

# TRAILS STRATEGY *for* BRITISH COLUMBIA





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*The Trails Strategy provides the framework, principles, and guidance necessary to develop a world class trails system for BC. Overall, this framework establishes clear strategic direction for planning, developing, maintaining, managing, marketing and using an integrated network of trails in our province over the next 10 years.*

## AIMING FOR A WORLD CLASS TRAIL SYSTEM

British Columbia offers an unparalleled diversity of landscapes and endless opportunities for outdoor recreation. Trails are the fundamental means to explore and enjoy these spectacular and unique experiences. Across the Province, there is increasing recognition that a world-class system of trails represents opportunities for British Columbians.

British Columbia possesses a unique advantage. Our rural communities are surrounded by extensive public lands and with exhaustive networks of exceptional trails used, valued and cared for by local communities.

Trails are integral to the landscape and enable meaningful connections between people and nature. An integrated and sustainable trails system will maximize benefits for British Columbians. The *Trails Strategy for British Columbia* is a call to action that invites all British Columbians to join in supporting and developing a sustainable network of trails.

Development and implementation of the *Trails Strategy* is linked to several provincial initiatives, including:

- Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan;
- Gaining the Edge: A Five-Year Strategy for Tourism in British Columbia;
- Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy for British Columbia; and
- programs that promote health and fitness, such as HealthyFamiliesBC.





## THE PARTNERSHIP SPIRIT

The *Trails Strategy for British Columbia* was developed in a spirit of partnership. It is a collaboration of provincial agencies, recreation organizations, local governments, land users, First Nations, and others across the province.

A committee of government representatives, user groups and other stakeholders addressed the issues that arose from a comprehensive provincial survey. The initial draft Strategy was presented to more than 1,300 people across the province. The committee considered more than 300 written responses to develop the final version.

The actions in the *Trails Strategy* constitute the 'BC Trails Program' which will be delivered with the support of all levels of government and communities consistent with legislation. The spirit of partnership will continue as the *Trails Strategy* is implemented through on-going involvement of the user groups, other resource users and communities.

*This Trails Strategy is intended to serve as the hub of a wheel connecting the broad range of organizations and initiatives that have historically worked independently, drawing them together in a shared vision to effectively and consistently develop and manage a world class B.C. trails network.*

## VISION

*A world-renowned, sustainable network of trails, with opportunities for all, which provides benefits for trails users, communities and the province.*



### A WORLD-RENOVED NETWORK

Trails can be locally cherished, popular in a particular region or sought out by international travellers; but when locals or visitors think about some of the best trails in the world, British Columbia should come to mind.

### A SUSTAINABLE TRAIL NETWORK

A sustainable network of trails balances environmental, social and economic values and ensures our trails are viable over the long term for future generations to enjoy.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Trails in British Columbia are enjoyed by a diverse range of users with a diverse set of recreation values. B.C.'s trail network must provide opportunities for all users groups while fostering respect between the users and for the environment.

### BENEFITS FOR TRAIL USERS, COMMUNITIES AND THE PROVINCE

“To ensure support for trails, all members of the community must realize the benefits trails provide for British Columbians.”

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## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The BC Trails Program will be built based on the following guiding principles:

- Sound Environmental Stewardship and Management
- Respect and Recognition for First Nations' Interests
- Mutual Respect between Trail Interests and Other Resource Users
- Respect and Understanding among Diverse Trail Interests
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Secure Recreation Opportunities for All Trail Users
- Benefits for Individuals, Communities and the Province

## DEFINING A RECREATION TRAIL

*Trails in B.C. serve a diverse multifunctional role, including transportation, tourism and leisure. The Trails Strategy is based on an inclusive definition for 'recreation trails:'*

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





## STRATEGIC CONTEXT FOR TRAILS

### HOW MANY KILOMETRES OF TRAIL ARE THERE IN B.C.?

As a result of the decades of hard-work and dedication by British Columbians, the province is fortunate to have an extensive range of recreation trails today.

B.C. has an estimated 30,000 kilometres of formally recognized and managed trails. However, many recreation trails are not formally managed and currently there is no consistent record available to track these trails. The total amount of kilometres of trails in B.C. is estimated at hundreds of thousands of kilometres.

