

**Provincial Trails Advisory Body for British Columbia (PTAB)**

**Meeting – Thursday May 11, 2017 – 8 AM to 4 PM**

**Penticton Trade and Convention Centre, Penticton**

***MINUTES***

<u>Members present</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Tennessee Trent (co-chair)	Director, Recreation Sites & Trails BC (RSTBC)
Jeremy McCall (co-chair)	Executive Director, Outdoor Recreation Council
Daniel Scott	Trails Specialist, RSTBC
Natalia Pisarek	Communications & Admin, ORC
Brian Farquhar	BC Recreation & Parks Association (BCRPA)
David Oliver	BC Wildlife Federation (BCWF)
Kirby Villeneuve	BC Parks
Scott Benton	Wilderness Tourism Association (WTA)
<u>Appointed by the Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC)</u>	
Andrew Drouin	South Okanagan Trail Alliance
Nick Heath	BC Marine Trail Network Association
Robert (Bob) Holland	Quad Riders ATV Association of BC
Tyler Kraushar	BC Snowmobile Federation
Orville Smith	Horse Council of BC
<u>Unable to attend</u>	
Allan Callander	Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI)
<u>Guest</u>	
Patrick Lucas	Founder, Aboriginal Youth Mountain Bike Program

**Welcome**

Tennessee called the meeting to order shortly after 8:30am and asked each person to introduce themselves and state their affiliation.

**1. Approval of agenda**

Jeremy explained that the agenda was put together after he invited feedback from ORC member organizations about questions and issues. Background Notes were distributed with the agenda which explained the issues. As the meeting progressed the order of certain agenda items was adjusted as indicated below to facilitate the discussion.

**Motion:** Moved & seconded (DO/JM) that the agenda be approved. **Carried.**

**2. Approval of minutes of February 16 conference call meeting**

a. Approval

**Motion:** Moved & seconded (DO/JM) That the minutes of the February 16 meeting be approved. **Carried.**

Note: Draft minutes are posted after each meeting. Follow the PTAB link on the home page of ORC's website at [www.orcbc.ca](http://www.orcbc.ca)

Bob raised a question regarding something Jeremy was quoted as saying about rail trails in the minutes of an ORC Board meeting which appeared to be at odds with statements in the February 16 minutes. Tennessee reminded those present about the "revised strategic approach" to maintaining the rail trails outlined in the letter

dated August 13, 2014, from Gary Townsend, Assistant Deputy Minister, MFLNRO. Tennessee also alluded to the asymmetrical experience of ORV owners compared to cyclists, hikers and equestrians, for example and the fact it could lead to conflict

b. Action Items and motions not included in the May 11 agenda: Either completed or well under way.

c. Business arising from the minutes: Re inviting First Nations to participate in the PTAB process. David described a presentation by John Henderson, of the Kwakiutl District Council on Northern Vancouver Island, who is going round the province to persuade people to “change their ways” towards First Nations. He suggested that Mr Henderson be invited to address a PTAB meeting. Orville also suggested Grand Chief Ed John of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council.

#### **4. First Nations’ involvement in trail planning – Guest: Patrick Lucas.**

(This item was brought forward. See Agenda Background Note for Item 4.)

Tennessee introduced Patrick and explained that the PTAB’s wants to interact with members of First Nations communities and is seeking advice on how to proceed.

Patrick is a community planner who is the Founder and Director of the Aboriginal Youth Mountain Bike Program (AYMBP). He discussed his experience working with First Nations in BC and offered advice around building relationships with indigenous communities. He said that First Nations are not homogeneous and said there is no easy answer to working with them. He had to struggle to get a rep on the AYMBP. It took five years. He also acknowledged the challenge of getting mountain biking groups to work together. Jeremy referred to efforts to form a provincial mountain biking organization. Patrick highlighted the importance of recreation clubs educating their members around First Nations’ rights. Members of the PTAB also discussed opportunities for assisting proponents around First Nations considerations when completing Section 57 applications. Tyler mentioned the importance of “giving” before “asking”! Patrick said that for some First Nations recreation is a dirty word and gave the example of parks being created without consulting local First Nations. He said user groups should be prepared to accept a “No” in response to their proposals.

Patrick was invited to prepare a “best practices” document for building relationships with First Nations communities, which could be shared with recreation groups once completed. He agreed. It was decided that ORC should lead this project and work directly with Patrick Lucas. Tennessee thanked Patrick for his contribution to the meeting.

