



Ontario's Trails

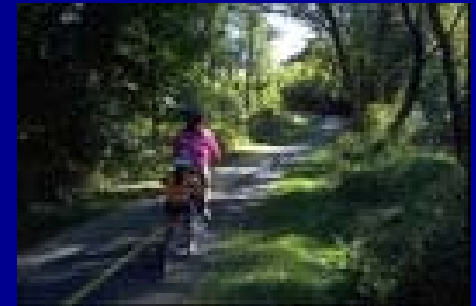
An Update from the Ministry of Health Promotion

**Presentation to Huronia Trails and
Greenway Conference**

April 14th, 2007

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The Ministry of Health Promotion's Role in Trails

- ❑ June, 2004 - given lead responsibility for:
 - Co-ordinating recreational trail issues & policy/planning matters on behalf of the Government of Ontario &
 - Leading the development of the Ontario Trails Strategy

- ❑ October, 2005 – launched the Strategy, including \$3.5 million in funding over five years for implementation

- ❑ February 2006 - established the Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee to oversee implementation of the Strategy

The Ontario Trails Strategy – A Framework for Trails

MHP led the development of the all government/all stakeholder Ontario Trails Strategy, as a framework to guide the future of Ontario trails & embrace associated health & economic benefits (an ACTIVE2010 initiative)

The Vision

A world-class system of diversified trails, planned & used in an environmentally responsible manner, that enhances the health & prosperity of all Ontarians



Core Values

- Respect private & public lands
- Protect, conserve & appreciate the environment & cultural & natural heritage features
- Provide a variety of trail opportunities in keeping with the diverse nature of Ontario's population
- Value regional differences & support local decision-making
- Adopt good planning principles & approaches



The Ontario Trails Strategy – A Framework for Trails

Key Strategic Directions

- ❑ Improve collaboration among stakeholders
- ❑ Enhance the sustainability of Ontario's trails
- ❑ Enhance the trail experience
- ❑ Educate Ontarians about trails
- ❑ Foster better health & a strong economy through trails

The Ontario Trails Strategy - Implementation Priorities

1. Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee (OTCC)
2. Trails for Life grant program
3. Trail mapping project with Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)
4. Review of Off-Road Vehicles
5. Review of Legislation Affecting Trails
6. Review of Trail Liability Issues
7. Central website for trails
8. A benchmark & monitoring process for trail participation

The Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee (OTCC)

Goal:

- ❑ To provide advice on the implementation of the Ontario Trails Strategy

Background:

- ❑ Chair – Jean Lam, ADM
- ❑ Advisor to the Minister on Trails – P.A. Peter Fonseca
- ❑ 12 ministries & 12 external stakeholders
- ❑ Scope of the Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee
 - Represents the diversity of trail stakeholders
 - Identifies potential issues & solutions affecting implementation
 - Advises on grant project priorities for years 2, 3, 4 & 5
 - Informs a network of stakeholders about implementation activities & opportunities to input to the process

Current Status:

- ❑ Met 3 times in 2006
- ❑ Next meeting scheduled for April 23, 2007

Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee - Members

External Stakeholders:

1. Trails Community – Ontario Trails Council
2. Landowners/Farmers – Ontario Federation of Agriculture
3. Tourism – Nature & Outdoor Tourism Ontario
4. Disabilities – Active Living Resource Centre for Ontarians with a Disability
5. Active Transportation – Go for Green
6. Aboriginal – TBA
7. Environment – Ontario Stewardship Program
8. Conservation Authorities - Conservation Ontario
9. Municipal – Association of Municipalities of Ontario
10. Culture – Ontario Heritage Trust
11. Resource-Based Recreation – Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters
12. Academic – Trails Study Unit, Trent University

Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee – Members (Cont'd.)

Ministries:

1. Health Promotion
2. Attorney General
3. Municipal Affairs and Housing
4. Natural Resources
5. Transportation
6. Northern Development and Mines
7. Agriculture and Food
8. Finance
9. Tourism
10. Culture
11. Public Infrastructure Renewal
12. Citizenship and Immigration

Review of Off-Road Vehicles

Goal:

- ❑ Recommendations to reduce conflicts associated with off-road vehicle (ORV) use

Background:

- ❑ Issues affecting landscapes, landowners and trail users

Current Status:

- ❑ Coordinating with MTO's response to a Coroner's inquest regarding training, public education and minimum age requirements
- ❑ Reviewed draft options paper on reducing conflicts with stakeholders in January, 2007
- ❑ Final consulting report expected by May 31, 2007
- ❑ Staff recommendations by the fall, 2007



Review of Trail Liability Issues

Goal: To address trail-related liability issues

Background:

- The Strategy indicated that MHP would:
 - Review best practices & risk management tools related to liability issues &
 - Examine education & awareness opportunities that address liability & insurance matters

- Inter-ministerial Working Group with MAG (Policy), MGS (Risk Management & Insurance Policy), FIN (Financial Services Commission of Ontario) reviewed options & ideas to address trail liability

Review of Trail Liability Issues

(Cont'd.)

