



Trailhead Toronto - 2016

Ontario Trails Legislation, Trails Action Plan and Other Updates

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Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

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Purpose

- Provincial Context for Trails – Key Partners and Stakeholders
- Background on Trails
- Overview of Trails Legislation
- Overview of the Trails Action Plan
- Government Trails-Supportive Funding
- Next Steps

Provincial Context for Trails

Consultative Body

Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee
 Co-chaired by MTCS ADM and Ontario Trails Council President

Members include ministries/agencies and external stakeholders

Government

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS)

Lead ministry on trail policy and planning

Directors Working Group on Trails

Government Partners

- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Ontario Parks
- Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC)
- Ontario Place
- Royal Botanical Gardens
- St. Lawrence Parks Commission
- Niagara Parks Commission
- Others

Key Partners/Stakeholders

Ontario Trails Council
 Umbrella organization for trails

Provincial/Regional Partners

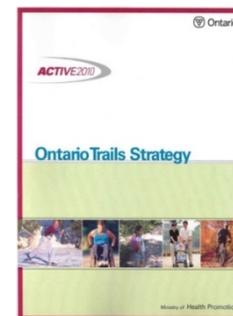
- Ontario Power Sport Working Group (umbrella organization for motorized trails)
- Provincial/regional trail organizations
- Regional Tourism Organizations
- Conservation Authorities
- Municipal Parks and Recreation
- Others

National Partners

- Canadian Trails Federation
- National Trails Coalition
- F-P/T staff group on Trails

Background on Trails

- Ontario has over 80,000 km of trails, the second largest network in Canada.
- Trails include land/water, motorized/non-motorized and on/off-road trails used for recreation, tourism and transportation (e.g. active transportation) purposes in urban, suburban, rural and remote settings.
- Launched in 2005, the Ontario Trails Strategy was developed collaboratively by a wide range of stakeholders as well as Indigenous communities. It provides a framework for planning, managing, promoting, and using trails across the province.
- The vision of the Ontario Trails Strategy is:
“A world-class system of diversified trails, planned and used in an environmentally responsible manner that enhances the health and prosperity of all Ontarians.”



Background on Trails (cont'd)

- In fall 2013, province-wide consultations were held on ways to strengthen or refresh the Ontario Trails Strategy.
- The consultative process sought to confirm that the issues related to trails and the way to address them remained relevant and to identify new key issues and opportunities.
 - **Key Issues:** financial stability, liability, securing lands for trails, trespassing, protection of private/public property, training, user conflict management, trail classifications/signage, trail standards/guidelines, supportive land/transportation planning and the need for a trails Master Plan.
 - **Key Opportunities:** enhancing trails tourism, strengthening the role of trails in active transportation, promoting trails more effectively, conducting trail-related research and maximizing water trail opportunities.
- As a response to these consultations, trails legislation and a trails action plan were developed.

Overview of Trails Legislation

- The *Supporting Ontario's Trails Act, 2016* was passed on June 1, 2016 including six elements:
 1. A stand-alone act entitled *Ontario Trails Act, 2016* (Lead: MTCS)
 2. Complementary amendments to the *Motorized Snow Vehicles Act* (Lead: Ministry of Transportation – MTO)
 3. Amendments to the *Occupiers' Liability Act* (Lead: Ministry of Attorney General – MAG)
 4. Complementary amendments to the *Off-Road Vehicles Act* (Lead: MTO)
 5. Amendments to the *Public Lands Act* (Lead: Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry – MNRF)
 6. Amendments to the *Trespass to Property Act* (Lead: MAG)



Overview of Trails Legislation (cont'd)

The *Ontario Trails Act, 2016* (MTCS lead)

- Proclaims an annual Trails Week.
- Codifies the Minister's authority to:
 - Recognize Ontario trails of distinction;
 - Establish a voluntary trails classification system;
 - Establish voluntary best practices; and
 - Establish targets to further the purposes of the act.
- Requires the Minister to maintain a trails strategy.
- Sets out consultation requirements for the implementation of sections in the act (e.g. trails classification).
- Provides eligible bodies or a nominee with a statutory mechanism to enter into voluntary trail easements, with covenants and with property owners.



Overview of Trails Legislation (cont'd)

Amending Legislation (led by MAG, MNRF and MTO)

- Amendments were also made to the *Occupiers' Liability Act* (MAG), *Public Lands Act* (MNRF) and *Trespass to Property Act* (MAG) that clarify liability, enhance compliance and enforcement tools for managing public land and strengthen the consequences of trespassing.
- Complimentary amendments to the *Motorized Snow Vehicles Act* (MTO) and *Off-Road Vehicles Act* (MTO) to align with changes to the *Occupiers' Liability Act*.



Overview of the Trails Action Plan 2015-2018

- The Trails Action Plan was released to trails stakeholders in December, 2015.
- Aligns with the vision and core values of the Ontario Trails Strategy and sets the priorities for its continued implementation:
- Consists of three pillars with 31 action items to be implemented collaboratively in a consensus-seeking approach with stakeholders, over three years (2015/16 – 2017/18):
 - Pillar 1: Sustainability and Planning;
 - Pillar 2: Access and Awareness; and
 - Pillar 3: Tourism and Economic Development.
- The Ontario Trails Action Plan can be found on the Ontario Trails Council's website at: www.ontariotrails.on.ca > Connect > Media Releases > 22.12.15 Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee Action Plan 2014.



