiquette and Safety Requirements

Trail etiquette and safety requirements for all permitted users are vital for fostering a secure outdoor recreational environment. By establishing and adhering to these standards, user groups will ensure their well-being and contribute to preserving the trail's natural beauty.

Goal #6: Collaborate with all Confederation Trail stakeholders to develop best practices for etiquette, trail-related planning, and programming to foster safety and respect for user groups.

Recommendations:

- Develop a collective set of agreed-upon trail etiquette guidelines for all user groups by 2025.
- Provide resources for local user groups to host workshops and training on agreed-upon trail etiquette for the Confederation Trail.
- Create awareness for first-time users of opportunities for participation in local area trail-related groups.
- Enhance communication and enforcement of leash regulations for dogs and service dogs on the trail to foster a safer and more inclusive environment for all trail users.

Expected Outcome: Improve the enjoyment of the Confederation Trail and reduce the number of conflicts between users.

Goal #7: Establish mechanisms to facilitate enforcement and create deterrents to prevent unauthorized trail activities.

Recommendations:

- Offer resources to trail associations and federations to promote learning and collaboration among user groups.
- Encourage members of associations and federations to participate actively in monitoring and enforcing trail regulations.
- Create collaborative opportunities for groups to discuss trails, including trail clean-up days or other social trail-related activities.
- Host an annual trails conference for Confederation Trail user group organizations to review the effectiveness of user guidelines, education and maintenance requirements of the Confederation Trail.
- Host a meeting during the annual trails conference for all trail user groups on PEI to come together, exchange ideas, and share responsibility for the safety and proper use of all trails.

Expected Outcomes: Reduce conflict due to increased communication and knowledge transfer about creating trails and communications assets that all trail users are aware of.

INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE CONFEDERATION TRAIL

Maintenance

The maintenance of the Confederation Trail is critical to ensuring its longevity, functionality, and appeal to all user groups.

Goal #8: Collect detailed information on trails and related features or amenities to understand user group habits for trail use.

Recommendations:

- Develop an annual user count for designated sections of the Confederation Trail to monitor user interactions and maintenance requirements.
- Publish regular assessments of trail conditions by trail managers to increase transparency and expense of maintenance.
- Promote ways for users to report feedback.
- Facilitate increased monitoring and maintenance of specific high-use routes.

Expected Outcome: Improve the availability of information on trail use to improve user experience and safety and minimize hazards.

Signage

The consultation process highlighted a desire for more signage demarking kilometres and distance to water, accommodation and shelter.

Goal #9: Improve security and user experience on the Confederation Trail by providing additional signage on permitted users, speed limits, trail etiquette and proximity to amenities.

Recommendations:

- Increase distance signage across the Confederation Trail to provide kilometre markers and approximate time for various users to reach amenities.
- Identify the location of critical amenities like washroom facilities, water and communities.
- Provide an online, interactive map of trail routes, distances between gates, and access to amenities.

Expected Outcome: Users can plan for trips properly, reducing the anxiety of new users accessing unfamiliar sections of the trail.

Gates and Access Points

The current construction and layout of the Confederation Trail gates are not ideal for all users. Altering gate design requires balancing the prevention of the entry of motorized vehicles and unauthorized users while facilitating safe passage for permitted trail users at entrances.

Goal #10: Adjust gate breadth to accommodate wider and permitted higher speed users yet continue to deter non-permitted users.

Recommendations:

- Investigate the requirements for standard opening of gates for trail access.
- Implement visibility requirements and speed limits for cyclists and snowmobiles in areas with gates and access points.

Expected Outcome: Reduce injury incidents and improve accessibility while maintaining barriers for motor vehicles and non-permitted users from accessing the Confederation Trail.

Crossings

Crossings on the Confederation Trail provide access for permitted landowners, farmers, and woodlot workers to cross or use a small section of the trail. Local ATV groups also have permitted crossings for access to ATV trails. These crossings are approved by the Minister and are clearly delineated year-round.

Distance between crossings where a trail crossing is designated under subsection (1) of the *Trails Act*: the trail crossing shall not be within 15 kilometres of any other new or existing trail crossing.¹

Goal #11: Develop a transparent application and approval process for all new crossings and provide an annual update on crossing permit approvals at the Trail Conference.

Recommendations:

- Post trail crossing designations online.
- Report new crossing permits at the annual trail conference.

Expected Outcome: Increase transparency of access to the Confederation Trail.

¹ Government of Prince Edward Island. 2022. *Trails Act*. https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/t-04-1-trails_act.pdf

Access to Water and Washrooms

Users highlighted the need for greater access and information sharing on accessible washroom facilities and water stations on the Confederation Trail.

Goal #12: Increase access to accessible washroom facilities and water stations.

Recommendations:

- Complete an audit for washroom and water access for all areas of the Confederation Trail.
- Create an asset map layover for the Confederation Trail map and identify gaps in access.
- Increase information on signage about suggested water access for trail segments.
- Explore options with municipalities along the Confederation Trail to develop additional washroom facilities and access to public water.

Expected Outcome: Informing users about access to washroom facilities and water along the trail can significantly enhance the user experience, promoting proper hygiene, hydration, and accessibility.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS TO THE CONFEDERATION TRAIL

Tourism Development and Accommodations

Offering suitable accommodations and amenities along the Confederation Trail can assist economic growth and ensure visitors enjoy a smooth and memorable experience while exploring PEI.

Goal #13: Maximize tourism and economic benefits derived from the Confederation Trail.

Recommendations:

- Continue to assist in promotion of recreational offerings along the trail, such as cycling tours, guided hikes, wildlife viewing opportunities, and cultural experiences through Tourism PEI.
- Continue to work with local businesses, accommodations, restaurants, and tour operators through Tourism PEI to create tourism packages and experiences centred around the Confederation Trail.

Expected Outcomes: Improved Confederation Trail visitor numbers to enhance tourism-related businesses, job creation, and revenue generation for local economies along the trail.

Historical and Cultural Preservation

Preserving the historical and cultural integrity of the Confederation Trail ensures that future generations can appreciate and learn from its historical context. This creates a deeper understanding and appreciation while motivating and inspiring users to continue to honour and protect its unique legacy.

Goal #14: To enhance visitors' historical and cultural experience on the Confederation Trail, fostering a deeper appreciation for the region's heritage, Indigenous connections and the communities along the trail.

Recommendations:

- Enhance informative signage at significant points along the trail, highlighting historical and cultural landmarks, events, and stories associated with the area's heritage.
- Collaborate with community organizations, volunteer groups, and Indigenous communities to develop and promote authentic cultural experiences and events along the trail.

Expected Outcomes: Users gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the historical and cultural significance of the Confederation Trail and the surrounding regions, fostering a sense of connection to its heritage.

Marketing and Promotion of the Confederation Trail

Through targeted messaging and promotion, a public awareness campaign focused on the Confederation Trail can inform and engage the community about its significance and benefits.

Goal #15: Work with the Department of Economic Development, Innovation and Tourism, Tourism PEI, Regional Tourism Associations and community partners to expand awareness of and interest in the Confederation Trail for Island residents and visitors.

Recommendations:

- Develop targeted marketing campaigns to promote the Confederation Trail locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Collaborate with tourism boards, travel agencies, and online platforms to showcase the trail's attractions, activities, and scenic beauty.
- Explore incentives such as discounts, package deals, or special events to attract visitors and increase trail awareness.

Expected Outcome: Enhance recognition of the Confederation Trail as a premier international tourism destination and a valuable recreational resource.

Goal #16: Develop a public awareness campaign to inform the general public, targeted to key user groups, about proper etiquette and safety when using the trail system.

Recommendations:

- Create digital and video assets featuring trail etiquette and safety practices.
- Use marketing outlets to reach various user groups (online, digital, print, out-of-home, radio).
- Tailor messages and content to address the unique needs of all user groups.

Expected Outcome: Increase awareness and adherence to trail etiquette and safety protocols.

Conclusion

The recommendations in this report aim to enhance the Confederation Trail's overall experience for permitted users. By focusing on safety and policy, infrastructure and maintenance, increasing user engagement, and fostering partnerships, the goal is to maintain the trail as a shared legacy on PEI.

