

CANADIAN TRAILS STUDY

DECEMBER 2010



NTC • CNS
NATIONAL TRAILS COALITION COALITION NATIONALE SUR LES SENTIERS



About the Author



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Terry was also a co-founder of the Canadian Trails Federation and he served as volunteer President of that organization from 2004 until 2009 when he resigned to accept an appointment as National Coordinator of the National Trails Coalition. In the latter role he was the chief administrative officer responsible for investing \$25 million on behalf of the Government of Canada in 474 trail infrastructure projects across Canada .

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Canadian Trails Study

A Comprehensive Analysis of Managed Trails and Trail Uses

December 2010

Study Commissioned by:



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COALITION

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By

Terrance J. Norman, M.Sc.



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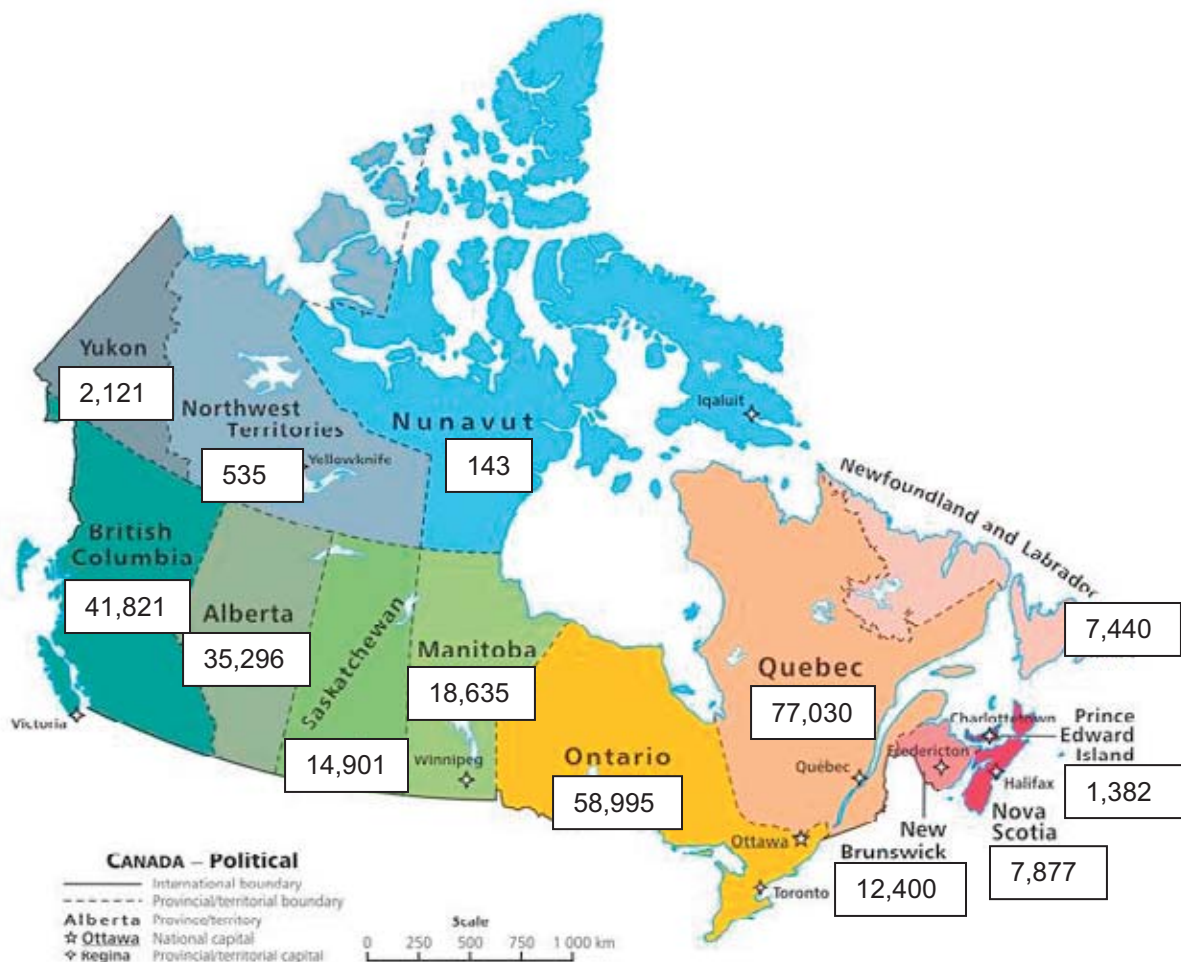
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1. Introduction

Through research conducted for this study, the consultants have determined that there are more than 278,000 kilometres of managed trails throughout Canada. Many of these trails are single track or single use such as snowmobiling, ATVing, hiking, cross country skiing, cycling, mountain biking or horseback riding. The research has also determined that there are currently more than 71,000 kilometres of managed trails in Canada that are shared use trails.

The following map of Canada has been used as a backdrop to illustrate the number of kilometres of managed trails in each province and territory.

Kilometres of Managed Trail in Each Province and Territory of Canada



The above numbers illustrate the wide variation in trail development across Canada. Since there is a significant variance in population between different regions of the country, the consultants developed a means for measuring the relative amount of trail development by compiling a ratio of metres of trail per resident of each province and territory. Of course the Yukon came out on

top because of their sparse population in comparison to their long distance trails. However, in terms of provinces, New Brunswick got top marks with a ratio of 17 metres of trail per resident.

This study provides an overview of all managed trails in Canada and an analysis of the most important development during the past decade for Canadian trails: the investment by the federal government of \$25 million in recreational trails through a partnership with the National Trails Coalition. This study also documents as accurately as possible the current trail inventory across Canada and it reviews existing management practices for trail development and maintenance. It also examines the differences between single track and shared use trails as well as urban and rural trails.

1.1 Background

Trails can be a myriad of things to a variety of people. Trails can be as simple as a neighbourhood footpath, as challenging as a long distance hiking trail or as complex as a shared use trail.

Trails can be urban or rural and they include:

- Footpaths with natural surfaces
- Shared use treadways with asphalt or crusher dust surfaces
- On-road and off-road bicycle routes
- Walkways, boardwalks and sidewalks
- Rail Trails: Converted abandoned rail lines
- Rails with Trails (trails adjacent to operating rail lines)
- Road allowances and machinery tracks
- Forestry and mining access roads designated as trails
- Equestrian trails for horseback riding
- Mountain biking trails
- ATV and off road motorcycle trails
- Groomed snowmobile trails
- Dog sledding trails
- Cross country ski trails
- Waterways for canoeing and kayaking
- Canal tow paths, dykes and irrigation surface roads

Trail users include: walkers, hikers, joggers, runners, inline skaters, cyclists, mountain bikers, horseback riders, cross country skiers, snowshoers and dog sledders. People with disabilities or mobility challenges and those who use wheelchairs or motorized scooters can also use trails that have been built to accessibility standards. There are also motorized trail users who operate specialized recreational vehicles such as snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles and off road motorcycles. Water routes are enjoyed through kayaking and canoeing.

While some trails are intended for a single use (e.g. mountain biking trails) others accommodate multiple or shared uses such as walking and cycling. Some trails are seasonal (such as snowmobile trails in the winter or mountain biking in the summer) while others are operational all year long. An example of a shared use trail is Alberta's Iron Horse Trail. It is designed for hiking, cycling, horseback riding including horse drawn wagons, ATVing, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling.

There are many different terms that are used by people in the trails community across Canada. Accordingly, in the appendices at the end of this study, we have provided a glossary of these terms and common acronyms.

Trails in Canada are built and maintained largely by the efforts of volunteer-driven, not-for-profit organizations with varying levels of support from their community and local, provincial and federal governments. Often governments encourage local community groups to adopt sections of trails that are located on crown land (e.g. abandoned rail lines) because it encourages people to take pride in the management and stewardship of “their” local trail. It is also much less costly for community groups to build and maintain sections of trail because they can mobilize volunteer resources and obtain corporate contributions.

There are also many instances where municipal recreation departments, provincial government agencies and regional, provincial or national park authorities are responsible for the management and operation of trails. Often trail development is made possible through the generous support and cooperation of private landowners who make their land available at no cost for others to enjoy. Trail development and management is a working example of how good things happen when volunteers, landowners, local businesses and governmental organizations work together for the public good.

1.2 Purpose and Objective

The Novus Consulting Group Limited¹ was commissioned by the [National Trails Coalition](#) (NTC)² to conduct this study. The three partners in NTC are: the [Canadian Off Highway Vehicle Distributors Council](#) (COHV)³, the [Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations](#) (CCSO)⁴ and the [Canadian Trails Federation](#) (CTF)⁵. The goal of the National Trails Coalition is to bring together the major partners involved in trail development and to encourage collaboration and cooperation to enhance the trail system in Canada.

The overall purpose of this study was to publish accurate information that is currently not available to the public. The primary objective of this study was to gather data about existing Canadian trails and their uses in order to understand the big picture. This type of research and analysis had not been done before. Once all of the information was compiled, the consultants then segmented the data for further analysis. The consultants also examined the different ways that trail development has occurred across Canada.

¹ The Novus Consulting Group is a boutique management consulting firm that is based in Halifax, NS. Website: <http://www.novusconsulting.com>

² The National Trails Coalition is a federally incorporated non-profit organization that represents all Canadian trail interests. Website: <http://www.ntc-canada.com>

³ The Canadian Off Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV) represents the interests of Canadian ATVers and Off Road Motorcyclists through the All Terrain Quad Council of Canada (AQCC) and the Motorcyclists Confederation of Canada (MCC).

⁴ The Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) represents the provincial snowmobile associations across Canada.

⁵ The Canadian Trails Federation (CTF) is a federally incorporated not-for-profit organization whose members are the provincial and territorial trails associations across Canada.

1.3 Scope

The scope of this project was broad in that it was a national study of managed trails. However, the scope was limited to secondary research and, accordingly, the study was dependent upon the availability of data from a number of diverse sources. The quality of data varied widely from province to province. Some provincial trail associations have very detailed databases of trail inventory information while others have virtually nothing.

In addition to the managed trail system in Canada, there are also many unauthorized trails. Unauthorized trails are outside the scope of this study.

Trail usage data is also outside of the scope of this study. It would be helpful in the future to gather data regarding the number of people per day that use specific trails. A number of trail managers are installing counters and digital cameras to collect this information. Some groups have also commissioned surveys to obtain information about demographics and user preferences.

1.4 Methodology

The consultants used secondary research techniques to source data regarding trail inventory and management practices. Sources of information were the provincial trails organizations, provincial governments, national trail user groups, provincial trail user groups, websites such as Canada Trails⁶ and Trailpeak⁷ as well as publications such as Backroad Mapbooks.

The consultants encountered difficulty in obtaining information about equestrian trails. These types of trails are generally related to specific riding stables. Information about the number of kilometres of single use riding trails is not generally available. Of all of the provinces, British Columbia and Quebec had the best information available regarding equestrian trails. British Columbia also had the highest percentage of shared use trails that permit horseback riding.

In some cases such as Ontario, there is excellent datum available online through the Ontario Trails Council website⁸. This data was downloaded and sorted into trail uses for each of more than 2,000 trails. Most provincial trails organizations do not have this level of detail regarding their trail inventory. In some cases estimates from knowledgeable trail managers were used. Datum regarding sections of the Trans Canada Trail is readily available by province and trail name via their website⁹. Special efforts were made to avoid duplication by using distinct trail names in each province as the primary data field. This was particularly important for shared use trails where the consultants used their best efforts to record the data according to the primary use of those trails.

⁶ <http://www.canadatrails.ca>

⁷ <http://www.trailpeak.com>

⁸ <http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca>

⁹ <http://www.tctrail.ca>

2. Overview of Canadian Trails

To the best of our knowledge until now there has never been a compilation of the total kilometres of trails in Canada. Tables 1 and 2 below are based upon data collected from a number of diverse sources in each province and territory. The data has been segmented into single use and shared use trails plus water and road routes. Water routes and roads were separated from managed trails because there is no trail construction, maintenance or management required or possible on these routes other than staging points for canoe / kayak routes. The consultants have made every effort to ensure that the data is comprehensive but it is likely that there are additional trails that have not yet been tabulated.

Table 1 shows that as of 2010 there are more than 278,000 kilometres of managed trails in Canada. Also included at the side of this table are our estimates of the kilometres for water routes and road routes. They have not been included in the total kilometres of managed trails because they are not marked with trail signage and they are not maintained by registered trails organizations.

Table 1. Canadian Managed Trails

by Number of Kilometres per Province / Territory as of 2010

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

Our data shows that motorized trails (snowmobile, all terrain vehicle and off road motorcycle trails) represent 66.4% of the total kilometres of managed trails in Canada while non-motorized trails represent about 33.6%. Non-motorized activities include walking/hiking, cycling, mountain biking, cross country skiing and horseback riding.

Table 1 shows that Ontario and Quebec together comprise almost 49% of the total number of kilometres of managed trails in Canada. They are followed in size by British Columbia and Alberta. These four provinces combined represent over 76% of all managed trails in Canada.

Table 2.

Canadian Managed Trails by Number of Kilometres According to Use as of 2010

Prov. / Terr.	Single Use Trails						Shared Use Trails				Total Km Managed Trails
	Snow-mobile	ATV / ORM	Hiking / running	Cross Country Skiing	Mtn. Biking	Cycling (off road touring)	Walking & cycling	Eques-trian	Snow-mobile	ATV	
NL	3,600	1,000	1,204	316	82	0	152	0	158	928	7,440
NS	1,600	1,000	873	149	195	0	192	0	2,600	1,268	7,877
PE	600	5	137	106	32	50	98	0	354	0	1,382
NB	6,700	3,201	646	706	144	0	300	6	397	300	12,400
QC	31,745	17,182	13,214	6,312	2,333	1,601	943	3,000	700	0	77,030
ON	32,418	3,786	7,608	3,516	1,629	550	4,968	870	1,844	1,806	58,995
MB	12,506	2,660	735	760	533	110	1,036	0	295	0	18,635
SK	7,000	2,500	339	942	215	2,132	1,564	0	190	20	14,901
AB	8,614	1,000	6,841	1,752	1,640	425	2,743	782	1,040	10,459	35,296
BC	0	0	7,125	2,020	2,260	231	3,995	2,130	11,775	12,285	41,821
YT	0	0	550	106	200	0	300	0	500	465	2,121
NT	0	0	0	15	15	0	0	0	500	5	535
NU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	143	0	143
Totals:	104,783	32,334	39,272	16,700	9,278	5,099	16,291	6,788	20,496	27,536	278,576
% of Total:	37.6%	11.6%	14.1%	6.0%	3.3%	1.8%	5.8%	2.4%	7.4%	9.9%	

We have defined single use or single track trails as trails that are designed for use by a single trail user group such as mountain bikers. Table 2 shows that single track or single use trails represent almost 75% of the total kilometres of managed trails in Canada. The largest segment is represented by single use snowmobile trails at 37.6%. The second largest segment is ATV/ORM trails at 11.6%. When the shared use component for each of these segments is included, the total for snowmobile trails increases to 45% and the ATV/ORM segment increases to 21.5%.

We have defined shared use trails as trails that permit more than one type of trail user at the same time (i.e. hiking and cycling) or at different times (i.e. snowmobiling in the winter and cycling in the summer). They can be non-motorized, motorized or mixed (both non-motorized and motorized trail users sharing the same trail). Most motorized shared use trails permit non-motorized trail users as well. We have allocated kilometres to the category that is the primary activity on these trails but we acknowledge that it can be somewhat subjective.

Shared use trails have grown significantly in recent years¹⁰. This category now represents over 25% of the total kilometres of managed trails in Canada. About one third are non-motorized shared use trails (walking/cycling or equestrian shared use trails) and the other two thirds are motorized shared use trails. Shared use trails that permit ATVs make up more than half of the motorized category.

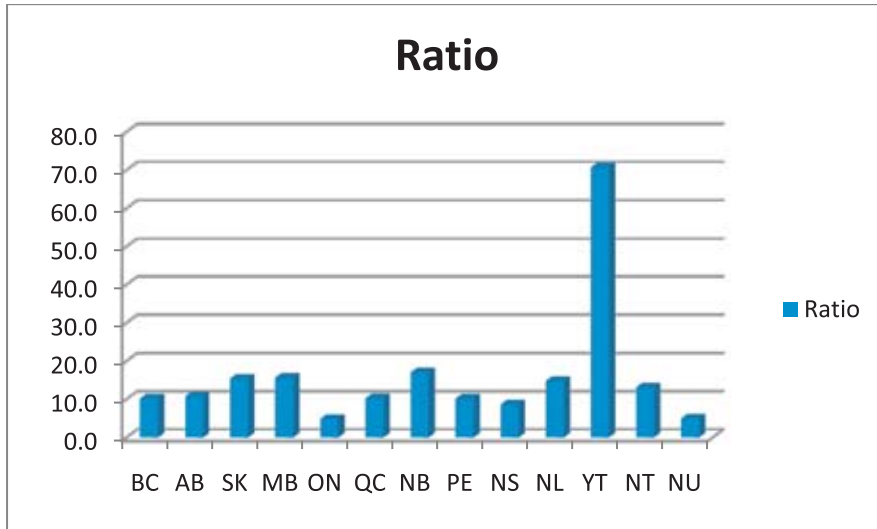
Water routes and roads have not been included in Table 2 as they do not fit under our definition of managed trails and, in any event, they have already been included in Table 1.

¹⁰ Shared Use Trails in Canada, 2008, report prepared for COHV by Novus Consulting Group.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the consultants compiled a ratio of the number of metres of managed trail per resident for each province and territory. This provides a means to compare the relative development of trail infrastructure across the country.

Chart A below shows that by far the highest ratio was recorded by the Yukon Territory (70). This is because they have long distance managed trails and a sparse population. On the other hand, most of the long distance trails in the Northwest Territories are located on roads and they were not included in our number of kilometres of managed trails.

Chart A Metres of Managed Trail per Resident for Canadian Provinces and Territories



With respect to a comparison between provinces, New Brunswick had the highest ratio at 17. The lowest ranking province, which also has the largest population, was Ontario with a ratio of 5 metres of managed trail per resident.



Shared use trail bridge over the Crowsnest River in Southern Alberta.

3. The National Trails Coalition and Canada's Economic Action Plan 2009-2010

3.1 Background

In March 2009, the Government of Canada announced a major new job-creating investment in Canada's network of recreational trails. As part of Canada's 2009-2010 Economic Action Plan, the federal government committed to invest \$25 million in one year into Canada's recreational trail infrastructure on the condition that the funding would be at least matched by other funders and the projects would be completed by March 31, 2010. This investment was administered by the National Trails Coalition (NTC) in partnership with Infrastructure Canada.

The NTC is the operating name for the Coalition of Canadian Trails Organizations, a federally incorporated not-for-profit organization. Its members are: *Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO)*, *Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV)* and *Canadian Trails Federation (CTF)*. The NTC was founded in 2007 based on a common belief that cooperative approaches and support at the national level would facilitate trail building and refurbishment activities; be beneficial to the long term sustainability of all forms of trail-based activities; and stimulate economic activity and development in communities across the country. The NTC through its member organizations represents over a million Canadian citizens who enjoy outdoor activities on managed trails.