Trails on public lands include those under the authority of various government agencies. These include:

- municipal trails and pathways (9000 km);
- regional district trails (1000 km);
- recreation trails (12,000 km) managed by Recreation Sites and Trails BC
- provincial park trails (7000 km) managed by BC Parks; and
- national park trails (1000 km) managed by Parks Canada.

In addition, resource roads are used as trails (particularly by motorized users) or provide key access to trails. There are also a large number of trails on private land.

### RAIL TRAILS, AND THE TRANS CANADA TRAIL

B.C. has many abandoned railway corridors. Over the past 15 years, the Province has been acquiring abandoned corridors for conversion to a world-class recreation trail experience.

The B.C. portion of the Trans Canada Trail, stretching approximately 1600km across southern B.C., includes approximately 800km of provincially owned former rail corridors, now used as recreation trails. The Province's rail trail network links 18 communities and includes: the Kettle Valley Rail Trail, Slocan Valley Rail Trail, Columbia and Western Rail Trail, Cowichan Valley Rail Trail and the Great Northern Rail Trail. The length of the trails and diversity of scenery they pass through provides an unprecedented world-class recreation opportunity.

### FIRST NATIONS AND HERITAGE TRAILS

First Nations have used trails for travel and acquiring sustenance since the beginning of time. Early European explorers and settlers to British Columbia relied on these already established trails and added to their unique histories. Nine heritage trails, totalling over 500 km, have been designated in B.C. under the Heritage Conservation Act including the well-known 350 km Nuxalk-Carrier Grease/Alexander Mackenzie Heritage Trail between Quesnel and Bella Coola. In addition, some First Nations are actively involved in protecting trails, and in managing and promoting responsible trail use that respects cultural values.



## TRENDS INFLUENCING TRAIL USAGE

Trail usage is as varied as the number and types of trails available. Most trails are used for walking, hiking and cycling but are also used for horseback riding, snowmobiling, off road vehicle riding, and other uses.

The following five trends are considered especially significant in planning and developing a world-class recreation trail system for B.C.

### INCREASING INTEREST IN THE BENEFITS OF ACTIVE OUTDOOR LIFESTYLES

*There is growing recognition of the importance of trails in contributing to active lifestyles that improve the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of all ages, particularly our youth.*

Active lifestyles can translate into more productive individuals and communities, and lower health care costs. Increasing outdoor awareness and appreciation can also foster an ethic of caring for our environment. New and improving technologies

enable those with physical challenges to participate in a broadening range of trail activities and to increase their enjoyment of the outdoors. Communities that encourage physical activity by making use of linear corridors are registering a significant positive influence on public health and wellness.

### CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

*Growing Demand for recreation trails close to urban and residential areas is helping to invigorate individual and community health.*

More people are using trails as a form of physical activity – this trend can be seen especially in the 55+ age group. Trail use in B.C. is growing strongly amongst both baby boomers and their children, who value a healthy lifestyle. Urban residents increasingly view recreation trails as an alternate means of transportation. Both groups are demanding more trails for low impact use. Consequently there is growing demand for more recreation trails near urban centres, long distance trails and increased day-use opportunities.

### INCREASING DIVERSITY OF USERS

*There is growing recognition of the increasing diversity of users and the need to reflect diverse values in trail planning and management.*

One of the factors contributing to the increase in demand for trails is the growing number of activities occurring on trails. Activities such as mountain biking, cycling for recreation and transportation, horseback riding, walking and hiking have all increased in volume and popularity.

As well, there is increasing trail use by motorized recreationists, due in part to the rapid changes in technology for snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and off-road motorcycles. Increased motorized trail use can change trail use patterns. Competing demands for trails and recreation opportunities often reflect different values and can lead to friction between user groups.

These factors, along with increasing concerns for the environment, are compelling governments to take a more integrated approach to recreation and



transportation and to classify trails according to the desired experience. The increasing diversity of users underscores the growing importance of collaborative partnerships between public, private, community and volunteer groups for successful coordination of trail networks.