**Motion:** Moved & seconded (DO/DS) That John Henderson of the Wildlife Stewardship Council be invited to a future PTAB meeting. **Carried.**

Orville suggested that Mr Henderson be invited by the co-chairs and that a topic be chosen and a set time allowed and that Mr Henderson’s travel costs be covered.

**Action item:** Tennessee and/or Jeremy to invite John Henderson to the next in-person meeting. David to provide Mr Henderson’s contact information.

**Motion:** Moved & seconded (TK/BH) That the PTAB develop a “best practices” document, to incorporate current best practices where known, and to facilitate the development of relationships with First Nations by trail user groups, and that the Outdoor Recreation be requested to work with Patrick Lucas on this project.

**Carried.**

**Action item:** JM to negotiate contract terms with Patrick Lucas to produce the “best practices” document.

### **3. Update on ORV Trail management sub-account – Tennessee**

This fund is the Off-Road Vehicle Trail Management Sub-account in the 2014 Off-Road Vehicle Act. It was established under the Special Accounts Appropriation & Control Act and is not subject to the Provincial Government’s fiscal year constraints. \$330,000 has now been deposited in this account. The primary funding source is the one-time ORV registration fee of \$48, less ICBC’s recovery of its costs for setting up the registration program. An administration fees is also charged when ORV registrants request an address change. Groups and individuals can also donate to the account. Funds can be carried over to later fiscal years and can accumulate interest. RSTBC is currently developing a policy document, which will guide how the account funds will be allocated and how spending decisions will be made.

Tennessee said spending authority has been delegated to RSTBC through Section 56 of the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) and the fund will be used for construction or maintenance of ORV trails and for safety and education. RSTBC is developing a policy document and has studied four other jurisdictions for guidance on allocating spending (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Washington State & BC Parks’ Park Enhancement Fund). There has already been stakeholder consultation with ATVBC, BCORMA and the BC Snowmobile Federation (Power Sports Coalition). Further consultation will begin shortly and is to be completed by December 2017.

**Action item:** TT to distribute a draft policy document for expenditures from the Off-Road Vehicle Trail Management Sub-account to PTAB when completed.

### **5. Provincial Trails Strategy – The local government perspective – Brian Farquhar**

Brian said there are 29 regional districts, 166 electoral areas, 162 municipal governments, 198 First Nations governments, and approx. 10,000 kms of trail managed by local governments. He stressed the economic value of trails as well as their health benefits. He questioned the extent to which the PTAB has the capacity to deliver the Trails Strategy and suggested it is not feasible for the PTAB to engage with so many local authorities. He said the scope and jurisdiction of the PTAB is inadequate for the task. Scott agreed, especially with the Provincial Government cutting back. Brian said the options for local governments are either to engage with the PTAB or set up a parallel organization under the BC Parks & Recreation Association. Tennessee said there is limited prospect of getting additional funding to the PTAB.

Brian reiterated his concern over the scope and jurisdiction of the PTAB relative to its capacity and he questioned the focus of RSTBC with reference to the Trail Strategy. He said the focus should either be on provincial lands, with a capacity to expand the scope, or it should continue to work on a “roll-out” of a “one-stop-shop” for all jurisdictions. Tennessee responded that he and Daniel are pursuing the components of the Trail Strategy with local governments with which they have good connections, including regional districts like the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, and they could extend those relationships. He acknowledged that various levels of government are challenged to integrate their processes and collaborate efficiently.

Tennessee asked if there could be a way for the PTAB to “roll-out” what it has done. David and Jeremy said more political support is needed for the PTAB. Orville said the local regional district questioned the lack of BC trail standards when Tabor

Mountain made a presentation to it. Tyler suggested that the PTAB recommend improved funding for itself to the provincial government and Bob suggested asking the Deputy Minister. Brian pointed out that the Trails Strategy is not about RSTBC and asked how the roll-out of the Strategy is being supported. Scott said a letter to the Deputy Minister (MFLNRO) would likely not be effective and that instead the PTAB, as a steering committee, should step back, examine the Strategy, prioritize and then send a letter recommending a solution rather than stating a problem. Jeremy suggested that a strong political champion is required. Orville agreed (Tyler suggested Jordan Sturdy). Brian suggested a resolution at the annual general meeting of the Union of BC Municipalities which could emphasize the benefits to health and wellness. Scott said it's important to have clear "ask". Jeremy said the PTAB should do some strategic planning. Brian suggested that it should improve the ability of communities to take advantage of the Rural Dividend Fund.

