

**Provincial Trails Advisory Body (PTAB)
Conference Call Meeting - Tuesday May 10, 2016**

MINUTES

<u>Members present</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
John Hawkings (co-chair)	Director, Recreation Sites & Trails BC (RSTBC)
Jeremy McCall (co-chair)	Executive Director, Outdoor Recreation Council
Tennessee Trent	RSTBC
Brian Farquhar	BC Recreation & Parks Association (BCRPA)
David Oliver	BC Wildlife Federation (BCWF)
Evan Loveless	Wilderness Tourism Association (WTA)
<u>Appointed by the Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC)</u>	
Andrew Drouin	Central Okanagan Trail Alliance
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)
Nick Heath	BC Marine Trail Network Association
Kirby Villeneuve	BC Parks

Welcome: John called the meeting to order at 3 PM

1. Approval of agenda

The Agenda was approved with the addition of Item 8A: Enhancing public access to privately owned wild lands.

2. Review of minutes of February 18 meeting

The Action Items in the February 18 minutes were reviewed:

- Action Item 2: Brian agreed to distribute the draft resolution proposed by the Association of Vancouver Island Communities (AVIC). He had done so but it was not circulated so he agreed to forward it again for distribution.
- Component 10 of the Trails Strategy: See Agenda Item 4 below
- Component 12: Andrew to distribute a list of funding sources. Andrew agreed to provide it immediately, which he did. It was then distributed to all members after the meeting.
- Component 13: Development of trail standards. No further progress. The possibility of employing a contractor was discussed.
- Component 7: ORC to post a link to the *Application Information & Guidelines for Trails and Recreation Facilities* on the PTAB pages of the ORC website (to be checked). John said the RSTBC website is being restructured.
- Components 1 & 2: ORC to post a link to the Environmental Screening Tool developed by Shuswap Trail Alliance in conjunction with RSTBC. (to be checked)
- Trail funding opportunities: John to distribute information about the Rural Dividend Fund. Complete.

3. Approval of minutes of February 18 meeting

Motion: Moved & seconded (DO/OS). That the minutes of the February 18 meeting be approved. **Motion carried.** These minutes will be posted on the PTAB pages on the ORC website at www.orcbc.ca

4. **Sub-committee updates on Trails Strategy Actions**

Component 10 - Enhance recreation opportunities by reducing liability risk to land owners and groups responsible for managing trails: Tennessee reported that he is developing a memo to standardize the information about the Occupier's Liability Act (OLA) for the public. It is being reviewed by two lawyers, one of which is with the BC Government. John said there have been more lawsuits including one related to river rafting and none regarding an injury from a fallen tree. He said the Crown is frequently named as a co-defendant and that the Act has held up in the cases to date.

Brian pointed out that occupiers (e.g. landowners), even if not held liable, frequently incur significant legal costs to defend their position, so they are not necessarily persuaded to rely on the OLA. John and Tennessee emphasized that more education is needed.

Action item: Tennessee to distribute the OLA memo as soon as it is completed.

Component 9 - Improve legislation, regulations and policy to manage motorized use and enhance opportunities for motorized trail users: Tennessee said that brochures and signage will be developed to reflect the Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Act. John referred to the confusion surrounding ORV insurance requirements, especially with respect to the distinction between highways and trails. It was agreed that there will not be any changes resulting from the proposed Natural Resource Roads Act for two years.

Component 13 – Consolidate existing trail standards, guidelines and best practices and ensure they are communicated: Jeremy acknowledged that no further action had been taken since the previous meeting. He again suggested that the Alberta Trail Classification System be used as a basis and that a contractor be employed to develop a BC system. John said that RSTBC's budgeting for the current year is still being developed.

5. **Distinction between motorized and non-motorized bikes in different riding areas (i.e. electric assist mountain bikes vs. dirt bikes)**

Tennessee said that two Recreation Officers had brought up the issue of whether electrical assisted bicycles should be treated as motorized or non-motorized. He also said that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management had conducted a thorough review and determined that they should be treated as motorized. Andrew said that the South Okanagan Trail Alliance banned motor assisted bicycles from its trails, though he did not think they should be because there is no difference from an erosion standpoint and the wheels do not spin. Orville said the Motor Vehicle Act defines motorized as powered by internal combustion. He agreed with Andrew. Tennessee said there could be potential for conflict due to the speed differential. Brian said that the capital Regional District allows them on the galloping Goose Trail, which is paved, but he acknowledged that there is a potential for conflict. Evan suggested that allowing motor assisted bicycles would be a "slippery slope" because of the potential for more powerful motors in future. Brian said the only clear way to distinguish between them is either motorized or non-motorized, which makes it easier to apply any regulation. Jeremy reminded members that the Federation of Mountain Clubs advocates "self-propelled" recreation. Brian agreed that does provide a clear distinction for an emerging technology.

