

BC's Provincial Trail Advisory Body (PTAB)

Backgrounder

May 28, 2015

A key component of the *Trails Strategy for British Columbia*, which was published by the Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRO) in May 2013, is **Action 21**, which reads as follows:

“Establish a provincial trail advisory body to provide advice on the implementation of the Trails Strategy and the BC Trail Program. The advisory body will:

- *Assist government in ensuring that implementation is consistent with the intent of the Trails Strategy;*
- *Advise government of any recommended improvements to the Trails Strategy such as through a formal review every two years; and*
- *Provide a collaborative forum for the many trails organizations and interests to help ensure that the Trails Strategy continues to meet the needs of all trail users.”*

The full text of the *Trails Strategy for British Columbia* can be viewed at:

http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca/documents/Trail_Strategy%20for_BC.pdf

Initial steps

In May 2014 the Recreation Sites and Trails Branch (RSTBC) of MFLNRO took the initial step towards establishing the PTAB and published *Recommendations for a Provincial Trail Advisory Body*. This document was presented to members of the Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC) at their Annual General Meeting in June 2014. According to the *Recommendations* document, the PTAB could play a key role in:

- Advising government on trails planning and management;
- Prioritizing trail strategy actions;
- Helping to resolve provincial issues in trails management by providing input to the Province from a trail user and stakeholder perspective;
- Advising on trails funding priorities;
- Providing a forum for the exchange of information and help to resolve disputes between stakeholders and with government;
- Participating in public events and announcements related to trails in BC;
- Expanding partnerships for trail management;
- Sharing expertise, opinions and knowledge between trail groups; and
- Reducing institutional and legislative barriers to achieving the objectives of the trails strategy.

Membership in the PTAB

Following extensive discussions between RSTBC, ORC and other organizations and agencies, it was decided that the membership of the PTAB should initially consist of 13 members, including three Executive Committee members, two sector representatives, five

persons representing public outdoor recreation, two provincial government agencies and a regional government representative.

The five public outdoor recreation seats on the PTAB are held by individuals nominated by ORC's province-wide member organizations and appointed by ORC's Executive Board of Directors. Those individuals, together with two members appointed by the BC Wildlife Federation and the Wilderness Tourism Association, represent the broad interests of public recreational trail user groups. ORC's Executive Director is also a member and co-chair.

Agencies with membership in the PTAB are Recreation Sites & Trails BC (2 members). BC Parks, the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure and the BC Parks & Recreation Association. Inclusion of other appropriate agencies and NGOs is also being considered.

The Executive Committee is formed from the following members of the PTAB:

- RSTBC – Co-Chair
- ORC Executive Director – Co-Chair
- RSTBC - Executive Director

Qualifications for the ORC appointees

As well as being a member in good standing of a Provincial Group Member of ORC each applicant for nomination was requested to meet the following criteria:

- Have the time and willingness to commit to meetings and other PTAB activities;
- Have a high interest and knowledge of trails in BC;
- Be interested in more than one trails-related activity and demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the views of multiple user groups;
- Have a history of collaborating with groups having a variety of interests and working for the greater good of the trails community;
- Have an interest in public policy issues;

PTAB governance and Terms of Reference

The PTAB will follow Terms of Reference, which have been developed by the Executive Committee in conjunction with the members of the PTAB. The Terms of Reference can be viewed at [Link](#) and are subject to approval at the next meeting of the PTAB.

PTAB meeting schedule and agenda setting

The PTAB will meet initially three to four times per year. Based on available funding, ideally two meetings will be face-to-face in various locations throughout BC. The remaining meetings will use conference call or video conferencing. Face-to-face meetings will likely include a full day to make best use of the opportunity and travel costs.

Term of service of appointees

Representatives will serve for either two or three year terms, subject to a maximum of two terms.

Compensation of appointees

Subject to available government funding, positions on the body not supported by public funds will have their travel expenses reimbursed to attend committee meetings, but an honorarium will not be paid.

Communications

Consistent with Provincial government direction, the PTAB will maintain a high level of transparency. It is anticipated that issues addressed by the body will be of concern and interest to the broad spectrum of recreation users, both affiliated and non-affiliated.

jm
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