Outdoor recreation allows residents to live active lifestyles to improve their well-being, enhance eco-tourism and connect communities. Ensuring the safety and well-being of Confederation Trail users in perpetuity will allow for improved features to be developed, preserving it as a cherished connector of the Island.

This report is respectfully submitted to the Province of Prince Edward Island for their consideration.



Appendix 1: Commitment to Engagement: What We Heard

In the fall of 2023, VOLUME18 crafted a What We Heard report that included the feedback collected across the surveys, written submissions and stakeholder engagement sessions. The report featured Islanders' perspectives and insights regarding the future of the Confederation Trail. The ideas from Islanders and others have helped to inform the recommendations in this report.

Online Survey:

The survey received 5,744 responses. Survey respondents emphasized the trail's well-maintained infrastructure and the need for safety and security. They also highlighted the trail's role as a quiet and peaceful piece of PEI, offering a unique opportunity to connect with nature. All users, including motorized recreational users, stated they needed a safe place to enjoy their hobby. Participants were invited to provide feedback on proposed Guiding Principles to define proposed values for the current and future use of the Confederation Trail.

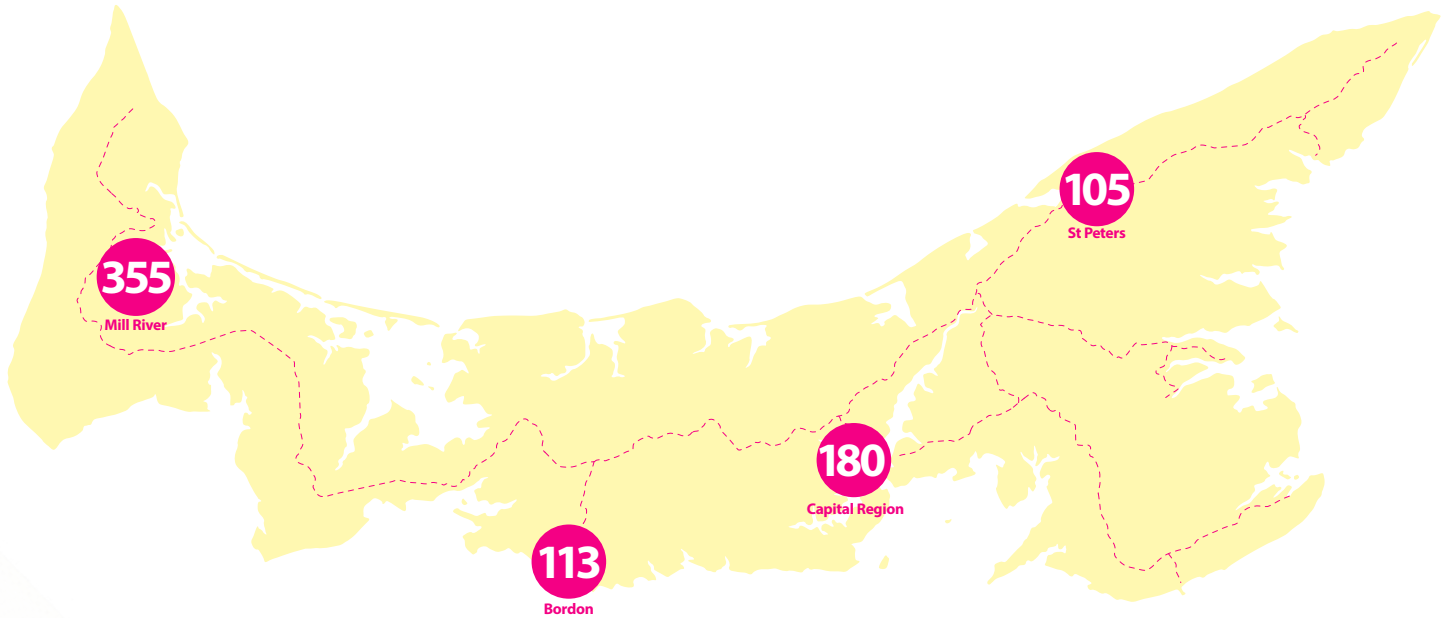
"It is important for Islanders and visitors to have access to the natural resources of the Island, and for a safe place to experience outdoor activities like walking, running, biking."

"PEI has so few spaces for walking and cycling safely in a natural setting compared to other provinces. We need to protect the flora and fauna which make the trail beautiful."

Community Engagement Workshops:

The community engagement sessions facilitated discussions among a broad range of trail user groups. The sessions encouraged dialogue, covering topics including trail usage patterns, safety practices, etiquette, and opportunities for future development.

The four locations for community engagement sessions were carefully selected areas that showcased a high overlap across user groups.



	Activities checked:			Attendees:		
	Walk/Run	Bike	Equestrian	ATV	Snowmobile	Total attendees
Borden	30	27	9	84	38	113
Mill River	72	44	16	318	92	355
St Peters	61	51	6	60	38	105
Stratford	152	140	8	46	34	180

"To participate in maintaining the trail for all walks of life, making it accessible so that it's a nature legacy for our families in the future. Remove all motorized vehicle usage from the trail and open them up to winter sports like cross-country skiing, winter biking, etc. Expand on using the trail for education to expand plant life."

"My vision for the Confederation Trail is to stay the same. I don't like the idea of ATVs on the trail because of safety, noise and fumes from the fossil fuel-burning vehicles. Our Island is small. The trail is a treasure for those who like to be physically active outdoors."

"Perhaps increased services (washrooms) in the interest of catering to local users and touring hikers (and more parking areas), but overall, very similar to its use today. More signage acknowledging [Indigenous] land would be nice."

"Be a shared trail for all activities. For ATVs: don't need the whole trail, just part for making connections from one ATV trail to the next. Keeps us off the highways and allows for more enjoyable full activity as [we] won't have to load and unload bikes at different trails."

Written Submissions

As part of the engagement process, 174 written submissions received through email and mail from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure and the Minister were reviewed.

Themes from Written Submissions

Safety Concerns Among User Groups:

Many who sent submissions emphasized the Confederation Trail as a location on the Island for safe walking and cycling, promoting health, wellness, and active transportation. Safety concerns were raised regarding the potential dangers to cyclists and pedestrians, alongside the increased risks of trail damage stemming from the presence of motorized users and equestrians.

Walkers have expressed concerns regarding cyclist etiquette, with instances of cyclists passing on the right and travelling at inappropriate speeds, highlighting the recurring need for trail etiquette enforcement in both walking and cycling. ATV users and equestrians have voiced safety concerns in the absence of dedicated off-road trails in all regions of the province.

Health and Wellness:

Submissions highlighted concerns about granting access to new user groups, which could diminish usage among walkers, runners, and cyclists and take away the opportunity for people to invest in their mental and physical wellness.

On the other hand, ATV users and equestrians highlighted the benefits of enhancing access to a provincial trail system, envisioning opportunities for increased community engagement and immersion in nature by connecting established ATV trails across the Island.

Maintenance and Infrastructure Improvements:

Letters commended the maintenance of the Confederation Trail but expressed concerns about potential damage from heavy motorized vehicles or horses. Feedback from the Equestrian pilot project highlighted issues like hoof marks and droppings near the trail.

Ideas submitted around infrastructure improvements included better signage, washrooms, bike racks, picnic tables, and exercise stations. Some proposed a parallel ATV trail to expand ATV access while preserving the current trail's integrity. Submissions also stressed the necessity of improved ATV crossings with enhanced signage and policies.

Environmental Considerations:

Submissions referred to the Department of Environment, Energy, and Climate Action's commitment to achieving net zero by 2040, stressing the importance of promoting decarbonized recreational activities and avoiding increased emissions from motorized sports on PEI.

Moreover, respondents called to prioritize the ecological health of the Confederation Trail, recognizing it as a greenway deserving protection and working with environmental experts to assess the trail's impact on local flora and fauna for long-term ecological sustainability.

Tourism Development:

PEI's tourism sector benefits from many economic opportunities due to the Confederation Trail's global appeal. Developing pedestrian and cycling tours and amenities while ensuring the Confederation Trail remains free from motorized vehicles appeals to tourists seeking a more relaxed experience. This approach aligns with the popularity of leisurely tours like the Island Walk, showcasing PEI's natural beauty and catering to a different segment of the tourism market.