- Key issues regarding trails liability & risk management include:
 - The trails sector & insurance industry lack consistent, transferable data on trail group claims history
 - The insurance-industry does not perceive trail organizations to have validated & standardized risk management practices (i.e. extent of signage)
 - Existing risk management resources have not been developed in an integrated or strategic way – difficult for insurers to assess & understand nature of sector activities
 - Focused public education and awareness campaigns are required to articulate responsibilities of trail users & volunteers of trail clubs

Review of Trail Liability Issues

(Cont'd.)

Current Status:

- ❑ As part of the Ontario Trails Strategy, MHP is undertaking activities to address trail liability and insurance issues in collaboration with other ministries and stakeholders towards minimizing liability issues within the trails community.
- ❑ MHP is working with partners to develop a trails-specific manual to help trail organizations plan and manage risks. By working in collaboration with insurers and risk managers, trail organizations' insurance needs for negotiating both coverage and premiums will be supported.
- ❑ The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) is exploring issues related to non-profit liability insurance. MCI is also addressing a range of measures aimed at creating a more supportive environment for trails volunteers in our communities.

Review of Legislation Affecting Trails

Goal:

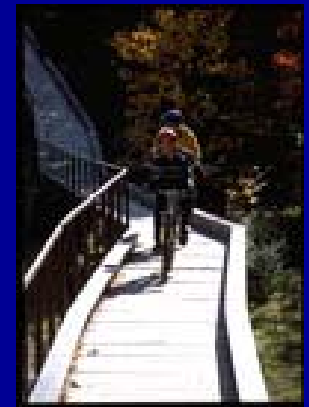
- A more supportive legislative environment for trails

Background:

- Legislation was identified as a barrier to trail development.

Current Status:

- A consultant has been retained to:
 - Review approximately 30 pieces of legislation in consultation with affected ministries (Inter-Ministerial Working Group) & external stakeholders (May/June) &
 - Identify options toward a more supportive legislative environment for trails
- MHP will prepare recommendations for change.



Review of Legislation Affecting Trails (Cont'd.)

Examples of Existing Legislation under Review

- ❑ Occupier's Liability Act
- ❑ Line Fences Act
- ❑ Motorized Snow Vehicle Act
- ❑ Trespass to Property Act
- ❑ Off-Roads Vehicle Act
- ❑ Public Lands Act
- ❑ Negligence Act

Examples of Potential New Legislation

- ❑ Ontario Trails Act
- ❑ An Act to Sustain Trails

Trails For Life Grant Program

Current Status:

- ❑ 2006/07 grant program released

- ❑ 17 successful projects are posted at:

<http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/sportandrec/trailsstrategy/grants.asp>

- ❑ 2007/08 program to be released in fall of 2007

Healthy Eating Active Living Initiative

- ❑ Partnership with the Ontario Heritage Trust for “Trails Open” to promote trail development, environmental interpretation & heritage in the province (\$100,000)
- ❑ The Active & Safe Routes to Schools Program will be supported throughout 2006-2007, including the IWALK & Spring Into Spring campaigns
- ❑ Considering five Active Transportation and Urban Design Community Workshops for community planners, engineers, designers & other professionals
- ❑ A provincial Active Transportation Roundtable (Mar 31/07) to develop a blueprint on next steps toward an Ontario Active Transportation Strategy
- ❑ WALK21 (Oct 1 – 4) – “Walkability Road Show”
- ❑ World Record Walk – Oct 3, 12:30 pm EST

Baseline Data & Monitoring Trail Participation

Goal:

- ❑ Collect baseline data on trail participation & an on-going monitoring process in support of the ACTIVE2010 physical activity goal of 55%

Background:

- ❑ August – December, 2005 - Conducted survey through Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI) to establish baseline data

Current Status:

- ❑ Baseline data established at 60%
- ❑ Target 65% by 2010
- ❑ Next survey is scheduled for September, 2007



Mapping Ontario Trails

Goal:

- ❑ Comprehensively mapped trails & publicly accessible data base with provisions for on-going updates

Background:

Lack of a central inventory of trails.

Current Status:

- ❑ MHP is working with MNR via a Memorandum of Understanding
- ❑ MNR is the project lead; MHP is responsible for policy development requirements and will provide strategic direction
- ❑ MNR has hired a consultant to conduct Phase One, a scan of mapped trails and gap analysis by end of March 2007
- ❑ In Phase 2 MNR will collect data on unmapped trails
- ❑ Considering mapping priorities (e.g. Trans Canada Trail Ontario, Greenbelt etc.)

Other Trail Activities

- ❑ Infrastructure advocacy by Minister at Federal-Provincial & Territorial Tables
- ❑ Memorandum of Understanding signed between MHP and MNR toward the completion of the Trans Canada Trail Ontario by 2010
- ❑ Discussions with MPIR on future of provincially-owned abandoned rail lines
- ❑ Working with MPIR via MMAH study on future use of hydro corridors
- ❑ Built environment – healthy communities through land-use planning and design (Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, GTA Growth Plan, Greenbelt etc.)
- ❑ Inter-ministerial Initiatives (e.g. GTA Transportation Demand Management; Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act– Standards for the Built Environment; Sustainable Transportation Summit etc.)

Contact Information

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Link to the Ontario Trails Strategy:

http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/sportandrec/A2010_TrailStrategy.pdf