



ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

Presentation by the Ministry of Health Promotion for

GREAT LAKES BEACHES AND COASTS: 2010 TO 2020

April 15, 2010

INTRODUCTION

- Update on the implementation of the Ontario Trails Strategy and its key initiatives.
- Identify challenges that confront trails in Ontario along with possible solutions.



THE ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

DEVELOPMENT AND LAUNCH OF THE STRATEGY

- The Ministry of Health Promotion is the lead ministry for trail coordination and planning matters and promotes the economic, health (physical and mental) and environmental benefits of trails.
- The Strategy is a framework with 52 action items.
- 2003 – 2005, MHP led the development of the Strategy with advice from the Minister's Advisory Committee and DWG on Trails and involved over 1,000 participants in the process.
- 2005 - Cabinet approved the Ontario Trails Strategy (with \$3.5 million over 5 years) with its vision of achieving:
"a world-class system of diversified trails planned and used in an environmentally responsible manner, which enhances the health and prosperity of all Ontarians".
- 2010 Review of the Ontario Trails Strategy.



THE ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

TRAIL CONTEXT

- Water trails (e.g. canoe routes) and land trails.
- Recreational and active transportation uses.
- Motorized (snowmobiling, ATVing, off-road motorcycling etc) and non-motorized uses (cycling, horseback riding, walking, jogging, cross-country skiing etc.).
- Trails can bring people to the waterfront year round.
- Waterfront trails link communities and attractions.
- Trails are accessible to all regions, cultures, ages and abilities.



THE ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY (CONT'D.)

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR TRAILS

National Structure

- Canadian Trails Federation – not-for-profit trail organizations.
- National Trails Coalition - Canadian Trails Federation, the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations and the Canadian Off- Highway Vehicle Distributors Council.
- A Federal-Provincial/Territorial Committee on Trails.

Provincial Structure

- Ministry of Health Promotion is lead ministry for trails coordination and planning matters.
- Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee is ADM-led (13 ministries and 11 external organizations (refer to Addendum 1).
- Directors' Working Group on Trails involves 17 ministries.
- Ontario Trails Council is the provincial trails umbrella.



THE ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

KEY TRAIL INITIATIVES OF THE STRATEGY

- Review of Legislation Affecting Trails.
- Review of Off-Road Vehicle Use.
- Trails for Life grant program 2005/06 – 2008/09 merged into the Healthy Communities Fund.
- Central website for trails through the Ontario Trails Council.
- Trail mapping through the Ministry of Natural Resources.



ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION

Ontario Trails Act (Ministry of Health Promotion)

- Request permission to develop an Ontario Trails Act.
- To develop the content for the Trails Act collaboratively with other ministries and external stakeholders.

Key Elements

- Trail definitions, categories, provincially significant trails etc;
- Trail leadership;
- Protection of public and private lands;
- Link to the Occupiers' Liability Act;
- Trail easements;
- Financial sustainability;
- Enforcement; and
- Other.

ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION (CONT'D.)

Changes to the Public Lands Act (Ministry of Natural Resources)

- Add stop and inspect provisions.
- Protect Crown lands from environmental damage.
- Require agreements for major trail events on Crown lands.

Change the Occupiers' Liability Act (Ministry of the Attorney General)

- Provide a reference to trail standards in the Act such that courts may refer to standards established by the sector as a consideration in determining liability.

Enhance the Planning Act (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing)

- Explore opportunities to enhance the Act to better foster active communities through municipal planning (e.g. active transportation considerations).

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LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION (CONT'D.)

Amend the Trespass to Property Act (Ministry of the Attorney General)

- Increase deterrents to trespass through increased fines.

POLICY PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION

Review of Relevant Transportation Legislation and Policy (Ministry of Transportation)

- Toward a more collaborative approach to trail and highway planning in Ontario.
- Consider corridors, inter-sections and over/underpasses.

Enhance the Provincial Policy Statement (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing)

- During scheduled reviews explore opportunities to better foster active transportation and access to trails through municipal planning.



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POLICY PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION (CONT'D.)

Policy on Provincially-Owned and Future Abandoned Railway Rights-of-Way (Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure)

- Permission to develop a policy to enable municipalities and not-for-profit organizations to secure and/or use existing lines for trail purposes.
- Determine a process to deal with trail interests in future abandoned rail corridors.

Review of Economic Incentives for Landowners to Allow Trails on their Properties (Ministry of Finance)

- Determine if there are feasible incentives.

ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

Other examples of the MHP's collaboration on trails

Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Memorandum of Understanding with MNR and the Trans Canada Trail in support of completing the Trans Canada Trail in Ontario
Ministry of Transportation (MTO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MHP staff sit on the MTO-led inter-ministerial working group on active transportation• Various transportation planning exercises
Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MEI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MHP presents the case for capital investment in trails
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MHP staff reviewed the Planning by Design, a Healthy Communities Guide• MHP staff are involved in the Provincial Policy Statement Review 2010
Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MHP staff provides input to MTC on trails tourism (Sobara Report)

ONTARIO TRAILS STRATEGY

KEY CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS
Collaboration and coordination at local, regional, Provincial and Federal levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalitions – a united voice • New partnerships and networks (e.g. health, research) • Champion common priorities (e.g. Trails Act, branding, signage)
Relatively weak research, policy and legislative framework for trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger policy voice for parks, beaches and waterfront trails – green infrastructure – urbanization – retrofitting – aging • Support existing proposals under consideration • Minimum liability standards and technical guidance tools for trail development and maintenance • Economic impact models that incorporate social/health benefits • A scan on water trails • Trail voices at planning tables: Review of the Ontario Trails Strategy, Official Plan policies, Review of the Provincial Policy Statement 2010, strategies affecting the Great Lakes, Lake Simcoe etc.
Lack of tools to support a quality trail system in Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Case for Trails (benefits based) – e.g. all green benefits • Guidelines for the provision of green space and active transportation (including trails)
11 Lack of secure funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workable funding models that consider all sectors

CONTACT INFORMATION

Ministry of Health Promotion

<http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/default.asp>

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Ontario Trails Strategy

<http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/active-living/recreation/trails-strategy.asp>



ADDENDUM 1: ONTARIO TRAILS COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

1. Ontario Trails Council;
2. Ontario Federation of Agriculture;
3. Nature and Outdoor Tourism Ontario;
4. Disabilities;
5. Active Transportation;
6. Wasauksing First Nation;
7. Ontario Stewardship Program;
8. Conservation Ontario;
9. Association of Municipalities of Ontario;
10. Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters; and
11. Trails Study Unit, Trent University.

MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES

1. Health Promotion;
2. Attorney General;
3. Municipal Affairs and Housing;
4. Natural Resources;
5. Transportation;
6. Northern Development, Mines and Forestry;
7. Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs;
8. Finance;
9. Tourism and Culture;
10. Energy and Infrastructure;
11. Citizenship and Immigration;
12. Ontario Heritage Trust; and
13. Ontario Provincial Police.