Conversely, enhancing separated ATV trails could tap into a niche market, offering diverse terrains for exploration and leveraging the Island's scenic landscapes to attract visitors on trails suited for ATVs. Investments in well-maintained trails could stimulate businesses catering to ATV enthusiasts, including rentals, guided tours, and lodging, thereby bolstering the tourism economy.

The review's findings were disseminated to Island residents in the "What We Heard Report" through various news and social media channels. The overarching goal of the "What We Heard Report" was to ensure transparency and inclusivity by informing the public about the outcomes of the extensive public outreach.

Appendix 2: Findings from Jurisdictional Scan

Four questions served as guideposts for discussions with other jurisdictions:

1. Does your organization have principles or a policy statement regarding user groups and shared or exclusive access for particular user groups? If so, could you please share?
2. Does your organization provide the sole use of trail network(s) to any particular user group for any particular period each year? If so, which group and for what period?
 - a. In general, how long has this arrangement been in place, and what is the instrument (e.g. lease) that gives it legal force?
3. Under your purview, are there any shared use trails (between motorized and non-motorized user groups)?
 - a. (If applicable) What are the common sources of conflict, and how are these typically addressed?
 - b. (If applicable) Based on your experience, would you recommend a shared use approach between motorized and non-motorized user groups?
4. What considerations guide your thinking on different modes of non-motorized use (e.g. equestrian, cycling, snowshoeing, pedestrians) and what is permitted on the trails under your purview?

Newfoundland and Labrador

The Newfoundland T'Railway Council is a leader in the province for trail advocacy, driving partnerships, and collaboration.¹ They are dedicated to transforming the 883 kilometres of former railbeds into an expansive recreational trail. The vision for the trail is to support a range of activities, including hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, ATV riding, and cross-country skiing. Additional activities like dog sledding and snowshoeing may also find their place in select areas. Due to the scope of trail maintenance and development, the organization has identified several long-term goals, some of which include:

- Safeguarding its cultural significance while ensuring its role as a recreational legacy.
- Acting as a resource for other trail groups in the province, ensuring the adoption of essential standards and practices such as trail management, maintenance, and risk mitigation.
- Partnering with relevant agencies to advocate for the preservation of special areas and raise awareness about the ecological and cultural significance of the environment.
- Elevating the recognition of the province's trail network as a pivotal resource for tourism-driven economic growth.

Complementing the Council's initiatives is Bicycle Newfoundland and Labrador, an organization actively championing the ongoing enhancement of the Newfoundland T'Railway specifically for cycling enthusiasts. In 2022, they published a strategic plan underscoring their commitment to developing infrastructure that supports active transportation, and at the core of this infrastructure is the development of the T'Railway.²

1 Newfoundland T'Railway Provincial Park. (n. Newfoundland d.). T'Railway Council. <https://www.trailway.ca/council.php>

2 Bicycle Newfoundland and Labrador. 2022. *Strategic Plan*. <https://bicyclenl.com/wp-content/uploads/STRATEGIC-PLAN-2022-2026-Ratified.pdf>

The Newfoundland and Labrador Snowmobile Federation (NLSF) manages and grooms a network of over 3,300 kilometres of trails that services 17 member-based snowmobile clubs.

In 2017, the NLSF expressed a desire for other users to assist in funding trail maintenance in exchange for access to the NLSF trail system.¹

NL recently (2022) revised its legislation and regulations on off-road vehicles, allowing the Minister to approve organizations to construct, maintain, and/or operate managed trails.

The regulations establish a permitting system, which requires the following:

- Off-road vehicles, including snowmobiles, must carry a sticker or other identifying marker issued by a trail operator.
- Managed trail operators must handle trail permit applications and run a system to issue permits, with the permit cost needing Ministerial approval.
- The trail manager must maintain the trail, install necessary signage, and have liability insurance.

Nova Scotia

In 2009, a study examined the impact of ATV access on trails in Nova Scotia, addressing the ongoing debate on how motorized and non-motorized users can successfully share trails. The research presented considerable evidence that some recreational activities are incompatible, leading to conflicts due to differences in user experiences and values. It found that non-motorized users had little impact on motorized users, whereas motorized users significantly impacted non-motorized users. The study concluded that separating user groups was the most economically efficient solution for reducing conflicts. From a policy perspective, it was recommended that ATV use be permitted near trails or in areas with likely low non-motorized use. Conversely, areas with high non-motorized usage should restrict ATV access and be paved to discourage unauthorized ATV use.²

In 2013, the Ecology Action Centre (EAC) published a Green Mobility Strategy, emphasizing the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) in its recommendations. The report advocated for provincial responsibility in completing the trail network and promoting a mix of safe, environmentally sustainable transportation methods. This approach would protect the environment from gas emissions and provide a safe, accessible space for active transportation alternatives. The report also suggested that developing separate trails for motorized users, particularly in sections passing through communities, could eliminate conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users.³

Nova Scotia (NS) released its Shared Strategy for Trails in Nova Scotia in 2019.⁴ The development of the strategy, which began in 2013, illustrates the complexity of trail governance as over 200 organizations across the province built and manage trails supported by thousands of volunteers.⁵ Also present are ten different provincial user group representative organizations.

1 Newfoundland and Labrador Snowmobile Federation. (n.d.). *Cost Structure*. Retrieved August - September, 2023 from <https://nlsf.org/trails-and-passes/cost-structure.aspx>

2 Janmaat, J., & VanBlarcom, B. (2009). Impact of all terrain vehicle access on the demand for a proposed trail. *Managing Leisure*, 14(1), 57–70.

3 Ecology Action Centre. 2013. *Green Mobility Strategy for Nova Scotia*. <https://ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2022-06/Green%20Mobility%20Strategy%20for%20Nova%20Scotia%20-%202008.pdf>

4 Province of Nova Scotia. 2019. *Shared Strategy for Trails in Nova Scotia*. https://novascotia.ca/trailstrategy/docs/18-47600_SharedStrat_TrailsNS_Report_ENG_LoRes.pdf

5 NS Trails. 2015. *Profile of the Trails Movement In Nova Scotia*. <https://nstrails.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Profile-of-the-Trails-Movement-in-NS-2015-04-09.pdf>

One of the actions in the Strategy was to update the NS Trails Manual.⁶ The Trails Manual identifies six common trail types:

- Hiking trails are split into six types: wilderness, interpretive, backcountry, frontcountry, day-use, and urban;
- Bicycle trails are divided into two types: traditional cycling and mountain biking;
- Equestrian trails: this section notes equestrian use is compatible with all other uses, except snowmobile trails over dangerous terrain (ex. backcountry, low-visibility);
- Cross-country ski trails: this section notes that groomed trails cannot allow other activities, whereas ungroomed trails not designated as ski trails can also allow hikers, horses, snowshoers, and snowmobilers;
- Snowmobile trails: this section notes the need for trails to be wide, flat, and free of visual obstructions;
- Multi-purpose trails: these trails can accommodate different activities in the same season or different activities in different seasons. For instance, a trail used for cycling in summer can be used for cross-country skiing in winter, while these trails can also support various activities in the same season, like walking, running, and cycling.

The Trails Manual provides design specifications for types of trail use.⁷ The document states that snowmobile trails are suitable for winter cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and ATVs. In the summer, the trail is used for cycling, equestrians, hiking, and ATVs. Additionally, it mentions that if the snow is soft and more than 2 inches deep, ATVs can damage groomed snowmobile trails.