### **INCREASING RECOGNITION OF ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

*Recreation trails are becoming recognized as drivers of economic development and tourism.*

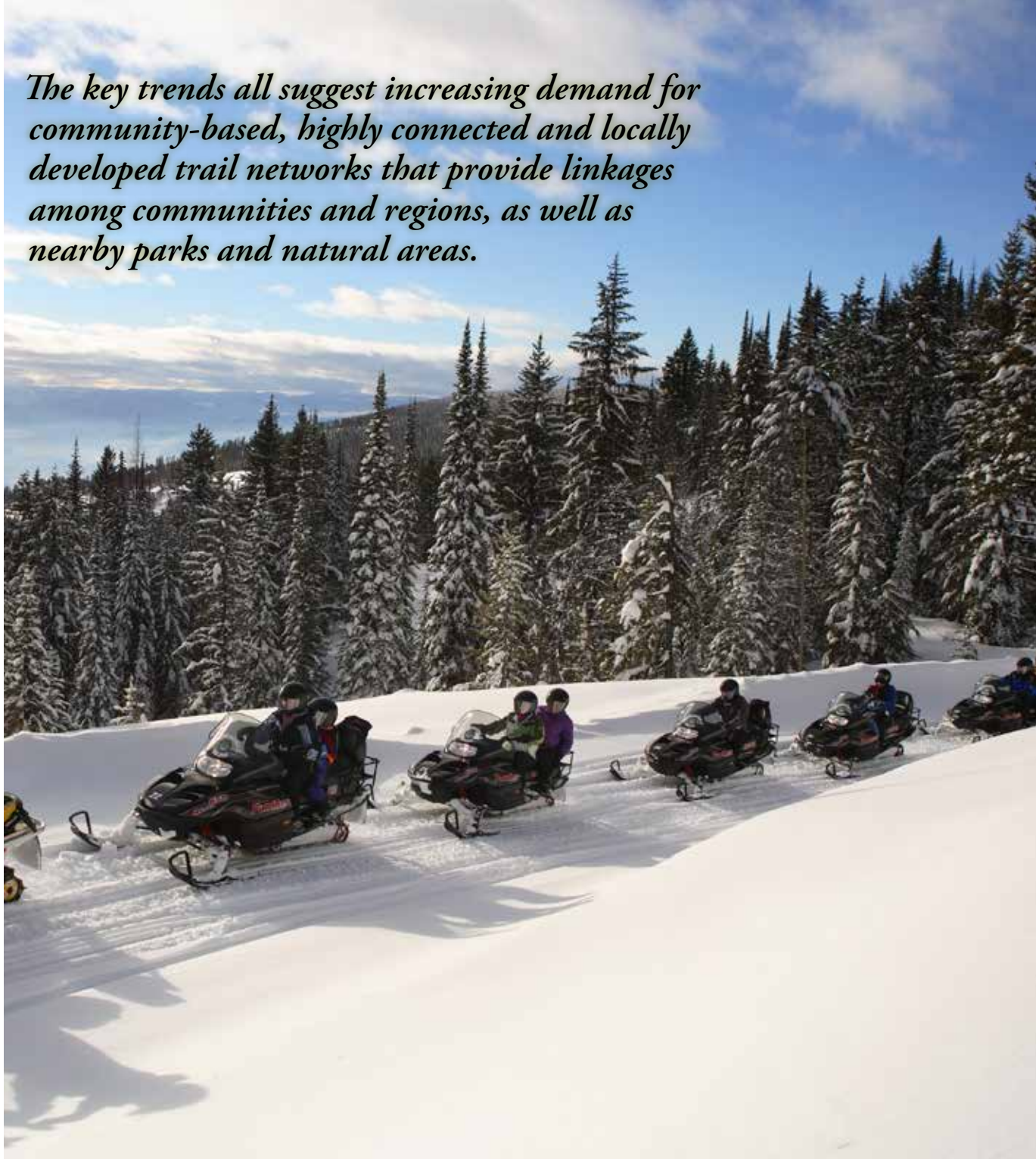
The links between traditional tourism and outdoor recreation are getting stronger. Communities are recognizing the opportunities associated with recreational trails as a tourism attraction and a driver of economic development. Trails provide opportunities for commercial recreation businesses that contribute to the local economy. Trails have the advantage of boosting economic activity while contributing positive impacts to community, social development, education of citizens, and the environment. It is also becoming apparent that economic benefits can even increase if trails are designed and managed as a network of interlinked connections between communities and a range of attractions.

