

Nova Scotia Trails Strategy Coordinating Group

Terms of Reference

December 2020

Background

The Shared Strategy for Trails in Nova Scotia (Trails Strategy) “reflects a shared vision and commitment to action, by community groups, provincial trail user/management organizations, Mi’kmaq communities, businesses, landowners and the various levels of government. It focuses action on the main issues and concerns that the trails community as a whole agrees need to be addressed. It provides the framework, principles, priorities and guidance necessary for the trails community to develop and maintain a quality system of trails that contributes in a meaningful way to the quality of life of all Nova Scotians.”

The vision for the Trails Strategy is as follows:

Nova Scotians and visitors have access to a variety of high quality, safe and appealing trail opportunities and are using them regularly. As a result, we enjoy many health, social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits.

Purpose

The creation of the Trails Strategy Coordinating Group meets Goal #1 of the Trails Strategy: Strengthen Alignment, Leadership and Collaboration of Trails Organizations, specifically, it addresses Action 1.1.

Establish a Trails Strategy Coordinating Group (TSCG) to support and coordinate the implementation of the strategy.

Membership in the TSCG will be broad based and representative of the whole trails community. The TSCG will champion the strategy, encourage the building of partnerships and identify the processes and structures needed to fulfill its roles and responsibilities listed below:

- communicating and encouraging alignment of the trails community with the strategy
- providing a way for trails stakeholders to plan and coordinate trails at the provincial and regional levels
- assisting with establishing strategic priorities based on greatest needs and benefits
- providing opportunities for trails stakeholder groups to connect; align visions, plans and activities; and share knowledge, resources and best practices
- forming and supporting working groups to take responsibility for aspects of implementing the strategy
- systematically monitoring, measuring and reporting on progress implementing the strategy

Deliverables

The TSCG will:

- Guide the implementation of the strategy
- Create plans that address key priorities in the strategy
- Develop methodologies to evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of the strategy
- Identify roles and responsibilities of trail stakeholders in implementing action plans and engage and collaborate with those stakeholders in implementation
- Establish and coordinate working groups to guide implementation of aspects of the strategy and recruit trail stakeholders to be active members of these working groups
- Provide high-level guidance for regular province-wide gatherings of trail stakeholders
- Communicate updates regularly to trail stakeholders (as described below under Communication)

Values

- **Informed decision making:** Decisions of the TSCG are based on the industry best practices, research & literature, stakeholder engagement, emerging issues, impact on the sector and wellbeing of Nova Scotians.
- **Innovation:** Goals are pursued through a spirit of exploration, creativity and learning.
- **Inclusion:** Members respect the similarities and differences within the trails community.
- **Collaboration:** Members work together in good faith to achieve the vision of the Trails Strategy and encourage shared leadership
- **Accountability:** Members promote accountability and align resources and enable their best use.

Membership

Membership:

- 3 positions to be named by NS Trails
- 2 positions to be named by the provincial OHV community
- 3 positions to be named by the ICT
- 2 positions open to the trails community at large
- 2 Mi'kmaq community representative
- 2 senior municipal staff positions

Membership Recruitment

- TSCG will hold an open application process for the trails community representatives and the senior municipal positions
- Mi'kmaq representatives will be appointed by the Assembly of Mi'kmaq Chiefs

Term of Membership:

TSCG terms will be staggered and will be approved by the TSCG Chair or Co-Chairs. Terms will be a maximum of three years, renewable once.

TSCG Chair or Co-Chairs:

The TSCG will be chaired by members of the TSCG. A chair or co-chairs will be selected by the members of the TSCG. The terms of the chair position is 1 year and is renewable.

Meeting Guidelines

Meeting Frequency:

The Chair will be responsible for scheduling meetings with input from the larger TSCG. At least two will be in-person meetings, and the others will be by audio or visual conferencing. An agenda and supporting documents will be provided in advance.

Meeting Records:

Meeting notes will be provided to members within two weeks of each meeting. Notes will be taken by support staff from either provincial government staff or NS Trails staff.

Meeting Location:

To be determined by the TSCG.

Committee Expenses:

All members (excluding ICT representatives) are eligible to be reimbursed for travel costs associated with participating in meetings in line with the government travel policy.

Decision-Making

Consensus will be sought where possible, where key decisions are to be made. In the event there is not consensus, the issue may be tabled pending more research and discussion. If consensus still cannot be reached, a majority vote will be taken. Majority is half of those present, plus one.

Quorum shall consist of half of active membership of TSCG, plus one. No decision will be made without quorum.

Communications and Reporting

The TSCG will report directly to both the Nova Scotia Trails Federation Board (NS Trails) and to the provincial government's Interdepartmental Committee on Trails (ICT). Meeting minutes will act as regular reports to NS Trails and the ICT.

The TSCG will release an annual update on progress made on the previous year's action plan and provide an annual action plan.

Resources

In-kind:

- The ICT and NS Trails will provide staff person(s) (in kind and/or remunerated), access to meeting spaces, and conferencing services to help support the work of TSCG
- NS Trails and ICT will provide meeting space in-kind for the TSCG as well as conferencing services

Budget:

The TSCG will create an annual budget. Funding sources to support the TSCG action plan could include the ICT and others.

Review/Approval

The Terms of Reference for the TSCG and its working groups will be reviewed annually by the TSCG and any changes will be forwarded to both NS Trails Executive and the Co-Chairs of ICT for final approval.