During a nine-month period in 2009-2010 over \$23.2 million of federal government funding was distributed by NTC to infrastructure investments in 474 recreational trail projects across Canada. Funding partners provided another \$33.3 million as shown in Table 3 below. Although the program stipulated that a minimum of 50% of the funding had to come from partners, in the final analysis \$1.40 was contributed by other partners for every \$1.00 invested by the Government of Canada. The total investment in these projects amounted to \$56.5 million.

Table 3. NTC Matching Funds

Funding Source:	Amount
Provincial Governments	\$16,252,054
Municipal Governments	\$ 6,872,464
Other Federal contributions	\$ 672,768
Other sources ¹¹	<u>\$ 9,560,153</u>
Matching Funds Total:	\$33,357,439
Federal Government	<u>\$23,223,234</u>
Total Investment:	\$56,580,673

¹¹ Other sources of matching funds were national and provincial trails organizations, local community trail groups and clubs, conservation authorities, regional development organizations and First Nations.



Since 95% of the trails in Canada are located in rural regions of the country, the 2009-2010 NTC program was focused on rural trail investments. However, due to the difficulties that a number of rural trail groups encountered regarding access to matching funds, combined with strong demand for urban trail projects that had significant financial backing from municipal governments, in the end a total of 90% of the NTC funds were invested in rural trail projects and 10% were invested in urban trail projects.

The 2009-2010 NTC program created jobs and increased opportunities for tourism at a time when there was a strong need for economic stimulus across Canada. The legacy of these trail projects will provide safe opportunities for Canadians to enjoy their natural surroundings and to engage in an active and healthy lifestyle.

The funding was targeted equally to three trail use categories: non-motorized trails, motorized winter trails (snowmobiling), and motorized summer trails (ATVing and Off-Road Motorcycling). This correlated closely with the percentage of kilometres of managed trails according to use as shown in Tables 1 and 2 above. This structure helped to ensure that the federal investment in recreational trails would benefit rural communities across Canada while complementing other federal programs that were available for urban recreation projects.

A total of 20,128 kilometres of trails were built, upgraded or rehabilitated under the 2009-2010 NTC program. Table 4 below provides a summary of results for each of the three categories:

Table 4. NTC Program - Kilometres of Trail Built, Upgraded and Rehabilitated

Category	Built	Upgraded	Rehabilitated	Total
ATV/ORM	599	2,412	1,546	4,557
Snowmobile	689	8,062	1,971	10,722
Non-Motorized	<u>752</u>	<u>3,541</u>	<u>556</u>	<u>4,849</u>
	2,040	14,015	4,073	20,128

A total of 766 bridges were built, upgraded or rehabilitated. Included in this number were 65 bridges that were 15 metres (50 feet) or longer (generally called “engineered” bridges). One of the bridges that was constructed had a span of 110 metres (360 feet).

Although the number of culverts installed were not tracked, in many cases large culverts were installed to improve water management along trails.

3.2 Governance

NTC is governed by a six person Board of Directors. Two people are nominated by each of the three founding members to sit on the Board of Directors.

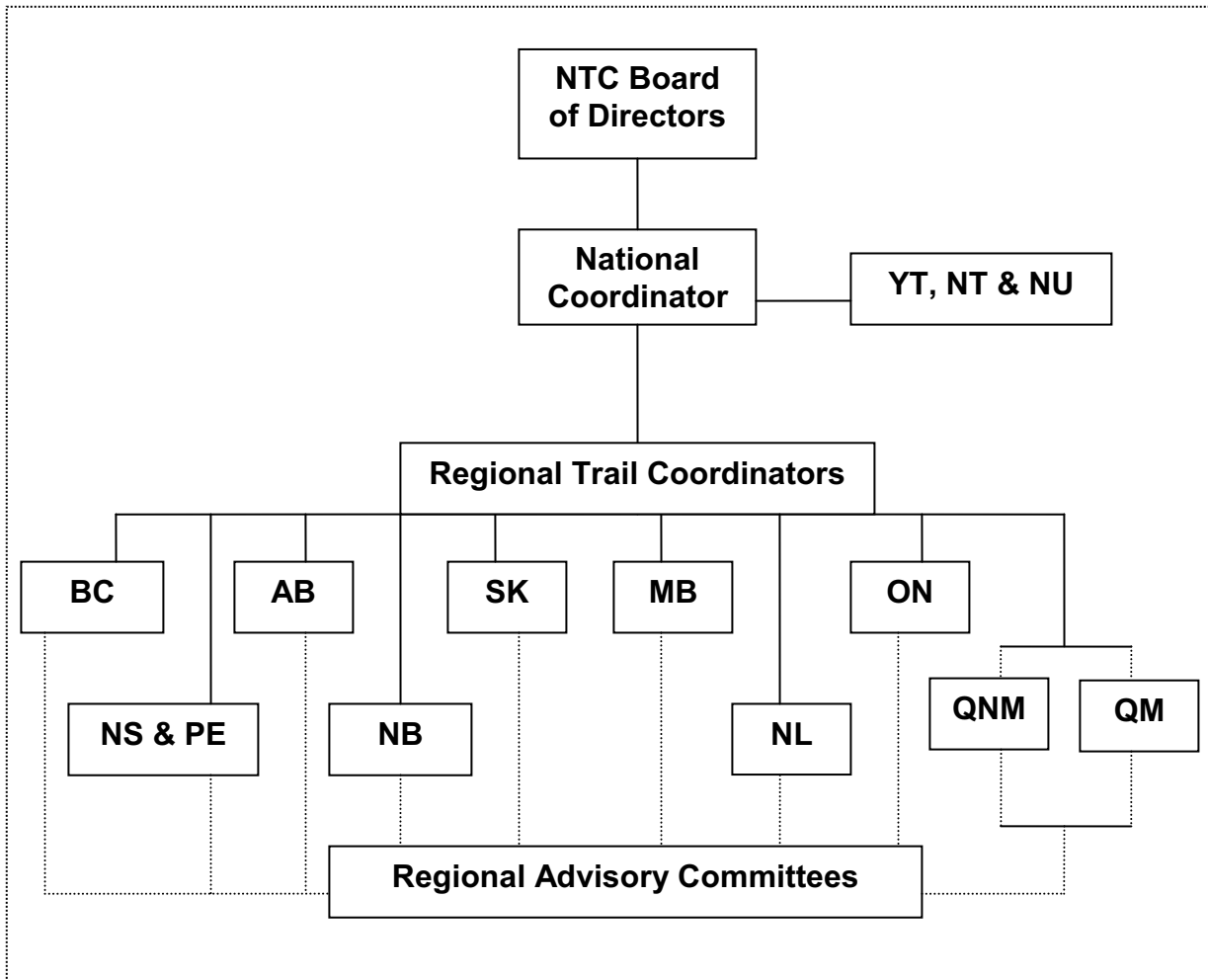
The Board of Directors oversees the management of the organization. During 2009-2010 the Board met on a regular basis (generally 2 - 3 times per month) to approve project contributions and/or changes to approved funding for projects. It established policies and approved procedures for operations. The Board also provided oversight on all aspects of the operation of the NTC recreational trail infrastructure investment program.

The following people were the volunteer Directors and Officers of NTC during 2009-2010:

Bob Ramsay	President
Kevin Sweetland	Vice President
Curt Schroeder	Secretary-Treasurer and Chair of the Audit Committee
Jo-Anne Farquhar	Director and Chair of the Communications Committee
Dennis Burns	Director
Patrick Connor	Director

The chief administrative officer of NTC is the National Coordinator (NC) who reports to the Board of Directors. During the 2009-2010 program there were ten Regional Trail Coordinators as shown on the organization chart in Chart B below. They reported to the National Coordinator and each of them also reported indirectly to the Regional Advisory Committee for their province. The NC handled the regional coordinator duties for the three territories.

Chart B. NTC Organization Chart



The NC is the senior administrator and a signing officer for the organization. He was responsible for the overall administration of the 2009-2010 recreational trail investment program. To assist in this process, the NC contracted for the services of Regional Trail Coordinators (RTCs) in each of the provinces. The NC was responsible for communicating policies and procedures that were approved by the NTC Board of Directors to the RTCs and then on to recipients in each of the provinces.

Another key role for the NC was financial administration of the organization including managing the payment of all contributions to recipients that had been approved by the NTC Board of Directors and the payment of all administrative expenses in accordance with the annual administrative budget as approved by the NTC Board of Directors as well as the Government of Canada.

3.3 Program Administration

The RTCs in each province were the key day-to-day liaison between NTC and the program recipients. They were responsible for administering the program in their province under the direction of the NC and in collaboration with the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) for their province.

The RTCs communicated information about the program to potential applicants in their province, assembled the funding applications that were received and presented them to the members of their RAC for their review, compiled the scores from the RAC members and then participated in meetings of the RAC to record the recommendations that were arrived at by consensus. The RTC then sent the RAC recommendations to the NC for presentation to the NTC Board of Directors. Upon approval by the NTC Board, the RTC prepared funding agreements for each recipient and sent signed copies to the NC for signing by two NTC officers.

The RTCs also initiated payments to recipients by issuing cheque requisitions for recipients whose documents were in order. This included the initial payment of 50% as well as subsequent payments of 20%, 20% and the 10% holdback. No payment to a recipient was made without a duly signed cheque requisition from the RTC for that province.

The RTCs also communicated NTC policies and processes to their recipients as they evolved during the term of the program. This was done by email and/or by regularly scheduled electronic newsletters. The RTCs also compiled monthly reports based upon information received from recipients and submitted these provincial reports to the NC. This information was used for the bi-monthly reports to Infrastructure Canada. Finally, each RTC also submitted a final report regarding the NTC program in their province.

A key management tool for administering the program was the weekly conference calls that were chaired by the NC and involved all of the RTCs. These calls were generally one hour long. Notes were taken by the NTC Administrative Assistant and they were circulated to all RTCs and posted on the internal NTC Board website for Directors to review.

These calls provided an opportunity for the NC to convey new policies approved by the NTC Board of Directors and/or to announce new processes to be implemented as a result of requests from the Board of Directors or the Government of Canada. The weekly calls also provided an opportunity for the RTCs to discuss developments in their province and any problems that had

arisen. Often issues in one province were relevant to RTCs in other provinces. The calls also provided an opportunity for the RTCs to ask questions regarding the implementation of the program. Finally, the weekly conference calls were a medium for communicating best practices amongst colleagues.

3.4 Regional Advisory Committees

Regional Advisory Committees (RACs) in each province and territory provided advice to the NTC Board of Directors regarding the operation of the NTC program in their province or territory. The members of each RAC met on a regular basis either in person or by conference call to discuss issues of importance to the program in their region. The RTC took notes at these meetings to record all important discussions and recommendations. The RTC also ensured that the views of the RAC members were properly noted and that all RAC recommendations were communicated to the NC for presentation to the NTC Board of Directors.

One of the key roles for members of an RAC was to review each application for funding within their province or territory and to score each potential project based upon consistent national ranking criteria. The RTC compiled the scores for each project that were submitted by each of the members of the RAC and recorded those scores on templates in order to arrive at an average score for each project. The RTC then ranked the projects in each category and presented this information for review at an RAC meeting. Once the members of the RAC had reached a consensus on the ranking of projects within each category, the RTC then communicated those recommendations to the NC for presentation to the NTC Board of Directors.

The NTC Board of Directors established a policy that no project would be approved for funding if it did not have at least a 50% average score from the provincial RAC. All scores were reviewed by the Directors prior to approval of initial funding as well as any recommended increases in funding.

From the beginning it was expected that there would be insufficient funding for all proposed projects. Accordingly, each RAC ranked their projects in order of strategic importance within each category in their province or territory. In this way, projects that did not receive funding in the first round could be considered for funding later in the year if any approved recipients in their province were unable to utilize the funding that had been allocated to them.

3.5 Re-allocation Funding

The NTC Board of Directors approved a policy whereby funding that could not be utilized by a recipient could be re-allocated to other approved recipients. The rationale for this policy was based upon the reality that most recipients were awarded only 50% of the funding they requested and some worthy applicants did not receive any funding at all in the first round of project funding approvals. Accordingly, recipients were asked to notify their RTC as soon as they became aware that they would not be able to utilize all of their approved funding so that the available money could be re-allocated to other worthy projects in their province.

The first step in the re-allocation process was to determine how much funding was available for re-allocation within each category (i.e. snowmobile, ATV/ORM or non-motorized) within a province or territory. The RTC then arranged for a meeting of the RAC either in person or by conference call to discuss where this funding should be applied. Once the RAC had arrived at its

recommendations, then the RTC forwarded the recommendations to the NC for presentation to the NTC Board of Directors.

Although the idea of re-allocation of funds was foreign for government administrators and it created a lot of extra administration by the RTCs, NC and Board members, it resulted in a significant amount of funding being transferred to other eligible projects rather than being returned to the federal government. Overall over \$5 million in funding was re-allocated and less than \$780,000 was returned to the government from those projects that could not utilize the full amount of their approved funding.

3.6 Summary of Investments

The total amount invested by the federal government in recreational trail projects in 2009-2010 through the NTC program was \$23,223,234. When combined with the matching funds from provincial and municipal governments and other partners, it resulted in a total of more than \$56 million invested in 474 projects across the country. The administrative costs to implement this program were less than 4% of the total NTC program costs.

Table 21 below provides a summary of the NTC funding invested by province and territory and segmented according to the three categories: snowmobile, ATV/ORM and non-motorized. The last column shows the total amount that was invested in managed trails in each province and territory. The total amount invested in managed trails in Canada was \$56.5 million including the NTC funding and the contributions by partners.

Table 5.

National Trails Coalition 2009-2010 Trail Infrastructure Investments by Category

Province / Territory	NTC Funding from Government of Canada			Total	Total Investment
	Snowmobile	ATV / ORM	Non-Motorized		
British Columbia	\$1,081,975	\$1,120,116	\$1,118,950	\$3,321,041	\$8,592,884
Alberta	\$738,010	\$829,955	\$1,046,437	\$2,614,402	\$6,198,023
Saskatchewan	\$122,950	\$79,364	\$507,236	\$709,550	\$2,256,508
Manitoba	\$458,188	\$75,802	\$351,064	\$885,054	\$1,814,982
Ontario	\$1,948,804	\$1,728,941	\$1,819,785	\$5,497,530	\$12,937,713
Quebec	\$2,008,341	\$1,963,616	\$1,488,144	\$5,460,101	\$13,632,068
New Brunswick	\$449,466	\$702,204	\$393,017	\$1,544,687	\$3,350,368
PEI	\$273,500	\$2,810	\$100,000	\$376,310	\$755,620
Nova Scotia	\$448,738	\$791,779	\$458,521	\$1,699,038	\$4,680,052
Newfoundland	\$315,629	\$352,030	\$189,667	\$857,326	\$1,789,653
Northwest Territories	\$13,333	\$13,333	\$13,334	\$40,000	\$97,884
Yukon Territory	<u>\$20,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$198,195</u>	<u>\$218,195</u>	<u>\$474,918</u>
Total	\$7,878,934	\$7,659,950	\$7,684,350	\$23,223,234	\$56,580,673

3.7 Audits

As a result of a competitive bidding process, an independent national accounting firm, PriceWaterhouse Coopers (PwC), was selected by the NTC Board of Directors to conduct a financial and compliance audit of the NTC program.

In addition the Internal Auditors at INFC conducted their own audit. No significant issues were identified through either of the audits.

3.8 Survey of Recipients

An online survey of project managers was conducted in both official languages. There were 150 respondents to the questionnaire out of 305 project managers who were invited to participate. This resulted in a 49% response rate. Table 22 below contains a summary of the responses:

Table 6. Summary of NTC Survey Responses

Item:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
NTC program should be renewed	89%	9%	1%	0%	1%
Information was timely	88%	11%	0%	1%	0%
Payments were timely	68%	26%	0%	3%	2%

Many respondents reported that this was a very valuable program. They felt that there is an important role for the federal government to play in supporting recreational trail development.

Following is a small sample of narrative responses that were submitted:

"The NTC program represented a tremendous opportunity to enhance recreational trails in many areas that have not seen opportunity for many years. The NTC program will yield socioeconomic benefits to these areas for many years to come. The contribution to enhancement of economic diversification opportunities to local communities is significant."

"Trail funding from a federal level is a great idea and an efficient use of funds for creation of jobs and a lasting public asset that normally gets a low priority."

3.9 Conclusions

The federal funding helped:

- Build, upgrade and rehabilitate more than 20,000 kilometres of trails to provide safe and environmentally sustainable use opportunities;
- Provide much needed local employment and skill development in rural communities;
- Foster partnerships between trail user groups, community groups, governments and First Nations;

- Provide a management presence on trails to help reduce conflicts;
- Improve the dialogue among diverse trail user groups nationally, provincially and locally;
- Provide enhanced trail use opportunities for all three of the trail categories: snowmobile, ATV/ORM and non-motorized trails across the country.

In summary, the NTC 2009-2010 Recreational Trail Infrastructure Investment Program was highly successful. The investment of \$56.5 million in a 9 month period in 2009 - 2010 had a major impact on the trails community across Canada. It demonstrated the depth of experience and the management capabilities that are in place to be able to conduct this program so smoothly. It is also a testament to the thousands of volunteers in rural and urban communities across Canada who give tirelessly of their time and effort to provide a world class system of recreational trails for citizens and visitors to enjoy.



Single track trail construction team on a bright September morning in Calgary. Photo courtesy of Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society.



Snow groomer near Mabou in Cape Breton. Photo courtesy of Snomobilers Association of Nova Scotia.



Cycling on a newly paved rail trail near Montreal.



Construction of the Grande-Rivière Suspension Bridge in the Gaspé Region of Quebec in 2009.

4. Analysis of Canadian Urban and Rural Perspectives About Trails

4.1 Overview

There is a significant difference between trail uses in urban regions compared to rural regions of Canada. However, the vast majority of trails (95%) are located in rural regions. This means that people who live in urban regions often must travel to rural regions to find the trail opportunity they are seeking.

In urban regions of Canada non-motorized trails represent the vast majority of trails. Generally there are more walkers/hikers and cyclists on urban trails and, due to the number of trail users, generally it is neither practical nor desirable to permit motorized use on those trails.

On the other hand, there are often very few hikers and cyclists on shared use trails in rural regions of Canada compared to horseback riders, ATVers, off-road motorcycle riders and snowmobilers. These are the types of trail users who appreciate the opportunity to use shared use trails to access single track trails that are built specifically for their preferred activity.

4.2 Urban Trails

For the purpose of this study we have defined urban trails as those trails that are located in regions with high population density such as cities. Suburban regions have been included in this definition. All paved trails have been defined as urban trails.

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

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

Table 7 above shows the number of kilometres of trails in urban regions of each province and territory across Canada. In total there are 13,290 kilometres of urban trails and they represent less than 5% of all trails in Canada. This table also shows the breakdown between single track and shared use urban trails.