The Nova Scotia Trails Federation oversees the management and development of trails across the province, including portions of the TCT. They collaborate with local trail groups to conduct user counts and gather feedback from trail users through surveys and community engagement initiatives.⁸

New Brunswick

New Brunswick (NB) is a province where trail use is more segregated. The Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development (DNRED) is responsible for the province's 1,100 kilometres of the former railbed.⁹

The province's most recent trail governance or management document is the Trails Action Plan, published in 2017.¹⁰ According to the document, which focuses on the tourism potential of its signature trails, NB has more than 20,000 kilometres of developed, non-motorized, snowmobile and/or ATV

6 NS Trails.(n.d.). *Trails Manual*. <https://nstrails.com/trails-manual/>

7 NS Trails. (n.d.). *Trails Manual - Development and Construction*. (S. 3.10, p. 68). <https://nstrails.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Section3.pdf>

8 Nova Scotia Trails Federation. (n.d.). About us. Retrieved June 18, 2024, from <https://www.novascotiatrials.com/about-us/>

9 Government of New Brunswick. 2011. *Policy for Non-Recreational Uses of Former Railway Properties*. <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/nr-rn/pdf/en/Publications/CLM0232009.pdf>

10 Government of New Brunswick, Tourism, Heritage and Culture. 2018. *The New Brunswick Trails Action Plan*. <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/thc-tpc/pdf/Parks-Parcs/TrailsActionPlan20171.pdf>

trails. The province has recognized its efforts to enhance snowmobile-based trail use and tourism, collaborating with non-motorized and ATV organizations to expand the user network.

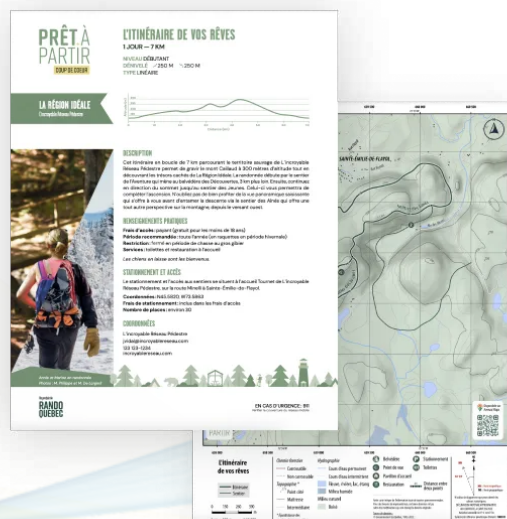
According to the Action Plan, in 2017, non-motorized trails were managed primarily by trail groups federated under the umbrella of the now-defunct New Brunswick Trail Council (NBTC). In NB, there is currently no umbrella organization for non-motorized user groups or trail managers; there is a series of regional trail associations.

The New Brunswick Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (NBFSC) is responsible for operating and managing its established trail network under the authority of the *Off-Road Vehicle Act*, supported by a 10-year Trail Management Agreement created in December 2014.

A similar situation occurred with the NB All-Terrain Vehicle Federation (NB ATV Federation), which has similar authority for its established trail network under the Act, underpinned by a 10-year agreement established in May 2014. According to the DNRED, the NB ATV Federation holds a Licence of Occupation for their trail network on Crown lands.¹¹ In contrast, the NBFSC holds a 'lease' for their trails on Crown lands between December 15 and April 15 each year, with a Licence of Occupation covering the remainder of the year to provide the Federation with the ability to access lands in the off-season for construction/maintenance.¹²

For former railbed trails under the authority of DNRED, snowmobilers and ATVers share some sections of the trail. The two user groups must negotiate based on who holds the lease and who wants access. Provincial officials report that this is sometimes a complicated process because of tension among user groups. Due to safety and liability concerns, NB officials noted that motorized and non-motorized uses do not co-occur on trails.

The Government of NB is drafting a new trail strategy to enhance non-motorized trail activities. One proposal is to form a new representative body for non-motorized trail users to replace the NBTC.



11 A 'Licence of Occupation' is a legal authorization providing for the temporary non-exclusive occupation and use of Crown land. This translates to a trail user group being able to make an application for a recreational trail with the authority to operate, use, and maintain their subject lands – however, the general public and other non-conflicting uses of the lands may still be authorized and allowed. The Government of NB reviews applications for all occupations on Crown Land and ensures there are no other conflicting uses to limit risk and liability to the Crown.

12 A 'lease' is a legal authorization providing for the exclusive use of Crown lands subject to the lease – permission to access the lands is required from the organization holding the lease (in this case, the Federation of Snowmobile Clubs).

Quebec

Quebec's (QC) Route verte is North America's longest cycling and hiking network, spanning over 5,300 kilometres. Like the Confederation Trail, it has rejuvenated rail lines and is renowned as one of the world's premier cycling routes.

Vélo Québec, a non-profit organization focused on promoting cycling and active transportation, collaborates with local governments and trail organizations in Quebec to bring awareness to the trail system in the province. They conduct surveys and studies to monitor usage on cycling and multi-use trails, including segments of the TCT in Quebec.¹³

The province's emphasis on safety is highlighted by its bicycle policy, which was published in 2008 by the Government of Quebec and the Ministère des Transports, de la Mobilité durable et de l'Électrification des transports (MTMDET).¹⁴

The MTMDET provides financial support to municipal partners for Route verte sections within urban areas, improving safety and boosting tourism.

For walkers, hikers, and snowshoers, Rando Québec, the federation in charge of hiking in the province, implemented a trail managers program to engage young people and outdoor enthusiasts to promote and advocate trail use.¹⁵ This approach cultivates appreciation for environmental sustainability, ensures trails are managed and maintained, promotes the safe use of trails, and provides wayfinding tools for targeted user groups. One example of their commitment to hiking and snowshoeing preparedness is their "Ready to Go" turnkey virtual printable trail resource, allowing trail users to confidently and easily navigate the trail network manager-approved routes.

In 2018, the province published an Active Transportation Intervention Framework focusing on infrastructure, efficiency, and safety.¹⁶ The Framework aims to enhance connectivity and user experience while supporting sustainable mobility.

In 2023, the Government of Quebec enacted the *Act Respecting Off-Highway Vehicles*, aimed at creating safe trail use for motorized and non-motorized vehicles while minimizing the impact on natural environments. This legislation mandates the proper licensing of off-highway vehicles (OHVs), including snowmobiles, quads, ATVs, and dirt bikes. Additionally, OHV operators are required to contribute financially, with these contributions channelled into the Land Transportation Network Fund. Funds collected are designated for essential purposes such as OHV training, safety courses, and the maintenance and development of infrastructure.

Under the Act, OHV clubs assume responsibility for posting signage and ensuring the upkeep of trails. Moreover, the legislation specifies that OHVs are prohibited from using trails designated solely for hiking, biking, or ski touring. When OHVs share trails with pedestrians or non-motorized vehicles, operators are required to reduce speeds and yield the right of way to ensure the safety of all users. By implementing these measures, the Act endeavours to facilitate recreational OHV use while safeguarding the integrity of natural landscapes and preserving the safe use of trails for all user groups.

¹³ Vélo Québec. (n.d.). About us. Retrieved June 18, 2024, from <https://www.velo.qc.ca/en>

¹⁴ Government du Québec. 2008. *From Fun to Functional: Cycling - A Mode of Transportation in its Own Right*. <http://www.bv.transports.gouv.qc.ca/mono/0979376.pdf>

¹⁵ Rando Québec. (n.d.). <https://www.randoquebec.ca/>

¹⁶ Gouvernement du Québec, ministère des Transports. 2018. *Transporting Québec Towards Modernity*. <https://www.transports.gouv.qc.ca/en/Documents/active-transportation-intervention-framework.pdf>

Ontario

In 2005, the Ontario Trail Strategy was released emphasizing the benefits of trail use for all users, including motorized activities.¹⁷ Still, it recognized challenges for trail operators, like managing various uses for motorized and non-motorized activities. It aimed to create a framework to address the needs of different users and resolve conflicts.

The Ontario Trails Council (OTC) manages 2,200 trails. Around 95% of these trails allow shared use, meaning they accommodate various types of motorized or non-motorized activities within their respective categories. About 80% of the trails are multi-use, catering to motorized and non-motorized activities throughout the year.

The OTC also collaborates with local trail organizations and municipalities to conduct user surveys and trail counts. They use manual methods and automated counters to gather data on trail usage, including sections of the TCT that pass through the province¹⁸.

The OTC highlights user responsibility and land manager accountability as crucial for effective trail use and shared governance. The OTC argues that the intrusion of a specific type of use on a trail only sometimes equates to its impact; for example, one dirtbike may be intrusive, but its impact cannot be compared to 90 hikers regarding trail maintenance and conveyance.

The OTC stated that it is the recommended standard operating procedure for all trail users to carry their insurance and follow an etiquette guide for trail use. They also advocate for each trail to have oversight from an organization or trail committee, with representation from each user group to ensure accountability.

