



Strategic Planning Survey

Summary Report

Introduction

As part of its 2018 strategic planning process, the Board of Directors of Nova Scotia Trails conducted a survey of its members and stakeholders. The survey was distributed through email and social media lists owned by the Association. Recipients were then encouraged to promote the survey to their members and contacts. The survey was conducted through Survey Monkey and a hard copy is attached. Persons who wished to participate in the survey, but did not have access to Survey Monkey, perhaps due to corporate internet security rules, were able to request a hard copy through the NS Trails office or contact the consultant directly.

302 responses to the survey were received from members and non-members. It is important to remember when reviewing this survey, the results are a compilation of those that chose to respond, not a perfect representation of the membership or trail community. In addition, many of the questions were open ended and therefore do not provide a comparative or rating tool between respondents. Users of this data should consider this and apply a level of rigor to their analysis and consideration of the responses. In addition, as this was an anonymous on-line survey tool, there were no opportunities to seek clarification or further explanation from responders.

In compiling the data comments made by approximately 5% of the respondents, i.e. 15 responses, are identified in the summary portion of this report. This is not meant to minimize single comments or responses, but simply to create a workable framework for those looking to use the data for planning purposes. In addition, the responses are presented in bullet lists to aid readability. While generally presented in order of frequency in the survey responses, the lists should not necessarily be considered sequential priorities.

The response rate significantly exceeded the expectations of the Nova Scotia Trailers Strategic Planning Committee, Staff, and the consultant. This is sign of an engaged and committed trail sector in Nova Scotia, a good sign by any measure.

Executive Summary

Of the 302 responses 156 or 51.66% indicated they were members of NS Trails.

The following number of respondents, who identified as members, indicated the following were their reasons for being a member of NS Trails.

- 124 or 79.5%: To promote trail usage
- 89 or 57.1%: For general news and information
- 78 or 50.0%: To access and receive insurance
- 63 or 40.4%: To participate in advocacy efforts
- 52 or 33.4%: To access workshops and education opportunities

OTHER

- 9 or 5.8%: For volunteer opportunities

Would you recommend membership to NS Trails?

	Detractor Scores 1 - 6	Passives Scores 7 - 8	Promoter Scores 9 - 10
Members	28.29%	27.63%	44.08%
Non-Members	64.00%	20.00%	16.00%
Total	44.40%	24.19%	31.41%

The Net Promoter Score from NS Trails members is: 16

The Net Promoter Score from Non-NS Trails members is: - 48

The Net Promote Score from all respondents is: -13

In comparing these NPS scores with benchmarking data, they are extremely low.

The following key issues were identified by respondents and should be discussed in further detail as part of future planning processes:

1. There are a considerable number of stakeholders who do not know who NS Trails is, what it stands for, or what the Association does.
2. There are multiple respondents who feel that the Association is ready and in need of a renewal of its core framework policies, not just a 'what's next' planning process. Some respondents indicate the Association needs to review its Mission, Vision and Values, potentially dramatically changing its focus, direction, and governance model.
3. There are multiple respondents who feel the Association has not provided them with satisfactory service in the past.
4. There are multiple respondents who feel the Association has served them well in the past.
5. The short and long-term maintenance and development of trails in Nova Scotia is a concern for many members and stakeholders. There are examples of trail maintenance needs that currently can't be addressed, such as deteriorating bridges.
6. The current trail volunteer network is aging, tired, and needs rejuvenation.
7. Many of the trail groups identified needing funding as a priority if they are to continue their work.
8. The mixed or shared use of trails, particularly between motorized and non-motorized users, is an issue that concerns many respondents. Respondent's views on this issue are varied and, in some cases, appear incompatible. There is, however, a desire for NS Trails to provide a unified voice for trails' stakeholders and a desire for a resolution around this issue.
9. Access to trails from various perspectives, including for those with mobility challenges, to private and crown land, is a concern for some respondents.
10. Respondents are seeking a continuous or connected network of trails throughout the province.

Respondents provided the following as roles they see for NS Trails.

- Promote trail usage and access including the provision of wayfinding aids, such as maps and signage.
- Be the umbrella organization for all trails' groups in Nova Scotia and provide a collective voice for the trails' community, especially, but not exclusively, to government.
- Advocate for and promote a trails construction and maintenance standard.
- Provide education and training for trails' stakeholders and groups.
- Provide a path to access funding to support the maintenance and development of trails.
- Continue to provide insurance to trails groups.

Respondents identified the following as the most important things NS Trails could do for the trails community.

- Increase the amount of funding available for trails maintenance and development.
- Promote trails usage and see an increase in the number of people on trails.
- Bring the various components of the trail community together, specifically addressing the schism between motorized and non-motorized usage.
- Increase the number of trails in Nova Scotia.
- Connect the trails network across Nova Scotia.

Respondents participated in a Goals Grid exercise identifying key things they would like to see NS Trails: achieve, preserve, avoid or eliminate. The following items were identified through that exercise:

- NS Trails needs increase profile in the community and a clear brand image.
- Everyone should have access to trails in Nova Scotia.
- The trails in Nova Scotia should be connected.
- There still is a need for more trails in Nova Scotia.
- Everyone needs to know where trails are in the community and how to access them.
- The trails' community needs to be unified. The trail community is larger than just trail groups and should include others, for example, the indigenous community.
- The issues between motorized and non-motorized users needs to be resolved.
- Insurance continues to be a need for trails' groups and a vital component of their membership with NS Trails.
- Volunteerism continues to be a challenge for many and anything that can help maintain and recruit trails volunteers is a good thing.
- The links to Government and the Shared Trails Strategy are very important.
- There are many issues within the trails community and a continued need for advocacy around them.
- The preservation of the natural environment is a core principle of trails usage and needs to be maintained and promoted.



Strategic Planning Survey

1. Are you a member of the Nova Scotia Trails Federation? Yes No

1a. Why are you a member of NS Trails? (please check all that apply)

To access and receive insurance

For general news and information

To participate in advocacy efforts

To access workshops and education opportunities

To promote trail usage

Other: _____

1b. How likely are you to recommend membership in the Nova Scotia Trails Federation to a friend or colleague?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not likely to recommend

Extremely likely

2. Currently what is the most critical issue facing trails in Nova Scotia?

3. What will be the most important issues concerning trails in the next decade?

4. In your own words, what do you see as the purpose of the Nova Scotia Trails Federation?

5. What is the most important thing the Nova Scotia Trails Federation could do to make a dramatic difference for trails in Nova Scotia?

6. Over the next several years what would you like the Nova Scotia Trails Federation to achieve?

7. What aspects of the organization and its work should be preserved?

8. Are there aspects of the organization and its work that should be eliminated or discontinued?

9. Are there things you think the Nova Scotia Trails Federation should be careful to avoid in its work and operation?

10. As the Board of Directors considers the future of the Nova Scotia Trails Federation and its work, is there anything further you would like to make sure they know?