### **INCREASING TRANSPORTATION ROLE FOR TRAILS**

*Trails are playing a greater transportation role as greener alternatives become increasingly popular.*

Trails provide alternative modes of transportation that are sustainable, economical, healthy and environmentally friendly. Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing modern society and trails represent opportunities to cut greenhouse gases and facilitate commuting and travel to local services. Communities are seeking ways to integrate transportation, such as improved linkages between road systems and commuter bike routes.

*The key trends all suggest increasing demand for community-based, highly connected and locally developed trail networks that provide linkages among communities and regions, as well as nearby parks and natural areas.*





## BENEFITS OF A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM OF TRAILS

This *Trails Strategy* represents a fundamental step toward formally recognizing and valuing B.C.'s trails system for the significant benefits it provides trail users, communities and the province.

Implementation of the *Trails Strategy* will contribute strongly to improved employment, sustainability, health, education, social support, and respect for the environment and our cultural heritage. Many communities view recreation amenities, such as trails, as exciting and sustainable means of attracting tourists and diversifying local economies. Communities that once relied on the forest industry are now turning to tourism to enhance long-term economic and community development opportunities.



Key benefits of recreation trails include:

- Community and social – cohesive communities, enhanced quality of life, providing opportunities for families and friends to enjoy time together.
- Economic – increased tourism revenues, greater business investment and enhanced property values.
- Educational – providing an outdoor classroom for nature, culture and history.
- Environment – enhanced environmental awareness, improved understanding of our natural heritage, and stewardship of the environment.
- Health and fitness – improved health and physical well-being for both individuals and communities, reduced health care costs, and enhanced productivity.
- Heritage and cultural – recognition and respect for First Nations culture and historical values.
- Transportation – greener transportation and commuting use of trails contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and improved health and wellness of individuals.



## KEY ISSUES

A number of key issues and challenges were identified in a province-wide survey during the initial stage of the Strategy development process. Key issues include:

- Access: limitations due to private land, deteriorating resource roads, and restrictions on motorized/mechanized use;
- Funding: inconsistent and insufficient to develop and maintain trails on a sustainable basis;
- Insurance/liability: insurance costs and liability exposure;
- Environment: impacts on soil, water, wildlife and other values caused by trail use;
- Expertise: a need to attract and maintain skilled volunteers;
- Legislation: gaps in legislation, regulation and policy to better manage trails including motorized use;
- Trails information: a need for maps, brochures and websites;
- Signage: requirement for signage that guides and informs users, and that promotes safe and responsible use;
- Trail Maintenance: increasing use of trails resulting in the need for improved trail construction and maintenance;
- Compliance and enforcement: the need for adequate compliance and enforcement services and enforceable rules; and
- Conflict between trail users: given the disproportionate nature of impacts between different types of users, it is particularly important to resolve conflicts so that all trail users can enjoy a high quality trail experience for their particular type of use.

Other important issues include multi-use versus single-use trails; private land concerns; trail standards; and competing resource users. The *Trails Strategy* addresses these issues through 22 key actions.





## KEY COMPONENTS AND ACTIONS

B.C.'s sustainable trail network is founded on six key components. Each component has a number of actions to ensure the growth and success of the trail program.

**ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP** integrated in trail planning, development, management and use is essential to ensure that trails exist with minimal impacts on the environment.

**ACTION #1:** *Integrate a framework of environmental considerations, actions and standards into planning, construction and management of the provincial trail network.*

A fundamental aspect of a sustainable trail system is environmental stewardship where trails are constructed and maintained to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse impacts to, sensitive ecosystems, species at risk, soils, water, wildlife and native vegetation.