The OTC strongly suggests joint public education programs on trail etiquette. Developing these resources together could help bridge the gap between user groups. Additionally, the organization advocates for a 'trail wardening' system, where volunteer wardens are given legal authority to enforce administrative penalties or direct other users on trails.

Manitoba

Manitoba (MB) released its Trails Strategy and Action Plan in 2023.¹⁹ The Action Plan includes establishing a new Provincial Trails Coordination Office within the Department of Natural Resources and Northern Development. Recognizing the potential for user group conflict, it outlines several pending actions to mitigate conflict. For example, the province plans to collaborate with provincial and regional ATV groups to designate sanctioned ATV trails, encouraging ATV users to utilize designated trails rather than those intended for non-motorized activities.

The province also plans to incorporate and share best practices on designing multi-use trails to avoid conflict and create opportunities for user groups to collaborate in events like trail clean-up days.

17 Government of Ontario. Ministry of Health Promotion. 2010. *Ontario Trails Strategy*. <https://cdn2.assets-servd.host/material-civet/production/images/documents/OntarioTrailStrategy.pdf?dm=1620062748>

18 Ontario Trails Council. (n.d.). Trail counts. Retrieved June 18, 2024, from <https://ontariotrails.on.ca/trails-counts>

19 Manitoba Natural Resources and Northern Development. 2023. *The Manitoba Trails Strategy and Action Plan*. <https://www.trailsmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/The-Manitoba-Trails-Strategy-and-Action-Plan.pdf>

Manitoba Parks classify trails in provincial parks according to recommended use types, considering factors and location-specific circumstances, including multi-use and single-use trails. Trail use types on non-Crown or provincial land are determined by the landowner and/or trail manager. Trails on Crown land outside provincial parks are usually considered multi-use unless specified otherwise by regulation or legal agreement.

Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) also can accommodate motorized and non-motorized trail users. In some WMAs, like Souris River Bend, there's an intention to segregate users (e.g., equestrian and ATV users are encouraged to use separate trails). Although WMAs are open to everyone, a multi-use pattern has evolved, leading to some conflicts that the Strategy and Plan aim to address.

The province also recently passed the new *Off-Road Trails Safety and Maintenance Act*.²⁰ This legislation requires off-road vehicles to pay a \$25 fee to provide sustainable funding for snowmobile and ATV federations. These funds are used for trail management, permitting, and public education activities.

Saskatchewan

In 2002, the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association established trail use guidelines.²¹ The guidelines recommended individual one-way lanes for snowmobiles, each measuring a minimum of 1.8 meters wide, suggesting a snow ridge between lanes. The guidelines also proposed visibility requirements of 90 meters on curves at speeds of 50 km/hr and 60 meters at speeds of 30 km/hr.

In 2009, the Saskatchewan Trails Association (STA) prepared "Pathways to Success," which highlighted a growing number of user groups, including ATVs and snowmobiles, expressing 'serious safety concerns' due to a lack of clarity and additional support.²² The document noted a lack of formal mechanisms to resolve conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users.

The document also highlighted the absence of government mandates to address trail development, maintenance, and use. It pointed out that evidence from other jurisdictions suggests conflict is inevitable and proposed working towards ways to identify and address conflicts in planning stages and core dispute resolution efforts.

According to the STA, trail use conflicts are rare, but if disputes do arise, they often involve snowmobile and ATV user groups. 'Respect the Trails,' STA's public education campaign, collaborates with user groups to compact conflict.

The STA website features several programs and initiatives that promote trail use and programming.²³ The STA Trail Ambassador initiative appoints trail enthusiasts to advocate for the trails through social media platforms and interactions with hikers and walkers.

SK also promotes trail use via Saskatchewan Trails Day, hosted annually on the first Saturday in June. The event provides an opportunity to celebrate recreational trails and their benefits for healthy living,

20 Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. (n.d.). *The Off-Road Trails Safety and Maintenance Act*. <https://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/42-5/b008e.php>

21 Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association Inc. 2002. *Trail Specification Guidelines*. <http://sasktrails.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/SPRA-Trail-Specification-Guidelines.pdf>

22 Saskatchewan Trails Association. 2009. *Pathway to Success: A Strategy for Trail Development in Saskatchewan*. <http://sasktrails.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Pathways-to-Success.pdf>

23 Saskatchewan Trails Association. (n.d.). <http://sasktrails.ca/>

economic development, tourism, and environmental preservation. All organizations, communities, and individuals across the province are invited to participate in the day's events and host events of their own. The province has developed a comprehensive manual to support interested groups in hosting their own Saskatchewan Trails Day celebrations.²⁴

Alberta

Over the past four decades, Alberta's (AB) trails have witnessed a surge in recreational use by motorized and non-motorized user groups. Usage data for the trails is collected by the Alberta TrailNet Society, an organization that works with local municipalities and trail user groups to monitor trail usage across the province. They employ various methods, such as user surveys and periodic trail counts, to gather data on the TCT and other regional trails.²⁵

In response to this trend, the province developed a comprehensive *Trails Act*, establishing a framework for effective trail management.²⁶ This legislation facilitates the appointment of trail managers, encourages partnerships with external organizations for trail operation and oversight, and grants Ministerial authority to various categories of designated trails through regulatory measures. Moreover, the province has authority under the Public Lands Administration Regulations to designate motorized trails and issue directives concerning motorized vehicle usage.²⁷

The Act employs clear guidelines for managing trails, ensuring their quality and safety across various activities such as hiking, biking, and off-highway vehicle use. Mandating trail management plans for designation, the Act integrates a variety of interests, including resource development and the concerns of Indigenous Peoples, collaborations with volunteer organizations, and respect for Indigenous ties to the land.²⁸

In tandem with the Act, AB has introduced a Crown Land Vision to bolster sustainable funding and partnerships for recreational endeavours.²⁹ Within the Vision is a commitment to enhancing outdoor recreation management across all Crown lands, ensuring a continuum of sustainable recreational opportunities for user groups.

The recent amendments to the Crown Land Vision have committed to significant enhancements in trail management on public lands, including:

- Strengthening compliance mechanisms, fostering a culture of environmental respect among users and minimizing the footprint on the land;
- Introducing supplementary tools for more efficient management of visitor activities, prioritizing environmental conservation alongside public safety, and

24 Saskatchewan Trails Association. (n.d.). *Saskatchewan Trails Day Event Organizer's Manual*. <http://sasktrails.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Saskatchewan-Trails-Day-Event-Manual.pdf>

25 Alberta TrailNet Society. (n.d.). About us. Retrieved June 18, 2024, from <https://albertatrailnet.com/about-us/>

26 Alberta Hiking Association. 2022. *The Alberta Trails Act*. <https://abhiking.ca/the-alberta-trails-act/>

27 Canadian Legal Information Institute. 2011. *Public Lands Act: Public Lands Administration Regulation*. <https://www.canlii.org/en/ab/laws/regu/alta-reg-187-2011/latest/alta-reg-187-2011.html>

28 Government of Alberta. 2022. *Trail Management*. <https://www.alberta.ca/sustainable-trail-management#jumplinks-0>

29 Government of Alberta, Environment and Parks. 2020. *Alberta's Crown Land Vision*. <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/4284f06b-a5a4-486a-8986-168751c2e28a/resource/57095da3-2007-42b5-8aa0-683b54e22714/download/aep-albertas-crown-land-vision-our-rich-natural-heritage-2020.pdf>

- Safeguarding trails and infrastructure, streamline the management of random camping impacts and facilitate swift and effective responses to emergencies within trail areas.

In September 2019, the province published the Trail Development Guidelines for Alberta's Public Land to help create quality and sustainable trails, establish a classification system that works for all user groups, outline requirements for infrastructure and amenities, and ensure consistency for all user groups to work together to enhance and preserve the trail system.³⁰

The document provides guidance on tailoring trail systems to attract different user groups, including design, signage, and amenities, as well as marketing and promoting those features. The guidelines emphasize the importance of minimizing the environmental impact and preserving historical resources throughout the trail development process. Trail operators are crucial in overseeing management and maintenance, ensuring their long-term sustainability and safety for all users.