**Action item:** PTAB to draft recommendations for moving the Trails Strategy forward and to identify an appropriate political representative to send the recommendations to.

(Lunch Break)

#### **10. Strategy Action 13 Trails Standards & Best Practices project - Daniel**

(This item was brought forward.) Daniel reviewed his work to date. Once complete it will replace the existing trail guidelines in Chapter 10 of the Forest Recreation Manual and provide standards for motorized and non-motorized trails. An initial version was done in 2013 and that has been incorporated. Daniel has reviewed 36 documents from other jurisdictions, including the State of Minnesota which he described as "phenomenal". Parks Canada is undertaking a similar project. He expects to have a draft ready for the PTAB to review in August 2018. He expects it to run to about 300 pages and some funding will be required to publish it. Daniel mentioned the growing importance of e-bikes and described some of their characteristics. There are now electric dirt bikes.

#### **6. Proposal for local designation of trails. *Agenda Background Note for Item 6.***

Members discussed emails received from Chris Moslin, Grand Forks Community Trails Society, and Doug Zorn, Grand Forks ATV Club. The first recommended that designations for motorized and non-motorized use be put to public referendum in each local area. The second responded by saying that this question has been "overly pursued" and that all stewards should work together for the betterment of trails. Tennessee referred to the Slocan Valley Rail Trail which did go to referendum and is non-motorized but there are also 600 kms of rail trails which are outside municipalities. He also referred to the policy outlined in Assistant Deputy Minister Gary Townsend's letter (see Item 2 above) which outlined a policy of acknowledging motorized use where it exists. He said there is never a consensus and he asked how can we best measure a community's interest. There was agreement that shared use does not always work. After considerable discussion about the divisive nature of trail designation PTAB members agreed that a referendum is not the most appropriate approach to dealing with this question.

**Motion:** Moved & seconded (DO/OS) That the PTAB acknowledges the April 12 proposal of the Grand Forks Community Trails Society which advocated local designation of trails but does not support the proposed motion regarding local referendums set out in it. **Carried.**

Members agreed that local communities should be consulted but that trail networks are a public asset for all citizens of BC and management decisions should reflect that fact.

**Motion:** Moved & seconded (DO/SB) That the BC Government should define clear objectives for rail trails and develop a transparent decision-making process to include consultation with all interested groups where restrictions are proposed.

**Carried.**

**Note:** Let the record show that BC Government employees Tennessee, Daniel and Kirby abstained from voting on this motion.

**7. Issues related to trail advisory groups, using the Chilliwack Recreation Advisory Group as a case study.** *Agenda Background Note for Item 7.*

Members discussed e-mails sent by Rose Schroeder and Jack Bryceland of the Chilliwack Recreation Advisory Group (CRAG). The latter raised a number of concerns with respect to the CRAG's dealings with RSTBC and the former, while agreeing with those concerns which had been expressed previously, suggested that they have generally been addressed. However both agreed that there is a lot of paperwork necessary for Section 56 and 57 applications and that a high level of skills is necessary. PTAB members suggested that the RSTBC website be improved, that a web-form be created to facilitate applications and that an i-map process might be useful when using the environmental "screening tool". Tennessee acknowledged that RSTBC has streamlined some processes in the Chilliwack area which may require a more formal approach by applicants than in other areas. They have also produced an excellent Power Point presentation for Section 56 & 57 applications though it needs to be edited.

**Motion:** Moved & seconded (TK/BH) That the PowerPoint presentation for Section 56 & 57 applications be edited and that it be distributed to user groups. **Carried.**

ORC can distribute it to its member organizations and post it on the ORC website.

**Action Item:** Tennessee to arrange for the Section 57 PowerPoint to be edited.

**8. Proposal that the PTAB not be a substitute for provincial trail organizations in Natural Resource Roads Act consultations.** *Agenda Background Note for Item 8.*

Members discussed an email from the BC Off-Road Motorcycling Association (BCORMA) regarding stakeholder consultation for the Natural Resource Roads Act (NRRA). BCORMA was concerned that the BC Government might consider the PTAB to be its primary consultation point for outdoor recreation. Members agreed that the PTAB should not be speaking for user groups. The PTAB should be apprised of developments and will participate in the consultation process, but user groups should represent their own interests regarding the NRRA.

**Action item:** Inform BCORMA that the PTAB does not consider it should speak for trail user groups with respect to consultations about the Natural Resource Roads Act.