It is important that the requirement for trail user groups to adhere to established environmental guidelines and standards is integrated into the trail planning, application and approval process.

**ACTION #2:** *Enhance environmental awareness and appreciation through education and interpretation.*

The Province will continue to support programs that enhance awareness and appreciation of B.C.'s immense environmental values. Many quality educational programs have been developed by various provincial, national and international recreation and trail organizations that promote respect for the environment and identify low impact practices, for example programs such as 'Tread Lightly' and 'Leave No Trace'.

**COLLABORATIVE PLANNING** ensures trails have the broadest level of community support and are responsive to the needs of all interests. Collaborative planning must include engagement with First Nations, other resource users, all levels of government, and trail user groups.

**ACTION #3:** *Collaboratively develop local, regional and provincial trail system plans that secure opportunities for all trail users in balance with environmental, cultural and social values.*

Collaborative planning undertaken by trail user groups, governments, First Nations and interest groups will help ensure strong, viable and sustainable trail systems and maximize support for trails within the broader community. A collaborative planning process ensures that the interests of trail users and existing tenure holders are accommodated in a manner that promotes mutual respect and cooperation.

Implementing this action will require a comprehensive review of local and regional trail planning processes, researching the best collaborative practices available, and then applying the learning to ongoing planning processes.

**ACTION #4:** *Engage First Nations in collaborative trail planning.*

Successful trail planning must engage First Nation communities on a government-to-government basis at the earliest stages. In addition to concerns about impacts to asserted rights and title, First Nations may have interests in trails and trail use from a variety of perspectives including:

- potential tourism opportunities and economic benefits for First Nations;

- educational and interpretive opportunities with trails related to First Nations traditional use and ecology, either provided by First Nations or in a partnership with First Nations;
- concerns that some trails could open areas of First Nations cultural and spiritual significance to outside trail users; and
- concerns about the potential impacts to the environment.

**ACTION #5:** *Engage landowners, tenured resource users and other stakeholders in collaborative trail planning.*

To be successful, all potentially interested parties need to be involved directly or indirectly in collaborative trail planning. Addressing all key interests in collaborative planning helps ensure the full range of benefits from trails are realized while also addressing concerns so that, for example, the rights held by tenured resource users are not unduly impacted.

**ACTION #6:** *Integrate trail planning with the transportation network system.*

Large and small scale traditional transportation infrastructure projects often provide opportunities to accommodate and support recreation trail objectives. Ensuring federal, provincial and local agencies responsible for transportation planning are aware of trail planning objectives will enable them to consider and accommodate, where possible, the recommendations in the trail plan when making subsequent transportation decisions.

Trail interests that involve the transportation network system can include:

- using public roads for particular trail use activities like cycling and/or designing safe cycling routes when constructing highways;
- using transportation right-of-ways or corridors for particular trail use activities;
- crossing of public roads by motorized trail users;
- maintaining existing trail links as part of road right-of-way dedication when subdivisions are developed (versus use of 5% dedication for parks);
- zoning authority decisions in unincorporated areas; and
- other related trail interests such as parking and access to trail heads.

**ACTION #7:** *Use legislative tools to approve trails, and identify trail uses, in support of a comprehensive trail network.*

B.C.'s 30,000 km of designated trails are managed within a governance framework. However, there are hundreds of thousands of additional kilometres of trails that remain undesignated and unmanaged. Factors such as trail use conflict, poor trail conditions and lack of management could result in communities unable to maximize the benefits from these trails.

A holistic approach to trail approvals, facilitated through partnerships, and ideally consistent with approved trail system plans, can help ensure that communities realize the greatest benefits from recreation trails. This enables trail use proponents to take advantage of narrow funding windows and volunteers to complete trail projects.



**GOOD GOVERNANCE** means that trails are developed and managed within a well functioning and supportive legislative, regulatory and policy framework. These efforts will help deliver a robust and responsive governance model for a sustainable trails system.