British Columbia

The Trails Strategy for British Columbia (BC) indicates all user groups are permitted to use the trail system across the province.³¹ The Strategy addresses safety and opportunities to mitigate potential conflict, with commitments to:

- Use legislative tools to approve trails and identify trail uses to support a comprehensive trail network.
- Improve legislation, regulations, and policies to manage motorized use and enhance opportunities for motorized trail users. The province plans to develop an Off-Road Vehicle Management Framework.

The province typically restricts trail uses only in specific cases, such as prohibiting snowmobiles near cross-country ski facilities. BC initiates a collaborative land use planning process if necessary, affirming all relevant user groups' rights before discussing use restrictions. This process includes Crown consultation with Indigenous Peoples and follows the U.S. National Park Service Visitor Use Management Framework.³²

BC stresses the importance of voluntary compliance with a general code of etiquette for shared trails, such as that promoted by Trails BC, before resorting to formal processes.³³ This involves interventions to alter user behaviour, including direct methods like restrictions, zoning, timed entry, and reservation systems, as well as indirect approaches like physical design solutions and educational programs.

While trail counting isn't provincially managed, various regional districts and trail associations have implemented trail count programs. For instance, the City of Vancouver and Metro Vancouver conduct periodic trail counts using volunteers and automated counters on sections of the Great Trail and other regional trails.³⁴

30 Government of Alberta, Environment and Parks. 2019. *Trail Development Guidelines for Alberta's Public Land* <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/b1cae0e7-4b70-4c7b-8575-f89ada15342d/resource/9cc04dc8-ffe5-4c04-aed4-ff43cee2cb56/download/aep-trail-development-guidelines-2019.pdf>

31 Government of British Columbia, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. (n.d.). *Trails Strategy for British Columbia*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/sports-recreation-arts-and-culture/outdoor-recreation/camping-and-hiking/recreation-sites-and-trails/trail-strategy.pdf>

32 Otak. (n.d.). <https://www.otak.com/blog/visitor-use-management-framework-guidelines/>

33 The Trails Society of British Columbia. (n.d.). *A Trail User's Code of Ethics*. <https://trailsbc.ca/travel-tips/trail-users-code-ethics/>

34 City of Vancouver. (n.d.). Vancouver trails strategy. Retrieved June 18, 2024, from <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/vancouver-trails-strategy-2016-2025.pdf>

Northeastern United States

Maine

Maine has a significant trail network with a more decentralized management approach compared to Canadian jurisdictions. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Off-Road Vehicle Program manages about 310 miles of multi-use railbed trails. The state emphasizes multi-use, including both motorized and non-motorized activities. Snowmobile use depends on snow cover; when snow is adequate, ATVs and horseback riding are prohibited, but skiing, hiking, snowshoeing, and dog sledding are allowed.¹

Regarding conflict amongst user groups, the state official noted that users typically follow etiquette guidelines and yield to one another, effectively keeping conflicts minimal.

**FOUR SEASONS ADVENTURE TRAIL
MULTI-USE TRAIL SYSTEM**

TRAIL SYSTEM MADE POSSIBLE BY MAINE DEPT. OF CONSERVATION,
LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE PROGRAM, MAINE OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND,
U.S. PARK SERVICE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND, CENTRAL MAINE
TRAILS COALITION, NATIONAL RECREATION TRAILS ACT
(FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION), COOPERATING PRIVATE
LAND OWNERS, AND THE MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

PERMITTED USES

SUMMER

WINTER

USER ETHICS WHEN MEETING ON TRAIL
PLEASE YIELD TO THOSE
PASSING FROM BEHIND
PASS ON LEFT WITH CAUTION

¹ Government of Maine. Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. 2021. *Maine ATV Program*. https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/trail_activities/atv/index.shtml#policystatement

New Hampshire

New Hampshire (NH) manages a wide variety of trails, with a substantial number of multi-use trails. The state has developed specific resources on trail etiquette, which are summed up in one graphic:

Generally speaking, all users are asked:



- Keep to the right and pass on the left when safe and appropriate;
- Travel at a reasonable speed, with faster users yielding the right of way to slower users;
- All users are to yield to horses and mushers;
- Users should stay in a single file when in groups or approaching others.

NH has also developed motorized and non-motorized etiquette guides specific to each type of use.

Reflections from the Trans Canada Trail

During the jurisdictional scan, a meeting was held with the TCT. The TCT aims to accommodate six 'preferred' activities in its network, with only one motorized: walking/hiking, cycling, horseback riding, cross-country skiing/snowshoeing, paddling, and snowmobiling. They strive to maximize 'greenway' (non-motorized) sections to promote active and healthy lifestyles in a safe environment. It's important to note that winter snowmobile use aligns with the greenway vision, which primarily applies to the summer months. These views have been documented in TCT's Greenways: Vision and Core Principles (See Appendix 6).¹

Regarding provincial/territorial approaches, TCT highlighted QC's model, where motorized and non-motorized trails are distinctly separated, referring to it as the 'gold standard.'

A central theme of the conversation with TCT was that motorized users tend to become the 'dominant' user group in shared trail scenarios. While hikers and ATVers can co-exist on a trail, TCT's experience suggests that trails may eventually cater more to the needs of the larger or riskier user groups. This statement aligns with trends in other provinces, noting that while motorized users do not mind sharing, the disruption and risks they pose to non-motorized users often lead to non-motorized users eventually opting out.

¹ Trans Canada Trail. 2009. *Greenways: Vision and Core Principles*. <https://tctrail.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Greenways-Vision-and-Core-Principles.pdf>

The design standards for multi-use trails ranges from 3 to 4 meters in width, with the exception of those in Alberta, which are slightly wider at 3 to 4.4 meters. National recommendations specify a minimum width of 3 meters, with a preferred width of 4 meters, to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized use.

Appendix 3: Provincial Rail Bed Conversion for Active Transportation

Newfoundland and Labrador:

- T'Railway Provincial Park: Spanning across the island of Newfoundland, this trail follows the former Newfoundland Railway line and is used for various recreational activities.

New Brunswick:

- Sentier NB Trail: Various segments of this trail follow former rail lines and are used for hiking, cycling, and snowmobiling.

Nova Scotia:

- Rum Runners Trail: This trail runs along a historic railway line from Halifax to Lunenburg and is used for cycling and walking.

Quebec:

- Le P'tit Train du Nord: This 200-kilometre trail, the longest linear park in Canada, follows a former railway route through the Laurentians and is popular for cycling and cross-country skiing.

Ontario:

- Elora Cataract Trailway: This 47-kilometre trail follows a former rail line for hiking, cycling, and horseback riding.
- Goderich to Guelph (G2G) Rail Trail: Stretching 127 kilometres, this trail is popular for walking, cycling, and snowmobiling in the winter.

Manitoba:

- Carman Active Transportation Pathway: This trail utilizes an old railway line within the town of Carman and is used for walking and cycling.

Alberta:

- Iron Horse Trail: Extending over 300 kilometres, this trail connects several communities in northeastern Alberta and is used for walking, cycling, and ATV riding.

Saskatchewan:

- The Great Trail: In Saskatchewan, several segments follow former railway lines and are used for walking, cycling, and horseback riding.

British Columbia:

- Kettle Valley Rail Trail: This trail is part of the larger TCT and runs through the Okanagan Valley. It features numerous trestle bridges and tunnels and is popular for local and long-distance cyclists and hikers.
- Okanagan Rail Trail: Running from Coldstream to Kelowna, this trail was developed with significant community involvement and serves as a multi-use pathway for walking and cycling.

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Appendix 4: Glossary of Terms

4-Wheeler: This is a type of OHV that typically has four wheels. It is designed for off-road use and is popular for recreational activities such as trail riding, hunting, and agricultural work.

Access Points: designated locations or entrances where individuals can enter or exit a trail system.

Active Transportation: the use of human-powered means of travel for commuting to work, attending school, running errands, or visiting friends, emphasizing eco-friendly and health-conscious modes of mobility.

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV): a motorized off-road vehicle designed with large, low-pressure tires, a straddled seat, and handlebars for steering control, primarily used for recreational activities across diverse terrains.