**9. RSTBC dealings with stakeholder trail organizations which may be affected in specific situations e.g. Back Country Horsemen of B.C. in South Chilcotin.**

*Agenda Background Note for Item 9.*

A letter was received from Brian Wallace, President of the Back Country Horsemen of BC (BCHBC), expressing concern that the BCHBC was not being informed about discussions regarding a memorandum of understanding between the Bridge River

Valley Community Trail Association (BRVCTA) and local First Nations for trails in the Bridge River Valley. The BCHBC letter also listed other concerns about trails in the South Chilcotin. After a brief discussion members were unable to provide any useful advice for BCHBC. Tennessee confirmed that RSTBC has not received any trail applications in the Bridge River area. One member suggested that the BCHBC join the BRVCTA.

**11. Trail Strategy Action 12 – Preliminary list of funding sources – Natalia**

Natalia is gathering information about funding sources for trails and recreation. The list is being compiled. It is a work in progress.

**12. Other Trail Strategy Actions – Reports on progress or developments**

There are no current updates regarding other Strategy Actions at this time.

**13. Proposal for a dedicated PTAB website and PTAB communications – Natalia**

Currently, PTAB information is posted on the RSTBC website and on separate pages on ORCs website. Members discussed options for creating a separate PTAB website, but since the Trails Strategy is a provincial initiative some suggested it should be a BC Government website. Members agreed to gather more information around government requirements before moving forward. Natalia estimated that it would cost between \$800 and \$1,200 to set up a new website.

**Action item:** Tennessee to confirm what requirements are in place for government websites.

**14. Developing a working relationship with Destination BC**

Members discussed opportunities for establishing a mutually beneficial working relationship with Destination BC. Tennessee reminded members that RSTBC is a land manager and not a tourism promoter. However, RSTBC has a rural diversification mandate and a working relationship with Destination BC is possible within that context. Members also discussed the importance of responsible tourism promotion that considers impacts on the environment and other users. Daniel pointed to overcrowding in some recreation areas due to over-promotion.

**Action item:** Jeremy to invite a representative from Destination BC to the next in-person PTAB meeting.

**15. Formation of a Park Issues Committee by ORC and interested member organizations**

Jeremy provided an update on this initiative. ORC is currently in the process of establishing a Park Issues Committee to resolve various trail access issues. Two prominent cases include the Singing Pass Trail to Garibaldi Provincial Park near Whistler and the Backcountry Access Corridor (BAC) in Cypress P.P. Andrew suggested that Jeremy look into the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society and their access committees. In the future, there may be an opportunity to form access coalitions across the province.

**16. E-bikes in BC Parks**

See also Item 5 in May 10, 2015 minutes. Daniel provided an update about the provincial e-bike policy. He has reviewed various jurisdictions as well as different e-bike technologies. E-bike technology is rapidly improving and diversifying. Daniel also pointed out that the US Bureau of Land Management has designated e-bikes as motorised. Daniel is currently writing a draft policy document for BC.

**17. National Trails Coalition – Updating the December 2010 Canadian Trails Study**

Information item only. Jeremy said that a national trails study was completed in 2010 to tie in with the federal trail funding program administered through the National Trails Coalition. Errors were found with the statistics in BC as well as other provinces. The purpose of the update to the Canadian Trails Study is to improve the classification of trails across Canada.

**18. Round Table – New or emerging issues in public recreation that PTAB should be aware of or comment on**

Members discussed emerging issues. Tennessee explained that the Rural Dividend Fund will be extended into the next 5 years. This fund has \$20 million per year to allocate for rural diversification of communities with populations below 30,000.

Andrew discussed opportunities for working with retailers around public education and ethical recreation since retailers are an important touch point. Kirby provided an update on the BC Parks Strategy.

**19. Upcoming events and meetings of interest – Trailhead Canada 2017 – A national trails conference to celebration Canada’s Sesquicentennial – Ottawa – November 22 - 23 2017 - <https://trailheadcanada.com/home/>**

Currently there is minimal representation from British Columbia and Jeremy is looking for speakers from BC to attend the conference. Tennessee and Daniel expressed interest but explained that it is difficult to get funding authorized for out-of-province trips. Daniel suggested inviting Patrick Lucas to speak at the conference.

**Action item:** Jeremy to organize a speaker from BC to attend Trailhead Canada.

**20. Schedule next meeting and adjourn**

The next meeting will be by conference call in September after Labour Day. A Doodle Poll will be required.

**Action item:** Tennessee to send out a Doodle Poll for next meeting in July or August.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3.30 PM.

As approved  
Oct. 17/17  
np/jm