**ACTION #8:** *Develop a communication and education strategy to inform trail users, land owners and managers about the existing governance framework.*

The legislative framework for trail governance in British Columbia is comprehensive but complex and confusing to the average user. Trails are managed through many pieces of legislation, multiple levels of regulation and policy, and multi-agency roles. As the public interest in trails grow the need to provide clear and consistent information about trail use and management increases.

Opportunities derived from clearly communicating how trails are governed and managed include:

- informed trail users, landowners and managers who can see how the legislative framework relates to their interests;
- more sustainable trail use as users, landowners and managers see how the pieces of legislation, regulation and policy ‘fit together’; and
- improved understanding which should lead to greater compliance with legal requirements.

**ACTION #9:** *Improve legislation, regulations and policy to manage motorized use and enhance opportunities for motorized trail users.*

Trails in British Columbia are used extensively by motorized riders, including snowmobiles, ATV’s and dirt bikes. When used responsibly, off-road vehicles (ORV’s) provide great opportunities for recreation activities. However, with growing use comes the need for a management approach that includes mechanisms to minimize environmental impacts, ensure public safety, and reduce social conflict associated with irresponsible ORV use.

The Province will develop an Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Management Framework that will encourage safe and responsible ORV riding and support a growing industry that has the opportunity to deliver lasting socioeconomic benefits for communities.

**ACTION #10:** *Enhance recreation opportunities by reducing liability risk to landowners and groups responsible for managing trails.*

Issues of liability and managing risk are some of the most formidable challenges facing trail managers and trail volunteer groups in any jurisdiction. Opportunities derived from addressing liability issues include:

- lowering liability risk to government, private landowners, trail stewards and users;
- providing access to insurance that is more attainable and affordable; and
- greater willingness on the part of landowners and trail proponents to be involved in trail projects.

The Province will continue to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the



recreation provisions in the Occupier's Liability Act and seek opportunities to further place responsibility for risks on the recreation users.

**SUSTAINABLE FUNDING** is needed to secure and sustain a trails system over the long term. Funding leverages critical volunteer support and ensures a long-term viability of a trail network.

**ACTION #11:** *Establish a reliable and diverse funding model to support B.C.'s trail system.*

A consistent and reliable level of funding will ensure trails in B.C. remain viable. Several successful funding models exist in other jurisdictions that can be examined in developing an optimum approach for BC.

**ACTION #12:** *Provide a clear and up-to-date catalogue of various funding sources that can support trails.*

A number of organizations and programs provide funding support for trail initiatives but these often vary from year to year. A well-organized and up-to-date catalogue of potential sources would enable trail proponents (including government staff at all levels, First Nations and trail groups) to access much-needed funding.

**EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT** is undertaken by governments, First Nations, trails groups, resource tenure holders and land owners. It is essential to support and maintain the trail system and ensure trails exist on the land-base with minimal conflict and the greatest benefits for all.

**ACTION #13:** *Consolidate existing trail standards, guidelines and best practices, and ensure they are widely communicated and accessible for agency staff and user groups.*

There are numerous carefully developed documents (e.g. trail standards, guidelines, best practices and related tools) in place to support trail development, management and use, thanks to the collaborative efforts of agencies and trail organizations. Consolidating these documents will provide trail stewards, organizations and other interest groups with readily available, current and relevant guidance for trail development and management.

**ACTION #14:** *Develop and implement educational programs that foster responsible trail practices and voluntary compliance.*

The collective educational efforts by government and trail user groups can help ensure that trail practices and use are appropriate and avert the need for more formal and costly compliance and enforcement action.

Educational efforts will focus on low impact practices to protect environmental values and respect for other trail users and stakeholders.

**ACTION #15:** *Integrate the BC Trail Program with inter-agency compliance and enforcement services.*

Educational efforts focusing on responsible trail development and use need to be further supported by compliance and enforcement programs to ensure use and impacts on the land base are consistent with regulation and requirements.



Compliance and enforcement efforts support the work of trail stewards, users and ensure broad support from the wider outdoor and resource communities.