Overview of the Trails Action Plan (cont'd)

Pillar 1 – Sustainability and Planning

- Improving Collaboration among Stakeholders (e.g. trail user code of ethics).
- Improving the Capacity of the Trails Community (e.g. training).
- Establishing a Legislative Framework for Trails (e.g. Trails Bill).
- Stabilizing Trail Routes (e.g. policy on abandoned railway rights-of-way for trail purposes).
- Enhancing Financial Sustainability (e.g. workshop on insurance coverage).



Pillar 2 – Access and Awareness

- Increasing Access to Trails (e.g. implement #CycleON).
- Increasing Awareness of Trails (e.g. voluntary branding and classification system).

Pillar 3 – Tourism and Economic Development

- Establishing a Research Plan (e.g. economic impact of trails).
- Supporting and Promoting Trails Tourism (e.g. revitalize Ontario Place).

Overview of the Trails Action Plan (cont'd)

Key cross-government alignments include:

Ontario Place Urban Park and Trail

- The province is moving forward with its vision to revitalize Ontario Place into a vibrant waterfront destination that engages residents and visitors of all ages.
- The first phase is already underway with the construction of the Urban Park and William G. Davis Trail on the east island of Ontario Place.
- When completed, the Urban Park and William G. Davis Trail will link to an expansive waterfront trail system that includes parts of the Trans Canada Trail Ontario (TCTO) route and the Martin Goodman Trail.

Climate Change Strategy (Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change)

- MTCS will continue to support the Strategy through trails initiatives (e.g. active transportation).

Overview of the Trails Action Plan (cont'd)

Key cross-government alignments include:

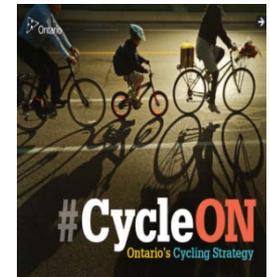
Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces: Accessible recreation trails and beach access routes (Ministry of Economic Development and Growth)

- Allows everyone, including people with disabilities, to enjoy trails.
- New or redeveloped recreational trails and beach access routes will need to meet these standards (e.g. minimum trail width), between 2015 and 2018.



#CycleON: Ontario's Cycling Strategy (MTO)

- #CycleON is a 20-year vision to promote cycling and cycling safety in Ontario.
- The Province is currently implementing #CycleON Action Plan 1.0.
 - As part of the plan, MTO is working to identify a province-wide network of cycling routes.



Biodiversity: It's in our nature – Ontario Government Plan to Conserve Biodiversity 2012-2020 (MNR)

- Ontario Children's Outdoor Charter <http://www.childrensoutdoorcharter.ca/>.



Overview of Trails Funding Opportunities

Government of Ontario Investment in Trails

- The Government of Ontario invested \$130 million in trails 2009/10 through 2014/15.

Pan/Parapan American Games Trail Legacy Initiatives

- Through Ontario's 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games Legacy investments, the province invested approximately \$3.5 million in trails initiatives to:
 - Complete 254 km of the TCTO resulting in a continuous route of over 2,000 km;
 - Connect the TCTO to key Games venues;
 - Reconfigure 5 km of the existing Waterfront Trail at Lynde Shores Conservation Area in Whitby; and
 - Include Indigenous markers at points of significance along the TCTO.

Overview of Trails Funding Opportunities (cont'd)

Current funding opportunities for trail organizations include:

MTCS Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund

- Provides non-capital funding to support projects that increase opportunities for physical activity in sport and recreation, embed physical literacy as a foundation for lifelong physical activity and strengthens the community sport and recreation sector by providing training in areas such as coaching, youth development, and volunteer development.

MTCS Tourism Development Fund

- Provides non-capital, project-based funding to support projects that encourage three key streams: tourism investment, tourism product development and industry capacity building.

(Fund information and application details for the two grants above can be found at www.grants.gov.on.ca.)

Ontario Trillium Foundation

- Provides capital and non-capital funding to support trail related projects.
(Grant information and application details can be found at www.otf.ca.)

Next Steps

- MTCS will continue to support trails through various grant programs.
- MTCS will continue to lead the implementation of the *Ontario Trails Act, 2016*, and the Trails Action Plan. Priorities include:

Trails Week

- The inaugural Trails Week will take place May 29, 2017 – June 4, 2017 to promote and celebrate trails.

Voluntary Trails Classification System

- In consultation with partner ministries and key stakeholders, MTCS is currently exploring options for a voluntary trail branding and classification system that could be used to promote trails as it would provide useful information for residents and visitors.



Next Steps (cont'd)

Ontario Trails of Distinction

- In consultation with partner ministries and key stakeholders, MTCS is developing options for a recognition program.

Trails Research Plan

- MTCS to release five activity-specific trail economic benefit research reports in fall/winter 2016 (i.e. mountain biking, off-road motorcycling, snowmobiling, cycling and equestrian) to trail stakeholders.
 - The report on the economic benefits of hiking was released in December 2015.
- MTCS will continue to explore opportunities to support trail research.
 - Previously supported research includes the recently released Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI) findings from a national survey conducted in 2014-2015 on trail usages which included frequency, type of activities engaged on trails and primary reason for using trails.



Questions?