John suggested that the PTAB develop guidelines in which the distinction would be described as an emerging issue and the various considerations would be discussed.

Action item: Develop guidelines as proposed by John.

6. Environmental impacts of different forms of recreation:

Tennessee introduced the topic by saying that there is often a difference between opinion and the facts of any given situation, and that the impacts are often perceived to be greater than what they actually are. RSTBC has two relevant documents: *Best practices for summer outdoor recreation* and *Back country wildlife considerations*. He agreed to circulate links to the two documents. Evan also referred to *Back Country Guidelines* and agreed to circulate these.

Action items: Tennessee to distribute links to the two documents referred to above. Evan to circulate *Back Country Guidelines* (done).

7. Rural Dividend update

John reviewed the criteria for the Rural Dividend Fund, including the size of communities eligible being limited to 25,000 and the fact that any project funded must be linked to the community. Tennessee said there so far there have been applications for a rail trail in Midway and from Bella Coola. Evan said that Cumberland may apply.

8. Share the Trails Workshop, Salmon Arm: Tennessee gave the highlights from the Share the Trails Workshop which was sponsored by the Horse Council of BC and ORC and hosted in conjunction with the Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA). Other PTAB members who attended were Orville and Andrew. This was a one and a half day workshop in Salmon Arm with indoor sessions on Friday May 6 and outdoor activities on Saturday May 7. Indoor sessions included a talk on conflict resolution by a consultant in that field, presentations from three trail user groups (Chilliwack Recreation Advisory Group, Taber Mountain Recreation Society and the STA), followed by a panel discussion. In the afternoon the STA and local First Nations gave a joint presentation, a representative of the International Mountain Biking Association of Canada (IMBA) gave a presentation on its goals and education programs, based on certain physical, social and political pillars. Tennessee provided an update for RSTBC and Lyle Knight of MFLNRO gave an update on the Natural Resource Roads Act. The indoor sessions ended with round table discussion of several questions related to the day's programs.

On the Saturday the STA arranged for attendees to visit local hiking and biking trails and to experience interactions between equestrians, hikers and mountain bikers. Tennessee commented on the great work being done by the STA with the Shuswap First Nation. He also said there had not been enough time to discuss some of the challenging issues facing groups today. Apparently Phil McIntyre Paul of the STA would like BC's leading trail user groups to get together to discuss these so there is clearly a need for a follow-up workshop. John suggested that there is a need for provincial and national trail conferences and Orville referred to the second question address by the round tables, i.e. what issues should the staff of RSTBC focus their limited energies on?

Possible action item: The PTAB should develop a proposal for a provincial trails workshop or conference.

Brian said he had attended the recent Canadian Parks Summit in Canmore, which was a meeting of parks and recreation representatives from across Canada. He said that a national parks and open spaces conference is being planned for March 2017 in Banff, but it is not a trails conference.

8A. Enhancing public access to privately owned wild lands.

Jeremy described the long standing concern of several of ORC's member organizations at the difficulty of accessing private forest lands, especially on Vancouver Island. For example, those wishing to fish in lakes on the Island could only do so when subjected to extremely restrictive and sometime costly conditions imposed by the forest companies. In 2015 ORC requested the Environmental Law Centre at UVic to review examples experienced by ORC's members and others and to research possible solutions based on experience in other jurisdictions, including the U.S and European countries. The ELC had agreed to allocate students to take on this project. Its report was delivered to ORC on March 8. The report is now posted on ORC's website and Jeremy agreed to distribute it to PTAB members.

Action item: Jeremy to distribute the ELC report on enhancing forest access..

9. Next meeting and adjournment

The next meeting will likely be a face-to-face meeting and may be scheduled for mid-September. Richmond seems to be the most convenient location. Daniel Scott, RSTBC's recently recruited trails specialist, will be invited to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4.20 PM.

As approved
Sep. 22/16/16
jm