It is interesting to note that in terms of the number of kilometres of urban trails, 60% are classified as shared use trails that permit walking and cycling. In many cases these trails are paved and this facilitates additional uses such as in-line skating.

Urban trails are generally more expensive to build because a metre of paved trail that is 3 metres wide generally costs in the range of \$100 - \$200 to build. However, there is an advantage to these trails because snow plows can be used on paved trails in the winter to facilitate year-round use. Also urban trails usually have many more trail users per day per kilometre which justifies the additional cost.

4.3 Rural Trails

For the purpose of this study we have defined rural trails as those trails that are located in regions with low population density that are outside of urban and suburban regions. Small towns fall into this category.

Table 8 below shows the number of kilometres of trails in rural regions of each province and territory across Canada. In total there are 265,291 kilometres of rural trails and they represent 95% of all trails in Canada. This table also shows the breakdown between single track and shared use rural trails. It should be noted that these numbers include trails that are located in provincial and national parks.

Table 8. Number of Kilometres of Rural Trails in Canada as of 2010

Prov.	Single Track / Use					Single Track		Shared Use		Shared Use		Sub-Total
	Hike	MTB	X-C Ski	Cycle	Eques-trian	SNO	ATV / ORM	Walk / Cycle	Eques-trian	SNO	ATV / ORM	
NL	1,144	82	301	0	0	3,600	1,000	19	0	158	928	7,232
NS	810	175	149	0	0	1,600	1,025	82	0	2,600	1,200	7,641
PE	127	32	106	50	0	600	5	45	0	354	0	1,319
NB	486	144	654	0	0	6,700	3,201	215	0	397	300	12,097
QC	13,174	2,333	5,604	1,231	3,000	31,745	17,182	670	0	700	0	75,639
ON	7,145	1,597	3,300	526	135	32,418	3,786	2,981	580	1,844	1,806	56,118
MB	735	533	586	0	0	12,506	2,660	616	0	295	0	17,931
SK	315	215	921	2,032	0	7,000	2,500	1,410	0	190	0	14,583
AB	6,541	1,140	1,681	0	782	8,614	1,000	500	0	1,040	10,459	31,757
BC	6,633	2,260	2,020	0	0	0	0	1,783	2,069	11,775	12,285	38,825
YT	350	50	106	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	465	1,471
NT	0	15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	5	535
NU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	143	0	143
Total	37,460	8,576	15,443	3,839	3,917	104,783	32,359	8,321	2,649	20,496	27,448	265,291
	13.4%	3.1%	5.5%	1.4%	1.4%	37.6%	11.6%	3.0%	1.0%	7.4%	9.9%	95.2%

It is interesting to note that in terms of the number of kilometres of rural trails, more than 37% are classified as single track snowmobile trails. However, it should be noted that most snowmobile trails operate only in the winter months (generally December through March). Snowmobile trails do not require as high a quality hard surface underlying treadway as a trail for cycling because the treadway will be covered with snow before it is used. However, snowmobiles benefit from firm treadways as this creates an improved base for grooming once the snow arrives and this facilitates the early opening of snowmobile trails.

Each year snowmobile trails must be built using snow groomers to prepare the trail surface for safe use. There is also a requirement for basic trail infrastructure such as bridges on snowmobile trails. Each year bushes grow along the sides of snowmobile trails and they must be trimmed back to improve visibility and safety.

Another factor for snowmobilers as well as ATVers is the need to access fuel and possibly repair facilities along the system of managed trails. Many small towns and even some suburbs of cities provide access via branch trails or alongside secondary roads to enable snowmobilers and ATVers to reach gas stations, grocery stores and restaurants.

There is a significant difference in the cost of building different types of trails. Hiking trails are the least expensive to build because they are rather narrow. They can follow geographic contours and go around major obstacles. The key is to build sustainable hiking trails that follow basic water drainage and environmental preservation principles.

Single track mountain bike trails are narrow like hiking trails but they must be designed to handle heavier traffic. Proper design of mountain bike trails is critical for technical challenges as well as sustainability. Trail builders from British Columbia are known worldwide for their skills in building sustainable, challenging mountain bike trails.



The pictures above are from Whitehorse, YT. They illustrate Technical Training Features that were designed to teach young people mountain biking skills.

Single track off-road motorcycle trails have a number of similarities with mountain bike trails but they must be designed for heavier and more powerful bikes. While mountain biking trails are designed primarily for downhill riding with separate relatively easy routes to return to the top of the hill, ORM trails must be designed for technical challenges in both uphill and downhill directions.



Single track off-road motorcycle trails at Vedder Mountain in British Columbia provide excellent riding opportunities amongst the big Coastal Cedars. By provincial legislation these are shared use trails which may be used by equestrians, trail runners and mountain bikers in addition to the off-road motorcycle community.

Cross country ski trails can be designed as shared use trails for hiking and mountain biking in the summer and cross country skiing in the winter. Generally the cost of building a cross country ski trail is slightly higher than the cost of building a hiking trail. This is because curves and elevation changes on cross country ski trails must be more gradual.

Snow grooming is also a factor for cross country ski trails. There are some snowmobile clubs that have cross country skiers as members. A few of these clubs have purchased special attachments for their snow groomers to enable them to groom separate cross country ski trails that are parallel but distinct from their groomed snowmobile trails.

There are very few single track equestrian trails in Canada. Most of them are associated with riding stables that are located on private property. However, in some provinces such as British Columbia and Ontario there are shared use trails that permit horseback riding as well as other non-motorized activities including hiking and cycling. Some motorized shared use trails also permit horseback riding in addition to a number of other trail uses.

Single track ATV trails are usually built on crown land or private property in remote rural areas with the permission of the land owner. They are usually technically challenging and designed for a back country experience. As more trail construction funding has become available through user fees and licenses, the quality of ATV trails has improved in recent years and the impact on the environment has decreased. More ATV riders are encouraged to stay on the trail once they have access to a managed trail network.

Shared use trails are the most expensive to build because they are usually wider in order to accommodate multiple trail uses. Typically it will cost approximately \$20,000 per kilometre to convert an abandoned rail bed to a rail trail. The costs can be even higher depending upon the quality of the treadway. Bridges and culverts are the biggest contributors to costs for shared use trails. Many abandoned rail bridges require significant improvements before they can meet the standards required by provincial and territorial governments.

5. Cross Canada Review of Trail Inventory and Management

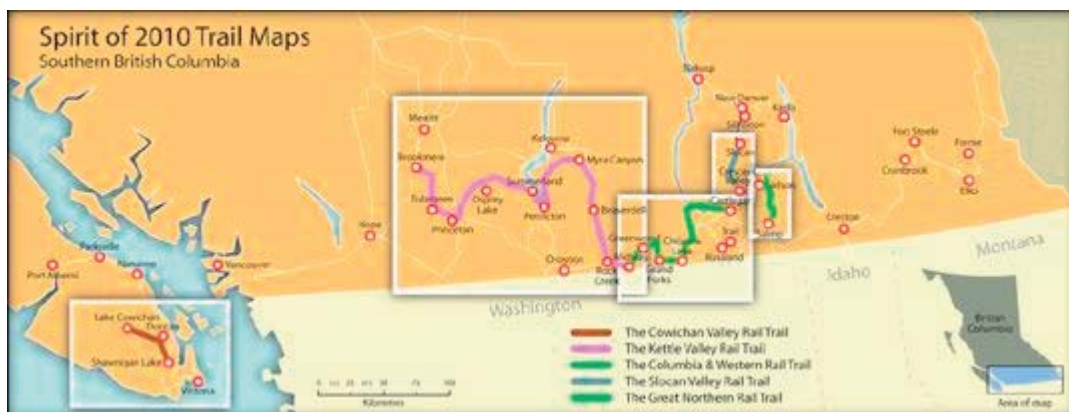
5.1 British Columbia

In 2005 the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MTCA) of the BC Government assumed responsibility for established recreational trails on Crown land in British Columbia. The MTCA Trails are managed by the Recreation Sites and Trails Branch of this Ministry, often through a management agreement with a local recreation organization. One important factor for volunteer trail builders and managers on these trails is that the BC Government covers the first \$2 million of insurance coverage. The provincial parks trails are under the jurisdiction of the BC Parks division of the Ministry of the Environment.

In 2006 the Government of British Columbia embarked upon a multi-phased approach to develop a recreation trails strategy. A survey of provincial recreation organizations was conducted and it provided preliminary information regarding an inventory of the existing trail network in BC. Following is a summary of their preliminary inventory of established trails:¹²

<u>Type of Trail:</u>	<u>Km.</u>
Rail Trails	2,000
MTCA Public Recreation Trails	9,237
BC Parks Trails	7,076
Regional District Trails	980
Municipal Trails	9,096
Parks Canada Trails	<u>950</u>
Total:	29,339

There are six rail trails in British Columbia that are owned by three different departments of the BC Government: Tourism BC (3), Ministry of Transportation (2) and Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (1). Five of these rail trails have been brought together under one umbrella for marketing purposes under the name of the “Spirit of 2010 Trail”. They are: The Kettle Valley Rail Trail, The Slochan Valley Rail Trail, The Great Northern Rail Trail, The Columbia & Western Rail Trail and The Cowichan Valley Rail Trail.



A draft document entitled "Recreation Trails Strategy" was developed through collaboration and consensus by a multi-agency stakeholder committee that included provincial government

¹² Source: Recreation Trails Strategy for British Columbia, Phase 1: Background Report, May 2007.

representatives and all trail user disciplines. This document was published in 2008.¹³ It outlined broad, strategic, provincial level goals. Public meetings were held across the province and the feedback received was incorporated into a final report and implementation plan in 2009. The next step is for the BC Government to implement the plan.

The authors of the Background Report for the Recreation Trails Strategy acknowledged in their report that their numbers of kilometres of trail are understated. By drawing upon additional sources of information, the consultants compiled an estimate of 43,090 kilometres of trail in BC. Table 9 provides details of kilometres of managed trails in British Columbia according to trail usage.¹⁴

Table 9. British Columbia Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route	Roads	Total	% of Total
Hiking , walking, running	7,125	-	-	0	7,125	16.5%
Cycling (touring)	231	-	-	1,269	1,500	3.5%
Mountain biking	2,260	-	-	0	2,260	5.2%
Cross country skiing	2,020	-	-	-	2,020	4.7%
Equestrian	61	-	-	-	61	0.1%
Snowmobile	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
ATVing	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>0</u>	-	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Sub-Total	11,697	0	0	1,269	12,966	30.1%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling	3,995	-	-	-	3,995	9.3%
add Equestrian	2,069	-	-	-	2,069	4.8%
add Snowmobile	-	11,775	-	-	11,775	27.3%
add ATV	-	8,785	-	-	8,785	20.4%
add ORM	-	<u>3,500</u>	-	-	<u>3,500</u>	<u>8.1%</u>
Sub-Total	6,064	24,060	0	0	30,124	69.9%
Total	17,761	24,060	0	1,269	43,090	100.0%
% of Total	41.2%	55.8%	0.0%	2.9%	100.0%	
TCT included above	534	421	0	1,269	2,224	5.2%
TCST included above	-	900	-	-	900	2.1%
NHTC included above	873	-	-	-	873	2.0%
GDT included above	600	-	-	-	600	1.4%

British Columbia is unique in that it has over 400,000 kilometres of forest service roads, abandoned mining roads, deactivated roads, non-status roads and skid trails on vacant crown

¹³ Trails Strategy, BC Ministry of Tourism, Culture & the Arts, Recreation, Sites & Trails Branch, 2008

¹⁴ Sources: BC Snowmobile Federation, Assoc. of BC Snowmobile Clubs, Quad Riders Assoc. of BC, BC Off-Road Motorcycle Assoc., Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, Hike Canada en marche, Government of British Columbia, IMBA Canada, Canada Trails, Trail Peak, Federation of BC Naturalists.

land and they are available for recreational trail use. Although there is an opportunity to use these roads for recreational purposes, we have not included them in the provincial trails inventory because they have not been mapped or signed and they are not maintained as managed trails.

Shared use trails in British Columbia represent a total of 30,124 kilometres which is almost 70% of the total kilometres of managed trail in BC. Based upon distance, about 75% of these shared use trails are motorized trails. The remaining 25% are non-motorized shared use trails. About one-third of the non-motorized shared use trails have horseback riding as their primary use. The reason for the high percentage of shared use trails in BC is that the majority of the land is owned by the provincial government and regulations require that trail managers will ensure that other trail users are welcome to share the trail.

There are two provincial snowmobile associations in British Columbia. They are: the [BC Snowmobile Federation](#) which is a member of the CCSO and the [Association of BC Snowmobile Clubs](#). The two associations report that their member clubs manage about 11,775 kilometres of trails that are primarily for snowmobiling but they are available for other uses as well.

We have estimated that there are about 8,775 kilometres of shared use managed ATV trails in BC. In addition, there are 3,500 kilometres of off-road motorcycle trails in BC. They are managed by local trail steward organizations that are usually member clubs of the BC Off Road Motorcycle Association. All of these trails are available for trail users from other recreational disciplines to share.

The [Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia](#) represents both motorized and non-motorized trail associations throughout the province. It also represents British Columbia as a voting member of the Canadian Trails Federation.



Restoration of the Brilliant Suspension Bridge over the Kootenay River near Castlegar.



Strathcona Wilderness Institute - barrier-free boardwalk through Forbidden Plateau, Strathcona Provincial Park, Vancouver Island.

5.2 Alberta

Alberta has a wide diversity of trail users ranging from hikers and cross country skiers who have the magnificent Canadian Rockies to explore, to mountain bikers and cyclists who have access to a growing network of biking trails, as well as ATVers and snowmobilers who have their own network of trails. There is also a significant difference between the trails in the more populated regions in central and southern Alberta compared to the trails in the less populated areas of Northern Alberta where there are vast stretches of wild country and relatively little in the way of recreational amenities. Some of the greatest touring rivers run through Northern Alberta. Table 10 below provides a breakdown of more than 35,000 km of managed trails in Alberta.¹⁵

Table 10. Alberta Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking, walking, running	6,841	-	-	0	6,841	18.8%
Cycling (touring)	425	-	-	200	625	1.7%
Mountain biking	1,640	-	-	0	1,640	4.5%
Cross country skiing	1,752	-	-	-	1,752	4.8%
Snowmobiling	-	8,614	-	-	8,614	23.7%
ATVing	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Off-road motorcycling	-	1,000	-	-	1,000	2.8%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	830	-	830	2.3%
Sub-Total	10,658	9,614	830	200	21,302	58.6%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & cycling	2,743	-	-	-	2,743	7.6%
add equestrian	782	-	-	-	782	2.2%
add snowmobiling	-	1,040	-	-	1,040	2.9%
add ATVing	-	10,459	-	-	10,459	28.8%
Sub-Total	3,525	11,499	-	0	15,024	41.4%
Total	14,183	21,113	830	200	36,326	100.0%
% of Total	39.0%	58.1%	2.3%	0.6%	100.0%	
TCT included above	523	292	830	115	1,760	4.8%
TCST included above	-	190	-	-	190	0.5%
NHTC included above	122	-	-	-	122	0.3%
GDT included above	600	-	-	-	600	1.7%

¹⁵ Sources: Alberta Snowmobile Association, Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association, Alberta TrailNet, Alberta Equestrian Federation, Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance, IMBA Canada, Canada Trails, Trail Peak, Government of Alberta.

The non-government umbrella trails organization for the province is [Alberta TrailNet](#). It is a not-for-profit society that coordinates trail building for local and regional community trail groups and it collaborates with provincial trail user groups. Alberta TrailNet promotes all types of trails. Their major focus is the promotion of active living through the use of recreational trails but they also recognize and support trail routes as another option in the Alberta transportation system. Alberta TrailNet is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes representatives from user groups such as the [Alberta Bicycle Association](#), [Alberta Equestrian Federation](#), [Alberta Snowmobile Association](#), [Cross Country Alberta](#) and the [Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association](#). Alberta TrailNet is the Alberta member of the Canadian Trails Federation.

Alberta TrailNet has produced two trail maps for Northeastern Alberta and Northern Rockies Trails. These maps show the major trails in those regions of the province as well as a description of the trails and special interest sites. This project was very successful and Alberta TrailNet has now embarked upon a long term program to develop trail maps for the balance of the province.



Upgrade to Bow Falls Trail, Banff. Funding provided by NTC / Government of Canada & the Town of Banff.



ATV ORM "Up and Over" fence line crossing in Maclean Creek riding area near Bragg Creek.



Lafarge-Chaparra Regional Pathway, Calgary. Project of Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society. Funding provided by NTC / Government of Canada, Government of Alberta & other sponsors.



Ten day trail clearing expedition in 2009 by Willmore Wilderness Preservation & Historical Foundation. Funding provided by NTC / Government of Canada and other sponsors.

5.3 Saskatchewan

Before the prolific use of the automobile, Saskatchewan was criss-crossed with an abundance of trails that were used as transportation routes. Pathways used by trappers, canoe routes mapped by voyageurs and nomadic patterns used to follow buffalo migration carved their way into the geographic past of this province. Footways, cattle trails and horse paths used by farmers, ranchers, merchants and their families to conduct work, visit neighbours and enjoy nature evolved as communities were built and European migration increased.

As populations grew and automobiles became the primary means of transportation, natural pathways were subsumed by paved roadways; natural areas became urbanized with sidewalks and streets to facilitate transportation. Today's trails in Saskatchewan mimic the natural pathways by providing logical routes for non-automobile transportation.¹⁶

Table 11. Saskatchewan Managed Trails¹⁷

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking , walking, running	339	-	-	0	339	2.2%
Cycling (touring)	2,132	-	-	0	2,132	13.8%
Mountain biking	215	-	-	0	215	1.4%
Cross country skiing	942	-	-	-	942	6.1%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	7,000	-	-	7,000	45.2%
ATVing	-	2,500	-	-	2,500	16.2%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>351</u>	-	<u>351</u>	<u>2.3%</u>
Sub-Total	3,627	9,500	351	0	13,478	87.1%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & cycling	1,564	-	-	220	1,784	11.5%
add snowmobiling	-	190	-	-	190	1.2%
add ATVing	-	<u>20</u>	-	-	<u>20</u>	<u>0.1%</u>
Sub-Total	1,564	210	-	220	1,994	12.9%
Total	5,191	9,710	351	220	15,472	100.0%
% of Total	33.6%	62.8%	2.3%	1.4%	100.0%	
TCT included above	283	69	0	220	572	3.7%
TCST included above	-	1,395	-	-	1,395	9.0%
NHTC included above	15	0	-	0	15	0.1%

¹⁶ Pathway to Success: A Strategy for Trail Development in Saskatchewan, Sept. 2008, Saskatchewan Trails Association.

¹⁷ Sources: Saskatchewan Snowmobile Assoc., Saskatchewan Trails Assoc., Saskatchewan ATV Assoc., Canada Trails, Trail Peak, Government of Saskatchewan.

Table 11 above illustrates that there is already a strong network of diverse trails in Saskatchewan. The [Saskatchewan Trails Association](#) (STA) is relatively young as it was incorporated in 2004. In 2008 the STA developed a province-wide trails strategy in consultation with the Government of Saskatchewan, [Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association](#) and trail stakeholders. In 2008 STA also produced a map of abandoned rail lines in Saskatchewan that could be converted to rail trails.

The STA is the Saskatchewan member of the Canadian Trails Federation. It has 55 members including community trail groups from across the province as well as provincial trails organizations such as the [Saskatchewan ATV Association](#). Day to day management is provided by a part-time executive director. The Government of Saskatchewan does not have a designated position for a trails consultant or administrator.

In 2011 the [Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association](#) will celebrate its 40th anniversary. Its 67 member clubs manage and groom 7,000 kilometres of snowmobile trails across the province.

The two major urban centres in Saskatchewan are blessed with excellent trail systems that have been developed by two different but similar organizations that were incorporated under special acts of the provincial government. In Regina the [Wascana Centre Authority](#) has developed shared use non-motorized trails around Wascana Lake and the lands surrounding the provincial legislature. The members of this unique organization are appointed by the provincial government, University of Saskatchewan and the City of Regina.

The [Meewasin Valley Authority](#) has developed an extensive network of 60 kilometres of paved and crusher dust shared use non-motorized trails on both sides of the South Saskatchewan River through Saskatoon. The members of this unique conservation organization are appointed by the provincial government, University of Saskatchewan and the City of Saskatoon.



Extension of the Meewasin Trail network along the South Saskatchewan River near Saskatoon in 2009.



Wascana Centre Authority constructed the Broad Street Bridge in 2009-2010 for cyclists and pedestrians to avoid a busy road bridge. Photo courtesy of Guy D. Photography, Regina.

5.4 Manitoba

Manitoba has two distinct elements to its trail network that are directly related to its geography. Since the majority of the province is comprised of prairie, the trails in that part of the province have been built on relatively level traditional pathways or unused road allowances. However, the part of the province that borders on Ontario has a very different geography that is part of the Precambrian Shield where the terrain is more rugged and forested. Trail building in this part of Manitoba is similar in its challenges to those faced in Northwestern Ontario.

Table 12 below shows that there are over 17,000 km of managed trails in Manitoba.¹⁸ Manitoba has a strong provincial snowmobile association that goes by the name of Snoman - [Snowmobilers of Manitoba Inc.](#) More than 67% of the managed trails in Manitoba are dedicated for snowmobiling. There are a growing number of managed ATV trails under the umbrella of a new provincial association, [ATV Association of Manitoba Inc.](#)

Table 12. Manitoba Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking , walking, running	735	-	-	-	735	3.9%
Cycling (touring)	110	-	-	-	110	0.6%
Mountain biking	533	-	-	-	533	2.9%
Cross country skiing	760	-	-	-	760	4.1%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	12,506	-	-	12,506	67.1%
ATVing	-	2,660	-	-	2,660	14.3%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	0	-	0	0.0%
Sub-Total	2,138	15,166	0	0	17,304	92.9%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & cycling	331	-	-	406	737	4.0%
add snowmobiling	-	295	-	299	594	3.2%
add ATVing	-	0	-	0	0	0.0%
Sub-Total	331	295	0	705	1,331	7.1%
Total	2,469	15,461	0	705	18,635	100.0%
% of Total	13.2%	83.0%	0.0%	3.8%	100.0%	
TCT included above	342	221	0	705	1,268	6.8%
TCST included above	-	732	-	0	732	3.9%
NHTC included above	0	0	-	0	0	0.0%

¹⁸ Sources: Manitoba Recreational Trails Association, Snoman Inc., All Terrain Vehicle Assoc. of Manitoba, Canada Trails, Trail Peak, Government of Manitoba.

The [Manitoba Recreational Trails Association Inc.](#) (MRTA) is a not-for-profit organization that is the governing and oversight body that provides management and direction for trail development being undertaken by 17 regional trail associations across the province. It is governed by a volunteer board, consisting of seventeen people, including four regional representatives. The MRTA has one full time executive director and a part-time office administrator/bookkeeper. The Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism has a Provincial Trails Consultant, who works closely with the MRTA.

The Government of Manitoba has been very supportive of trail development. In addition to providing direct funding, the provincial government has also put in place legislation that exempts not-for-profit organizations from property taxes on land they acquire. This is particularly helpful for the acquisition of abandoned rail lines or private property donated by individual landowners to provincial trails associations or local community trail groups.

The City of Winnipeg has a network of 120 kilometres of shared use non-motorized trails. Most of these trails are under the stewardship of local community trail groups that are coordinated by the [Winnipeg Trails Association](#). The [Prairie Pathfinders](#) is a very active walking group that has developed maps for about 25 trails in Winnipeg.



Broken Head Trail Blazers snowmobile club completing trail upgrades in 2010.

5.5 Ontario

Table 13 shows that there are over 59,000 kilometres of managed trails in Ontario.¹⁹ More than 52% of these trails are specifically for snowmobiling in the winter months. There are 525,000 people in Ontario who use snowmobile and ATV trails.²⁰

Ontario also has a great variety of trails and 30% of them are non-motorized trails for walking, cycling, mountain biking and horseback riding. In fact there are 800,000 people in Ontario who use hiking trails.²¹ Although the majority of cyclists are interested in recreation, many owners are now using their bicycles for active transportation to commute to work or to visit the corner store.

Table 13. Ontario Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Routes			
Hiking , walking, running	7,608	-	-	0	7,608	8.6%
Cycling (touring)	550	-	-	5,421	5,971	6.7%
Mountain biking	1,629	-	-	0	1,629	1.8%
Cross country skiing	3,516	-	-	-	3,516	4.0%
Equestrian	135	-	-	-	135	0.2%
Snowmobiling	-	32,418	-	-	32,418	36.4%
ATV/ORM	-	3,786	-	-	3,786	4.3%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>22,447</u>	-	<u>22,447</u>	<u>25.2%</u>
Sub-Total	13,438	36,204	22,447	5,421	77,510	87.1%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & cycling	4,968	-	-	2,079	7,047	7.9%
add equestrian	735	-	-	-	735	0.8%
add snowmobiling	-	1,844	-	-	1,844	2.1%
add ATV/ORM	-	<u>1,806</u>	-	-	<u>1,806</u>	2.0%
Sub-Total	5,703	3,650	-	2,079	11,432	12.9%
Total	19,141	39,854	22,447	7,500	88,942	100.0%
% of Total	21.5%	44.8%	25.2%	8.4%	100.0%	
TCT included above	1,656	586	248	383	2,873	3.2%
TCST included above	-	2,600	-	0	2,600	2.9%
NHTC included above	1,563	-	-	0	1,563	1.8%
BT included above	1,100	-	-	0	1,100	1.2%

¹⁹ Sources: Ontario Trails Council, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs, Ontario Federation of All Terrain Vehicles, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders, Hike Ontario, Ontario Equestrian Federation, Trails Canada, Trail Peak and Government of Ontario.

²⁰ Active 2010 Ontario Trails Strategy, 2005, Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion

²¹ Ibid.

The [Ontario Trails Council](#) (OTC) is the umbrella organization for community trail groups and provincial trail user groups in Ontario. It has 12 volunteer Directors on its Board. This includes five Directors representing trail user groups ([Ontario Equestrian Federation](#), [Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs](#), [Ontario Federation of All Terrain Vehicles](#), [Ontario Federation of Trail Riders](#) and [International Mountain Biking Association of Canada](#)), one representative of professional trail builders and six other Directors representing trail management organizations, conservation authorities and regional governments. The OTC is the Ontario member of the Canadian Trails Federation.

The OTC is dedicated to the development of the Trillium Trail Network in Ontario. It is a four season trail system that supports a range of recreational uses. It includes long distance wilderness pathways, rail trails, waterfront trails, historic colonization roads and urban greenway connectors.

For many years the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) has operated a trail permit system with their 232 member clubs who are organized into 17 districts across the province. This trail permit enables purchasers to enjoy a network of over 34,000 kilometres of groomed snowmobile trails in Ontario for one annual, weekly or daily fee. A few years ago the [Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance](#) adopted the trail pass concept for other trail users such as ATVers, cyclists, cross-country skiers, horseback riders and dogsledders. In 2008 the OTC collaborated with the Ontario Federation of All-Terrain Vehicle Clubs to expand the trail permit concept for ATVers to a number of regions across Ontario through a program they called the Trillium Trail Network Gold Trail Permit.



Removal of a condemned bridge and construction of a new 50 foot long Black Creek Bridge on the North Simcoe Rail Trail near Wasaga Beach in November 2009.



Rehabilitation of the Salarno Creek Bridge near Lakefield. This was a joint project of two local off-road motorcycle and snowmobile clubs.



Inspecting snowmobile trail improvements in OFSC District 17 near Dryden in North Western Ontario.

5.6 Québec

Table 14 shows that there are 77,000 kilometres of managed trails in the Province of Québec.²² There are extensive networks of hiking, cycling, snowmobiling and ATV/ORM trails throughout the province. Although most of the trails are separate and distinct, often common facilities such as warming huts and cooking facilities at junction points are shared among a number of different trail users.

Table 14. Québec Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Routes			
Hiking , walking, running	13,214	-	-	0	13,214	10.9%
Cycling (touring)	1,601	-	-	5,190	6,791	5.6%
Mountain biking	2,333	-	-	0	2,333	1.9%
Cross country skiing	6,312	-	-	-	6,312	5.2%
Snowmobiling	-	31,745	-	-	31,745	26.3%
ATVing	-	14,682	-	-	14,682	12.1%
ATV & ORM	-	2,500	-	-	2,500	2.1%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	38,642	-	38,642	32.0%
Sub-Total	23,460	48,927	38,642	5,190	116,219	96.2%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & cycling	943	-	-	-	943	0.8%
add equestrian	3,000	-	-	-	3,000	2.5%
add snowmobiling	-	700	-	-	700	0.6%
add ATV/ORM	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
Sub-Total	3,943	700	-	-	4,643	3.8%
Total	27,403	49,627	38,642	5,190	120,862	100.0%
% of Total	22.7%	41.1%	32.0%	4.3%	100.0%	
TCT included above	859	568	27	162	1,616	1.3%
TCST included above	-	1,500	-	-	1,500	1.2%
NHTC included above	1,000	-	-	0	1,000	0.8%
La Route Verte incl above	1,601	-	-	2,765	4,366	3.6%
IAT included above	644	-	-	0	644	0.5%

A number of strong separate non-motorized trail user groups and trails organizations have operated for many years in Quebec but they had not coordinated their activities. As a result of the federal government funding that became available in 2009 through the National Trails Coalition, the [Conseil québécois du loisir](#) (CQL) agreed to coordinate all non-motorized trail

²² Sources: Conseil québécois du loisir, Vélo Québec, Fédération Québécoise de la marche, Fédération des clubs de motoneigistes du Québec, Fédération Québécoise des Clubs Quads, Canada Trails, Government of Québec.

groups in Québec. At that time CQL became the Québec representative for the Canadian Trails Federation.

Cycling is very popular in Québec. It has been developed and promoted by [Vélo Québec](#), a non-profit organization. In collaboration with the Government of Québec, Vélo Québec has developed La Route verte which spans more than 4,000 km of bikeways across the province. La Route verte is recognized globally as a preferred destination for cyclists.

Hiking is also very popular in the province of Québec. [La Fédération Québécoise de la Marche](#) (FQM) is a government-sponsored organization that is responsible for the promotion of hiking in Québec. It also oversees the construction and maintenance of the National Hiking Trail (Sentier National) across the province. To date over 1,000 kilometres of the National Hiking Trail have been completed in Québec. FQM also publishes La Marche magazine and a French-language directory of Québec trails. It acts as an umbrella group for more than 100 hiking clubs and other outdoor groups in Québec.

Snowmobiling is another big economic generator in Québec. [La Fédération des clubs de motoneigistes du Québec](#) (FCMQ) was founded in 1974. It is made up of 209 snowmobile clubs and it brings together over 90,000 individual members from all regions of Québec. Each year over 4,500 members volunteer more than 800,000 hours of their time to maintain their snowmobile trail network of over 31,000 kilometres.

In Québec there are more managed trails for ATVing, or "quading" as it is known, than in any other province. [La Fédération Québécoise des Clubs Quads](#) (FQCQ) is a not-for-profit organization consisting of 123 clubs and associations with over 50,000 individual members who have joined together to develop the ATV sport in Québec. The member clubs of FQCQ offer 17,045 km of groomed and marked trails. Off-road motorcycles share 2,500 km of these trails with ATVs. A total of 9,661 km of ATV trails can be used in winter only, another 7,384 km in summer only and 4,685 km are available year-round.

In summary, Québec is a leader when it comes to the development of single use trails. The Government of Québec is very supportive of trail development. Their Department of Transportation works closely with Velo Québec to build specially marked bicycle lanes along highways. The vast networks of cycling, hiking, snowmobiling and ATVing trails make Québec an ideal destination for outdoor adventurers.

Official opening of the Saint-Martin Suspension Bridge in September, 2009. This 8 foot wide bridge spans 110 metres (360 feet) across the Chaudiere River. Its use is shared by hikers, cyclists, ATV riders and snowmobilers. Funding for the bridge was provided by NTC / Government of Canada, the municipality of Saint Martin, the Province of Quebec and local donations raised by members of the Beaux Sentiers snowmobile club and Club VTT St-Martin inc.



5.7 New Brunswick

Table 15 below shows that there are over 12,000 km of managed trails in New Brunswick.²³ More than half of these trails are for exclusive snowmobile use during the winter months. Another 25% are single use ATV trails. In addition, there are a number of excellent hiking and cycling trails in New Brunswick. The International Appalachian Trail connects from Maine to New Brunswick at Andover and then it weaves its way along 274 km of footpaths to the Quebec border at Matapedia. The [Fundy Trail Parkway](#) is another world class hiking and cycling opportunity that is adjacent to the Bay of Fundy with the highest tides in the world.

Table 15. New Brunswick Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking , walking, running	646	-	-	0	646	5.2%
Cycling (touring)	0	-	-	0	0	0.0%
Mountain biking	144	-	-	0	144	1.2%
Cross country skiing	706	-	-	-	706	5.7%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	6,700	-	-	6,700	53.6%
ATVing	-	3,201	-	-	3,201	25.6%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>94</u>	-	<u>94</u>	<u>0.8%</u>
Sub-Total	1,496	9,901	94	0	11,491	92.0%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling	300	-	-	-	300	2.4%
add Equestrian	6	-	-	-	6	0.0%
add Snowmobile	-	397	-	-	397	3.2%
add ATV	-	<u>300</u>	-	-	<u>300</u>	<u>2.4%</u>
Sub-Total	306	697	-	-	1,003	8.0%
Total	1,802	10,598	94	0	12,494	100.0%
% of Total	14.4%	84.8%	0.8%	0.0%	100.0%	
TCT included above	98	198	94	0	390	3.1%
TCST included above	-	525	-	-	525	4.2%
NHTC included above	142	0	-	0	142	1.1%
IAT included above	274	0	-	0	274	2.2%

²³ Sources: New Brunswick Trails Council Inc., New Brunswick Federation of Snowmobile Clubs Inc., New Brunswick All Terrain Vehicle Federation, Hike Canada en marche, Canada Trails, Government of New Brunswick.

The trail system in New Brunswick is managed by three organizations: the [New Brunswick Trails Council Inc.](#) (NBTCI), the [New Brunswick Federation of Snowmobile Clubs Inc.](#) (NBFSC) and the [New Brunswick All Terrain Vehicle Federation](#) (NBATVF).

The NB Trails Council manages the Sentier NB Trail which is a network of shared use recreational trails using the provincially-owned abandoned railway lines. Approximately 700 km of the Sentier NB Trail have been completed to bicycle standards and several hundred other kilometres of trail are available for walking, snowmobiling and ATVing.

Non-motorized activities such as walking, hiking and cycling are permitted on the Sentier NB Trail. Equestrian use is also allowed on certain sections of this trail system. Motorized activities such as snowmobiling and ATVing are also allowed on certain sections. The snowmobilers have sole use of this trail system from December 1st to April 15th. From April 16th to November 30th the NBATVF has a non-exclusive license for about 270 km of specific sections of this trail system for shared use by ATVers as well as hikers, cyclists and horseback riders where permitted.

The Sentier NB Trail is maintained by NBTCI for an annual payment of \$445,000 through an agreement with the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources. NBTCI also provides promotion/marketing/information to the public and encourages volunteers to become involved in its Adopt-A-Trail and Trail Patrol programs.

In addition to the Sentier NB Trail, there is a system of over 6,000 km of single use snowmobile trails that are maintained by clubs that are members of the NBFSC. Many of these snowmobile trails are on Crown land but some also cross private land through agreements with landowners.

The member clubs of the NBATVF are also responsible for a system of over 3,300 km of single use ATV trails. Most of these trails are on Crown Land or Park Land. Approximately 400 – 500 km kilometres of new ATV trails are being built each year by members of the NBATVF.

Several years ago the Government of New Brunswick enacted legislation that required ATV and snowmobile owners to pay \$25 of their annual registration fee of \$41 per year into a trust fund to be used for trail building and maintenance. Members of each of these organizations may apply for funding from their portion of the trust fund.

A recent development in New Brunswick will assist in reducing insurance premiums for snowmobilers. The NBFSC has been designated by the province as the trail manager for all snowmobile trails in the winter months. This means that NBFSC will be treated the same as the province in the event of a lawsuit involving their role as trail manager.

Installation of a new trail bridge over the Gaspereau River at Port Elgin in February, 2010. Funding was provided by NTC / Government of Canada, Province of New Brunswick, New Brunswick Trails Council and New Brunswick Snowmobile Federation.



5.8 Prince Edward Island

When one thinks of trails on Prince Edward Island the first name that comes to mind is the Confederation Trail. It is a shared use trail that was built on the abandoned rail line that runs 279 km from tip to tip on the island. In 2008 Destination Canada, which markets Canada primarily to Nordic countries, selected the [Confederation Trail](#) as one of the top 7 cycling destinations in Canada.²⁴

Table 16 below shows that there are 1,382 km of managed trails in PEI including snowmobile trails and hiking trails.²⁵

Table 16. Prince Edward Island Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails				Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route	Heritage Roads		
Hiking , walking, running	137	-	-	0	137	9.5%
Cycling (touring)	50	-	-	0	50	3.5%
Mountain biking	32	-	-	0	32	2.2%
Cross country skiing	106	-	-	-	106	7.3%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	600	-	-	600	41.6%
ATVing	-	5	-	-	5	0.3%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>0</u>	-	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Sub-Total	325	605	0	0	930	64.4%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling only	98	-	-	62	160	11.1%
add Snowmobiling	<u>0</u>	<u>354</u>	-	<u>0</u>	<u>354</u>	<u>24.5%</u>
Sub-Total	98	354	-	62	514	35.6%
Total	423	959	0	62	1,444	100.0%
% of Total	29.3%	66.4%	0.0%	4.3%	100.0%	
TCT included above	8	354	0	0	362	25.1%
TCST included above	-	342	-	0	342	23.7%
NHTC included above	0	0	-	0	0	0.0%
IAT included above	0	144	-	0	144	10.0%

²⁴ http://www.destinationcanada.info/canadian_cycling_routes.html

²⁵ Source: Prince Edward Island Trails Inc., PEI Snowmobile Association, Prince Edward Island All Terrain Vehicle Federation Inc., Government of Prince Edward Island.

Trails in PEI pass through woods and fields, villages and towns. Trekkers and cyclists have a chance to stop, shop, dine out and stay at a local campground, bed & breakfast or inn. In winter many trails are turned over to the PEI Snowmobile Association. The groomed snowmobile trails make an excellent cross-island network that connects to locations for food and accommodations.

[Prince Edward Island Trails Inc.](#) (Island Trails) is a not-for-profit non-government volunteer organization which actively supports the promotion, development and enhancement of trails across P.E.I. for healthy recreational and educational use. It has 14 members on its Board of Directors including representatives from the PEI Tourism Industry Association, the Government of Prince Edward Island, The Medical Society of Prince Edward Island, [Prince Edward Island Snowmobile Association](#), Cycling Prince Edward Island and the Active Living Alliance.

The PEI Snowmobile Association operates a Trail Warden program that is one of the best in the country. Its Trail Wardens must attend a two-day training course at the Justice Institute of Canada. Upon passing and working as an Assistant Trail Warden for a year, they are then authorized by the provincial government to issue Summary Offense Tickets under the Off Highway Vehicle Act.

Island Trails also organizes and promotes a similar Trail Officer program during the summer months. Twenty eight volunteer cyclists have been certified as Trail Officers and they act as ambassadors on the Confederation Trail. Trail Officers attend a two-day training course and they commit to a minimum of one patrol (3 hours) per week on a designated section of the Confederation Trail. Trail Officers receive their appointments from the Minister of Tourism. They are authorized to write warning and summary offence tickets under the Trails Act but their main focus is public relations, education, and voluntary compliance. An award is given to the Trail Officer of the year at an annual volunteer recognition event.

In addition Island Trails recruits Trail Watch Volunteers who walk or cycle a designated section of the Confederation Trail and they report via fax or email once per week on the flora and fauna, wildlife, birds, traffic, and natural or willful damage. Some Trail Watch Volunteers have an assigned section of trail while others are roving volunteers who monitor a different section each week.

Island Trails also organizes an annual Tip to Tip cycle tour on the Confederation Trail. Each Saturday during the summer a group tour is organized for a different section of the trail. Trail Officers accompany the group and arrangements are made to bring the participants and their bicycles back to the starting point by the end of the day. Over the summer the entire length of the Confederation Trail is traversed and participants receive a Tip to Tip certificate.

The [PEI ATV Federation](#) is relatively new. It represents 6 ATV clubs that are located on Prince Edward Island.

The picture on the right was taken in late 2009 during construction of a new section of the Confederation Trail near Hermitage. Funding was provided equally by the Government of PEI and NTC / Government of Canada in partnership with the PEI Snowmobile Association.



5.9 Nova Scotia

Trails in Nova Scotia are never far from the seacoast; in fact no portion of the province is more than 56 kilometres from the ocean. Nova Scotia has 7,400 kilometres of coastline and this translates into many opportunities to enjoy coastal hiking trails. There are also more than 1,100 kilometres of abandoned rail lines that were acquired by the provincial government and they are being converted into rail trails. Table 17 below shows that there are over 7,000 kilometres of managed trails in Nova Scotia.²⁶

Table 17. Nova Scotia Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails				Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route	Roads		
Hiking , walking, running	873	-	-	0	873	10.6%
Cycling (touring)	0	-	-	89	89	1.1%
Mountain biking	195	-	-	0	195	2.4%
Cross country skiing	149	-	-	-	149	1.8%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	1,600	-	-	1,600	19.4%
ATVing	-	1,000	-	-	1,000	12.2%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>263</u>	-	<u>263</u>	<u>3.2%</u>
Sub-Total	1,217	2,600	263	89	4,169	50.7%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling	192	-	-	0	192	2.3%
add Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
add Snowmobile	-	2,600	-	-	2,600	31.6%
add ATV	-	<u>1,268</u>	-	-	<u>1,268</u>	<u>15.4%</u>
Sub-Total	192	3,868	-	0	4,060	49.3%
Total	1,409	6,468	263	89	8,229	
% of Total	17.1%	78.6%	3.2%	1.1%	100.0%	
TCT included above	49	254	0	67	370	4.5%
TCST included above	-	426	-	-	426	5.2%
NHTC included above	0	-	-	0	0	0.0%
IAT included above	465	0	-	0	465	5.7%

The provincial trails association is the [Nova Scotia Trails Federation](#) (NS Trails). Its Board of Directors is comprised of 23 members including 2 members at large, 12 members who represent community trail groups (2 from each of 6 regions) and 9 members who represent provincial trail

²⁶ Sources: Nova Scotia Trails Federation, All Terrain Vehicle Association of Nova Scotia, Snowmobile Association of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Off Road Riders Association, Equestrian Federation of Nova Scotia, Hike Nova Scotia, Bicycle Nova Scotia, Cross Country Ski Nova Scotia, Trails Canada, Trail Peak, Government of Nova Scotia.

user groups such as the [Nova Scotia Equestrian Federation](#), [Hike Nova Scotia](#), [Bicycle Nova Scotia](#), [Cross Country Ski Nova Scotia](#), [Canoe Kayak Nova Scotia](#), [All Terrain Vehicle Association of Nova Scotia](#), [Snowmobilers Association of Nova Scotia](#), [Nova Scotia Off Road Riders Association](#) and [Atlantic Canada Geo-Caching Association](#). NS Trails is the Nova Scotia member of the Canadian Trails Federation.

NS Trails also manages the [Nova Scotia Integrated Trail Patrol Program](#). More than 400 Trail Wardens have been trained as ambassadors to promote safe trail uses throughout the province. They include hikers, cyclists, equestrians, snowmobilers, ATVers and off road motorcyclists. Trail Wardens patrol regularly on the managed trail system to educate trail users regarding safe practices and provide information and assistance. The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources has assigned 12 Conservation Officers (2 in each of 6 regions) to a special OHV enforcement team. This team assists with the training of Trail Wardens and coordinates its own trail user education activities with those of the Nova Scotia Trail Patrol.

The annual cost to register an off-highway vehicle in Nova Scotia is \$51.86. The Province of Nova Scotia retains \$11.86 to cover registration costs and the balance of \$40 is directed into an [Off-Highway Vehicle Infrastructure Fund](#) administered by the Province. This fund invests in programs to build and maintain vibrant provincial OHV organizations as well as projects to build and upgrade motorized shared use trails. Each year funding requests are reviewed by the OHV provincial organizations and the OHV Ministerial Advisory Committee (OHV MAC) whose members are appointed by the Minister of Natural Resources. The OHV MAC makes funding recommendations to the Minister for approval. Approximately \$700,000 in grants are invested annually by the OHV Fund into building and upgrading shared use trails in Nova Scotia.

A unique development in Nova Scotia is their trail liability insurance program. In 2004 the Government of Nova Scotia agreed to provide the first \$1 million of coverage on a \$5 million general liability insurance policy that is administered jointly by NS Trails and the Snowmobile Association of Nova Scotia. This policy provides sustainable insurance coverage to community trail groups throughout Nova Scotia for a reasonable annual premium. This program has been very successful as annual insurance premiums have decreased substantially since its inception.

Before



French River Bridge near Tatamagouche in 2009 as repair work was commencing on the eroded centre support pier. Photos courtesy of Bob Gould, Tatamagouche Area Trails Association.

After



French River Bridge in 2010 showing completed repairs to concrete support piers. Funding was provided by NTC / Government of Canada, Government of Nova Scotia and the Municipality of the County of Colchester.

5.10 Newfoundland & Labrador

The earliest trails in Newfoundland and Labrador were not man-made. They were formed over countless eons by herds of caribou migrating across the barrens and tundra.²⁷ These well worn paths were used by native people in search of game. Later, European settlers built additional paths to link isolated settlements along the coastline and to reach stands of heavy timber they needed for their boats. For centuries these rough trails were the only means of transportation in Newfoundland other than by sea.

Today trails in Newfoundland and Labrador come in all manner of shapes and sizes, ranging from the 1,500 kilometre winter trails network in Labrador to small community boardwalks and local nature trails.

Table 18. Newfoundland & Labrador Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking , walking, running	1,204	-	-	0	1,204	16.2%
Cycling (touring)	0	-	-	0	0	0.0%
Mountain biking	82	-	-	0	82	1.1%
Cross country skiing	316	-	-	-	316	4.2%
Snowmobiling	-	3,600	-	-	3,600	48.4%
ATVing	-	1,000	-	-	1,000	13.4%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	0	-	0	0.0%
Sub-Total	1,602	4,600	0	0	6,202	83.4%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling only	152	-	-	-	152	2.0%
add Snowmobile	-	158	-	-	158	2.1%
add ATV	-	928	-	-	928	12.5%
Sub-Total	152	1,086	-	-	1,238	16.6%
Total	1,754	5,686	0	0	7,440	100.0%
% of Total	23.6%	76.4%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	
TCT included above	23	841	0	0	864	11.6%
TCST included above	-	883	-	-	883	11.9%
NHTC included above	300	0	-	0	300	4.0%
IAT included above	147	225	-	264	636	8.5%

Table 18 above shows that there are over 7,400 kilometres of managed trails in Newfoundland and Labrador.²⁸

²⁷ Trails of Newfoundland and Labrador, From a Walk in the Park to a Wilderness Adventure, Newfoundland TRailway Council

²⁸ Sources: Newfoundland TRailway Council, Avalon T'Railway Corporation, Newfoundland and Labrador Snowmobile Federation and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The [East Coast Trail](#) and [Gros Morne National Park](#) are two of Newfoundland's premier attractions for hikers. The East Coast Trail extends 520 km as it links communities along the Avalon Peninsula. So far about 220 km of this trail have been completed and the balance is under development. The East Coast Trail has been described as *the jewel in the crown of hiking in Atlantic Canada*²⁹ and it has also been called one of the 10 premier footpaths in Canada.³⁰

Gros Morne National Park is an area of great natural beauty with a rich variety of scenery, wildlife, and recreational activities. It is located in western Newfoundland near Deer Lake. It was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. There are more than 100 km of trails in the park, ranging from half-hour strolls to strenuous day hikes. The Long Range Mountains in western Newfoundland provide some of the best wilderness hiking experiences in eastern North America. Boat tours bring visitors under the towering cliffs of a freshwater fjord that was carved out by glaciers. Gros Morne is one of six national parks across Canada that permit snowmobiling in the winter. This has been a great boost to tourism in Western Newfoundland as the scenery is equally as spectacular in the winter as in the summer.

St. John's has an exceptional network of 125 kilometres of urban trails called the [Grand Concourse Walkways](#). Beginning at The Lookout on Signal Hill, the Grand Concourse winds from Signal Hill to other parts of the city, linking the downtown area with a total of 40 different trails in the urban network. The Trans Canada Trail starts at the historic train station on Water Street and it heads west to connect to the [Newfoundland TRailway](#) for its journey across the province.

Although there is no umbrella provincial trail association, the Newfoundland TRailway Council often performs this role. It is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the development of a recreational trail from St. John's to Port aux Basques using the former Canadian National Railway line. Its mandate is to promote multi-use trail development and to preserve abandoned railway lines for future use such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, ATVing and cross-country skiing. Other uses like dog sledding and snowshoeing are also permitted in certain regions. Newfoundland TRailway is the Newfoundland member of the Canadian Trails Federation.



View from the Heritage Run Trail on the Burin Peninsula.



Construction of a boardwalk in 2009 on the Grand Bay West Trailway in Port-aux-Basques.

²⁹ Explore Magazine

³⁰ Canadian Geographic

5.11 Yukon Territory

The [Klondike Snowmobile Association](#) (KSA) has taken the lead role in developing managed trails in the Yukon Territory. It has responsibility for coordinating the building of the Trans Canada Trail in the Yukon and it was the first group to get behind the concept of the Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail. Many of the shared use trails that have been developed and managed by KSA are available for all types of trail users including hiking, cycling, ATViing, cross country skiing, dog sledding and snowmobiling.

Table 19 shows that there are 2,121 kilometres of managed trails in the Yukon Territory.³¹ Many of these trails are located near Whitehorse, Dawson City and Carcross but others are long distance trails through remote areas.

Table 19. Yukon Territory Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking , walking, running	550	-	-	0	550	16.2%
Cycling (touring)	0	-	-	0	0	0.0%
Mountain biking	200	-	-	0	200	5.9%
Cross country skiing	106	-	-	-	106	3.1%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
ATViing	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	0	-	0	0.0%
Sub-Total	856	0	0	0	856	25.3%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling only	300	-	-	0	300	8.8%
add Snowmobile	-	500	-	1,269	1,769	52.2%
add ATV	-	465	-	0	465	13.7%
Sub-Total	300	965	-	1,269	2,534	74.7%
Total	1,156	965	0	1,269	3,390	100.0%
% of Total	34.1%	28.5%	0.0%	37.4%	100.0%	
TCT included above	0	257	0	1,269	1,526	45.0%
TCST included above	-	257	-	1,269	1,526	45.0%

In 2009 the Klondike Active Transport and Trails Society (KATTS) in Dawson City agreed to become the Yukon member of the Canadian Trails Federation as a means to facilitate access to NTC funding for non-motorized trails. In 2010 the [Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon - RPAY](#) took over from KATTS as the Yukon member of the Canadian Trails Federation.

³¹ Sources: Klondike Snowmobile Association, City of Whitehorse, Klondike Active Transport and Trails Society, Carcross / Tagish First Nation, Government of the Yukon Territory.

5.12 Northwest Territories

Table 20 shows that most of the trails in the Northwest Territories are located on roads.³² There are some managed trails near Yellowknife and in rural communities. The [Northwest Territories Recreation and Parks Association](#) is responsible for coordinating the building of the Trans Canada Trail in the Northwest Territories and it is also the NWT member of the Canadian Trails Federation. It manages a fund for trail development through its Trail Committee.

Table 20. Northwest Territories Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking , walking, running	0	-	-	0	0	0.0%
Cycling (touring)	0	-	-	0	0	0.0%
Mountain biking	15	-	-	0	15	0.4%
Cross country skiing	15	-	-	-	15	0.4%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
ATVing	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>2,239</u>	-	<u>2,239</u>	<u>66.9%</u>
Sub-Total	30	0	2239	0	2,269	67.8%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling only	0	-	-	0	0	0.0%
add Snowmobile	-	500	-	574	1,074	32.1%
add ATV	-	<u>5</u>	-	0	<u>5</u>	0.1%
Sub-Total	0	505	-	574	1,079	32.2%
Total	30	505	2,239	574	3,348	100.0%
% of Total	0.9%	15.1%	66.9%	17.1%	100.0%	
TCT included above	0	53	2,239	574	2,866	85.6%

Recently a new group, the Great Slave Snowmobile Association, has formed to manage 500 kilometres of snowmobile trails in the Northwest Territories.

³² Sources: Northwest Territories Recreation and Parks Association, Great Slave Snowmobile Association, Government of the Northwest Territories.

5.13 Nunavut

As shown in Table 21 below, to the best of our knowledge there is only one managed trail in Nunavut.³³ It is the Itijjagial Trail and it is located in Katannilik Territorial Park. The Itijjagial Trail starts at Frobisher Bay after a one-hour boat ride from Iqualuit. It crosses the rolling hills of the Meta Incognita peninsula. The trail is not marked but there is a suggested route to follow. It is a difficult route only to be completed by experienced hikers. There are a number of stream crossings, it is very isolated and there are no trail markers.

There is no organized trail association in Nunavut.

Table 21. Nunavut Managed Trails

Summary of Numbers of Kilometres by Use as of 2010

Single Use Trails	Trails			Roads	Total	% of Total
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Water Route			
Hiking , walking, running	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Cycling (touring)	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Mountain biking	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Cross country skiing	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Equestrian	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
Snowmobiling	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
ATVing	-	0	-	-	0	0.0%
Canoeing, kayaking	-	-	<u>0</u>	-	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Sub-Total	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Shared-Use Trails						
Walking & Cycling only	0	-	-	-	0	0.0%
add Snowmobile	-	143	-	0	143	100.0%
add ATV	-	0	-	0	0	0.0%
Sub-Total	0	143	-	0	143	100.0%
Total	0	143	0	0	143	100.0%
% of Total	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	
TCT included above	0	143	0	0	143	100.0%

³³ Source: Trails Canada, Government of Nunavut

6. The Importance of Shared Use Trails

Shared use trails can be non-motorized or motorized. Examples of shared use non-motorized trails are trails that are designed for hiking/walking as well as cycling. They are common in urban regions. Shared use trails can also permit motorized use. Some shared use trails permit snowmobiling in the winter months (generally December through March) and non-motorized activities in summer months. Other shared use trails permit all motorized trail uses such as snowmobiling, ATVing and off road motorcycling as well as a full range of non-motorized trail activities.

Table 22 below shows that there are in excess of 71,000 km of shared use trails in Canada. Over 88% of these shared use trails are located in rural areas and more than three quarters of the shared use trails in rural areas permit motorized uses.

Table 22. Shared Use Trails in Canada

Province / Territory	Urban			Rural			Total	Percent of Trails
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Sub-Total	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Sub-Total		
Newfoundland & Labrador	133	0	133	19	1,086	1,105	1,238	16.6%
Nova Scotia	110	68	178	82	3,800	3,882	4,060	49.7%
Prince Edward Island	53	0	53	45	354	399	452	32.7%
New Brunswick	91	0	91	215	697	912	1,003	8.1%
Quebec	273	0	273	3,670	700	4,370	4,643	6.6%
Ontario	2,142	0	2,142	3,696	3,650	7,346	9,488	19.1%
Manitoba	420	0	420	616	295	911	1,331	7.1%
Saskatchewan	154	0	154	1,410	210	1,620	1,774	11.6%
Alberta	2,243	0	2,243	1,282	11,499	12,781	15,024	42.6%
British Columbia	2,212	0	2,212	3,852	24,060	27,912	30,124	69.9%
Yukon	300	0	300	0	965	965	1,265	59.6%
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	0	505	505	505	94.4%
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	143	143	143	100.0%
Totals:	8,131	68	8,199	14,887	47,964	62,851	71,049	
% of Total:	11.4%	0.1%	11.5%	21.0%	67.5%	88.5%		

This table also illustrates that there are significant differences between provinces regarding the number of kilometres of trail that are shared use as a percentage of the total kilometres of trail in that province. It ranges from a low of 6% in Quebec (where they have a well established network of single use snowmobile and ATV trails as well as excellent cycling trails under the banner of La Route Verte) to a high of 100% in Nunavut where there is only one trail. The Yukon and Northwest Territories have high percentages of their managed trails that are shared use. Some of the provinces that have higher percentages of shared use trails are British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

6.1 Conflicts Between Trail User Groups

Conflicts between different trail user groups on shared use trails are generally indicative of the value trail users place on their recreation experience and on specific trails. Conflict can be attributed to perception about activity style (mode of travel, level of technology), focus of trip, expectations, attitudes toward and perceptions of the environment, level of tolerance for others and different norms held by different users.³⁴

Increased demand for relatively unstructured outdoor recreation experiences is not specific to one trail user group or type of use. Hikers, cyclists, horseback riders and motorized off-highway enthusiasts would all like to access Crown land. Increasing availability and advances in equipment technology have contributed to the quality and quantity of mountain bikes, off-road motorcycles, ATVs and snowmobiles. This has resulted in increased opportunities for contact between different types of trail users and the potential for conflict. However, contact is not always a prerequisite for conflict.

6.1.1 Conflicts Between Non-Motorized Users and ATVs

The most common conflict in Canada is between walkers/hikers and/or cyclists who are seeking quiet and solitude on trails and ATVs or off-road motorcyclists who are seeking a different recreation experience. This is highlighted by the debate regarding access to rail trails in particular. Some elements of the non-motorized trails community have been very vocal about their desire to ban ATVs from all shared use trails. They argue that ATVs are a safety hazard and they degrade their trail experience and the quality of the trail.

These issues have been addressed on the major shared use trails that permit ATVing among other trail uses. The issue of safety has been managed by the implementation of trail patrols to educate users and monitor compliance with regulations including posted speed limits.

The quiet trail experience for hikers has been addressed by educating ATVs to respect other trail users. The manufacturers of ATVs and snowmobiles have also addressed the noise issue by building quieter machines. There is research underway to come up with electric engines that would be even less noisy. However, a shared use trail is generally not the type of trail that a hiker would seek for solitude. Even non-motorized urban shared use trails are noisy due to the large numbers of trail users and other sources of noise in an urban environment. A rural single track hiking trail would be the preferred choice for solitude.

Usually shared use trails that permit ATVs are located in remote areas where there are very few hikers. A long distance rail trail through remote countryside is generally not a preferred trail for a hiker unless it leads to an entrance to a single track hiking trail.

Finally, with respect to degradation of the trail by ATVs, many shared use motorized trails have been built with a special treadway to support use by ATVs as well as bicycles. These surfaces are groomed regularly to smooth out bumps. The result is a very good experience for all trail users. In fact one of the frequent hikers on the Ceilidh Coastal Trail in Cape Breton likes to walk barefoot on the trail because the treadway is so smooth and well maintained.

³⁴ Moore, Roger. 1994. Conflicts on Multiple Use Trails: Synthesis of Literature and State of the Practice. Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. Washington, DC.

The users of trails such as the [Iron Horse Trail](#) in Alberta, the Eastern Ontario Trail Alliance trail system in Ontario, the Ceilidh Coastal Trail in Cape Breton and Newfoundland T'Railway all tell us that their experience with a wide variety of different trail users has been very good.

Non-motorized trail users have stated that they want a ban on ATVs on all shared use trails across Canada. This method of dealing with the issue is contrary to the principles of fairness upon which trails have been developed in Canada. Most shared use trails were built and they are managed today by local not-for-profit community trail groups. The decisions to permit ATVs on those trails were made through democratic processes by the local communities. To impose a national directive that would override those local decisions would be undemocratic and patently unfair to those people who donated their money, time and hard work to build those trails.

6.2 Conflict Resolution

There is also conflict between hikers and mountain bikers, horseback riders and cyclists or any other combination of trail users. Roger Moore has observed that conflict is often asymmetrical where negative perception is held by one group towards another but the reverse is not true.³⁵

Trail user conflict is a complex issue that is often best addressed by employing a coordinated and multi-faceted approach to the issues. It may not be possible to completely eliminate conflict; however a pro-active approach to trail management can reduce the potential for conflict as well as provide a framework for dealing with it when it arises. For example, involving local user groups in trail management provides a venue for each group to understand other user's perspectives, attitudes and objectives. Actively involving different trail users in common tasks such as trail patrol gives different trail users an opportunity to work together and it often highlights similarities and reduces misconceptions.

One way to reduce conflict on shared use trails is through appropriate use of signage (i.e. on web sites, at trail heads, etc.) to inform trail users in advance regarding approved trail uses. This can go a long way toward establishing realistic expectations for trail users and thereby avoid unwelcome surprises.

Education is also an important factor when dealing with trail user conflict. Uninformed, unintentional, unskilled and careless actions by users are often cited as the causes of many problems in outdoor recreation areas.³⁶ Delivery of educational information in a strategic but easy to understand format can address many of these oversights.

While enforcement is a necessary component of any trail management plan, it should be used in conjunction with other available tools such as education and user involvement. Trail users are more likely to accept regulations and cooperate if they understand the reasons for the regulations. One of the attractive features of trail based recreation is that it is relatively unstructured. Most trail managers follow the principle of "least intervention necessary" when undertaking enforcement of regulations.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Roggenbuck, J. 1992. Use of information and education in recreation management. In *Conflicts on Multiple Use Trails; Synthesis of Literature and State of the Practice*, p.23. Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. Washington, DC.



RCMP members are trained on ATVs and ORMs. This night patrol is setting out to monitor 11 pm curfew infractions on a motorized shared use trail. Their off-road motorcycles are licensed for both road and off-road use for flexibility of pursuit.

Respect for other trail users is an essential requirement for well managed shared use trails. Promotion of shared use trail etiquette by way of brochures and “on the trail” education through volunteer trail patrol or stewardship programs has proven to be a very effective trail management technique.



The consultants believe that the best way to defuse the current heated debate regarding the use of ATVs on selected sections of the Trans Canada Trail would be to grandfather the rights of those community trails organizations that have already registered their section of trail. The "Greenway" policy could be applied to all new sections of the Trans Canada Trail so that trail developers would know the ground rules before they embark upon building a section.

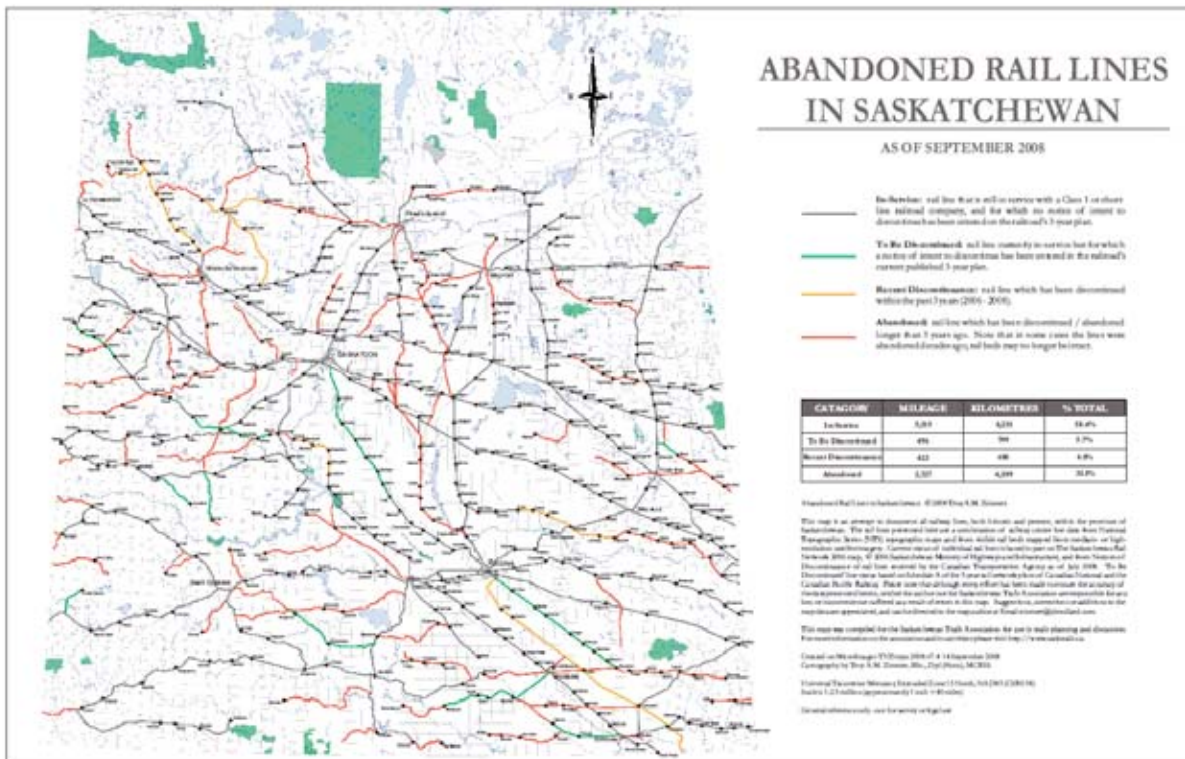
7. The Importance of Rails to Trails in Canada

7.1 Background and Current Status of Rails to Trails in Canada

There has been significant development of abandoned rail lines into recreational trails in many provinces in Eastern and Central Canada. Research by the consultants shows that there are more than 120 rail trails in Canada today as listed in Appendix C.

In Atlantic Canada the provincial governments purchased more than 3,000 kilometres of abandoned rail lines. Most of them have been developed or are in the process of being developed into recreational trails. In the provinces of Quebec and Ontario a large number of abandoned rail lines were purchased by counties or regional municipalities and they have been converted to highly popular recreational trails.

However, the development of rails to trails in Western Canada has lagged the rest of the country. British Columbia is an exception where the provincial government purchased 2,000 kilometres of abandoned rail lines and converted them to recreational trails. In the Prairies there are thousands of kilometres of abandoned rail lines that are still owned by the railways. Many of these lines are located in Saskatchewan as shown by the map below.³⁷



The above map shows abandoned rail lines in red. The black lines indicate those rail lines that are still in service. The reader may access a high resolution pdf file of this map by clicking on the following link: <http://www.sasktrails.ca/maps/SaskRailNetworkSept2008.pdf>

³⁷ Source: Troy A. M. Zimmer, Saskatchewan Trails Association.

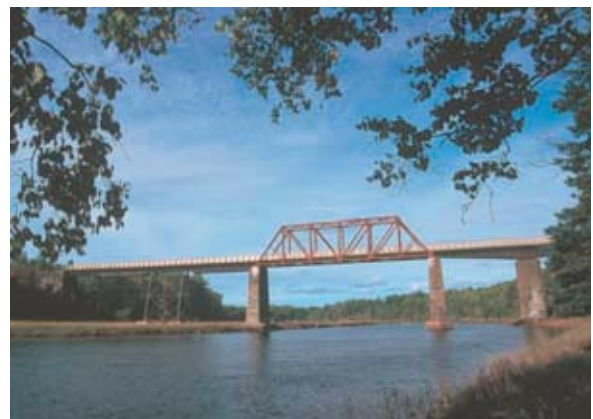
As of September 2008 there were 4,469 km of abandoned rail lines in central and southern Saskatchewan. The map above shows these abandoned lines in red. An additional 799 km of rail lines in this province are scheduled to be abandoned between 2009 and 2011 according to statements filed by the owners. There is significant potential to utilize a number of these former rail corridors for recreational trails.

In the late 1990's the Trans Canada Trail was gifted a large number of kilometres of abandoned rail lines by the CPR and CNR. Most of those lines that are located along the planned TCT route have since been developed as recreational trails. However, they still own about 1,000 km of abandoned rail lines that are surplus to their needs and TCT would like to transfer them to provincial or municipal governments or community trail groups for development as trails.

In addition to the abandoned rail lines in Saskatchewan that are mentioned above, there are also thousands of kilometres of abandoned rail lines in Alberta and Manitoba. Ontario and Quebec also have a number of still undeveloped abandoned rail lines.

Manitoba is unique because it enacted legislation that exempts not-for-profit organizations from property taxes on land and buildings. In other provinces municipalities have the right to waive property taxes or to provide grants to offset the taxes they collect from not-for-profit organizations. The cost of paying annual taxes on land is one of the key impediments to development of rails to trails in Canada by not-for-profit organizations.

The picture on the right shows the Wallace River Bridge in Nova Scotia. It is located near the mouth of the river where it flows into Wallace Bay and the Northumberland Strait. It is a former cantilevered railway bridge that swung open to enable tall-masted ships to sail up the Wallace River from the ocean. Today this trail bridge is a key connector on the Cumberland County Trail, a shared use trail that permits hiking, cycling, horseback riding, ATVing, snowmobiling and cross country skiing. In 2004 a fire destroyed all of the wood on the structure but it was re-built within 8 weeks by local volunteers.



7.2 The U.S. Experience with Rails to Trails

In the United States the situation with rails-to-trails is considerably different than in Canada. In the 1800's when the Americans were opening up the west, they encouraged railroads to build railways on land that was leased from the Federal government. In the 1970's when American railroads started to abandon rights of way, the responsibilities of ownership reverted back to the Federal government. In 1983 the U.S. Congress enacted the National Trails System Act³⁸ to preserve these corridors through "railbanking".

"Railbanking" is defined in this Act as a voluntary agreement between a railroad company and a trail agency to use an out-of-service rail corridor as a trail until some railroad might need the corridor again for rail service. Because a "railbanked" corridor is not considered abandoned, it

³⁸ <http://www.nps.gov/nts/legislation.html>

can be sold, leased or donated to a trail manager without reverting to adjacent landowners. The “railbanking” provisions of the National Trails System Act have preserved 4,431 miles of rail corridors in 33 states that would otherwise have been abandoned.

The leading proponent of rails-to-trails in the United States is the Rails to Trails Conservancy.³⁹ It is a nonprofit organization that works with communities to preserve unused rail corridors by transforming them into trails.

7.3 The Rail Abandonment Process in Canada

When a federally regulated railway company in Canada announces its intention to discontinue operation of a rail line, the railway company must adhere to a formal abandonment process as laid out in sections 140-146 of the Canada Transportation Act. This process requires that the railway company must offer the line they intend to discontinue for sale for ongoing railway operations. If no commercial sale is completed within the allowed time, the railway must offer to sell the line first to the Government of Canada, then to the applicable provincial government and finally to the applicable municipal government(s) for a price to be negotiated (not more than the net salvage value of the line). Each level of government has 30 days to declare if it wishes to purchase the line. After that process has been completed without any purchasers, then the railway company may dispose of the assets as it wishes.

Canadian railways must make a "three-year plan" available to the public and this plan must be prepared and kept up-to-date on each line indicating whether they:

- intend to continue to operate the line;
- intend to transfer the line to a short line company; or
- intend to take steps to discontinue operating the line.

This information is in the public domain; consequently, it would be possible to compile a database of abandoned rail lines in Canada that are available for conversion to recreational trails. To the best of our knowledge, this has not been done.

7.4 Other Opportunities: Potential Development of Unused Roads as Trails

There are also thousands of kilometres of undeveloped or unused roads in Canada that fall under the jurisdiction of provincial governments. In many provinces forestry roads are available for use as managed trails where the local trail organization has received written permission from the landowner. The consultants believe there is significant potential to develop additional shared use trails on unused roads.

³⁹ <http://www.railstotrails.org>

8. The Significance of Long Distance Trails

There are six long distance trails in Canada that are of regional, national or international significance. They are: [National Hiking Trail of Canada](#), [International Appalachian Trail](#), [Bruce Trail](#), [Great Divide Trail](#), [Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail](#) and the [Trans Canada Trail](#). These trails are significant because they capture the imagination of Canadians and encourage local trail developers to become part of a bigger picture. Table 23 below lists the number of kilometres of each of these trails by province and territory.

Table 23.

Canadian Managed Trails

Long Distance Trails

Kilometres of Trail by Province / Territory as of 2010

Province / Territory	NHTC	IAT	BT	GDT	TCST	TCT
Newfoundland & Labrador	636	372	0	0	883	864
Nova Scotia	0	465	0	0	426	370
Prince Edward Island	0	144	0	0	342	362
New Brunswick	142	274	0	0	525	390
Quebec	1,000	644	0	0	1,500	1,616
Ontario	1,563	0	1,100	0	2,600	2,873
Manitoba	0	0	0	0	732	1,268
Saskatchewan	15	0	0	0	1,395	572
Alberta	122	0	0	600	190	1,760
British Columbia	873	0	0	600	900	2,224
Yukon Territory	0	0	0	0	1,526	1,526
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	0	0	2,866
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0	143
Totals:	4,351	1,899	1,100	1,200	11,019	16,834

NHTC: National Hiking Trail of Canada

IAT: International Appalachian Trail

BT: Bruce Trail

GDT: Great Divide Trail

TCST: Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail

TCT: Trans Canada Trail

We will review each of these long distance trails starting with the most prominent one.

8.1 Trans Canada Trail

The Trans Canada Trail is the best known brand of all three of the national trails in Canada. It will be 22,000 kilometres in length once it is finished. It is a shared use recreational trail that winds its way through every province and territory, from the Atlantic to Pacific to Arctic Oceans. When completed, it will be the world's longest recreational trail, linking close to 1,000 communities and over 33 million Canadians.



The red line on the map above shows the land route of the Trans Canada Trail from St. John's in Newfoundland and Labrador to Victoria in British Columbia and all the way to Inuvik on the Arctic Ocean. The light blue line shows the water routes.

The Trans Canada Trail is a federally registered charitable organization. It does not own or operate any of the trail sections that are registered as part of the Trans Canada Trail. In British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario separate organizations have been incorporated whose sole purpose is to coordinate the development of the TCT. In most provinces and territories the provincial trails organization is the official partner that is responsible for coordinating the construction and management of the TCT in their region. Two exceptions are Saskatchewan and the Yukon where the provincial / territorial snowmobile associations are the partners.

Most provinces have adopted a volunteer community group model whereby local not-for-profit organizations assume responsibility for building and maintaining a section of the trail that is typically 10 – 20 kilometres in length. In order to register a section of trail as part of the TCT, written landowner permission is required. Also, the local trail group must ensure that the TCT has been named as an additional insured on their general liability insurance policy.

In many cases the Trans Canada Trail provides a backbone or connectivity for regional trail networks. Its development was a stimulus for the creation of a number of new provincial trail associations and hundreds of new local trail groups.

The Trans Canada Trail is currently about 70% complete if one includes water routes and road links. Table 24 below shows that as of November 2010 there are over 8,600 kilometres of operational managed trails which make up about half of the total kilometres of registered trail. The other half is comprised of 3,438 kilometres of water routes and 4,764 kilometres of road routes.⁴⁰ Table 24 shows that almost 86% of the managed trails that comprise operational sections of the TCT are located in rural regions of Canada.

Table 24

Trans Canada Trail

by Number of Urban & Rural Kilometres as of 2010

Province / Territory	Urban Trails		Rural Trails			Total Km of Trails	Water Routes	Roads	Total Km
	Non-Motorized	Motorized	Non-Motorized	SNO	Yellow				
Newfoundland & Labrador	23	0	0	0	841	864	0	0	864
Nova Scotia	49	10	0	0	244	303	0	67	370
Prince Edward Island	8	0	0	354	0	362	0	0	362
New Brunswick	52	0	46	198	0	296	94	0	390
Quebec	177	0	682	568	0	1,427	27	162	1,616
Ontario	334	0	1,322	433	153	2,242	248	383	2,873
Manitoba	57	3	285	218	0	563	0	705	1,268
Saskatchewan	76	0	207	69	0	352	0	220	572
Alberta	219	0	304	54	238	815	830	115	1,760
British Columbia	182	0	352	421	0	955	0	1,269	2,224
Yukon Territory	0	17	0	240	0	257	0	1,269	1,526
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	53	0	53	2,239	574	2,866
Nunavut	0	0	0	143	0	143	0	0	143
Totals:	1,177	30	3,198	2,751	1,476	8,632	3,438	4,764	16,834
Percentage of Total:	7.0%	0.2%	19.0%	16.3%	8.8%	51.3%	20.4%	28.3%	

There are six preferred trail activities on the Trans Canada Trail: walking / hiking, cycling, horseback riding, cross country skiing, snowmobiling and canoeing.⁴¹ Table 24 shows that motorized use is permitted on about half of the length of the managed trails portion of the Trans Canada Trail other than water and road routes. The majority of this motorized activity is snowmobiling but there are four provinces that have "Yellow" trails meaning that ATVing is permitted on those trails. The longest "Yellow" trail is the Newfoundland T'Railway. It is owned by the provincial government which enacted legislation that permits the use of ATVs and snowmobiles on their linear park.

In 2004 the Trans Canada Trail obtained \$15 million in funding from the Canadian Government to assist with funding for construction of the trail. This money was invested in trail construction over the succeeding 7 years. In October 2010 the Canadian Government announced a new \$10 million contribution to assist the TCT to reach its completion goal by 2017.

⁴⁰ Source: Trans Canada Trail.

⁴¹ http://www.tctrail.ca/RMC_Report_June_6.pdf

8.2 Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail

The Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail (TCST) was established in 1998 by the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) through the cooperation of its 12 provincial / territorial snowmobiling associations. It follows an independent route across the nation's snowbelt as shown on the map below.



The history of the Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail goes back to the creation of the Trans Canada Trail in 1992. Although snowmobiling is one of the TCT's preferred trail activities, it became clear to the CCSO that the route of the Trans Canada Trail would take it along a track in many parts of the country that was too far south for snowmobiling. In 1993 the CCSO decided to link existing provincial snowmobile trails together into a cross Canada snowmobiling trail.

In 1996 the first official section of the TCST was opened in the Yukon along the Top of the World Highway. This highway was closed during the winter and it was used by over 500 snowmobilers during the Trek Over the Top in 1996. As in numerous jurisdictions across Canada, combining the TCT and the TCST in the Yukon makes sound economic and environmental sense. In this case the trail has a wide variety of users because it permits snowmobiling, cross country skiing and dogsledding in the winter and hiking and biking in the summer.

In 1997 the TCST was established from Saskatchewan to Newfoundland and in 1998 British Columbia and Alberta were added. In January and February of 1998 representatives from the CCSO rode coast to coast during RendezVous 1998 to inaugurate the TCST.

Snowmobiling is permitted on 4,227 km of the Trans Canada Trail but most of those sections are not part of the Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail. The consultants estimate that the overlap between the TCT and the TCST is about 1,500 kilometres.

Approximately 10,000 kilometres of the Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail are in place but the trail is not yet complete. There are several significant gaps that need to be built. In addition, there is a need for signage.

8.3 National Hiking Trail of Canada

For over thirty years, Hike Canada en marche has been working on the vision of a footpath across Canada. The following map shows the planned route.



The red line on the map above shows the proposed route of the National Hiking Trail

Piece by piece, the proposed 10,000 kilometre hiking trail is growing to connect the Atlantic to the Pacific. The long-held vision of a greenway connecting existing natural-surface pedestrian trail systems with parklands and wild places is slowly becoming a reality. Already, trails spanning much of British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick are in use. Once established, the trail corridor will help to protect Canada's heritage of natural landscapes and historic places, and provide passage, habitat, and refuge for wildlife.

The Bruce Trail in Ontario, forerunner of Canada's modern-day trail system, is a pioneer long distance hiking trail that is part of the National Hiking Trail. Other long distance hiking trails such as the International Appalachian Trail could assist the National Hiking Trail in Atlantic Canada by completing sections that could serve a dual purpose.

As of 2010 more than three thousand kilometres of the National Hiking Trail have been completed; some on existing trail systems, others following older routes that await designation on public land.

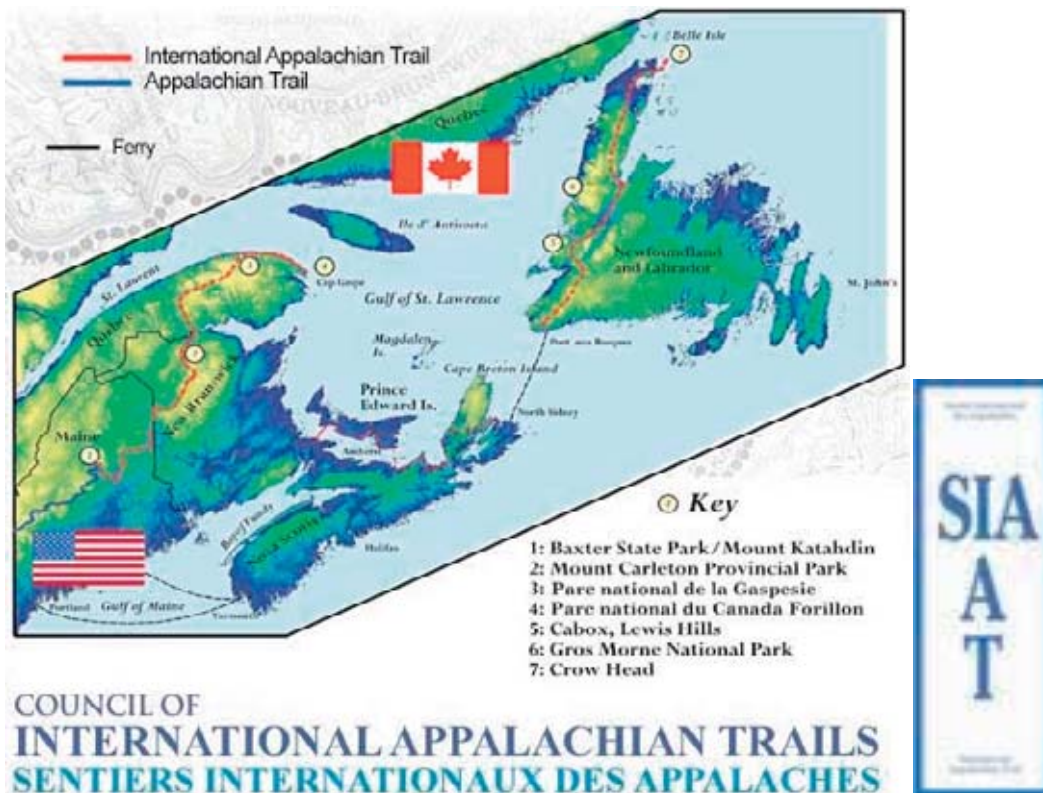


8.4 International Appalachian Trail

The International Appalachian Trail (IAT) *Sentier International des Appalaches*, (SIA) is a hiking trail which runs from the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail at Mount Katahdin, Maine through New Brunswick to the Gaspé Peninsula of Québec, after which it takes a bridge crossing from New Brunswick to Prince Edward Island and from there a ferry crossing to Pictou, Nova Scotia. The IAT follows the Cape to Cape Trail in Nova Scotia and it continues to the Canso Causeway then through Cape Breton to the ferry terminal at North Sydney. Following the ferry crossing to Newfoundland the IAT continues from Port aux Basques along the western part of Newfoundland to the northern tip of the Appalachian Mountain chain at Belle Isle, NL.

Proponents of the trail theorize that the Appalachian Mountains and the mountains of Western Europe and North Africa are related. When the continents of Europe and North America collided more than 250 million years ago on the super-continent Pangea, they then drifted to their present locations. Based on this theory, efforts are being made to extend the IAT into Western Europe and North Africa.

In April 2010 Greenland became the seventh chapter of the International Appalachian Trail. It was followed by Scotland in June, 2010 when the West Highland Way became the first IAT trail in Europe. In October 2010 the IAT expanded further into Europe when nine new chapters joined the IAT at a meeting in Aviemore, Scotland. The new chapters include Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, England, Ireland, Wales, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland. At that point the IAT became the largest trail network in the world.



8.5 The Bruce Trail

The Bruce Trail (BT) is the oldest and longest continuous footpath in Canada. It runs along the Niagara Escarpment in Ontario from Niagara to Tobermory, spanning more than 850 kilometres of main trail and 250 kilometres of side trails.

The first meeting of the Bruce Trail Committee of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists was in 1960. Since those initial days, escarpment landowners have been key to the existence of the Bruce Trail. Understanding that building relationships was essential, then Trail Director Philip Gosling and his team of volunteers visited major towns along the proposed trail route to discuss with landowners their vision of a trail along the Niagara Escarpment. They were greeted with support all along the way. Regional clubs were established by 1963. Each club was responsible for organization, landowner approvals, construction and maintenance. The same club management system remains in effect today.

The Bruce Trail was officially opened at a ceremony in Tobermory in 1967- Canada's Centennial Year. Since then a number of sections of the trail have been re-routed as additional land has been acquired.

Management of the Bruce Trail is through the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC). Nine Bruce Trail Clubs support BTC by managing a section of the Trail. All club activities are overseen by volunteers who handle trail maintenance, stewardship, public education, hiking programs, and landowner relations. There are 8,400 members of BTC and 1,000 of them are active trail volunteers.

In order to ensure a secure a permanent conservation corridor, the BTC acquires Niagara Escarpment land for the Bruce Trail and conservation buffers. Almost 7,000 acres of Escarpment land are now secured and managed by the BTC. This preserved land is cared for by volunteers, with the support of a small BTC staff. However, 52% of the trail corridor is still subject to development.

The BTC is working to secure the remaining sections of the corridor by obtaining donations of land or by purchasing land. Each year the BTC spends \$1 to \$2 million on land purchases. These acquisitions protect a diverse array of landscape types - wetlands, karst topography, open meadows, caves, towering scarp edges and lush forests - all within the Niagara Escarpment UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve.



Photo courtesy of Bruce Trail Conservancy.

8.5 Great Divide Trail

The Great Divide Trail (GDT) is a 1,200 km wilderness hiking trail in the Canadian Rockies. This trail closely follows the Continental Divide between Alberta and British Columbia, crossing the divide no fewer than 30 times. In Table 22 above we have allocated 600 kilometres of this trail to each of British Columbia and Alberta because there is insufficient detailed information to apportion the kilometres of trail otherwise.

The GDT begins in Waterton Lakes National Park at the Canada-US border where it connects with the Continental Divide Trail from the United States and it ends in Kakwa Provincial Park north of Jasper National Park.

The route south of Palliser Pass was originally mapped in 1974 by a group of 6 people funded by an Opportunities for Youth Grant. Cliff White, the project coordinator, used the data from this project as the basis for his undergraduate thesis.

The GDT is not officially recognized by Parks Canada and therefore is not signed and not always even an actual trail, sometimes merely a wilderness route. The GDT passes through five National Parks including Waterton, Banff, Kootenay, Yoho and Jasper, seven Provincial Parks, four provincial wilderness areas and five provincial forest districts.



9. The Role of the Three Levels of Government

The federal government has provided significant support to trail building in Canada through funding for the National Trails Coalition, Trans Canada Trail and active transportation projects through co-investments with municipalities. The Canadian Government has also provided funding for regional trails initiatives through agencies such as Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, FedNor and Western Economic Diversification Canada. However the level of federal funding for trails in Canada on a per capita basis falls far short of the support that the federal government in the United States has provided for trails in that country. Their land banking program for rails to trails helped to preserve many abandoned rail lines that have now been converted into trails. The U.S. Government has provided hundreds of millions of dollars for trail development each year for the past 20 years through their Department of Transportation. There is a need for more support for trail development at the federal government level in Canada.



Photo reproduced with permission from the Library of Parliament / Bibliothèque du Parlement. Photo credit: CB-077/ Mone Cheng.

Provincial governments in Canada have supported trail development in a number of different ways. In some cases provincial governments have purchased abandoned rail lines and provided support to not-for-profit trails associations to develop them into shared use trails. A number of provincial governments have designated specific departments to coordinate trail development because trails typically involve a number of departments such as Natural Resources, Transportation, Tourism, Health Promotion, Justice and Economic Development. The Nova Scotia Government has even backstopped a trails liability insurance program for not-for-profit trails associations. However, the most important contribution from provincial governments has come in the form of financial support for trail building. We estimate that provincial governments across Canada contribute approximately \$50 million per year for trail development and management.

Municipal governments also play a key role in trail development. Many new urban trails have been built during the past ten years and more are currently being planned. The majority of these trails are for active transportation. Approximately 70% of the population of Canada lives in urban settings; consequently the majority of demand for trail uses comes from these regions. On a typical day, most people want to be able to experience trails in their own neighbourhood or within a one-hour drive of their home. However, there is increasing demand for longer distance trail use on weekends and during vacations. Municipal governments are doing a good job at building trail networks within their urban boundaries. In a number of cases in rural parts of Ontario and Quebec regional governments have purchased abandoned rail lines and invested in converting them to recreational trails. In other cases small towns have collaborated to purchase abandoned rail corridors and convert them to rail trails to connect their communities.

10. Key Issues Regarding Canadian Trails

10.1 Access

One of the issues most often cited by trail users is that they want increased access to managed trails. This could be in the form of more access to single use or shared use trails. Some trail users are finding that their traditional access to trails is being restricted due to land use regulations, development or environmental concerns. This means that it is more important than ever to develop managed trail systems that are sustainable. Education of trail users about the importance of staying on managed trails is also important because often access restrictions are imposed as a result of misuse or environmental damage to valuable natural resources on Crown and/or private land.

10.2 Lack of Funding for Trail Development

Finding scarce financial resources is another issue that always impacts trail developers. Fortunately there are tens of thousands of volunteer trail builders in Canada who devote hundreds of thousands of hours every year to further trail development. Without their support, trail development in both urban and rural parts of Canada would be only a fraction of what it is today. Most trail building in Canada follows the community development model where it is organized by local community trail groups or trail user clubs who take pride in their local trail. Not only do local volunteers build the trail but they also manage and maintain it so that it is sustainable for the long term. However, when volunteers spend a large portion of their time seeking funding, they become discouraged and lose interest in what they set out to do – that is, build trails for everyone to use. The best practices in shared use trail building are evidenced by those organizations that collaborate with all three levels of government, interested trail users in their community as well as good corporate citizens who contribute financially as well as in-kind.

10.3 Risk Management, Liability and Insurance

Many trail developers continually grapple with the issue of liability insurance. In 2002 Lloyds of London elected to exit this part of its business and they advised provincial trail associations accordingly. The premiums for alternative insurance coverage skyrocketed. Trail builders faced the prospect of either diverting a large chunk of the money they had raised for trail construction into insurance premiums or abandoning their goals and closing their community trail groups. Fortunately within a few years the insurance market recovered and premiums were reduced to their former levels.

Risk management remains a significant issue for community trail groups because their members are volunteers and they do not want to be drawn into any possibility of personal liability. At the same time, property owners (both private and public sector) want to be assured that they will not incur any potential liability by agreeing to permit their property to be used as a trail. The practice of risk management will not eliminate risks but it can identify, reduce and manage them in order to decrease risk to the user as well as potential liability to the trail manager. Most provinces have enacted Occupiers Liability Acts which limit the liability that a land owner or *occupier* may have regarding trails on their land. The only obligation one has is to not create a danger with intent to do harm or act with reckless disregard to the safety of someone or the integrity of someone's

property. Most of these acts also state that a person who enters premises for the purpose of recreation is deemed to have willingly assumed all risks.

10.4 Environmental Stewardship

Governments are moving to protect natural resources for ecological values. Our natural environment is the resource at the heart of the experience being sought by all trail users. Accordingly, all trail users should be encouraged to follow good environmental stewardship practices.

10.5 Increased Demand for Trails

Demographic trends have produced a growing demand for managed trails because aging baby boomers want more recreational opportunities. At the same time it is recognized that people today are not getting sufficient exercise. Trails are viewed as an inexpensive way for everyone to recreate without competition. There are also many opportunities for families to use trails as a safe, affordable activity.

Trail users may be generally segmented into two groups regarding trail activities: (a) those who prefer non-motorized activities on trails and (b) those who prefer motorized trail activities. Regardless of their preference, Canadians are demanding more managed trails, especially trails that are close to major population areas.

Managed trails are also becoming recognized as drivers of economic development. Provincial governments are now beginning to actively market sustainable trail systems as a tourism destination. Many people from other countries (i.e. Europe) are already aware of the benefits of trails and they are seeking to access the natural beauty that Canada has to offer without having to deal with crowds of people.

10.6 Legislation, Compliance and Enforcement

Many provincial governments have enacted legislation or regulations regarding OHV use on trails. While most OHV operators have voluntarily complied with these regulations, there are a small number where enforcement is needed to ensure compliance. Enforcement has been handled in different ways across the country. Some provinces such as Nova Scotia have assigned a team of Conservation Officers to OHV enforcement. Others such as Prince Edward Island have developed Trail Patrol programs where their volunteer Trail Wardens can issue Summary Offense Tickets. Most provinces and territories have simply left the issue of enforcement to regular law enforcement agencies as part of their overall duties.

11. Conclusions

There is a great deal of trail development underway across Canada. It is primarily driven by volunteers and not-for-profit trails organizations with support from governments at all three levels. However, there is very little information available to the public about this activity. This report is designed to provide important information for public policy makers as well as trail developers, users and managers. Hopefully it will stimulate more interest in this sector of our economy and it will lead to more support for recreational activities on trails.

The consultants found that there is a significant difference between trails in urban versus rural areas. Generally trails in urban settings are non-motorized. However, in rural areas, the principal trail users are generally motorized groups. They appreciate the privilege of using shared use trails in order to access other single use trails for their particular interest.

Since our natural resources are finite, it is important to strive to respect our environment at all times. Shared use trails are an efficient way to address this issue because multiple trail user groups can access the same resources through cooperation on shared use trail systems. However, there is a need for trail management practices to be applied in order to reduce conflict between user groups. Volunteer trail patrols have proven to be very effective in encouraging compliance with trail regulations. Dedicated teams of enforcement officers have also made a significant impact regarding compliance. Respect for other trail users is the key to successful collaboration on shared use trails.

A common thread that links the best practices regarding trail development and management is active community involvement. By working together in local communities, volunteers are addressing the key issues that impact trail users and adjacent landowners in all parts of Canada.

12. Recommendations

Based upon the research we have conducted for this report, the consultants make the following public policy recommendations:

1. There should be additional funding from all levels of government to support trail development and management in Canada.
2. Several provinces have selected one ministry to coordinate government activities related to trails because they often involve multiple departments. Other provinces and the federal government should do the same thing.
3. Priority should be given to the development of shared use trails wherever appropriate because it is the most efficient way to invest public funds.
4. Additional research should be undertaken to obtain more detailed information regarding trail development and usage.

Appendix A.

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Active Transportation: refers to any form of human-powered transportation – walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, in-line skating or skateboarding. There are many ways to engage in active transportation, whether it is walking to the bus stop, or cycling to school or work. Active transportation includes many active modes and methods of travel such as: walking, jogging, running; cycling; in-line skating; skateboarding; non-mechanized wheelchairs; snowshoeing and skiing.⁴²

ATV or All Terrain Vehicle: A small, open motor vehicle having one seat and four wheels fitted with large tires. It is designed chiefly for recreational off-road use.

CCSO: An abbreviation for the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations, a national not-for-profit organization whose members are the provincial and territorial snowmobile associations.

Community Trail Groups: Not-for-profit organizations that are formed to build and manage sections of trail near the community where their members live.

CTF: An abbreviation for the Canadian Trails Federation, a national not-for-profit organization whose members are the provincial and territorial trails organizations across Canada.

Designated Trails: Trails that have been designated by a government for use by a particular type of trail user through the purchase of a trail pass. Examples are snowmobile or ATV/ORM trails where the users purchase a trail pass for an annual or a daily fee.

Established Trails: Registered trails that are located on crown land in British Columbia that have been approved for use under a management agreement between the Government of BC and a local or provincial sponsor.

FedNor: A branch of Industry Canada that is the federal government's regional development organization for Northern Ontario.

FSR: Forest Service Road. A road that is usually built by a forest products company for their own use to transport trees using large trucks. Once a region has been harvested for trees, forest service roads in that region could remain unused for another 20 - 30 years. These roads are often available for recreational trail use by ATVs, ORMs and snowmobiles through an agreement with the landowner.

GDT: The Great Divide Trail is a hiking trail that is located along the border between Alberta and British Columbia running north from the U.S. border.

Greenway: A long, narrow piece of land, often used for recreation and pedestrian and bicycle traffic and sometimes including multiple transportation (streetcar, light rail) or retail uses. The term greenway comes from the "green" in greenbelt and the "way" in parkway, implying a recreational or pedestrian use. It is usually a contiguous pathway that facilitates urban commuting via bicycle or foot. An example is the [Central Valley Greenway](#) in Vancouver.

⁴² Source: Public Health Agency of Canada website. [What is Active Transportation? - Physical Activity - Healthy Living - Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

IAT: An abbreviation for the International Appalachian Trail, a hiking trail that starts at the end of the Appalachian Trail in Maine, crosses the border into Canada at New Brunswick then proceeds to Quebec, PEI, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

IMBA: An abbreviation for the International Mountain Biking Association. IMBA Canada was established in 2004 as the Canadian arm of IMBA.

Managed Trails: Recreational trails that are managed or operated by a government department, a registered not-for-profit trails organization or an incorporated trail user group. In order to qualify as a managed trail, there must be an agreement between the manager / operator and the landowner that establishes the terms of use of the trail. Managed trails must also be marked using appropriate signage, mapped or GPSed to assist trail users and they must be maintained by the trail manager / operator.

Mixed Use Trails: Shared use trails that permit both motorized and non-motorized trail users.

Motorized Trails: Trails that permit snowmobiles and/or ATVs and/or off-road motorcycles.

MTB: An abbreviation for mountain bikes or mountain biking.

Multiple Use or Multi-Use Trails: Same definition as shared use trails.

Non-Motorized Trails: Trails that do not permit snowmobiles, ATVs or off-road motorcycles. Permitted non-motorized trail activities generally include hiking, walking, running, cycling, mountain biking, horseback riding, cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

National Trails Coalition: A national not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to unite all of the diverse trails organizations in Canada.

NHTC: An abbreviation for the National Hiking Trail of Canada / *Sentier National*, a hiking trail from coast to coast in Canada that is promoted by Hike Canada en marche.

NTC: An abbreviation for the National Trails Coalition.

OHV: An abbreviation for an off highway vehicle. Any motorized mode of transportation built for cross-country travel on land, water, snow, ice or marsh or swamp land or on other natural terrain.

ORM: An abbreviation for an off-road motorcycle.

Puncheon (Bog Bridge): A log or timber structure built on the ground for the purpose of crossing a marshy or boggy area. Sometimes called a corduroy road or trail.

Quad: A common name for an all terrain vehicle.

Recreational Trails: Trails whose uses are restricted to recreational purposes.

Rural Trails: For the purpose of this study we have defined rural trails as those trails that are located in regions with low population density that are outside of urban and suburban regions.

Shared Use Trails: Trails that permit more than one type of trail user either at the same time or during different seasons. For example, a trail that is exclusive for snowmobile use in the winter months but permits other uses in the summer months is considered a shared use trail.

Single Use or Single Track Trails: Trails that are designed for use by a single trail user group. Examples are hiking trails, cross country ski trails, mountain biking trails, snowmobile trails and off-road motorcycle trails.

Sled: A commonly used term for a snowmobile.

SNO: An abbreviation for the words “snowmobile” or “snowmobiling”.

TCT: An abbreviation for the Trans Canada Trail, a national registered charity whose purpose is to promote the completion and use of the Trans Canada Trail, a shared use trail that will run 22,000 kilometres from coast to coast to coast.

TCST: An abbreviation for the Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail, a snowmobile trail from coast to coast to coast that is promoted by the CCSO.

Trail: The standard definition for a trail is "a path or track roughly blazed through wild or hilly country". However, today trails are much more than that. A trail can be as simple as a narrow footpath or as complex as a paved 3 metre-wide shared use trail.

Trail Corridor: The full dimensions of a trail, including designated land on both sides of the treadway. The dimensions are cubic rather than linear because a trail corridor also includes sufficient space overhead to accommodate riders on horseback.

Trailhead: An access point to a trail. It is often accompanied by public facilities including signs, maps, parking for vehicles, staging areas for horses, ATVs or snowmobiles, toilets and water.

Trail User: Anyone who participates in an activity on a trail.

Trail User Group: A group of trail users who join an organization that is dedicated to pursuing their preferred activity on trails. Examples are: snowmobile clubs, ATV and ORM clubs, cross country ski clubs, hiking clubs, cycling clubs, mountain biking clubs and canoe/kayak clubs.

Treadway: The trail surface upon which users travel. Often the materials used to form the treadway are pavement, crusher dust or class A gravel. Most hiking trails have a natural treadway. Cross country ski and snowmobile trails have a snow cover on top of the treadway.

Unauthorized Trails: Trails that have been developed without an agreement with the landowner for the use of the land where the trail is located. Users of unauthorized trails may be subject to trespass legislation.

Urban Trails: For the purpose of this study we have defined urban trails as those trails that are located in regions with high population density such as major cities. Suburban regions have been included in this definition. All paved trails have been defined as urban trails.

Appendix B

National Trails Coalition - Regional Advisory Committee Members

Province / Territory	Name	Organization
British Columbia	Roger Frost	British Columbia Snowmobile Federation
	Les Auston	
	James Brown	Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia
	Rose Schroeder	
	Terry Wardrop	Quad Riders Association of British Columbia
	Peter Sprague	British Columbia Off Road Motorcycle Association
	* John Hawkings	(ex-officio) MTCA, BC Government
	* Terje Vold	NTC Regional Coordinator for BC
Alberta	Chris Brookes	Alberta Snowmobile Association
	Darryl Copithorne	
	* Linda Strong-Watson	Alberta TrailNet Society
	Cory Kulczycki	
	Brent Hodgson	Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association
	Bob Smith	
	Fred Wilton	(ex-officio) Alberta Tourism Parks & Recreation
Jeff Gruttz	NTC Regional Coordinator for Alberta	
Saskatchewan	* Chris Brewer	Saskatchewan Snowmobile Assoc.
	Barry Bradshaw	
	Dorothy Rhead	Saskatchewan Trails Association
	Ed Spratt	(deceased)
	Gary Pare	Saskatchewan ATV Association Inc.
	Kevin Pare	
	Pat Rediger	NTC Regional Coordinator for Saskatchewan
Manitoba	Ernie Smelski	Snoman (Snowmobilers of Manitoba) Inc.
	Linda Morin	Manitoba Recreational Trails Association
	Chris Fox-Decent	All Terrain Vehicle Association of Manitoba
	Lynn Lafleche	NTC Regional Coordinator for Manitoba
Ontario	Bruce Robinson	Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
	Ron Purchase	
	* Jack de Wit	Ontario Trails Council
	Patrick Connor	
	Bruce Murphy	Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
	Ken Hoeverman	Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
	Rick Antaya	NTC Regional Coordinator for Ontario

Note: * indicates RAC Chair

Province / Territory	Name	Organization						
Quebec	*	Normand Besner Daniel Pouplot Louis Carpentier Danny Gagnon Benoit Gilles Depont Jean Duchaine Denis Sylvestre	Fédération des Clubs de Motoneigistes du Québec Conseil québécois du loisir Fédération Québécoise des Clubs Quads Fédération Québécoise des Motos Hors Route NTC Regional Coordinator for Québec (motorized) NTC Regional Coordinator Québec (non-motorized)					
	New Brunswick	*	Ross Antworth Leon Bourque Brian Clark Poul Jorgensen Daniel Boucher Jacques Poirier Kirk MacDonald Ron Akerley Jamie Kelly	New Brunswick Federation of Snowmobile Clubs New Brunswick Trails Council Inc. New Brunswick ATV Federation (ex-officio) NB Dept. of Natural Resources (ex-officio) NB Dept. of Natural Resources NTC Regional Coordinator for New Brunswick				
		Prince Edward Island	*	Dale Hickox Murray MacPherson Brendon McGinn Tom Connor Rodney Croken Lynn Ferguson Shane Arbing Roger Mailman	Prince Edward Island Snowmobile Association Prince Edward Island Trails Inc. Prince Edward Island ATV Federation Inc. (ex-officio) PEI Government NTC Regional Coordinator NS & PEI			
			Nova Scotia	*	John Cameron Steve McLelan Avery Bain Keith Ayling Wayne Rock Chris Thompson Steve Vines Roger Mailman	Snowmobile Association of Nova Scotia Nova Scotia Trails Federation All Terrain Vehicle Association of Nova Scotia Nova Scotia Off-Road Riders Association (ex-officio) Health Promotion & Protection, NS Gov't NTC Regional Coordinator NS & PEI		
				Newfoundland & Labrador		Bruce Nicholl Clarence Sweetapple Leon Organ Rick Noseworthy Victor (Junior) Howlett Terry Morrison	Newfoundland & Labrador Snowmobile Federation Newfoundland T'Railway Council Avalon Railway Corporation NTC Regional Coordinator for Newfoundland	
					Yukon Territory		Mark Daniels Jim Connor Alex Brook Jane Koepke Afan Jones	Klondike Snowmobile Association Klondike Active Transport & Trails Society City of Whitehorse (ex-officio) Yukon Territorial Government
Northwest Territories							Geoff Ray Mike Mitchell Doug Ritchie Theresa Ross	NWT Recreation & Parks Association

Appendix C

List of Rail Trails in Canada

Ontario

- [Beaver River Wetland Trail](#)
- [Caledon Trailway](#)
- [Cambridge-Paris Rail Trail](#)
- [Catarauqui Trail](#)
- [Chrysler Canada Greenway](#)
- Elgin Trail
- [Elora - Cataract Trailway](#)
- [Georgian Trail](#)
- [Goderich - Auburn Rail Trail](#)
- Gordon Glaves Memorial Pathway
- [Grand Trunk Trail - St. Mary's](#)
- Grey County CP Rail Trail
- [Hamilton-Brantford Rail Trail](#)
- Howard Watson Trail
- [Iron Horse Trail, Ontario](#)
- [K&P Rail Trail](#)
- Kay Gardiner Beltline Park
- Lynn Valley Trail
- New York Central Recreational Trail
- [Niagara River Trail](#)
- [North Simcoe Rail Trail](#)
- Merritt Trail
- [Midland Rotary Waterfront Trail](#)
- [Oro-Medonte Rail Trail & Barrie North Shore Trail](#)
- Saugeen Trail
- [S.C. Johnson Trail](#)
- Seguin Trail
- [Tay Shore Trail](#)
- Thames Valley Trail
- Thornton-Cookstown Trail
- [Uhthoff & Lightfoot Trails](#)
- Upper Canada Heritage Trail
- [Victoria & Haliburton Trails](#)
- Wainfleet Rail Trail
- Waterfront Trail
- [West Toronto RailPath](#)

Quebec

- [Cycloparc PPJ](#)
- La Vagabonde
- [Montréal-Montérégia](#)
- [L'Estriade](#)
- [Sentier Massawippi](#)
- [La Cantonière](#)
- [Parc linéaire des Bois-Francs](#)
- [Parc linéaire de la MRC de Lotbinière](#)
- [Parc linéaire Le Grand Tronc](#)
- [Ligne du Mocassin](#)
- [Parc linéaire de la rivière Saint-Charles](#)
- [Parc linéaire Rouyn-Noranda-Taschereau](#)
- [Parc Linéaire Le P'tit Train du Nord](#)
- [Parc linéaire des Basse-Laurentides](#)
- [La Campagnarde](#)
- [Corridor des Cheminots](#)
- [Piste Jacques-Cartier/Portneuf](#)
- [Parc linéaire interprovincial Petit-Témis](#)
- [Parc linéaire de la Vallée de la Gatineau](#)
- [Route des Champs](#)
- [Sentier Nature Tomifobia](#)
- [Corridor Aérobie](#)
- [Corridors Verts d'Asbestos](#)

New Brunswick

- Gibson Trail
- [Lincoln Trail](#)
- [Nashwaak Trail](#)
- Northside Trail
- Petit Temis Interprovincial Linear Park
- Sackville to Port Elgin Trail
- Upper St. John River Valley Trail

Prince Edward Island

- [Confederation Trail](#)

Canadian Rail Trails cont'd.

Nova Scotia

- [Adventure Trail](#)
- [Albion Trail](#)
- Annapolis County Trail
- Aspotogan Trail
- [Atlantic View Trail](#)
- [Barrington Bay Trail](#)
- [Bay to Bay Trail](#)
- Bear River to Sissiboo Trail
- [Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea Trail](#)
- Blueberry Run Trail
- [Bridgewater Centennial Trail](#)
- [Bull Run Trail](#)
- Butter Trail
- Ceilidh Coastal Trail
- Chain of Lakes Trail
- Chester Connector Trail
- [Cobequid Trail \(Truro\)](#)
- [Cobequid Trail \(Bible Hill\)](#)
- Cornwallis River Pathway
- Cumberland County Trail
- [Dynamite Trail](#)
- East Richmond Rail Trail
- [Guysborough Nature Trail](#)
- [Jitney Trail](#)
- [Jordan Falls Community Trail](#)
- Judique Flyer Recreational Trail
- [Kentville Rail Trail](#)
- King's County Rail Trail
- [LaHave River Trail](#)
- [Lunenburg Back Harbour Trail](#)
- [Lunenburg Front Harbour Walk](#)
- [Musquodoboit Trailway](#)
- Queen's County Rail Trail
- [Sable River Community Trail](#)
- [Salt Marsh Trail & Shearwater Flyer Trail](#)
- [Sentier de Clare Trail](#)
- [Shelburne Rail Trail](#)
- Ship Railway
- St. Margaret's Bay Rail Trail
- St. Mary's Trail
- [St. Peter's Coastal Trail](#)
- [Trestle Trail](#)
- Yarmouth County Trail

British Columbia

- [Columbia & Western Rail Trail](#)
- [Cowichan Valley Rail Trail](#)
- [Galloping Goose Regional Trail](#)
- [Great Northern Rail Trail](#)
- [Interurban Rail Trail \(Saanich\)](#)
- [Kettle Valley Rail Trail](#)
- [Lochside Regional Trail](#)
- [Slocan Valley Rail-Trail](#)

Alberta

- [Iron Horse Trail](#)
- Athabaska Landing Trail

Saskatchewan

- Big River to Shellbrook Rail Trail
- Prinz to Paradise Hills Rail Trail
- Regina Beach to Lumsden Beach Trail
- Rocanville to Esterhazy Trail
- [Sky Trail \(Outlook\)](#)
- St. Walberg Trail

Manitoba

- [Harte Trail](#)
- [Headingly Grand Trunk Trail](#)
- [Northeast Pioneers Greenway](#)
- [Prime Meridian Trail](#)
- [Rosburn Subdivision Trail](#)

Newfoundland

- [Newfoundland T'Railway](#)

Officers & Directors - National Trails Coalition

Bob Ramsay

President

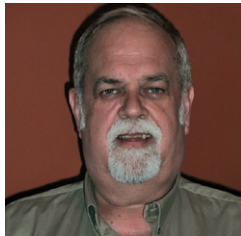


Bob is President and Chief Staff Officer for MMIC and COHV. He is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario. He has served as an assistant to a Member of Parliament and a federal Cabinet Minister.

Bob presently serves as the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE), the national professional society of not-for-profit executives. Previously he served on the Executive Committee of CSAE's Trillium Chapter for seven years, and as the Chapter President in 1998.

Kevin Sweetland

Vice President



Kevin is the volunteer President of the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations and Vice President of the International Snowmobile Council.

He has been snowmobiling for over 40 years. He has been President of his local club and President of the Newfoundland & Labrador Snowmobile Federation.

Curt Schroeder

Secretary-Treasurer
Chair of Audit Committee



Curt Schroeder is a faculty member of the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology in Regina, with an interest in applied research in trails and sustainability education. In addition to serving on the National Trails Coalition board he currently volunteers as chair of the Great Plains Trans Canada Trail Association in Regina, is Past-President of the Saskatchewan Trails Association and is a Director (Secretary) of the Canadian Trails Federation.

His interest in trails includes dog sledding, hiking, cycling, horseback-riding, cross-country skiing and canoeing and encouraging others to do the same.

Jo-Anne Farquhar

Director
Chair of Communications
Committee



Jo-Anne is the Director of Communications and Public Affairs for the Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council (MMIC) and the Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV). In her career she has held several senior positions within the federal and Ontario Provincial governments and as a Public Relations consultant in the private sector.

She has been Chief of Staff to the Ontario Minister of Tourism & Recreation, Minister of Agriculture & Food and Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Jo-Anne represents the responsible interests of the not for profit associations member manufacturers, distributors, their dealerships and national and provincial on road and off-road rider federations across Canada.

Dennis Burns

Director

Dennis is currently the Executive Director of the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations.

Patrick Connor

Director



Patrick is a Professional Management Executive with 25 years experience in business, government and private human service sectors. He is currently Executive Director of the Ontario Trails Council and Vice-President of the Canadian Trails Federation. Patrick is a member of The Canadian Society of Association Executives, has an Honours BA in Economics and a Business Diploma from St. Lawrence College, Kingston.



NTC • CNS

NATIONAL TRAILS COALITION COALITION NATIONALE
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