Crossings: denote points where trails intersect with roads or other trails, necessitating safe navigation for users through designated road crossings or other infrastructure, accompanied by signage and safety measures to ensure user safety and trail integrity.

Crown Land: government-owned land typically managed for public use or conservation purposes and governed by laws and regulations set by the relevant government authority.

Dirt Bike: a type of motorcycle designed explicitly for off-road recreational riding on rough, unpaved surfaces such as dirt trails, motocross tracks, or rugged terrain. Dirt bikes typically feature lightweight frames, tires with deep treads for traction, and robust engines optimized for high performance in off-road conditions.

Designated Trails: trails designated for specific types of trail users.

Equestrian Pilot Project: allows equestrians to ride on six sections of the Confederation Trail. The pilot project was launched July 1, 2021 and has run throughout the summer and early fall, based on trail conditions. This is the third year of a pilot to evaluate the integration of horses on the trail and their impact.

Greenway: a designated trail primarily intended for recreational purposes, offering opportunities for leisurely activities such as walking, jogging, cycling, and other forms of outdoor enjoyment in a natural or urban setting.

Infrastructure Management: the strategic planning, regular upkeep, and systematic improvement of physical features and amenities along trails, encompassing tasks such as trail clearing, erosion control, signage installation, and facility maintenance to ensure safe, accessible, and enjoyable outdoor recreational experiences for users.

Island Walk: a 700-kilometre walking route that loops around PEI, along the ocean, much of the Confederation Trail, red dirt roads, beaches, and secondary roads throughout the province.

Jurisdictional Scan: a comprehensive review conducted to analyze policies, regulations, practices, or structures within different jurisdictions, aiming to identify best practices, trends, challenges, and opportunities in a particular area of interest.

Motorized: objects or vehicles that are powered by an engine or motor, typically using fuel or electricity for propulsion or movement, such as ATVs, snowmobiles, dirt bikes, cars, motorcycles, etc.

Motorized Trails: trails allowing snowmobiles, ATVs, or off-road motorcycles.

Multi-Use Trails: trails accommodating multiple user groups simultaneously, requiring careful coordination and signage to ensure safety and enjoyment for all.

Mushers: individuals who drive teams of sled dogs in races or expeditions, taking care of the dogs and leading them through cold, snowy environments.

Non-Motorized: objects or vehicles that operate without an engine or motor, relying instead on human or natural power for propulsion or movement.

Non-Motorized Trails: trails excluding snowmobiles, ATVs, off-road motorcycles, etc.

Non-Permitted User: someone who accesses or uses the trail without proper authorization, ignoring established regulations or permissions set by trail management or authorities.

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV): a type of motorized vehicle designed and equipped for operation on unpaved terrain or off-road environments. These vehicles include but are not limited to ATVs, dirt bikes, snowmobiles, and off-road trucks. They are typically used for recreational purposes such as off-road driving, trail riding, and exploration of rugged landscapes.

Permitted User: an individual or group authorized to access and utilize the trail according to established regulations, guidelines, or permissions set forth by trail management or relevant authorities.

Quad: a type of ATV that exclusively has four wheels (while an ATV can have up to 6) and is designed to be driven by a single operator, though some models may accommodate a passenger. Due to their ability to navigate rough terrain, quads are popular for recreational activities such as trail riding, hunting, and agricultural work.

Recreation: voluntary participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative, and spiritual activities enhancing individual and community well-being.

Seasonally Permitted Users: individuals or groups granted temporary access or usage rights to certain resources or areas during specific times of the year, often for activities such as recreation, hunting, fishing, and agriculture, in compliance with regulations and permits issued by the relevant authorities or land managers.

Section-Specific Permitted Users: individuals or groups authorized to access specific areas of land or resources for defined purposes in compliance with regulations and permits issued by relevant authorities.

Side-by-Side: a small, multi-passenger off-road utility terrain vehicle (UTV) designed to carry two or more occupants sitting side by side, typically equipped with a steering wheel, roll cage, and safety features, used primarily for recreational purposes, utility work, or off-road exploration.

Snowmobile: a motorized vehicle designed for travel over snow and ice, equipped with skis at the front for steering and a track at the rear for propulsion, often used for recreational activities and transportation in snowy conditions.

Stakeholder: an individual, group, organization, or entity with an interest, concern, or investment in a particular project, decision, or issue whose actions or decisions can impact or be impacted by the outcome.

Sustainability: practices aimed at minimizing environmental impact, preserving natural resources, and ensuring the long-term viability of an ecosystem.

Trail Etiquette: guidelines and norms governing user behaviour on the trail, promoting safety, courtesy, and environmental stewardship.

Trans Canada Trail (TCT): a national charity promoting the completion and use of a 22,000-kilometre shared use trail across Canada.

Trail Development: encompasses planning, building, and maintaining pathways for recreational or transportation purposes, focusing on user needs, safety, and environmental sustainability.

Trail Maintenance: regular upkeep activities performed to ensure the safety, accessibility, and sustainability of the trail, including clearing vegetation, repairing erosion, and grooming surfaces.

Trail Management: the oversight and maintenance of the trail system, including repairs, signage, and safety measures.

Trail Network: an interconnected system of pathways, routes, or trails designed and maintained to facilitate recreational activities, transportation, and access to natural or urban areas.

Trail User: anyone utilizing trails for recreational, commuting, or exercise purposes.

Trail User Group: Organizations or associations representing specific user communities, advocating for their interests and contributing to trail stewardship efforts.

Trail Regulations: rules and regulations governing trail usage, including hours of operation, permitted activities, and restrictions on motorized vehicles.

Trail Planning: the process of designing, developing, and implementing new trails or improvements to existing ones, often involving input from stakeholders and community members.

Appendix 5: Trans Canada Trail Greenways: Vision and Core Principles



Trans Canada Trail Greenways: Vision and Core Principles

Mission: We will promote and assist in the development and use of the Trans Canada Trail by supporting success at the local level in the creation of this national network.

The *Greenways: Vision and Core Principles* document guides the Trans Canada Trail and its local partners in connecting the Trail. The TCT's goal is to be one of the world's pre-eminent long-distance trails; a travel destination for Canadians and international visitors and a unique way to explore Canada's magnificent landscapes, rich history and diverse culture.

Trans Canada Trail Greenways: Vision and Core Principles

Vision

The Trans Canada Trail is a multi-use recreational trail, stretching from coast to coast to coast.

- The Trail is designed to accommodate six preferred activities: walking/hiking, cycling, horseback riding, cross-country skiing/snowshoeing, snowmobiling and paddling
- Made up of hundreds of local trails, joined together to form the world's longest and grandest trail, the Trans Canada Trail offers a multitude of trail experiences from wilderness pathways, rail trails, forested trails, rural tracks, and historic canoe routes to paved urban walkways, downtown streets, country roads, logging roads and secondary highways
- The goal is to maximize greenway sections
- The Trans Canada Trail continually strives to deliver a quality trail experience that is recognized as being best in class. We seek to be one of the world's pre-eminent long distance trails
- The Trail offers Canadians and international visitors a unique way to get outdoors, explore major cities and small towns; experience our ever-changing landscapes; and discover Canada's rich history, diverse cultures, communities and people

Core Principles

The Trans Canada Trail is committed to:

- Providing a safe and enjoyable trail experience on high quality trail
- Promoting an active and healthy lifestyle
- Preserving green space, encouraging active transportation and protecting the environment
- As a priority, developing a greenway trail that promotes non-motorized uses in summer (walking/hiking, cycling, horseback riding, and paddling on water routes), as well as cross-country skiing/snowshoeing and snowmobiling on some Trail sections, in winter

Board Approved March 28, 2009

Defining Trails

To communicate the type of trail experience users are likely to have, the TCT will use the following categories to describe sections of the Trail:

- **Greenway** – a section of the Trail that has been developed for and supports one or more of TCT's preferred activities in the summer – greenways do not allow motorized use in the summer months
- **Road cycling route** – a section of the Trail that is on either a paved or gravel road, where users may be subject to the relevant highway traffic act, motor vehicle code or resource road regulations and/or legislation
- **Yellow Trail** – a section of the Trail that allows for motorized use in the summer months
- **Blueway** – a water route on an established line of travel along a watercourse, where users may encounter motorized watercraft that are subject to relevant legislation or regulations, such as the Navigable Water Protection Act

Implementing the Greenway Vision

To achieve the Greenway Vision, TCT takes the following approach to Trail development:

- TCT will actively support and promote **Greenways**, that is, sections which have been or will be developed for one or more of the TCT's summer preferred activities
- Where the route of the Trail is on a paved or gravel road, which is shared with motorized vehicles and users and may be subject to the relevant highway traffic act, motor vehicle code or resource road regulations and/or legislation, the TCT will recognize this as a **Road Cycling Route**, until an alternative route, at some point in the future, can be developed.

Forest Access Roads (such as in Ontario) will be considered **Road Cycling Routes** and may allow summer motorized use. TCT will not fund construction of a **Road Cycling Route** except for wayfinding and safety signage, and, if necessary, bridges that will serve as pinch points (locations where two or more Trail sections meet)

- Existing Trail sections with off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, which were registered before December 31, 2009, and where motorized use occurs, will continue to be recognized as Trans Canada Trail, and will be categorized as **Yellow Trail**. However, the long term goal is for all land-based Trail sections to be greenways – over time, TCT will seek to work collaboratively with its partners to achieve this goal. This will require discussions with provincial/territorial partners and local trail groups to plan for alternate routes for motorized use, the removal of motorized use from the TCT, or finding alternate routes for the Trail.
- TCT will not fund improvements on **Yellow Trail** except for wayfinding and safety signage, and, if necessary, bridges, which will serve as pinch points.
- TCT will not support or register new Trail where summer motorized use is permitted, that is, no concept plans or proposals for **Yellow Trail** will be funded or accepted for consideration. Where a gap cannot be bridged for summer non-motorized use before 2017, the section of Trail must be on an existing gravel or paved road trail type and will be categorized as **Road Cycling Route**. TCT will not fund construction of a **Road Cycling Route**, except for wayfinding and safety signage, and, if necessary, bridges, which will serve pinch points
- TCT will continue to support the development of **Blueways**, including providing funding for water route development for non-motorized users

Winter Activities

Cross-country skiing/snowshoeing and snowmobiling are preferred activities of the TCT in the winter months. The TCT will continue to support Trail sections developed for these uses. Funding for winter-use Trail is based on the trail type constructed for summer-time use.

Appendix 6: Confederation Trail Guiding Principles & Feedback

An online survey was made available for people to submit their feedback, providing a valuable opportunity for participants to share their opinions and experiences of the Confederation Trail. The response rate was significant, with a total of 5,744 individuals completing the survey.

Guiding Principle	Agree	Disagree	Feedback
<p>Environmental Stewardship and Conservation</p> <p>a. Prioritize protecting and conserving natural habitats, flora, and fauna along the Confederation Trail.</p> <p>b. Promote practices that minimize the ecological footprint of trail construction, maintenance, and use.</p> <p>c. Collaborate with environmental organizations to conduct regular assessments and adopt measures to mitigate any negative impact on the environment.</p>	94.9%	5.1%	<p>“The stewardship principles outlined will help to maintain the trail in its current, pristine state for people to enjoy into the future. This is an incredibly valuable resource for people but also as a corridor of nature for conservation purposes.”</p> <p>“Protecting the environment and the Island's natural beauty are paramount. This is why I suggest the building of additional trail systems can threaten or displace existing wildlife. The Confederation Trail was built to move Canadians and goods by motorized transport. This has been done in a sustainable manner in the past and would continue should motorized vehicles such as ATVs be given some shared access...”</p>
<p>Sustainable Development and Planning</p> <p>a. Encourage sustainable development alongside the trail that aligns with local community needs and enhances economic vitality.</p> <p>b. Involve local stakeholders in planning to ensure community input, considering long-term sustainability and cultural preservation.</p> <p>c. Implement and adhere to zoning and land use policies that safeguard the trail and its surroundings from incompatible development.</p>	92.4%	7.6%	<p>“Communities should be involved in the long-term use of the trail in their area as long as the trail is protected from commercialization. Communities would be better able to identify areas for improvement for the local riders and can also provide great input for tourism opportunities within their boundaries that would benefit from an offshoot from the trail within their limits.”</p> <p>“More should be done to encourage ATViing development alongside the trail so communities can benefit from economic revenue they bring in.”</p>

Guiding Principle	Agree	Disagree	Feedback
<p>Inclusivity and Accessibility</p> <p>a. Ensure the Confederation Trail is accessible to all individuals, including those with diverse abilities and needs.</p> <p>b. Design and maintain the trail to accommodate various forms of recreation, transportation, and cultural experiences for a wide range of users.</p> <p>c. Promote inclusivity through educational initiatives and outreach programs that raise awareness of accessibility requirements and encourage respectful usage.</p>	72.5%	27.5%	<p>“The statement 'Ensure the Confederation Trail is accessible to all individuals ..' needs to include access to everyone all year around including during the winter months. It is ridiculous that the trail is restricted to all but snowmobilers during the winter months. It's like an open invitation to anyone who wants to drag race their machines through a dark path and have no limits or rules placed on them. There is no reason that skiers and snowshoers shouldn't be allowed on the trail in the winter, it just means snowmobilers would need to adhere to some speed limits and respect other people that are on the trail. And listening to snowmobiles all through the night as they race back and forth on the trails and through people's fields takes away from other people's enjoyment of the environment.”</p> <p>“People with disabilities and challenges have just as much right to enjoy the scenery and outdoor experiences as everyone else.”</p> <p>“There is so much potential for partnerships with Parks Canada, Canadian Heritage, provincial and municipal organizations and groups to enliven the trail through interpretation and cultural offerings.”</p>

Guiding Principle	Agree	Disagree	Feedback
<p>Community Engagement and Collaboration</p> <p>a. Actively involve local communities, Indigenous groups, and stakeholders in decision-making processes related to the trail's development, upkeep, and events.</p> <p>b. Establish partnerships with community organizations to plan events, maintenance, and educational programs that foster a sense of ownership and pride among local residents.</p> <p>c. Facilitate opportunities for cultural events, interpretive signage, and educational workshops to promote understanding and appreciation of the trail's historical and cultural significance.</p>	91.7%	8.3%	<p>"I think the ATV clubs on PEI proved over the years how to create and maintain trails so I think they would do a great job helping out with Confederation Trail"</p>
<p>Safety and Well-being</p> <p>a. Prioritize the safety and well-being of all trail users by regularly assessing and maintaining trail conditions, signage, and facilities.</p> <p>b. Promote responsible trail behaviour and provide educational materials on safety measures and user encounters.</p>	95.9%	4.1%	<p>"I think it's important that the trail is safe for all users. I'd like to see it remain free of motorized vehicles, to ensure the safety of walkers, runners, cyclists, and horseback riders. The tranquillity and peacefulness of the trail would also be seriously negatively impacted if ATVs and dirt bikes were allowed access to the trail. I'd also be strongly in favour of snowmobile use of the trail to be ended, so it can be utilized by walkers, cross-country skiers, and snowshoers in the winter months. The snowmobile community has miles and miles of trail to ride on, whereas access to trails for non-motorized winter activities is limited."</p> <p>"If you do not police the trails and maintain all areas of the trail, it would just create chaos."</p>

Guiding Principle	Agree	Disagree	Feedback
Continued from page 44.			<p>“Safety is an issue and users don't stay to the right and pass on the left. Some bikers use the trail as a racetrack. They are at top speed when passing walkers. They should have a bell to ring as a warning. A friend was seriously injured as a result of speed and lack of a bell. When biking, I ring nearing walkers. Thank yous are mostly given”</p>
<p>Preservation of Cultural Heritage a. Recognize and respect the historical, cultural, and spiritual significance of the Confederation Trail to indigenous peoples and local communities. b. Collaborate with Indigenous groups and local communities to interpret and preserve cultural heritage, incorporating appropriate signage, artwork, and educational programs.</p>	89.6%	10.4%	<p>“I think it is a stretch to fit it in everywhere. I think the nature aspects of the trail should be emphasized with the cultural aspects strengthened within the communities along the trail.”</p> <p>“We can all learn more about each other if there were signage and markers on the trail to note significant information about each community or culture.”</p>