



Strategic Planning Framework

May 2018

Mission

NS Trails is a volunteer, membership-based registered charity, a resource for trail stakeholders, and a forum to facilitate the cooperative building, maintaining, and enjoyment of trails in our province.

Vision

A diverse and vibrant trails community exists in Nova Scotia that works respectfully and collaboratively so that all Nova Scotians and visitors have easy access to safe and enjoyable trail experiences.

Strategic Priorities

1. *Increase the capacity of the trail community*

- NS Trails will host a regular conference and education event. This event will be targeted toward a broad spectrum of trail stakeholders, promoting best and promising practices in trail management and operation.
- NS Trails will update its resources for the development, management, maintenance, and promotion of trails. These resources will incorporate current best and promising practices and reflect the unique context of trails in Nova Scotia.
- NS Trails will promote an education program for youth that addresses both trail development and how to share and safely use trails.
- NS Trails will create a series of workshops and webinars around key issues and topics important to trail stakeholders. The Federation will seek ideas and input from stakeholders and members.
- NS Trails will improve their web site to create a dynamic, easy to use, “one stop shop” connection for people looking for all types of trail information.

2. *Strengthen the NS Trails Brand*

- NS Trails will clearly articulate who we are and what we do. The Federation will develop a clear value proposition and promote it vigorously.
- NS Trails will develop a comprehensive position paper addressing safe and shared use of trails. The paper will specifically address the issue of motorized vs non-motorized usage in Nova Scotia.
- NS Trails will develop a comprehensive communication strategy, including both offline and online methodologies.
- NS Trails will explore options for a certified trails program that will enhance trail usage.

3. *Advocate on behalf of the trails community*

- NS Trails will develop an annual advocacy agenda for the Federation.
- NS Trails will champion the implementation the Shared Strategy for Trails in Nova Scotia.
- NS Trails will educate senior leaders and decision makers in the non-for-profit, private, and public sector about the importance of maintaining support for trails in Nova Scotia.
- NS Trails will seek increased funding support for its work through educating leaders and decision makers in the non-for-profit, private, and public sector as to what NS Trails does and the dramatic difference it makes in the community.

4. *Strengthen Association Leadership*

- NS Trails will develop and implement a Board of Directors governance training program.
- NS Trails will complete a review of the Federation's governance model. The review will include examining:
 - The size of the Board of Directors;
 - The representative nature and approach of the Board of Directors;
 - The role and number of ex-officio government representatives;
 - Options to ensure effective and efficient decision making;
 - Best and promising practices around committee and task team structures, work methods and accountability.
- NS Trails will develop a position paper addressing the future of the Trans Canada Trail initiative in Nova Scotia.
- NS Trails will preform a policy audit and address opportunities for improvement as identified through the process.

NOTES

Force Field Analysis

Participants participated in a force field analysis process, identifying items that they felt could be holding the Federation back and those pushing the Federation forward or that it could build on.

Items potentially holding the Federation back:

- TCT / Provincial trail – it has been at times all we have been about, it drives some of the motor vs non- motorized debate, has created confusion in community, and led us to be very project driven
- Lack of clarity around our role in the NS Shared trails strategy
- Our capacity to handle our role ... we need to set clear priorities ... we can't do everything
- A lack of data
- Possible or perceived conflict of interests within TCT funding process
- There is a feeling of entitlement to trails from users and not wanting to contribute to trails development and maintenance ... is this wrong/bad?
- People don't know who builds trails or how to get involved
- Lack of diversity in the trails community
- Lack of self promotion about what we do
- Lack of understand of the NS Trails value proposition (even among ourselves)
- NS Trails doesn't know the value we provide
- Lack of understand of the economic impact of trails – motorized has a good model
- Lack of clarity around the purpose of NS Trails

Those items pushing the Federation forward or it could build on:

- A perception of increased usage on trails
- The trends in tourism toward outdoor adventure
- The goals of the Nova Scotia Government around outdoor tourism
- The prominence of experiencing nature in the Share Strategy in Recreation in Nova Scotia
- The draft Shared Strategy for Trails in Nova Scotia
- Social media
- The energy that has surround the TCT and Provincial trail work
- Our willingness to have discussions about whether we are advocacy or project driven
- The broad focus at multiple levels of government around active transportation
- The investments being made throughout our communities on active transportation
- Recognition from outside groups or organizations concerning the value of trail work
- The significant levels of pride in the community around the trails work they have done
- There is a high level of competency in the trails community
- Historically high level of work and commitment from trail volunteers
- People care about trails in their community ... this passion can be translated to volunteer work and service

Priority Setting Exercise

Potential Priority	Priority Voting	Interest voting
Governance	5	2
Education	6	3
Fund development	2	1
Research	3	3
Brand development	6	1
Support trails strategy	3	0
Volunteer development	4	0
Advocacy	5	1
Promotion	2	1
Membership recruitment	1	0
Insurance program	0	0

Parking Lot

Governance changes, such as the structure of the Board or changes to the Federation's legal name, would require one or more bylaw amendments at the AGM.