**ACTION #16:** *Integrate consideration of recreation trail use into resource road decisions.*

Resource roads provide vital access to many recreation trails and in some cases are used as an integral part of the trail system. Resource road decisions are often based primarily on environmental, liability, safety and cost considerations. Given the fundamental role resource roads play in trail use and management, it is essential that trail and recreation interests are considered in on-going resource road decision. Recreation and trail interests will be an on-going consideration as the Province continues to enhance resource road management through development of the proposed Natural Resource Road Act (NRRRA). Further, opportunities to better manage trails, particular motorized trails will be sought through development of this Act.

**ACTION #17:** *Develop a "best practices" approach to the stewardship of trails on, or adjacent to, agricultural and private lands.*

The vast majority of B.C. is Crown land (approximately 95 per cent). Even so, most community-based trail networks include some amount of private land near urban areas. There are also trail interests on non-urban private land such as privately managed forest lands.

Agricultural Land Reserve is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use. The Agriculture Land Commission, in partnership with the

Province, has developed A Guide to Using and Developing Trails in Farm and Ranch Areas [www.alc.gov.bc.ca/publications/publications.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/publications/publications.htm). This document outlines a current 'best practices' approach that may be refined and updated as required.

In addition to ensuring support from agriculture interests, a sustainable trail network must be supported by the many private landowners potentially impacted by trail use and development. A best practices guide for managing trails on private land will provide trail advocates with an effective set of tools to engage private land owners to win support for valued community trails.

**STRATEGIC INFORMATION AND MARKETING** includes gathering the fundamental data needed to design, develop and maintain a sustainable trail system; and targeted marketing of specific trails where there is community and trail user support.

**ACTION #18:** *Develop and maintain an inventory of trails.*

An up-to-date inventory of recreation trails can be used in planning, and support marketing of specific trails where there is community and trail user group support. An inventory could also provide trail information to other resource users so that trail values can be factored into their plans and practices.

**ACTION #19:** *Undertake a comprehensive survey of trail users.*

An up-to-date comprehensive survey of trail users in B.C. will provide an accurate estimate of trail use, trip expenditures, use preferences, and related information.





A carefully designed user survey can yield results that are critical for several reasons, including:

- providing data that can strengthen the business case for investing in trails (e.g. by quantifying the amount and type of trail use, and economic and other benefits associated with trail use);
- providing the information necessary to ensure that land managers invest wisely and target the highest priorities; and
- establishing a baseline of information that can be compared with past surveys and can be used to highlight key trends; for example in trail use and recreational demand.

**ACTION #20:** *Support the marketing of trails, where there is community and trail user group support.*

Combined with extensive network of recreation trails and strong community support, British Columbia is poised to provide world-class visitor experiences as the premier trail destination. The *Trails Strategy* is a key element of the Province's 5-year tourism strategy, *Gaining the Edge*.



## IMPLEMENTATION

**ACTION #21:** *Establish a provincial trail advisory body to provide advice on the implementation of the Trails Strategy and the BC Trail Program.*

The formation of a trail advisory body will help ensure that the *Trails Strategy* is effectively implemented.

The advisory body will:

- assist government in ensuring that implementation is consistent with the intent of the *Trails Strategy*;
- advise government of any recommended improvements to the *Trails Strategy* such as through a formal review every two years; and
- provide a collaborative forum for the many trails organizations and interests to help ensure that the *Trails Strategy* continues to meet the needs of all trail users.

**ACTION #22:** *Support existing local and regional trail committees or groups, and where not present encourage their establishment, so they can help implement the Trails Strategy.*

This *Trails Strategy* is intended to present the overarching foundation for a world-class provincial trails network. The trails themselves, however, exist on-the-ground in communities and regions throughout the province; therefore the Strategy must connect the provincial level to the local and regional levels.

Local trail stewardship groups, First Nations, and regional and local governments all have a vital role to play in implementing the Strategy. The *Trails Strategy* will continue to support the efforts of local or regional trail user groups that are already in place and working effectively.

