

# **Report of the National Trail Leadership Roundtable**

**Banff, Alberta**

**Nov. 23-25, 2010**

**A report prepared by MASS LBP for Trans Canada Trail/Sentier  
Transcanadien, Parks Canada, and the delegates of Canada's  
first National Trail Leadership Roundtable.**

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## Introduction

In Banff, Alberta the mercury dropped below minus 30 degrees centigrade but the delegates were determined to attend. After all, the 50 delegates invited to participate in the first National Trail Leadership Roundtable, Nov. 23 to Nov. 25, 2010, represented dozens of Canada's leading trail associations and organizations. It was a group built for all-weather conditions.

Calgary's airport may have been struggling to keep up, but each of the delegates arrived on time ready to make the most of a rare meeting that in just forty-eight hours was designed to help identify common ground and set a new course for the trails movement in Canada.

The genesis of the meeting was simple: Throughout Canada, there are many organizations that develop, fund, maintain, and promote a variety of trails at the local, provincial and national level. Generally, these organizations are staffed by dedicated volunteers and channel whatever monies they have directly towards improving the trail system. There's no neat diagram to explain the work or relationship of these organizations, and their difference in size, longevity, purpose and capacity is vast. Some trail groups are new, while others have extensive experience in trail building and know more about funding mechanisms and working with different levels of government. Among organizations that exist to advocate on behalf of different users, genuine conflict exists as to how to accommodate a variety of activities on the same trail in some cases and which trails are reserved for which activities in others. User groups and trail managers, builders and operators don't fully understand each others needs, and necessary elements for trails, such as affordable insurance, access to properties for connectivity, community amenities and planning policies, are not always on everyone's agenda. The result is that in the eyes of many trail stakeholders, including users, builders, operators, and government funding partners, there is too little focus on collaboration, understanding, or reaching out and too much time spent looking inwards. When this happens, resources get wasted and the trails movement suffers, failing to attract broader public interest or investment.

Trail leaders recognize that the trails sector is comprised of an overwhelming number of stakeholders with different needs and goals. The National Trail Leadership Roundtable was designed to see if there was support for improving collaboration across the sector, so that leaders of a variety of organizations can clarify their roles and responsibilities as positive contributors to trails at the national level. Funded by the Trans Canada Trail Foundation and Parks Canada with the intention of promoting greater cohesiveness among trails organizations,

the Roundtable provided a space for trail leaders to meet and talk candidly about their shared interests and concerns.

The results of the Roundtable, detailed below, are guidelines for developing this new cooperative framework. Delegates identified shared values, created visions for trail collaboration, prioritized issues for action under nine themes, and brainstormed opportunities for solving these challenges together. But it was the final session that presented delegates with a real opportunity for compromise and union. This session allowed each delegate to propose an area for agreement from the rest of the group. On issues that did not garner agreement, delegates decided to list them as needing more time to resolve. Presented in the final section of this report, these lists review topics that will require focus from the entire trails community over the next few years.

Delegates also agreed on some immediate next steps. Seventeen trail leaders volunteered to serve on a Working Group to review this report during a teleconference in early January. These volunteers represent small and large trail organizations, some catering to a variety of motorized and non-motorized activities, and are geographically diverse. For some members of the Working Group, this is their first experience of working to organize at the national level. Their main task will be to investigate options for the form or mechanism of collaboration. Delegates agreed on the urgency of collaboration, and hope to establish a forum for planning collaborative initiatives early in the New Year.

### **About this report**

MASS LBP, an independent company that designed and led the Roundtable process, prepared this report. We have tried to capture the nature and outcomes of the delegates' conversations in a manner that closely follows their experience of the process. Before publication, each delegate reviewed this report. Their feedback was instrumental in helping us present an accurate depiction of the Roundtable's events.

### **The case for conversation**

Around the world, recreational and transportation trails are recognized as important assets that support healthy living, tourism, and provide myriad economic benefits. Countries such as the United States, Australia and Ireland have developed strategies and policies for trail development that bring together a variety of stakeholders and strengthen the trails sector across state lines. For example, Ireland has a national strategy, while the US has mechanisms to bring state trail

leaders together for greater trails coordination and advocacy while respecting state autonomy. Canada, in contrast, has not been as well coordinated in its approach. Some provinces have created or are engaged in creating strategic plans for trails, while others are not. The level of government support, coordination and policy leadership also varies. This means government stakeholders struggle to address multiple requests for support, which makes funding for trails difficult to secure and sustain. As well, users who take part in different trail activities have little access to education and resources to understand and resolve conflict, and trail leaders exhaust themselves trying to solve obstacles to building and operating trails in isolation from others in their sector.

Resolving these issues requires collaboration and planning. Trail stakeholders across the country recognize this, and are interested in exploring and creating new opportunities for coordinated approaches. But they also know that jumping into a strategic planning exercise or setting up a new national organization without the support of the many stakeholders and groups in the trails community would be shortsighted. This is how the Roundtable came to fruition - trail leaders wanted to create a strong mandate for collaboration before tackling the thornier issues of organizational structures or strategic planning.

The Roundtable engaged trail leaders in a process that helped identify and better align a wide range of often shared values and priorities. The goals were twofold - to promote a more cohesive trails community in Canada and to find opportunities for greater collaboration. Seated at small tables with seven or eight other colleagues, delegates progressed through sequential, focused conversations that built mutual respect and understanding. On the first day, delegates began with discovering shared values, moved to mapping out common challenges, then brainstormed the ways in which greater national cohesion could help. On the second day, delegates looked candidly at the trail community's ability and readiness to collaborate. They found many areas where they agree, and outlined issues that needed further clarification or study. Finally, they affirmed their dedication to a collaborative approach and mutual respect.

## **Planning and research: Getting to the Roundtable**

This report is the final step in a six-month project to promote a more cohesive trails community in Canada. Initiated by Trans Canada Trail (TCT) and supported by Parks Canada, the National Trail Leadership Roundtable built on the successes of previous local, provincial, and national efforts to increase trail stakeholder cooperation. It marked the first time trail leaders gathered

from across the country with the goals of identifying areas for greater collaboration and adopting a more united voice.

In June 2010, TCT struck a Planning Committee, comprised of ten trail leaders from across Canada, to ensure that the Roundtable process reflected the needs of the wide variety of trail stakeholders. Members provided input to the organization of the Roundtable, and advised the support staff provided by TCT and Parks Canada. A list of the Planning Committee members appears in the Appendix.

Next, TCT commissioned two research papers to establish a common base of information and a framework for discussion. The first paper, “Collaborative planning for trails: Assessing the development of trail strategies in Canada and abroad,” looked at how other jurisdictions have developed and run strategic planning processes as methods of encouraging collaboration and resolving both user conflict and misunderstanding among trail leaders. It set out lessons for participants to consider when drawing together the trails community at a national level, such as the importance of soliciting feedback from all stakeholders, including users not involved in formal trail organizations, and the necessity of engaging government participation in and support of collaborative initiatives. The second paper, “Canada’s Trail Community: Perspectives on collaboration,” is based on interviews with thirteen trail leaders across the country, representing trail builders, managers, operators, and user groups as well as government stakeholders. In these interviews, trail leaders identified common experiences and challenges they face, such as the lack of sustainable funding, and discussed the ways in which collaboration on a national scale could help resolve some of these issues. These papers were circulated to participants in advance of the Roundtable.

Finally, invitations were sent to over fifty trail leaders from local, provincial, and national organizations involved in trails. Among the invitees were user organizations representing a diversity of water, motorized and non-motorized trail activities, representatives from some provincial and municipal governments, trail builders, operators, and managers, and those involved in national and provincial-level trail administration, organization and advocacy. The Planning Committee carefully considered geographical location, user group representation, purpose and size of organization, and level of operation (local, provincial, or national) in the invitation process, aiming to invite a broad range of stakeholders, including those not previously connected to large-scale organizing. Each delegate came to the Roundtable with the authority to make contributions on behalf of their organization. Capped at fifty participants due to resource constraints, the delegates recognized that the Roundtable would not be fully representative of

the trails community, and committed to widening the conversation to the broader trails community and the general public with the release of this report. The list of delegates appears in the Appendix.

### **Process and outcomes: Building greater cohesion**

The Roundtable began with an evening Welcome and Official Opening. Jim Bishop, Chair, Board of Directors, Trans Canada Trail and Ed Jager, Director of Visitor Experience, Parks Canada welcomed delegates and explained their role as observers of the process. Guest speakers Kevin Van Tighem, Field Unit Superintendent, Banff National Park and Councillor Stavros Karlos, Acting Mayor of Banff, gave a note of welcome on behalf of the park and the municipality.

The first full day of the Roundtable opened with official introductions during which trail leaders shared their favourite trail story. Peter MacLeod and Joslyn Trowbridge, Roundtable Leaders, explained the goals and background of the Roundtable and reviewed the findings from the research papers. Returning to small groups, delegates began the first of a series of facilitated activities designed to promote greater awareness and understanding amongst attendees.

*Activity 1* asked participants to identify the values that guide their organizations and share instances where these values were either a source of pride or conflict. Each table then found the values they had in common and that could act as a uniting force in the trails sector. In plenary, participants clustered similar values together to get the following “values map”:

**Diagram 1: Values Map**



This map shows the values loosely grouped according to theme. The size of the circle indicates the frequency with which the value was cited by one of the five delegate tables. The values most common to trail organizations were: working in a collaborative manner, showing respect for the many stakeholders involved in trails, committing to making trails accessible, maximizing the passion of the trails community, raising the profile or stature of trails in the eyes of the public and policy-makers, and working with communities that are close to trails to ensure that trails are socially, environmentally, culturally, and economically sustainable. Some values related to how delegates felt about the trails themselves – that they are integral to our heritage, health, and natural environment - and some values related to how delegates hoped to ensure that trails stay this way, through education, safety promotion, sharing, good planning, and stewardship. Delegates felt confident that these shared values were a strong basis for moving forward with collaboration.

*Activity 2* used the seven challenges from the second research paper, identified through interviews with thirteen trail leaders, as a basis for mapping the shared challenges of the trails community. These challenges were:

1. User group conflict and user experience of the trails
2. Fragmentation of trail organizations
3. Funding
4. Marketing and promotion
5. Trail building and maintenance
6. Government involvement
7. Risk management

Delegates discussed how each of these challenges affected a) their organizations and b) the strength of the trails movement. Two additional common challenges were added to the discussion:

8. Education and engagement
9. Land use, access and management

A tenth challenge, Environmental stewardship and wildlife protection, was also identified by many delegates, but due to time constraints was not discussed in detail. It remained on the list of priorities.

After lunch, delegates chose one issue from the list of nine that they cared strongly about and worked with others to compare the results of *Activity 2* across each table. The goal for *Activity 3* was to distill the top three local and top three national challenges that they agreed should be priorities for trail leaders. Delegates remained with their chosen issue for *Activity 4*, where they brainstormed the ways in which greater collaboration could help address each local and national priority. Table 1 presents the results of *Activities 3* and *4*. It is important to note that the top local and national challenges are not arranged priority sequence, and that many delegates felt some or all of the challenges they discussed were both national and local.

**Table 1: Shared challenges and potential solutions**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Top Local and National Challenges</b>	<b>Collaborative opportunities</b>
<b>User group conflict and user experience of the trails</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack (real or perceived) of opportunities</li> <li>- Lack of a framework to resolve user conflict</li> <li>- Understanding of asymmetrical conflict</li> <li>- Managing user expectations and behaviour</li> <li>- Unaffiliated users</li> <li>- Ethos of unlimited access/rights vs. privileges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholders in trail planning</li> <li>- Face-to-face forums</li> <li>- Set of guiding principles</li> <li>- National forum</li> <li>- Cross-user training, sharing experiences</li> <li>- Sharing best management practices</li> <li>- Developing a shared code of ethics</li> <li>- Putting a monetary value on access</li> <li>- How to get more users involved in a local organization that is connected to larger-scale organizing</li> </ul>
<b>Fragmentation of the trails sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual volunteers and volunteer groups need mechanisms for inclusion</li> <li>- More information sharing / formal and informal</li> <li>- Need to understand the needs of different trail groups/stakeholders</li> <li>- Make decision-making more transparent</li> <li>- Central hub for communication</li> <li>- Need to celebrate each others' successes</li> <li>- Unified voice to government</li> <li>- Mechanisms for decision-making – a way to solve problems amongst ourselves (so that we can present a unified voice to government).</li> <li>- National voice</li> <li>- Greater recognition of trails</li> <li>- Lack of organization and alignment</li> <li>- Lack of sustainable funding – need strategic approaches</li> <li>- Lack of cohesive messaging and recognition</li> <li>- Lack of trust</li> <li>- Need more inter group communication</li> <li>- Need agreement on equitable representation of groups given differences in size, capacity, experience</li> <li>- Need common standards</li> <li>- “Turf protection”</li> <li>- Lack of collective information and expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research models for organization</li> <li>- Establish ongoing dialogue/forums between stakeholders (face-to-face)</li> <li>- Dedicate the time and space to set goals, timelines and get agreement on the rationale</li> <li>- Implement a broad communication plan to promote/inform a wide audience</li> </ul>

<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inconsistent recognition of economic benefits of trails</li> <li>- Focused on needs of funders not users or trail managers/operators</li> <li>- Lack of private sector support</li> <li>- Need equitable opportunities for funding that doesn't penalize smaller organizations through "matching" formulas</li> <li>- No funding for administrative support, maintenance, enforcement, user education, training, bringing people to same table</li> <li>- Lack of long-term sustainable funding</li> <li>- Lack of expertise in grant-writing</li> <li>- Need to explain why someone should fund trails, learn where to go for money, where to spend the money</li> <li>- Lack of unified government approach to funding trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help explain projects to each specific funder</li> <li>- Events for exposure to community</li> <li>- Develop a model for funding</li> <li>- Advocate for federal funds</li> <li>- Develop a national protocol for provincial organizations</li> <li>- Find sources outside user pay</li> <li>- Advocate for private sector support</li> <li>- Speak to government in a more coordinated and unified voice</li> <li>- Request government to respond in a more coordinated way</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing and promotion</b>	<p>Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On highways to promote trails</li> <li>- Government regulations differ between provinces</li> <li>- Way finding on trails</li> </ul> <p>Responsible Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finish the product before you market</li> <li>- Ensure expectations can be met</li> <li>- Advertising agencies and companies need to be responsible</li> </ul> <p>Disconnect from community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We promote to bring the tourism in but don't promote at home</li> </ul> <p>Inventory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We need to know and map / gather info</li> <li>- Promote these tools</li> </ul> <p>Integrated Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online</li> <li>- Offline</li> <li>- Knowing the market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large or provincial association could take a leadership role</li> <li>- Combining resources and best practices</li> <li>- Be accurate and honest about the trail</li> <li>- Classification of trails</li> <li>- Communicating with the trail operator about maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>Trail building and maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No access to best practices</li> <li>- Recognize the high cost of maintenance</li> <li>- Poor trail design</li> <li>- Difficulty retaining volunteers</li> <li>- No training programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need training programs</li> <li>- Communicate best practices</li> <li>- Hold symposium of networked collaborative process to identify best</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need trails to be safe and affordable for the long-term</li> <li>- Need maintenance to be recognized as part of building during planning process</li> <li>- Hard to engage or attract landowners in trails</li> <li>- Need ability to connect trail systems</li> <li>- Maintenance is linked to insurance, liability and risk management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>practices</li> <li>- Professional standards and training</li> <li>- Promote a trail-building culture to encourage volunteers</li> <li>- More volunteer recognition, more volunteer leadership</li> <li>- Advocate for the recognition of maintenance as key to trails (deserves funding)</li> </ul>
<b>Government involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of government policy framework and guidelines</li> <li>- No lead agency</li> <li>- Lack of coordination and clarity between different levels of government and departments – silos</li> <li>- Lack of buy-in and lack of recognition of values/education</li> <li>- Complex application and approval process – pressure for timing</li> <li>- Funding – not sustainable – trickle down from others</li> <li>- “Trails are a political issue”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify to government what the key issues are in relation to the trails community</li> <li>- Identify which policies, legislation and other support are required to deal with these issues</li> <li>- Provide collective overwhelming evidence of gaps, needs and benefits to government and their constituents</li> <li>- Commitment to working with government, share our expertise, collaborative dialogue, outreach with broader communities and diverse groups of stakeholders</li> <li>- “Make the case for trails”</li> <li>- Leverage existing contacts and relationships</li> <li>- Keep the conversation focused</li> <li>- Long term vision that addresses not just the needs of today but those of the future</li> <li>- Develop a multi-tiered approach</li> <li>- Bring a volunteer network to assist with provincial and national delivery of programs</li> <li>- One voice and many voices</li> </ul>
<b>Risk management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Perception of RM as too complex</li> <li>- Lack of resources and inconsistent approaches</li> <li>- Lack of management plans</li> <li>- No qualified assessors</li> <li>- High cost of insurance, spread unevenly across groups</li> <li>- Lack of perceived risk on the part</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to share resources and information about successes and downfalls with RM</li> <li>- Need to share best practices in planning</li> <li>- Provincial umbrella organizations could have</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of users</li> <li>- Lack of understanding of occupiers liability act for landowners and adjacent landowners</li> <li>- Lack of government involvement in “umbrella” insurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a role as regional coordinators</li> </ul>
<b>Education and engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult to engage and educate users unaffiliated with trail group</li> <li>- How to do cross-user training</li> <li>- Engaging and educating youth in ways that appeal to them</li> <li>- How to combine current trail-building educational initiatives with programs (for example) at the college level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help develop college or university training programs</li> <li>- Use partnerships to implement them</li> <li>- Talk to each other to find different ways to engage with youth and a diversity of users</li> <li>- Investigate online options</li> <li>- Municipal and provincial associations and parks could combine resources and best practice</li> <li>- Understand user demographics and interests ie. Youth, changing public behaviours, new technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Land use, access and management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical barriers (railway, highway, pipelines, waterways) hamper trail continuity</li> <li>- Dealing with competing land uses and ownership</li> <li>- Land use planning must recognize trails</li> <li>- First Nations involvement in public land use decisions requires meaningful consultation and early engagement, relationship-building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to create and improve incentives for private landowners to allow trail access or donate/sell land</li> <li>- Need to share expertise among trail stakeholders</li> <li>- Need a cultural shift to recognize trails as infrastructure</li> <li>- Need to educate one another about the regulations</li> <li>- Need to come to mutual understanding on conservancy</li> </ul>

This table can be interpreted as a preliminary guide to strengthening the trails sector in Canada. A time crunch during this activity meant that delegates did not thoroughly describe the collaborative opportunities that present potential solutions. Nonetheless, it is important to see this table as more than a list of common stumbling blocks. It represents agreed-upon priorities for a variety of stakeholders, and a clear consensus that individual organizational attempts at resolution would be less effective than a united approach.

By the end of the day, delegates had stated strong support for future collaboration. This foundation included a map of shared values, a thorough exploration of common challenges, a prioritization of which obstacles to tackle first, and an agreement that a collaborative approach is the best way forward. As an initial exploration of this approach, delegates agreed to:

- Share information and learn from one another
- Speak with a clear voice
- Work towards common goals
- Champion an inclusive and positive trail culture
- Raise the profile so more Canadians appreciate trails
- Be more strategic about resources: volunteers, funding and land assets

To close the day, delegates were invited to a dinner hosted by TCT and Parks Canada where they learned about the trails in Banff National Park from Ann Morrow, External Relations Manager with Parks Canada – Banff.

The final day of the Roundtable provided delegates with the opportunity to take stock of the readiness and ability of the trails community to collaborate. In small groups, delegates began with *Activity 5*, which asked each group to discuss two difficult questions: How do we strike the right balance between local autonomy and shared purpose? What are the advantages and disadvantages of greater collaboration? Delegates felt strongly that the local autonomy of trail organizations should in no way be subsumed by a collective project. Instead, they noted the need for compromise from all involved, and recognition that there are different pathways to reaching a common goal. One table identified that “collaboration is not losing autonomy, but gaining responsibility.” Similarly, another table felt that in a collaborative approach, you “need to feel like you’re sharing something instead of giving something away.” The advantages to collaboration were numerous, and delegates quickly drew up a long list that included shared knowledge and resources, the ability to leverage their collective strength in policy-making, and making a stronger “case” for trails. Delegates considered the disadvantages to collaboration carefully. Some groups worried about whether smaller, less resourced organizations would “hold collaboration back,” and talked about what an equitable representation of organizations in collaborative projects could be, given the size, strength, and resource differences among them. Some delegates noted that collaboration presents smaller organizations with the opportunity to build capacity and learn from partnerships. Others acknowledged that change is difficult, requiring tough conversations that take up the time and energy of volunteers and leaders who are already operating at maximum capacity. These issues warrant continuous reflection during any cooperative project.

The next activity gave delegates an opportunity to sketch out their hopes for trails in Canada and national trail collaboration, keeping in mind their values map from the previous day. Remaining in small groups, delegates were asked to complete the following sentences: Our vision is one where...As trail leaders we will work to...By doing... The results, detailed in the table below, accounted for a variety of important values. Some delegates had interpreted the task as creating a vision statement for the trails themselves, while others were focused on identifying a mechanism through which collaboration could begin to take shape. Regardless, the results did not emerge as mutually exclusive or incompatible with one another.

**Table 2: Hopes for trails and trail collaboration**

<p><b>Group 1</b></p> <p><b>Our vision is one where...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All trail users respect other trail users</li> <li>- Trails are safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly</li> <li>- Trails are valued culturally, economically and socially</li> <li>- Trails are recognized as contributing to healthy/active lifestyles</li> </ul> <p><b>As trail leaders we will work to...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educate</li> <li>- Speak with a strong voice for trails</li> <li>- Create a national trails geo database</li> <li>- Create a national trails network to link communities and include non-affiliated users and diverse cultures</li> <li>- Ensure continuous sources of funding</li> </ul> <p><b>By doing...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respecting land owners, users, heritage and culture</li> <li>- Resolving user group conflicts</li> <li>- Ensuring the quality of current and future trail experiences</li> <li>- Develop a strategy to share, such as a trails charter or large scale business plan</li> <li>- Building a professional trails community</li> <li>- Working with other organizations within the trails community</li> <li>- Securing trails corridors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Group 2</b></p> <p><b>Our vision is one where...</b>all trail user groups, recognizing diverse interests, will collaborate to achieve our common goals.</p> <p><b>As trail leaders we will work to...</b>make a personal commitment to this shared vision and work together in cooperation and trust. We will work towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resolving user group conflicts</li> <li>- Raising the profile of trails</li> <li>- Securing funding opportunities together</li> <li>- Removing barriers to access and fortifying the permanence of trails</li> </ul>

**By doing...**

- Increasing communication between trail leaders, their constituents, and all levels of government
- Sharing best practices and experiences
- Advocating for a vibrant trails community

**Group 3**

**Our vision is one where...**Canadian trails will be there for the enjoyment and well-being for all people by providing a lasting legacy / Trails are celebrated and highly valued by all Canadians.

**As trail leaders we will work to...**

- Present a more unified voice on trails and trail issues
- Develop an inclusive national level framework/process to engage all trail stakeholders, by which we will achieve our common goals and objectives

**By doing...**

- Obtain resources at the federal level
- Support positive relationships at the provincial and local level within the trails community
- Share best practices

**Group 4**

**Our vision is one where...**the Canadian trails community is strengthened by shared purpose and there is a forum for national collaboration.

**As trail leaders we will work to...**

- Honour the diversity within the trails community
- Share best practices
- Advocate for trails in a coordinated way
- "Leave no value behind"
- Build momentum and profile around trails
- Build respect between trail communities
- Ensure that Canada's trails are funded and sustainable
- Challenge ourselves to be innovative and seek out new opportunities
- Challenge ourselves to live up to our expectations

**By doing...**

- Engaging with Canadians
- Promoting the benefits of trails
- Ensuring there is a viable organizational structure to take the next steps
- Finding a dedicated government partner or a portfolio of partners
- Articulate a plan for our community, from level to level to level

**Group 5****Our vision is one where...**

- We create a cohesive trails environment that assists all organizations to meet their goals
- Trails are highly valued and celebrated by all Canadians
- Trails are equally worthy of funding

**As trail leaders we will work to...**

- Provide support to our regional and provincial trail managers so that they can provide a

<p>positive trail experience to the trail users of Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide leadership to all stakeholders and carry a positive message to user groups</li> </ul> <p><b>By doing...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating a transparent, open and inclusive process for working together</li> <li>- Working to obtain resources at the federal level to support trail development, operation, planning, communication, research and development</li> <li>- Explaining the value of what we do and what we are doing for Canadians</li> </ul>
<p><b>Group 6</b></p> <p><b>Our vision is one where...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We perpetuate, protect and promote Canadian trails in all their facets for their world renowned sustainable outdoor experiences</li> </ul> <p><b>As trail leaders we will work to...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support trails of all shapes and sizes to get people outside</li> <li>- Work in collaboration with the Canadian trails community</li> <li>- Promote sustainability and healthy lifestyles</li> <li>- Strengthen local entities</li> <li>- Foster participation</li> <li>- Encourage user awareness and respect</li> <li>- Communicate with all levels of government</li> </ul> <p><b>By doing...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engaging government, volunteers, member users and Canadians</li> <li>- Building trust among the trails community</li> <li>- Exercising our responsibility to educate</li> <li>- Developing and sharing trail resources</li> <li>- Empower and support local trail initiatives</li> </ul>

While there was enough alignment between the groups to create a common vision, delegates were concerned with the limited time left for conversation and did not want ‘wordsmithing’ to distract them from their goals. Over the lunch break, they decided to continue the conversation on finding common ground for the remainder of the afternoon. Delegates suggested a plenary where they could map areas of agreement and disagreement as a means of solidifying the issues, opportunities, and progress of the past two days. They wanted to ensure that they didn’t leave the Roundtable with an empty promise of future collaboration.

Coming together after lunch, they asked each other to clarify compromises, agreements, and commitments, ensuring that each issue garnered the support of the room. Issues where solutions had not yet been found were listed as unresolved, on the understanding that trail leaders would revisit them over the course of collaborative initiatives. The results are listed below. It is important to note that neither list represents a priority sequence of issues to address

or to move forward on. Instead, the results of this conversation can be used as guidelines for mapping out a structure or mechanism for national collaboration.

### **Areas of Agreement**

#### Collaboration:

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

#### Profile of Trails:

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

#### Funding and Resources:

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

#### Conduct:

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

#### Information and Knowledge-sharing:

- We need to do more to share best practices and information
- We agree that we need to better understand the trail organizational landscape (mapping stakeholders, needs and priorities)
- We agree that we need to do further research about the collective benefits of trails with a focus on health, well-being and prosperity (economic, social, environmental)

- We need to “make the case for trails”
- We agree that we need a ‘collection point’ for informational resources (e.g. a website)
- We need to communicate the knowledge we already have

#### Interacting with Government:

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

#### **Issues for further consideration**

##### Structure of Collaboration:

- We have not resolved the form of the organization/forum/coalition that would represent our interests / We have struck a Working Group to investigate this further
- We have not resolved what constitutes equitable representation of trail organizations in a collaborative approach
- We have not resolved the relationship between local, provincial and national membership
- We have not resolved whether we need a comprehensive architecture for trails organizations in Canada

##### Determining Priorities and Allocating Resources:

- We have not resolved what priorities and needs are / We know that this needs to be part of our research agenda
- We have not resolved how to allocate funding according to priority or need / We know that this needs to be part of our research agenda
- We have not resolved what sustainable funding would look like and how much we need

##### Other:

- We have not resolved issues of terminology / We agree that we need to develop a clear terminology regarding trails
- We have not resolved whether we need a user pay system or what it would look like

- We have not resolved whether we need a national classification system

Finally, *Activity 6* gave delegates the chance to reflect on their own role and organizational commitments to collaboration, and to think about ways to involve those not in the room.

Delegates were asked to answer three questions:

1. How do we each play a leadership role and foster greater collaboration?
2. How do we widen this conversation?
3. What are we asking of one another? What will we commit to doing next?

Sharing their individual commitments with the room, delegates identified some initial actions.

They will:

- Take the results of the Roundtable back to other provincial governments / Prime the conversation within provincial government on lead agency
- Take back to trail user associations, stakeholder groups, local trail groups / Share information and encourage feedback from these groups / Take report from this Roundtable back to board
- Engage other appropriate stakeholders and individuals
- Call on senior trails organizations to play a leadership role
- Conduct background research / Build collaborative research capacity / Develop a resource-sharing website
- Serve on a working group / Orchestrate working group logistics / Gather Provincial support for working group / Provide organizational resources for working group
- Distribution of Roundtable Report through our networks
- Be dedicated to a collaborative approach
- “No talking out of the side of my mouth”
- Create a central electronic space for activities and keep stakeholders in the loop

To ensure timely follow-up from the Roundtable, fifteen delegates volunteered to serve on a Working Group for January 2011. The Working Group will review this report and investigate options for a collaborative structure or mechanism. Central to their investigation will be to find ways to bring trail leaders, organizations, users and other stakeholders who were not represented at the Roundtable into the cross-country dialogue and planning. The Working Group members have committed to attending a teleconference in early-to-mid January, and all delegates expressed the hope that a forum for planning can be found soon after collaborative options are proposed. The Working Group members are:

- Pat Harrison – Hike Canada en Marche

- Jeremy McCall - Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia
- Lora Woolner – International Mountain Biking Association Canada
- Terry Norman - Nova Scotia Trails
- Christine Ross - Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association
- Poul Jorgensen - NB Trails Council
- Cal Rakach - Alberta Outdoors Coalition
- Dennis Burns – Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations
- Hap Wilson - Eskakwa/Eco TrailBuilders
- Carol Oitment - Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion
- Bob Smith - Motorcycle Confederation of Canada
- John Cushing – Canadian Trails Federation
- Beth Kümmling - Bruce Trail Conservancy
- Tim Hoskin – Trans Canada Trail
- Mike Mitchell - Northwest Territories Parks and Recreation
- Barbara Bishop – Nova Scotians Promoting Active-Transportation on Community Trails
- Linda Strong-Watson, Alberta TrailNet Society

## **Conclusion**

The first National Trail Leadership Roundtable marked a shift in the architecture of trail organizing and administration. Building on the success of previous joint efforts in strategic planning and fundraising, trail leaders affirmed the value of a collaborative approach, set out agreements and commitments, and identified potential hurdles for the future. Delegates expressed the need for urgent action on many issues and returned to their communities with renewed determination. The task for delegates now is to widen this conversation to engage their own constituencies as well as other trail stakeholders and users across the country.

## **Independent Recommendations**

MASS LBP was asked by delegates to suggest recommendations for moving forward. Our first recommendation was easy – that the Working Group commit to a teleconference in early January to review this report – and was quickly accepted. We have five additional recommendations.

### **Build momentum with early and immediate wins**

Roundtable delegates identified a substantial list of priorities where there is already clear agreement. We urge the Working Group to identify three to five of these priorities and set and

communicate deadlines for implementation. As ‘demonstration projects’ they will provide concrete evidence of the benefits of collaboration, and create a sense of momentum for more ambitious undertakings. We think it’s important the Trail Leaders focus on what they agree on, and push aside or defer disagreements until a stronger culture of collaboration and partnership takes root. A clear ‘early win’ stemming from Roundtable conversations would be to find an accessible and useable mechanism for sharing best practices and resources. For example, some delegates talked about building resource-hubs through independent academic programs related to the study of trails, such as the Trent Trail Studies Unit at Trent University.

### **Collaboration before structures**

As consultants, we’ve perceived a tendency amongst Trail Leaders to focus on structures before collaboration, and significantly, before outcomes. We appreciate the history and traditions of the trails movement in Canada, but worry that too much energy and too many resources are being directed towards all manner of committees, advisory groups, associations and organizations — and the politicking that often accompanies these structures. We urge the Working Group to put collaboration before structures — either existing or new — and focus on the shared goals articulated at the Roundtable. Work loosely, share power, insist on transparency and focus on those areas where consensus is possible. Let the organizational form fit the task, and grow organically in response to your goals.

### **Widen the conversation**

The Roundtable brought together many of the country’s most prominent trail leaders, but there are many more trail advocates, organizations, and public users who need to be consulted and engaged. We urge all delegates to organize special meetings, or dedicate a portion of an upcoming meeting in the regions to discuss the Roundtable, this report and the first update from the Working Group early in the new year. The Working Group may wish to propose a series of discussion questions for these meetings, and share the responses they receive.

### **A common channel for communication**

Clear communication for a geographically dispersed group is challenging. Without face-to-face meetings, trust is difficult to build and maintain. If the momentum generated by the Roundtable is to be sustained, then it’s important that Trail Leaders can keep in touch and up-to-date. We understand the time and financial barriers to in-person meetings, but we want to underscore their importance in successful collaboration. We also urge the Working Group to commit to creating a quarterly email update following their first meeting in January 2011. The Working Group should delegate this task to one or more of its members, and in turn ask all Roundtable

delegates to submit a list of Trail Leaders across the country who would be interested in receiving this update. In this early stage, we're skeptical of the need for new websites, or creating special annexes on existing websites. Certainly no one needs more passwords, nor is it likely that anyone really wants to participate in an online discussion forum. Instead, we think the Working Group should focus its energies on maintaining clear, consistent communication with interested trail leaders.

### **Create a joined-up strategy**

One clear theme of the Roundtable and the research conducted prior to the Banff meeting, was the value of creating a national vision and strategy for trail development and leadership. We believe that a year-long process that draws together trail leaders and users in communities across the country could help to foster a sense of common enterprise and direction. It is a 'next step' that would help solidify a more 'joined-up' approach to trail advocacy and investment, and bring Canada into line with other leading international jurisdictions.

## Appendix A – Planning Committee and Roundtable Participants

### Members of the Roundtable Planning Committee

- Tim Hoskin, National Trail Director, Trans Canada Trail – [www.tctrail.ca](http://www.tctrail.ca)
- Mark Schmidt, National Trails Analyst, Parks Canada – [www.pc.gc.ca](http://www.pc.gc.ca)
- John Cushing, President, Canadian Trails Federation – [www.ctf-fcs.ca](http://www.ctf-fcs.ca)
- Dennis Burns, Executive Director, Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations – [www.ccsso-ccom.ca](http://www.ccsso-ccom.ca)
- Lora Woolner, Executive Director, International Mountain Biking Association Canada – [www.imba.com/canada](http://www.imba.com/canada)
- Mike Mitchell, Trails Coordinator, Northwest Territories Parks and Recreation Association – [www.nwtrpa.org](http://www.nwtrpa.org)
- John Hawkings, Provincial Trails Manager, British Columbia Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts – [www.gov.bc.ca/tca](http://www.gov.bc.ca/tca)
- Andy Hennebury, Industry Development Officer, Newfoundland Department of Tourism, Culture & Recreation – [www.tcr.gov.nl.ca](http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca)
- Dan Andrews, Executive Director, Trans Canada Trail Ontario – [www.tctontario.ca](http://www.tctontario.ca)
- Poul Jorgensen, Executive Director, New Brunswick Trails Council – [www.sentiernbtrail.com](http://www.sentiernbtrail.com)

### Advisors and Support:

- Deborah Apps, President and CEO, Trans Canada Trail
- Ed Jager, Director, Visitor Experience, Parks Canada
- Jane Murphy, National Program Coordinator, Trans Canada Trail

### National Trail Leadership Roundtable Delegates

Mark Schmidt	National Trails Analyst	Parks Canada
John Hawkings	Provincial Trails Manager	BC Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts
Carol Oitment	Senior Policy Advisor and Lead for Trails	ON Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport
Andy Hennebury	Industry Development Officer	NL Dept of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
Fred Wilton	Provincial Trail Coordinator	AB Parks and Recreation
Patrick Harrison	President	Hike Canada en marche

Lora Woolner	Executive Director	International Mountain Bicycling Association-Canada
Wayne Daub		All-Terrain Quad Council of Canada
Priscilla Haskin	Alberta Director	Paddle Canada
Jack DeWit	Board of Directors	Equine Canada
Dennis Burns	Executive Director	Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations
Bob Connell	President	NSPACTS
James Cunningham	WP Rep	Cross Country Canada
Bob Smith	Director and Secretary/Treasurer	Motorcycle Confederation of Canada
John Cushing	President	Canadian Trails Federation
Tim Hoskin	National Director of Trail	Trans Canada Trail
Bob Ramsay	President	National Trails Coalition
Linda Strong-Watson	Executive Director	Alberta TrailNet
Pat Connor	Executive Director	Ontario Trails Council
Mike Mitchell	Trail Coordinator	Northwest Territories Parks and Recreation
Terry Morrison	Executive Director	Newfoundland T'Railway
Terry Norman	Past President	Nova Scotia Trails
Jeremy McCall	Executive Director	Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia
Jean Duchaine	General Manager	Fédération des clubs de motoneiges du Quebec
Ross Antworth	General Manager	New Brunswick Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
Paul Shaughnessy	Executive Director	Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
Christine Ross	Secretary- Board	Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association
Derek Radomski	President	Alberta Society of Off-Road Motorcycles
Danny Gagnon	President	Fédération Québécoise des Clubs Quads
Al Skucas	President	Trails BC

Poul Jorgensen	Executive Director	NB Trails Council
Jim Chapryk	Executive Director	Manitoba Recreational Trails Association
Cathy Watts	President	Sask Trails
Deb Ryan	President	Hike Nova Scotia
Doug Topp	President	Bow Valley Mountain Bike Alliance
Al Macpherson		Kawartha Lakes TCT Association
Phil McIntyre-Paul		Shuswap Trail Alliance
Beth Kümmling	Executive Director	Bruce Trail Conservancy
Hap Wilson		Eskakwa/Eco TrailBuilders
Bill Goulding		Professional Trail Builder Association
Dave Williamson		Cascade Environmental
Anne Morgan	Executive Director	Recreation and Parks Association Yukon
John Hawkins	Co-Chair Halifax Regional Trail Association	Halifax Regional Municipality
Cal Rakach	President	Alberta Outdoors Coalition
Sonia Vaillancourt	Director of Development	Conseil québécois du loisir
Gordon McKeever	Project Manager	Sea to Sky Trail
Gerald Beaton	Senior Policy Analyst, Sport, Recreation and Stewardship	SK Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
Michael Haynes	Director	Transactive Solutions
Adrian Tanner	Vice President	East Coast Trail

## Appendix B – Tables and Charts

Diagram 1: Values Map



**Table 1: Shared challenges and potential solutions**

Issue	Top Local and National Challenges	Collaborative opportunities
<p><b>User conflict and experience of the trails</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack (real or perceived) of opportunities</li> <li>- Lack of a framework to resolve user conflict</li> <li>- Understanding of asymmetrical conflict</li> <li>- Managing user expectations and behaviour</li> <li>- Unaffiliated users</li> <li>- Ethos of unlimited access/rights vs. privileges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholders in trail planning</li> <li>- Face-to-face forums</li> <li>- Set of guiding principles</li> <li>- National forum</li> <li>- Cross-user training, sharing experiences</li> <li>- Sharing best management practices</li> <li>- Developing a shared code of ethics</li> <li>- Putting a monetary value on access</li> <li>- How to get more users involved in a local organization that is connected to larger-scale organizing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fragmentation of the trails sector</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual volunteers and volunteer groups need mechanisms for inclusion</li> <li>- More information sharing / formal and informal</li> <li>- Need to understand the needs of different trail groups/stakeholders</li> <li>- Make decision-making more transparent</li> <li>- Central hub for communication</li> <li>- Need to celebrate each others' successes</li> <li>- Unified voice to government</li> <li>- Mechanisms for decision-making – a way to solve problems amongst ourselves (so that we can present a unified voice to government).</li> <li>- National voice</li> <li>- Greater recognition of trails</li> <li>- Lack of organization and alignment</li> <li>- Lack of sustainable funding – need strategic approaches</li> <li>- Lack of cohesive messaging and recognition</li> <li>- Lack of trust</li> <li>- Need more inter group communication</li> <li>- Need agreement on equitable representation of groups given differences in size, capacity, experience</li> <li>- Need common standards</li> <li>- “Turf protection”</li> <li>- Lack of collective information and expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research models for organization</li> <li>- Establish ongoing dialogue/forums between stakeholders (face-to-face)</li> <li>- Dedicate the time and space to set goals, timelines and get agreement on the rationale</li> <li>- Implement a broad communication plan to promote/inform a wide audience</li> </ul>

<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inconsistent recognition of economic benefits of trails</li> <li>- Focused on needs of funders not users or trail managers/operators</li> <li>- Lack of private sector support</li> <li>- Need equitable opportunities for funding that doesn't penalize smaller organizations through "matching" formulas</li> <li>- No funding for administrative support, maintenance, enforcement, user education, training, bringing people to same table</li> <li>- Lack of long-term sustainable funding</li> <li>- Lack of expertise in grant-writing</li> <li>- Need to explain why someone should fund trails, learn where to go for money, where to spend the money</li> <li>- Lack of unified government approach to funding trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help explain projects to each specific funder</li> <li>- Events for exposure to community</li> <li>- Develop a model for funding</li> <li>- Advocate for federal funds</li> <li>- Develop a national protocol for provincial organizations</li> <li>- Find sources outside user pay</li> <li>- Advocate for private sector support</li> <li>- Speak to government in a more coordinated and unified voice</li> <li>- Request government to respond in a more coordinated way</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing and promotion</b>	<p>Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On highways to promote trails</li> <li>- Government regulations differ between provinces</li> <li>- Way finding on trails</li> </ul> <p>Responsible Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finish the product before you market</li> <li>- Ensure expectations can be met</li> <li>- Advertising agencies and companies need to be responsible</li> </ul> <p>Disconnect from community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We promote to bring the tourism in but don't promote at home</li> </ul> <p>Inventory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We need to know and map / gather info</li> <li>- Promote these tools</li> </ul> <p>Integrated Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online</li> <li>- Offline</li> <li>- Knowing the market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large or provincial association could take a leadership role</li> <li>- Combining resources and best practices</li> <li>- Be accurate and honest about the trail</li> <li>- Classification of trails</li> <li>- Communicating with the trail operator about maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>Trail building and maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No access to best practices</li> <li>- Recognize the high cost of maintenance</li> <li>- Poor trail design</li> <li>- Difficulty retaining volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need training programs</li> <li>- Communicate best practices</li> <li>- Hold symposium of networked collaborative</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No training programs</li> <li>- Need trails to be safe and affordable for the long-term</li> <li>- Need maintenance to be recognized as part of building during planning process</li> <li>- Hard to engage or attract landowners in trails</li> <li>- Need ability to connect trail systems</li> <li>- Maintenance is linked to insurance, liability and risk management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>process to identify best practices</li> <li>- Professional standards and training</li> <li>- Promote a trail-building culture to encourage volunteers</li> <li>- More volunteer recognition, more volunteer leadership</li> <li>- Advocate for the recognition of maintenance as key to trails (deserves funding)</li> </ul>
<b>Government involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of government policy framework and guidelines</li> <li>- No lead agency</li> <li>- Lack of coordination and clarity between different levels of government and departments – silos</li> <li>- Lack of buy-in and lack of recognition of values/education</li> <li>- Complex application and approval process – pressure for timing</li> <li>- Funding – not sustainable – trickle down from others</li> <li>- “Trails are a political issue”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify to government what the key issues are in relation to the trails community</li> <li>- Identify which policies, legislation and other support are required to deal with these issues</li> <li>- Provide collective overwhelming evidence of gaps, needs and benefits to government and their constituents</li> <li>- Commitment to working with government, share our expertise, collaborative dialogue, outreach with broader communities and diverse groups of stakeholders</li> <li>- “Make the case for trails”</li> <li>- Leverage existing contacts and relationships</li> <li>- Keep the conversation focused</li> <li>- Long term vision that addresses not just the needs of today but those of the future</li> <li>- Develop a multi-tiered approach</li> <li>- Bring a volunteer network to assist with provincial and national delivery of programs</li> <li>- One voice and many voices</li> </ul>
<b>Risk management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Perception of RM as too complex</li> <li>- Lack of resources and inconsistent approaches</li> <li>- Lack of management plans</li> <li>- No qualified assessors</li> <li>- High cost of insurance, spread unevenly across groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to share resources and information about successes and downfalls with RM</li> <li>- Need to share best practices in planning</li> <li>- Provincial umbrella</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of perceived risk on the part of users</li> <li>- Lack of understanding of occupiers liability act for landowners and adjacent landowners</li> <li>- Lack of government involvement in “umbrella” insurance</li> </ul>	<p>organizations could have a role as regional coordinators</p>
<b>Education and engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult to engage and educate users unaffiliated with trail group</li> <li>- How to do cross-user training</li> <li>- Engaging and educating youth in ways that appeal to them</li> <li>- How to combine current trail-building educational initiatives with programs (for example) at the college level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help develop college or university training programs</li> <li>- Use partnerships to implement them</li> <li>- Talk to each other to find different ways to engage with youth and a diversity of users</li> <li>- Investigate online options</li> <li>- Municipal and provincial associations and parks could combine resources and best practice</li> <li>- Understand user demographics and interests ie. Youth, changing public behaviours, new technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Land use, access and management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical barriers (railway, highway, pipelines, waterways) hamper trail continuity</li> <li>- Dealing with competing land uses and ownership</li> <li>- Land use planning must recognize trails</li> <li>- First Nations involvement in public land use decisions requires meaningful consultation and early engagement, relationship-building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to create and improve incentives for private landowners to allow trail access or donate/sell land</li> <li>- Need to share expertise among trail stakeholders</li> <li>- Need a cultural shift to recognize trails as infrastructure</li> <li>- Need to educate one another about the regulations</li> <li>- Need to come to mutual understanding on conservancy</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Hopes for trails and trail collaboration**

<p><b>Group 1</b></p> <p><b>Our vision is one where...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All trail users respect other trail users</li><li>- Trails are safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly</li><li>- Trails are valued culturally, economically and socially</li><li>- Trails are recognized as contributing to healthy/active lifestyles</li></ul> <p><b>As trail leaders we will work to...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Educate</li><li>- Speak with a strong voice for trails</li><li>- Create a national trails geo database</li><li>- Create a national trails network to link communities and include non-affiliated users and diverse cultures</li><li>- Ensure continuous sources of funding</li></ul> <p><b>By doing...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Respecting land owners, users, heritage and culture</li><li>- Resolving user group conflicts</li><li>- Ensuring the quality of current and future trail experiences</li><li>- Develop a strategy to share, such as a trails charter or large scale business plan</li><li>- Building a professional trails community</li><li>- Working with other organizations within the trails community</li><li>- Securing trails corridors</li></ul>
<p><b>Group 2</b></p> <p><b>Our vision is one where...</b>all trail user groups, recognizing diverse interests, will collaborate to achieve our common goals.</p> <p><b>As trail leaders we will work to...</b>make a personal commitment to this shared vision and work together in cooperation and trust. We will work towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Resolving user group conflicts</li><li>- Raising the profile of trails</li><li>- Securing funding opportunities together</li><li>- Removing barriers to access and fortifying the permanence of trails</li></ul> <p><b>By doing...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Increasing communication between trail leaders, their constituents, and all levels of government</li><li>- Sharing best practices and experiences</li><li>- Advocating for a vibrant trails community</li></ul>
<p><b>Group 3</b></p> <p><b>Our vision is one where...</b>Canadian trails will be there for the enjoyment and well-being for all people by providing a lasting legacy / Trails are celebrated and highly valued by all Canadians.</p> <p><b>As trail leaders we will work to...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Present a more unified voice on trails and trail issues</li><li>- Develop an inclusive national level framework/process to engage all trail stakeholders,</li></ul>

by which we will achieve our common goals and objectives

**By doing...**

- Obtain resources at the federal level
- Support positive relationships at the provincial and local level within the trails community
- Share best practices

**Group 4**

**Our vision is one where...**the Canadian trails community is strengthened by shared purpose and there is a forum for national collaboration.

**As trail leaders we will work to...**

- Honour the diversity within the trails community
- Share best practices
- Advocate for trails in a coordinated way
- “Leave no value behind”
- Build momentum and profile around trails
- Build respect between trail communities
- Ensure that Canada’s trails are funded and sustainable
- Challenge ourselves to be innovative and seek out new opportunities
- Challenge ourselves to live up to our expectations

**By doing...**

- Engaging with Canadians
- Promoting the benefits of trails
- Ensuring there is a viable organizational structure to take the next steps
- Finding a dedicated government partner or a portfolio of partners
- Articulate a plan for our community, from level to level to level

**Group 5**

**Our vision is one where...**

- We create a cohesive trails environment that assists all organizations to meet their goals
- Trails are highly valued and celebrated by all Canadians
- Trails are equally worthy of funding

**As trail leaders we will work to...**

- Provide support to our regional and provincial trail managers so that they can provide a positive trail experience to the trail users of Canada
- Provide leadership to all stakeholders and carry a positive message to user groups

**By doing...**

- Creating a transparent, open and inclusive process for working together
- Working to obtain resources at the federal level to support trail development, operation, planning, communication, research and development
- Explaining the value of what we do and what we are doing for Canadians

**Group 6**

**Our vision is one where...**

- We perpetuate, protect and promote Canadian trails in all their facets for their world renowned sustainable outdoor experiences

**As trail leaders we will work to...**

- Support trails of all shapes and sizes to get people outside
- Work in collaboration with the Canadian trails community
- Promote sustainability and healthy lifestyles
- Strengthen local entities
- Foster participation
- Encourage user awareness and respect
- Communicate with all levels of government

**By doing...**

- Engaging government, volunteers, member users and Canadians
- Building trust among the trails community
- Exercising our responsibility to educate
- Developing and sharing trail resources
- Empower and support local trail initiatives