*The Province will develop a plan to implement the 22 key actions. Some of the Strategy's actions will be initiated or piloted within the coming year while others depend on funding resource support or support for legislative change that may take more time to secure. Overall the Trails Strategy is intended to be implemented over a 10-year timeframe.*

# OVERVIEW OF B.C.'S TRAILS STRATEGY

## VISION

A world-renowned, sustainable network of trails, with opportunities for all, which provides benefits for trails users, communities and the province.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR A WORLD CLASS SYSTEM OF TRAILS

- Sound Environmental Stewardship and Management
- Respect and Recognition for First Nations' Interests
- Mutual Respect amongst Trail interests, Other Resource Users and Existing Tenure Holders.
- Respect and Understanding among Diverse Trail Interests
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Secure Recreation Opportunities for All Trail Users
- Benefits for Individuals, Communities and the Province



# KEY COMPONENTS

These are the fundamental components, and associated actions, to achieve the vision of a sustainable trail program in B.C.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP	COLLABORATIVE PLANNING	GOOD GOVERNANCE	SUSTAINABLE FUNDING	EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT	STRATEGIC INFORMATION AND MARKETING
<p><b>1.</b> <i>Integrate a framework of environmental considerations, actions and standards into planning, construction and management of the provincial trail network.</i></p> <p><b>2.</b> <i>Enhance environmental awareness and appreciation through education and interpretation.</i></p>	<p><b>3.</b> <i>Collaboratively develop local, regional and provincial trail system plans that secure opportunities for all trail users in balance with environmental, cultural and social values.</i></p> <p><b>4.</b> <i>Engage First Nations in collaborative trail planning.</i></p> <p><b>5.</b> <i>Engage landowners, tenured resource users and other stakeholders in collaborative trail planning.</i></p> <p><b>6.</b> <i>Integrate trail planning with the transportation network system.</i></p> <p><b>7.</b> <i>Use legislative tools to approve trails, and identify trail uses, in support of a comprehensive trail network.</i></p>	<p><b>8.</b> <i>Develop a communication and education strategy to inform trail users, land owners and managers about the existing governance framework.</i></p> <p><b>9.</b> <i>Improve legislation, regulations and policy to manage motorized use and enhance opportunities for motorized trail users.</i></p> <p><b>10.</b> <i>Enhance recreation opportunities by reducing liability risk to land owners and groups responsible for managing trails.</i></p>	<p><b>11.</b> <i>Establish a reliable and diverse funding model to support BC's trail system.</i></p> <p><b>12.</b> <i>Provide a clear and up-to-date catalogue of various funding sources that can support trails.</i></p>	<p><b>13.</b> <i>Consolidate existing trail standards, guidelines and best practices, and ensure they are communicated and accessible for agency staff and user groups.</i></p> <p><b>14.</b> <i>Develop and implement educational programs that foster responsible trail practices and voluntary compliance.</i></p> <p><b>15.</b> <i>Integrate the BC Trail Program with inter-agency compliance and enforcement services.</i></p> <p><b>16.</b> <i>Integrate consideration of recreation trail use into resource road decisions.</i></p> <p><b>17.</b> <i>Develop a 'best practices' approach to the stewardship of trails on, or adjacent to, agricultural and private lands.</i></p>	<p><b>18.</b> <i>Develop and maintain an inventory of trails.</i></p> <p><b>19.</b> <i>Undertake a comprehensive survey of trail users.</i></p> <p><b>20.</b> <i>Support the marketing of trails where there is community and trail user group support.</i></p>

# IMPLEMENTATION

The Province will develop a plan to implement the actions.

**21.** *Establish a provincial trail advisory body to provide advice on the implementation of the Trails Strategy and the BC Trail Program.*

**22.** *Support existing local and regional trail committees or groups, and where not present encourage their establishment, so that they can assist implementation and continuous improvement of the Trails Strategy.*

## IN CLOSING

Numerous individuals and organizations contributed to the development of the *Trails Strategy*.

The Trails Strategy Committee reviewed and considered input from trail interests across B.C., including comments by the public, user groups and various levels of government. Extensive information sessions were held across the province to solicit feedback on the draft *Trails Strategy*.

The Province acknowledges the support and participation of all parties who provided valuable feedback.

Keep up-to-date on *Trails Strategy* implementation by visiting:

<http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca/about/provincial-trail-strategy.aspx>





Ministry of  
Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations