

BEST PRACTICES

For Increasing Trail Usage by Hikers and Walkers

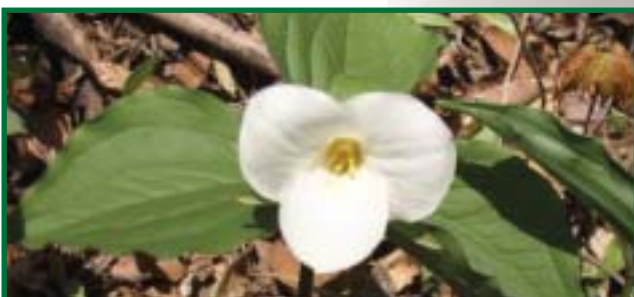


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About Hike Ontario



Throughout the years Hike Ontario has had one goal – to encourage walking, hiking and trail development in Ontario.

Established in 1974, Hike Ontario is a non-profit, charitable organization governed and operated by volunteers. We are the sole provider of province-wide hiking information and services. Hike Ontario is also unique amongst Canada's provinces and territories in many of the services it provides to this province's hiking associations and citizens. Eighty-five percent of Canadians walk for leisure and recreation. Thus, Hike Ontario acts as the voice for over 10 million hikers and walkers in Ontario.

Hike Ontario recognizes and supports trails throughout Ontario and appreciates that every trail is unique. Every trail can't be all things to all people but all trails can play beneficial roles. Trails play roles in the economy, play roles in the environment and perhaps most importantly, play roles in our health.

While Hike Ontario recognizes the diversity of trails and trail uses, our focus is on the representation and promotion of pedestrian based trails and their benefits, focusing specifically on connectivity, economics, education, environmental, health, heritage, recreation and transportation.

Hike Ontario does not make or maintain trails, nor does it offer organized hiking/walking events, except through its member associations. Hike Ontario is the umbrella organization that provides these province-wide associations with resources and services to build on these long-established local and regional initiatives in a way in which complements and enhances them.

Our core objectives:

- To encourage walking for recreation, transportation and health
- To encourage and facilitate trail development for walking and hiking throughout Ontario
- To encourage good trail maintenance and hiking practices and the enhancement and quality of the walking experience
- To encourage and facilitate the development of trail building hiking clubs in Ontario
- To act as an advocate for a club or clubs when requested or when an initiative is deemed necessary
- To encourage education and research into the health benefits and other aspects of recreational walking
- To encourage conservation and appreciation of the natural environment
- To maintain and disseminate information on hiking and hiking trails

Our core programs:

- Advocacy and Government Relations
- Hike Leader Certification Program

- Insurance Provision and Risk Management
- Young Hikers Program
- Long Distance Awards Program
- Annual Hike Ontario Summit
- Sponsor of Ontario Hiking Week
- Partnerships and Linkages

Program Descriptions:

Advocacy and Government Relations: Hike Ontario is an active voice and resource to our government partners in the Ontario trails community. We play a lead role in promoting, educating about and advocating pedestrian trail experiences through an active presence at local, regional, provincial and national trail events. We do this through strategic planning processes, active communications, conference and workshop participation, information distribution, special events and educational campaigns.

Hike Leader Certification Program: Hike Ontario has developed standards and training programs for Hike Leaders that are used by our member clubs, community colleges, universities, activity clubs and outdoor training organizations for course delivery. Currently, Hike Ontario offers Standard Hike Leader, Youth Hike Leader and Wilderness Day Hike Leader certification courses.

Insurance Provision and Risk Management: Hike Ontario works diligently with its trail partners and insurance providers to provide the best possible policy conditions to suit the needs of its trail clubs. This in turn is working towards managing for safe and sustainable trails systems throughout Ontario for the pleasure of walkers and hikers. Hike Ontario plays a key role in risk management through our dedication to pursuing best practices, sound advice and proactively engaging in and encouraging safe practices and education.

Young Hikers Program: The Young Hikers Program aspires to introduce youth to the joys and benefits of hiking, through a variety of mediums such as Activity Resource Kit, Provincial Youth Advisory Committee, Youth Hike Leader Certification, Youth Risk Management Training and youth volunteer opportunities.

Long Distance Awards Program: Hike Ontario has a mandate to encourage hiking for all ages and all athletic levels throughout Ontario. The Long Distance Hiker Awards celebrate dedicated hikers who have logged long distances on multiple Ontario trails. Hike Ontario offers three long distance hiking awards; the Red Pine Award for 550 kms, the Trillium Award for 900 kms and the Tamarack Award for 1500 kms.

Annual Hike Ontario Summit: Held annually in October, our Summit is a weekend long event that features timely workshops, presentations, award presentations, guest speakers, and a full schedule of invigorating hikes.

Sponsor of Ontario Hiking Week: Every year in late September, Hike Ontario sponsors Ontario Hiking Week, encouraging people of all ages to get out and hike the many trails of this beautiful province. Ontario Hiking Week demonstrates the many faces of hiking and walking - as a recreational activity that's low impact, affordable to all, and promotes environmental sustainability and ecological awareness.

Partnerships and Linkages: Hike Ontario has formed and sustains strong ties with both government and non-governmental partners related to pedestrian trails. We strive to represent the interests of all hikers and walkers, trail clubs and all pedestrian based trail interests throughout Ontario. Hike Ontario represents the interests of hikers and walkers on the Ontario Trails Council (OTC) Board of Directors and the through a nominated representative to the Hike Canada En Marche Board of Directors.

Introduction to the Best Practices Manual



In October 2005, the Ontario Government launched the Ontario Trails Strategy - a long term plan that established directions for planning, managing, promoting and using trails in Ontario, and that directly supported ACTIVE 2010 - an initiative to increase physical activity and participation in sport by all Ontarians. These strategies seek to increase awareness and trail use by Ontarians, to provide information to trail users and potential trail users, to improve accessibility and safety on the trails, and to promote an active and healthy life style.

In the spring of 2006 Hike Ontario received a grant from the Trails for Life funding program to develop a 'Manual of Best Practices to Increase Trail Use by Hikers and Walkers in Ontario'. Hike Ontario then engaged in researching and collecting data on strategies, methods and opportunities for increasing use of trails by walkers and hikers.

Many organizations have expressed interest in creating pedestrian footpaths and organizing hiking and walking activities to pique people's desire for healthy, inexpensive, and accessible activities on them.

It is expected that this Guide will be useful to a wide audience:

- Hiking and Walking organizations
- Parks and Recreation staff
- Conservation Area & Parks staff
- Municipalities
- A broad range of Special Interest groups (Health Units, Resorts, private landowners)
- Trail Builders, and more

If this audience includes your group, then this Guide will be useful to you. It focuses on five major strategies, and their component steps, that have proven successful, to help groups put the necessary structures in place for planning and managing pedestrian trails and activities to increase the number of Ontarians who participate in walking and hiking for exercise, health, entertainment, or active transportation.

Development of the 'Best Practices'

The five 'best practices' discussed in this Guide were adapted from strategies found to be successful by other individuals and organizations that have planned and managed trails and activities using them. Their experiences were solicited and many were interviewed. Their success stories, along with others researched in print and Internet sources, were then presented and discussed at a workshop of experienced hikers and trail builders at Hike Ontario's Annual General Meeting in October, 2006. The outcomes of those discussions were organized, analyzed and consolidated into the five 'Best Practices' described in this Guide.

The method used for determining the successful strategies is described more fully in Appendix 2 of the Guide.

Food for Thought

The term 'Best Practices' implies that there are agreed-upon and measurable standards against which other programs can be evaluated. The term also implies that there has been an extensive assessment of all the methods and programs that increase trail use.

However, within the broad range of human activity, planning and organizing hiking and walking would not be considered rigorously defined disciplines, nor would trail building and maintenance. These activities may be said to be practiced by individuals in diverse organizations, trained in a multiplicity of disciplines.

Thus, 'best practices' could be considered, for purposes of this document, to represent success stories – success in increasing participation in these activities in varying locations and among diverse groups, and success in building and maintaining pedestrian trails which are accessible and attractive to users.

Purpose of the Guide

Guiding Principles

For both the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Hike Ontario the guiding principles for increasing pedestrian trail use in Ontario's trails are:

Promote Good Health

- Advance the recognition and importance of hiking and walking as fundamental and inexpensive routes toward optimal health for all;
- Increase activity in walking and hiking by population groups - particularly those known to be less active;
- Increase available information about pedestrian trails; and
- Increase access to pedestrian based trails, including access by individuals with disabilities.

Encourage Hiking and Walking

- Enhance community based opportunities for walking, whether for recreation or active transportation;
- Increase the practice of pedestrian trail use by all Ontarians;
- Attract visitors from other provinces and countries as part of a viable, sustainable tourist industry in which those natural resources enjoyed by walking and hiking and accessible by pedestrian trails are key; and
- Increase support for and membership in Trail clubs and organizations that build and maintain the extensive system of pedestrian trails throughout Ontario, that organize and promote hiking activities, and train hike leaders.

Enhance Environmental Awareness and Conservation

- Increase opportunities for appreciation of the environment;

- Increase protected environmental areas - the ecosystems which sustain Ontario’s animal, bird, fish and human habitats;
- Present opportunities for education to take place in natural “classrooms and laboratories” – the living environment through which pedestrian trails, ideally, pass;
- Incorporate historical landmarks into urban and rural pedestrian trail systems to further appreciation of the province’s heritage.

Anticipated Outcomes

For Government, the benefits of increased numbers of individuals who participate in walking and hiking, at all stages of life, are quantifiable over time in terms of a healthier population, and reducing or containing health costs as the population of Ontario ages and grows.

An increased tourism industry attracting greater numbers of people from all over the world, will have a significant economic benefit, as will protection of natural environmental areas that provide the basis for eco-tourism of which hiking is an integral activity.

For individuals who walk and hike, the benefits are quantifiable in good health and enjoyment of life.

For Hike Ontario, success will be evident in increasing numbers and segments of the population using hiking and walking trails, in increasing membership in Hiking/Walking trail clubs, and in expanded networks of pedestrian trails throughout Ontario.

How to Use the Guide

Each of the five ‘Best Practices’ is included in a stand-alone section in this Guide.

Each section includes a:

- SNAPSHOT:** an overview of what will be covered in each section
- OBJECTIVES:** what the Best Practice strives to achieve
- BIG PICTURE:** provides details of the strategies necessary to achieving the Best Practice
- CASE STUDIES:** cross-referenced case studies that demonstrate the Best Practice in action

The five best practices follow a natural progression. The first two focus on laying the foundation – enhancing the trail experience through planning, designing, and building new trails (or improving existing ones), and planning organized and non-organized activities on the trails for which collaboration with key stakeholders must be in place.

The third practice deals with getting to the right people – targeting population groups that might benefit from the planned activities and finding out their needs and barriers. The fourth practice is about marketing the experience, and the fifth deals with evaluating the programs and modifying them to achieve even greater success.

Tools and strategies are further outlined for achieving the goals of increasing trail use by walkers and hikers in Ontario through the best practice categories and case studies referenced as examples of putting these theories into practice.

The five Best Practices are described in detail with reference to the sources for further investigation where relevant to specific planning situations.

Since a great many trails and footpaths already exist in Ontario, the starting points will differ for various groups that are planning to increase pedestrian trail use. Hence, the Best Practices, as presented in this Guide, should not be considered sequential. Nonetheless, they do present a series of strategic components which may be useful as a checklist, retrospectively, for ensuring ongoing success of both trails and the activities on them.

Five 'Best Practices' for Increasing Trail Usage by Walkers and Hikers

In the absence of evidence-based and measurable outcomes with a scientific method of evaluating those outcomes, an attempt has been made to identify “best practices” that have been effective in increasing walking and hiking and pedestrian trail use, based on the collective experience of professionals and volunteers working in this field. The “case studies”, which were provided in response to the interviews and research, are contained in Appendix One.

In data gathered for this project, five “Best Practices” emerged as essential for increasing trail use by walkers and hikers in Ontario:

The Five Best Practices

1. Collaborate

- a) Trail Planning, Development and Management
- b) Dialogue with Partners and Trail Users
- c) Develop Strong Linkages & Partnerships Across Various Sectors
- d) Develop Collaborative Strategies

2. Enhance the Trail Experience

- a) Great Trails
- b) Great Activities
- c) Great Trail Users

3. Target Specific Population Groups

- a) Older adults
- b) Children & youth
- c) Girls & women
- d) Low income families
- e) People with disabilities
- f) Visible minorities

4. Market the Experience

- a) Develop and commit to a public relations plan
- b) Brand your trail or experience
- c) Provide clear and accurate trail information
- d) Create a website providing easy access to current information and virtual experiences
- e) Establish mutually beneficial marketing relationships
- f) Make friends with the media

5. Evaluate and Modify the Program

- a) Develop measurable indicators of success
- b) Evaluate
- c) Analyze the results
- d) Modify program(s) to overcome barriers and achieve objectives

The Five Best Practices



Best Practice #1: COLLABORATE

Snapshot

It is important to recognize that in order to increase trail use by walkers and hikers, it is necessary to form successful and appropriate partnerships. This is especially important when attempting to target non-traditional demographics. Trails, their use and their management heavily rely on successful collaborative efforts for maintenance, growth and the provision of quality experiences.

Objectives

- Bring trail interests together to communicate and resolve issues;
- Understand the needs, desires, and characteristics of potential trail users, the barriers that might prevent trail use, and opportunities that encourage their use;
- Develop strategic and operational plans for trail development;
- Secure sufficient funding, in kind and volunteer contributions; and
- Establish and maintain effective trail management organizations.

Big Picture

The following are the **strategies** that can guide in collaborating appropriately to increase trail use amongst hikers and walkers.

- a) Trail Planning, Development and Management Practices
- b) Dialogue with partners and trail users
- c) Develop strong linkages and partnerships across various sectors
- d) Develop collaborative strategies

A) Trail Planning, Development and Management Practices

Good trail planning, development, and management practices ultimately result in good trails and increased trail use. Great trails and trail activities are only possible if they are supported by adequate capacity and resources and are planned and implemented well. Some of the factors that may prevent development of good trails are:

- Lack of community will and leadership;
- Lack of community and government support;
- Insufficient human and financial resources;
- Lack of communication, and conflicts between stakeholders; and
- No or ineffective organization.

To overcome the challenge of lack of community will and leadership, and community and government support, a 'community of practice' that will underlie development and increased use of trails must be created to:

- Foster the appreciation and value of trails;
- Engage the community to develop strong support;
- Bring trail interests together to communicate and resolve issues;
- Develop strong partnerships;
- Develop strategic and operational plans for trail development;
- Secure sufficient funding and 'in kind' and volunteer contributions; and
- Establish and maintain effective trail management organizations.

A review of the responses during the research phase of this project yielded the following observations about trail planning, development and management:

Leadership and Governance

The essential elements of the successful trail experience. The full potential of innovative ideas and programs will not be realized unless there are individuals and organizations that can effectively lead and implement projects through capacity building, good resource management, collaboration and strong partnerships. Taking time to identify, develop, support, and empower competent and motivated individuals and organizations at the provincial, regional and community levels to lead trail initiatives is time well spent.

Promotion and Advocacy

It is important to have provincial organizations such as Hike Ontario and the Ontario Trails Council promoting and advocating for opportunities while, at the same time, working with other trail interests and organizations to insure "a world class system of diversified trails, planned and used in an environmentally responsible manner, that enhances the health and prosperity of all Ontarians". This goal of the Ontario Trails Strategy, the strategy itself and the process of developing the strategy represent "best practices" that will ultimately increase trail use.

Foster Communications to Resolve Issues and Plan Strategically

Community and regional management organizations that bring together all trail Interests in common dialogue and to promote goodwill and awareness of each other's needs and desires, to resolve issues, and to plan together for trail development and use is an effective means of achieving the Trail Strategy goal.

Partner with Other Stakeholders

Historically, pedestrian trail users at the community level have been reluctant to form organizations to promote, advocate and protect their interests. With the formation of community and regional management organizations, it is more important than ever that walkers and hikers organize to have an equal voice at the table to ensure that the opportunities for walking and hiking continue to increase. Local organizations are stronger and have access to more resources if they join provincial organizations such as Hike Ontario and the Ontario Trails Council.

Build Capacity

Organizations and communities must create pedestrian trails and trail activities that will attract and serve more trail users. Capacity building involves securing adequate financial and human resources, fostering community support, and forming creative partnerships. It is critical that all levels of governments invest in trails and physical activity programs.

B) Dialogue with Partners and Trail Users

It is very important to ensure open and continued dialogue with partners and trail users. This communication can foster appreciation and provide forums for input and ideas sharing. It is important to:

- Bring trail interests together to communicate and resolve issues;
- Understand the needs, desires, and characteristics of potential trail users, the barriers that might prevent trail use, and opportunities that encourage their use;
- Hold regular events and meetings with partners and trail users; and
- Utilize newsletters and publications to inform.

C) Develop Strong Linkages across Various Sectors

Partnerships are the key to successful trails. Some important considerations with partnerships and trails are:

- Ensure strong community support, engagement and leadership;
- Dedicate adequate time and resources to engage target organizations, and group leaders to build meaningful partnerships;
- Develop partnerships with agencies and organizations that serve target groups – Health, Education, Cultural Communities, Special Interest Groups such as seniors, people with disabilities, mothers, children and youth, etc;
- Partner with public and private Sectors to develop and promote hiking and walking experiences and packages for Tourists; and
- Encourage and facilitate the forming of hiking and walking organizations to promote, advocate and protect their interests.

D) Develop Collaborative Strategies

It is important to include and collaborate with partners though all stages of trail use planning. In trying to diversify trail use, a strategic and collaborative approach is key.

- Promote use of trails through Health and School programs, organizations that serve different cultural communities, and special interest groups;
- Identify and promote trail activities that are specific for each target group;
- Plan, organize, implement, sustain trail events showcasing unique cultural, natural, and historical features that will engage the target group and others.

Case Studies: COLLABORATION

Case Study	Case Study Number
Hike Leader Certification	3.24
Lanark Trail Corporation	1.2
Hike Leader Resources	3.25
Walks on the Wild Side	3.21
Celebration of Trails	3.4
Motivated Hike Leader	3.12
Walking Clubs	3.13
Trail Standards for People with Disabilities	1.5
Active Transportation	4.3
Durham Lives	4.5
Gottawalk Week	4.8
Pathway Patrol	1.4
York Region Physical Activity Network	4.23
Trail Clean Ups	3.17
Volunteer Programs	1.10
Where the Trails Are	4.24
The Walking Program	4.26

Best Practice # 2: ENHANCE THE TRAIL EXPERIENCE

Snapshot

To best increase the use of trails in Ontario for walkers and hikers, you must ensure that the trail experience itself is a quality one. Enhancing the trail experience is needed to encourage repeat use and continued safe, appropriate use. There are many tools and strategies that can lead to establishing the best practice of enhancing the trail experience.

The ideal trail experience involves three fundamental elements:

Great Trails are well planned and designed, well constructed, and well maintained to ensure they are safe, readily accessible and aesthetically satisfying

Great Activities meet the needs and expectations of trail users.

Great Trail Users ensure the long-term viability of the trail or the experience through commitment and stewardship

Objectives

- Plan to provide a diversity of trail types that differ in length, difficulty, proximity and landscape;
- Connect trails, communities, organizations, people, centres of activity, and businesses;
- Make sure that trails are well designed, constructed and maintained;
- Ensure that trails are safe and accessible;
- Design and erect good signage to locate trails, and for way-finding on the trails;
- Provide amenities such as parking and restrooms where appropriate;
- Plan to provide a diversity of trail types that differ in length, difficulty, proximity, and landscape;
- Promote the benefits and values of trails and walking;
- Promote responsible, safe use of trails; and
- Create trail stewards and build the volunteer contingent dedicated to protecting and enhancing Ontario's natural resource.

Big Picture

The following are the **strategies** needed for enhancing the trail experience in order to increase trail use amongst hikers and walkers.

- a) Great Trails
- b) Great Activities
- c) Great Trail Users

A) Great Trails

Providing more and better trails / footpaths will result in more people walking and hiking. Some of the barriers which may prevent or discourage people from using trails include:

- Lack of trails or footpaths for walking/hiking within or close to populated communities;
- Trails may be hard to find and follow, with inadequate signage for way-finding to and on the trail;
- They may be difficult to access, lacking amenities such as parking and restrooms;
- Trails may be considered unsafe or hazardous;
- There may be lack of awareness of the trail.

The Characteristics of Great Trails are:

Proximity

If trails are nearby, people will use them more frequently.

Accessibility

People will use trails more if they can access the trailhead on foot or bicycle, rather than by driving. Access for persons with disabilities should be planned for portions of trails, wherever possible, if the landscape is suitable.

Diversity

Provide a diversity of trail lengths, difficulty, proximity, and landscape to appeal to a wider range of users. Urban, rural, semi-wilderness, and wilderness trails will attract different segment of the population. The majority of people are not avid hikers and are more likely to use trails that are shorter in length, less challenging, and located in familiar settings. Developing more trails in urban and suburban areas is an important strategy in increasing trail use.

While single use trails for walking and hiking are desirable, some shared uses are relatively compatible. For example, walking and cycling trails may encourage more families to be active together.

Connectivity

Connect trails with one other or to destinations of interest, providing more points of entry and encouraging people to explore and discover more trails. Connections also facilitate active transportation and interaction between communities. Major roadways often prevent connectivity when no safe means of crossing is provided. Identifying and overcoming barriers that limit connections is a key consideration in planning trails.

Signage

Design and install attractive, consistent and correctly positioned signage that is easily read and understood to provide direction and pertinent information. Directional signs are required to get users along roadways to the trailhead, and along the trail without getting lost. Interpretive signage should provide information about the natural, cultural, and heritage features along the trail. Regulatory signs make trails safer for use by reducing conflicting and inappropriate trail uses. Excessive use of signs should be avoided as they can detract from the aesthetic experience of the natural environment enjoyed by walkers/hikers.

Safety

People will use trails if they know they are safe. One of the best ways to provide a safe experience is to have many eyes (hikers and walkers) on the trail. Design, construct, and maintain the trail (walking surface and removal of hazards), monitor trail and way-finding signage, and educate the public about safe trail use, including recognizing and avoiding natural hazards such as poison ivy.

Aesthetics

Use of a trail increases if the trail takes the user through interesting landscapes and neighbourhoods, to points of interest. Signage should be minimal, attractive, and in good repair. The trail should be well maintained and free of litter.

Maintenance

Ensure that trails are well designed, constructed, and maintained. Keeping trails open in all seasons will encourage more use.

Amenities

Provide essential and enhanced trail amenities. For example, parking would be considered an essential amenity, washrooms - an enhanced amenity.

Trail design, construction, management and maintenance

To provide safe, quality trail experiences and thereby create trail environments that promote increased use of hiking and walking, design, construction, maintenance and management standards need to be established and be sustained. It is in the design and maintenance of trails that their long-term success can help to be ensured. The following tools can assist in successful trail design, construction, maintenance and management:

- Develop strategic and operational plans for trail development;
- Secure sufficient funding, in kind and volunteer contributions;
- Provide a diversity of trail types that differ in length, difficulty, proximity and landscape;
- Connect trails, communities, organizations, people, centres of activity, and businesses;
- Make sure that trails are well designed, constructed and maintained;
- Ensure that trails are safe and accessible;
- Design and erect good signage to locate trails, and for way-finding on the trails;
- Provide essential and enhanced trail amenities. For example, parking would be considered an essential amenity, washrooms - an enhanced amenity;
- Establish and maintain effective trail management organizations

B) Great Activities

Specific activities on trails can help promote increased trail use by hikers and walkers. The following are some general ideas to enhance and provide quality activities on trails, that all trail activities can incorporate. Trail activities should:

- Foster appreciation of trails, their benefits and values;
- Obtain and provide adequate and accurate trail information;
- Interpret natural, cultural and historical features along trails;
- Foster a sense of discovery on trails by incorporating, showcasing and interpreting natural, cultural, and historical features and engaging activities;
- Understand the needs, desires and characteristics of trail users, the barriers that might prevent trail use, and opportunities that encourage their use;
- Offer a variety of organized and unorganized trail activities:
Organized: Guided Walks & Hikes, Programs, Events & Festivals, Special Incentives, Fundraisers
Non-organized: Self-guided walks and hikes

The second essential element for a great trail experience is activity – the reasons for people to use trails. Many people use trails because they enjoy walking, hiking or snow shoeing simply for the fun of it and for the health benefits. However, many more people, who are not using trails, require incentives to motivate them to use a trail. Providing activities or experiences on trails is the most effective way of increasing trail use.

Activities on trails include, but are not limited to:

- Organized and non-organized activities;
- Self guided opportunities;
- Guided walks and hikes;
- Events and Festivals;
- Packaged programs;
- Special incentive programs.

Activities on trails provide opportunities for participants to:

- Improve physical and mental health through exercise and relaxation;
- Recreate and have fun;
- Explore features of interest and educational value, such as natural and cultural heritage, geographic and environmental features;
- Reach a desired destination at trail's end, such as school, work place, shops etc. ("active transportation");
- Foster community development and spirit, such as social events, fundraisers, etc.;
- Generate revenue for trail development and charitable causes.

To be effective in increasing trail use, activities must reflect the needs, desires and characteristics of the target group. Offering a variety of trail activities will attract more users to the trail.

Usually the development of pedestrian activities on trail systems begins with no "organized" activities on the trail system and culminates with regular ongoing programs on the trail system. The start of the continuum is the creation of a trail that is suitable for the activity – walking or hiking. The next step is the creation of a self-guided or themed trail with interpretive signage and/or written materials. The next level is development and

implementation of on-going regularly scheduled programs on the trail system, such as weekly guided themed hikes, or a health promotion/ incentive program. Each level of development will appeal to a particular market segment. As the trail activity becomes more “organized” and complex, specific markets should be identified and the “experience” developed to meet its needs.

Non-Organized Activities

Most trail use for recreational purposes involves non-organized activity - people using trails on their own or with friends and families.

A trail where natural, cultural and heritage features along the trail have been interpreted (to inform users about the natural environment or special features) will attract more walkers and hikers. On a self-guided trail, features can be interpreted using a brochure or signage. Typically, users would stop at a numbered post and read information from a brochure, or from a sign with text, which provides relevant information on a specific feature within a broader context. For example, a unique wildflower might be described in the broader context of the wetland ecosystem in which it is found. There is usually a common theme for the whole trail. Provincial, National Parks, Conservation Areas, as well as some Municipal parks and properties, have done an excellent job of developing this type of self-guided trail. There are numerous examples of trails where unique, relevant and often spectacular features of the protected ecosystems, landscapes and histories have been interpreted effectively in parks in Ontario.

Self-guided trails also provide opportunities for other types of discovery or interactive trails such as vita par courses with exercise stations for fitness buffs, or a trail with a labyrinth - a place for peaceful reflection and meditation - as in Haliburton County. Urban trails provide opportunities for many different points of discovery and destinations.

When developing new trails, features and opportunities for unique activities or destinations should be a primary consideration for trail layout and location.

Self-guided trails appeal to trail users who like to explore trails on their own, without services of a guide. Having things to do and discover on self-guided trails provides greater incentives for people to get out on trails.

Organized Activities

Organized or guided walks and hikes appeal to users who lack confidence to head out on their own, to those who are seeking to acquire knowledge and skills pertaining to some aspect of the trail or trail activity, and/or to those who are looking for opportunities to socialize with like-minded people. Guided activities range from a short walk along an urban trail to multi-day backpacking treks through wilderness areas. Guided activities may occur on an occasional or on a regular, scheduled basis. Guides, more often than not, are volunteers willing to share their knowledge and expertise, although they may also be staff or guides who are paid on a fee for service basis. The ideal guide is someone who has formal training and considerable experience in leading activities, who can lead and manage a group in a professional and dynamic manner, and who has knowledge of the natural, cultural, and historical features along the trail. For the user, the guided activity must be safe and enjoyable. Guided activities that are well organized, promoted and implemented will attract users who may not normally use a trail on their own.

Many hiking clubs have highly motivated, knowledgeable and skilled hike leaders that promote and organize guided hikes, encouraging others to participate. Such individuals are a valuable resource to be actively recruited and supported. Hike Ontario has developed programs to train and certify hike leaders of varying skill levels. The courses are offered throughout Ontario in conjunction with trail clubs and other sponsoring organizations.

Events and Festivals

Other organized activities, such as Events and Festivals using trails, are a proven method for increasing trail use. Events are trail activities that happen periodically (such as annually) or regularly although this may be on an infrequent basis. In addition to attracting significant numbers of participants at the time of the event, people who are introduced to trails through the event may return to use the trails again.

Events and festivals provide the following benefits:

- Economic benefit - Event participants spend money on accommodation, meals, fuel for their cars, and other shopping. Events can also generate revenue for charitable causes, community and trail organizations, and trail development.
- Regional identity enhancement - Events help put communities and regions “on the map” by establishing an identity and profile.
- Healthy lifestyles - Events involving physical activity can improve the health and well being of participants, particularly if they inspire regular physical activity after the event and often they inspire others to participate.
- Cultural development - Events often have cultural components which encourage and develop local cultural and ethnic expression.
- Volunteer development - Events are often run by volunteers with event-specific volunteer training, contributing a valuable long-term resource for the community.
- Youth Development - Events are opportunities for youth involvement providing inspiration to participate and contribute to community development according to their service learning requirements.
- Catalytic Development - In many ways events and related activities can change a community or serve as catalysts for change.

Signature Non-Competitive Themed Events

Tourism-focused events with educational and/or outdoor experience motivates visitors as well as local residents. Today’s tourists, interested in environment and environmental issues, seek healthful physical activities – often more interested in the experience than in the destination itself. They are seeking experience-based activities with personalized service and vacation packages adapted to their needs, such as adventure and eco-tourism.

Signature Competitive Events

Tourism-focused competitions that attract amateur and professional athletes looking for recognition, physical challenges and extreme adventure experiences. Such events also attract local and visiting spectators, besides competitors.

Community Non-competitive Themed Events

Local health and/or social motivators that target area residents - especially children, youth, families, and seniors. People participate in these events to improve their health and physical fitness, to explore natural and cultural heritage features, to experience the outdoors, to socialize with friends and family, and/or to contribute to community causes.

Community Competitive Events

Target area residents and involve fun and friendly competition. Participants are seeking a higher level of physical fitness, adventures in the outdoors, recognition and/or contributing to community causes. Some community events may involve competitive and non-competitive elements.

A review of a wide variety of Ontario trail events revealed the following:

- Most are community or locally significant events, with a few provincially or regionally significant events. No unique nationally or internationally significant events were evident at the time of writing, although several events were part of national campaigns, e.g., Terry Fox Run.
- Most are community-driven events based on interest, available opportunities and resources, and are not the result of a defined strategic need.
- Most events are organized by volunteers; a few have sufficient funding to employ an event planner.
- Often organizations will partner on events but there is no central coordination of trail related events within a given jurisdiction. Some organizations such as tourism bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, and municipalities have event planners on staff.
- Events on trails are organized by a wide variety of organizations in the trail, health, tourism, and community service sectors, and by the private sector. Examples include: “Take Heart, Start Walking - Ontario Trails: Yours to Explore” – Algoma Health Unit ; Record Breaking Walk – Ontario Trails Council, Parks and Recreation Ontario, and Hike Ontario; Achilles Rail Trail Relay - Achilles Track Club of Peterborough; Salomon Adventure Challenge – Frontier Adventure Racing. Special hikes organized by hiking clubs during Hike Ontario week held annually in the fall.
- Some walking /running events, though not trail events per se may involve use of trails. For example: Terry Fox Run, CIBC Walk for Breast Cancer, Septemberfest - Stirling
- Trail events may involve interesting and creative partnerships. For example, the Celebration of Trails involves trail organizations, health units, tourism agencies, economic development corporations, and local municipalities.
- There is a lack of incentive, knowledge, standards, and resources for planning, organizing and promoting trail related events.

Programs using pedestrian based trails

Programs involving sustained use of pedestrian trails can be very successful in increasing trail use, and often in targeting specific user groups. Local, regional, or even national in scope, these programs may be offered by organizations in the trail, health, community, and municipal sectors and may promote healthy lifestyles, active transportation, and environmental stewardship. For example, the health community offers walking programs promoting physical activity, such as Walk for Wellness, Walking Works, Walk to Win, GottaWalk, and Peterborough Walks.

Active Transportation promotes the use of footpaths and trails as routes to school and workplaces, increasing trail use and providing further incentives for trail development and connectivity.

Other programs geared to tourists, such as Day and Multi-day hiking and snow shoeing excursions, Learning vacations, and Ecotourism experiences all may combine hiking with food and accommodation to attract market segments.

NOTE: Activities Targeting Specific Population Groups follow as part of Best Practice Three.

C) Great Trail Users

Responsible, dedicated trail users are the cornerstone of Ontario’s pedestrian based trails and trail activities. Local hiking and walking organizations with very few exceptions, are governed and managed by a volunteer contingent.

Volunteers that tirelessly and selflessly invest the time, skills and expertise required to ensure that this incredible natural resource is protected for generations to come. Volunteers do this on behalf of all Ontarians , all visitors and all trail users.

Great Trail Users have several defining characteristics:

Responsible and Safe:

Responsible trail users lead to safe trail users. Responsible trail users know and adhere to all trail rules and regulations. They stay to designated trails and follow standard trail user codes of conduct. Responsible trail users know the conditions of the trails they use and do not alter those conditions through their use. Responsible trail users are courteous and conscientious of other trail users. Safe trail users are aware of trail and environmental conditions when they are walking. They know where they are going and their abilities as they relate to the trail. Safe trail users plan and prepare for their experience.

Informed:

A great trail user is an informed trail user. They will know and adhere to all rules and regulations governing use along the trail they experience. They will be informed on trail conditions and route specifics. An informed trail user is one that understands the nature of the terrain they are walking in and balance that with their ability levels. An informed trail user has all the relative information about the trail they are experiencing and uses that information responsibly and safely for a quality experience.

Stewards:

A great trail user is a steward of the trail and environment they experience. They treat the trail environment and natural surroundings with respect and appreciation and look upon these experiences as a privilege. Trail stewards minimize the impacts of their use and play a role in minimizing the impacts of others as best they can safely and appropriately. Trail stewards act as a voice and aid for trail managers in environmental protection. Trail stewards are social stewards as well, enhancing the trail experience by minimizing their impacts on other trail users.

Promoters:

A great trail user is a promoter of trails and their benefits. They understand the importance of these incredibly valuable recreational resources and promote their importance to others. They understand the environmental benefits of trails as they provide appreciation opportunities to our natural and cultural resources. They promote the economic benefits that trails contribute to their communities. They are a part of the social benefits that accompany trail use and they support the physical benefits of active living that trails are a key component of. A trail promoter also promotes the need for responsible, safe, and informed trail stewards.

Advocates:

A great trail user is strong advocate for trails themselves. They provide awareness and foster understanding around the many issues in trail development, management and use. They support the trail community through their respectful and responsible use and advocate others to the same. They become a voice for trails and their benefits through their interest and responsible use. They recognize that they are a part of a trail community and they contribute how best they can to their community.

Case Studies: ENHANCE THE TRAIL EXPERIENCE

Title	Case Study Number
Ontario Trails Strategy	1.12
Lanark Trail Corporation	1.2
Trail Master Plan	1.7
Trail Design and Construction Guidelines	1.13
Trail Training Workshops	1.8
Trail Studies Unit	1.9
Trails for All Ontarians	2.4
Trail Standards for People with Disabilities	1.5
Trail Improvements	1.6
Trail Considerations for Women	2.10
Boardwalks on Trails	1.1
Pathway Patrol	1.4
Leave No Trace	1.3
Trail Clean Ups	3.17
Volunteer Programs	1.10
First Trails	2.6
Interpretive Signage	3.11
Trail Brochures	4.16

Best Practice #3: TARGET SPECIFIC POPULATION GROUPS

Snapshot

If looking to increase trail use for walkers and hikers, it is important to focus a variety of trail based experiences and promotions on non-traditional users. Targeting specific audiences can help address the needs of a population not familiar to trail use and help to build a broader trail community.

It is hoped that the people of Ontario will embrace the active lifestyle choices offered by trails, including those groups who now use trails less frequently - older adults; children and youth; women and girls; low-income families; people with disabilities; and visible minorities.

It is important to plan and develop activities that will motivate these groups to use trails. It must be recognized that what seems like an easy outing to a seasoned walker or hiker may be a major challenge for the novice. A five kilometer walk in non-urban area on an uneven trail may be very challenging for a person who has never ventured onto a trail, or has no idea of the distance he or she can walk comfortably. To plan enjoyable and safe trail activities for the novice, an understanding of the demographics, culture, needs and desires of each identified target group is essential.

When developing trail activities for novice trail users, ease them into the trail experience with short walks in an urban environment and build the experience in a planned way and over time offer longer hikes in more challenging terrain. It is important to remember that the "end to end" experience appeals to a very small percentage of the population. Most people aren't capable of walking long distances over difficult terrain so organizations should provide more activities for the novice trail user. Providing transportation to trails outside of urban areas would also encourage more trail use.

Objectives

- Develop partnerships with agencies and organizations that serve target group: Local church groups, adult recreation programs, boys and girls clubs, Scouts/ Guides, family support groups, health and wellness centres
- Understand the needs, desires and characteristics of specific population groups as they relate to exercise, recreation, and active transportation. Different people reflect upon recreation differently. It is important to understand the needs of your target demographic to best promote the experience
- Involve community leaders in promoting trail use and advocating for trails
- Dedicate adequate time and resources to engage target group leaders and organizations, and build effective relationships with them
- Develop and promote trails and trail activities designed specifically to meet the needs of each target group; Special events specific to an audience, theme hikes and walks
- Recruit interested individuals and provide training and leadership development
- Promote the use of trails through health programs, schools, as well as organizations and clubs specific to each group
- Demonstrate relevance and contribute to achieving the Ontario schools curriculum
- Facilitate access and transportation to trails
- Plan trail activities and events that are relevant and "engaging" to each target group
- Offer more "easy" trail activities

Big Picture

The following are the **strategies** to increase trail use by hikers and walkers by targeting the following specific population groups.

- a) Older Adults
- b) Children and Youth
- c) Girls and Women
- d) Low Income Families
- e) People with Disabilities
- f) Visible Minorities

A) Older Adults

A large number of walkers and hikers are older persons, but a large segment of this population do not use the trails. Barriers that may prevent this group from using trails include poor health, lack of engaging programs and activities, insufficient information about trails and trail activities, and few trails in close proximity. Some strategies for involving older adults in greater use of trails for walking are to promote the health benefits of walking and the use of trails through community health programs; to provide information on nearby trails and promote the use of trails through schools and seniors' organizations; and to develop trail activities that are engaging and relevant to older adults.

B) Children and Youth

A national survey by the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Institute (2000) indicates that over half of children aged five to seventeen are not active enough to support optimal growth and development. For inactive children and youth, Canada's Physical Activity Guide recommends increasing time devoted to physical activity by at least 30 minutes per day and decreasing by 30 minutes daily the amount of time spent on the phone, watching television, or using a computer – all sedentary activities. Fostering trail use by children and youth will help improve their health and build their interest in and capacity for trail use. Having children and youth using trails also encourages other family members to get out on trails. Strategies for getting children and youth active on trails include:

Getting youth involved in trail use, development, and maintenance by providing:

- Engaging activities on trails for children, youth and their families;
- Leadership opportunities such as Hike Ontario's Youth Hiker Program;
- Opportunities to meet service and co-op learning requirements in the school curriculum;
- Special incentives such as fundraisers.

Demonstrating the relevance of trails to the Ontario curriculum by:

- Identifying within the Ontario curriculum learning opportunities that trails present and that could be achieved by using trails; and
- Identifying trails that schools could use to achieve specific learning outcomes.

Promoting trail use to students, teachers, administrators, parent councils, teacher federations, education organizations through health and active transportation programs.

- Supporting outdoor education organizations, programs and facilities, including trails; and promoting the use of trails for outdoor education; and
- Developing trails to link school with neighbourhoods.

C) Girls and Women

Less frequent use of trails by girls and women may be a result of barriers such as lack of engaging trail activities, insufficient information on trails, trail conditions, and amenities; safety concerns; and lack of female friendly language, images and role models. The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women has released Trail Considerations for Engaging Girls and Women, a very useful document for addressing the above factors. The following excerpt presents points to be considered when providing trail activities for girls and women:

- Promote female-only or family events about cycling safety, inline skating or walking programs. These provide skill-building opportunities and introduce girls and women to trails in a fun environment. Social and educational events at trail heads or interpretive centres will bring women and their families to the area, where they can be encouraged to walk, blade and cycle on appropriate trails.
- Encourage group activities to attract women as this experience can create a supportive and cooperative environment for participants who learn it is acceptable to make mistakes, that the group is there to support them, and that they can depend on others. Trails provide physical activity opportunities that address many barriers girls and women face related to income levels, family commitments, and safety concerns. Ensure they know about the trails and the surrounding services to increase their active living choices.
- Partner with community organizations & corporate groups such as the Running Room to encourage their use of the trails so participants become familiar with the resources in their neighbourhood.
- Females are interested in physical recreation and are more likely than males to want to increase their rate of participation, providing a wonderful opportunity to develop programs for this segment of the population. If there are no women and girls participating in a particular program, it does not mean they are not interested, and program planners should consider incorporating ideas listed above to engage the female half of the potential market.

D) Low Income Families

Research on the use of trails by low-income families yielded limited information. The Canadian Community Health Survey (2003) compiled by Statistics Canada indicates that more than 50% of Ontario adults are not active enough to achieve health benefits. Low-income families tend to be less physically active and less healthy than higher income families and low-income families use trails less often than higher income families for reasons such

as lack of leisure time; poor health; lack of engaging trail programs and activities; insufficient information on trails and trail activities; fewer trails in close proximity to their neighbourhoods; and concern about the safety of trails which may be isolated or shielded from surveillance.

Strategies for increasing use of trails by low-income families include the following:

- Develop more high quality trails in close proximity to less affluent areas; provide amenities to ensure safety;
- Promote health benefits of trails through health community programs;
- Provide information on trails and promote the use of trails through health programs, schools and community organizations;
- Offer affordable trail experiences; in most cases, use of hiking and walking trails is free, and generally no specialized equipment is required to participate in walking activities;
- Involve community leaders in promoting trail use and advocating for trails; and
- Provide relevant and engaging trail activities.

Very few “best practices” related to low-income families were submitted in response to the call for “best practices” or discovered during the research, indicating a significant gap in programming and a need for more research in this component.

E) People with Disabilities

As mentioned previously, all trails should be designed to be accessible for everyone including people with disabilities, although trails where the natural land formations and the natural environment are preserved may not be adaptable. Other barriers and factors that may prevent people with disabilities from using trails include lack or shortage of accessible trails; insufficient information about the location, nature and condition of accessible trails; challenge of getting to trail location; and lack of engaging trail programs and activities. Strategies and methodologies for increasing use of trails by people with disabilities include:

- Develop more trails that are accessible;
- Provide information on trails and promote the use of trails through health programs, schools, and community and disability organizations;
- Engage disability organizations through communications, providing access to trail information, and showing success stories;
- Provide transportation to trails; and
- Provide relevant and engaging trail activities.

F) Visible Minorities

Ontario’s visible minorities and ethnic population are comprised of many cultures and communities. Barriers that may prevent them from using trails include: use of trails not being part of the culture and country from which they originate; fear of the unknown and unfamiliar; insufficient information about trails, their benefits and availability; language; and lack of engaging trail programs and activities. Strategies and methodologies for

increasing trail use by Visible Minorities include:

- Gain an understanding of needs, characteristics and culture of each ethnic community;
- Identify individuals, organizations and communities that can be contacted;
- Involve community leaders in promoting trail use, advocating for trails and leading walks and hikes;
- Promote the use of trails through health programs, schools and community organizations;
- Provide information on trails, their benefits and availability in different languages; and
- Provide relevant and engaging trail activities.

Engaging ethnic communities requires a considered, significant and sustained effort. It is important to meet with each ethnic organization, to involve their community leaders, and to provide the information, resources, and training to educate community leaders and members about trails. There were few “best practices” related to New Canadians, submitted in response to the call for “best practices” or discovered during the research. More research is required.

Case Studies: TARGET SPECIFIC POPULATION MARKETS

Title	Case Study Number
Easy Walks	3.20
Gentle Nature, Gentle walking	3.7
Children’s Hikes	2.3
Earth Adventures	2.5
Children’s Summer Hike	2.7
Walking Tour of Canada	2.12
Youth Trail Initiatives	2.14
Family Passport to Trail Adventure	4.7
Active and Safe Routes to School	4.14
Trail Stroller Striding	3.18
Becoming an Outdoors Woman	2.2
Monday Moms	2.8
Trail Considerations for Girls and Women	2.10
Young Hikers Program	2.16
Trails and the School Curriculum	2.17
Streets to Trails	2.9
Trail Standards and Best Practices	1.5
Trail Improvements	1.6
Ability Trail Challenge	2.1
Get Active Now	2.4
Wilderness Access	2.13
Achilles Rail Trail Relay	2.15
How To Resources for Hikers	2.18
First Trails	2.6
Translation of trail Information	2.11
Exploring Toronto Program	3.6

Best Practice #4: MARKET THE EXPERIENCE

Snapshot

Even if you have successfully enhanced the trail experience, collaborated in doing so and targeted specific demographics, you still need to market and promote the trail experience in order to truly maintain accessibility and awareness of the trail. This is an integral practice in increasing use on trails; marketing that the resource is there and the opportunities for experiencing the trail are vast.

Great trails and great trail activities must be promoted to achieve the desired goal of increased trail use. It is important, however, to make the distinction between information promoting the trail and the detailed information required to get people to and around the trail in safety.

Potential users must be made aware of what trails and activities exist, and must be provided with the necessary information to use the trail and/or participate in the activity. Both marketing and information tools, however, can include brochures, maps, signage, trail guides, web sites, e-navigate communications, branding, advertising, media coverage and special incentives.

There must be a product to market - an established trail or trail activity - before undertaking a promotional campaign. It is important to know precisely what you have to offer in your community.

Objectives

- Understanding the needs, desires, and characteristics of the target market;
- Developing a marketing plan based on that understanding;
- Identifying, designing, and implementing appropriate marketing methods and tools;
- Develop accurate and adequate information providing information essential for locating the trail and way finding (Navigation) on the trail. This may include brochures, maps, guidebooks or trail guides, and websites – updated regularly with current trail conditions and routes; and
- Create a website for both trail navigation and promotional information.

Big Picture

The **strategies** for marketing the trail experience are:

- a) Develop and commit to a public relations plan
- b) Brand your trail or experience
- c) Provide clear and accurate trail information
- d) Create a website providing easy access to current information and virtual experiences
- e) Establish mutually beneficial marketing relationships
- f) Make friends with the media

A) Develop and commit to a public relations plan

A Public Relations Plan will define the ongoing activities you will implement to ensure you gain and maintain a strong public image. Public relations activities are crucial in ensuring that the public understands your organization and your mission.

Your Public Relations Plan should include the following elements:

- Description of what you want to convey to whom;
- How you plan to convey it;
- Who is responsible for various activities and by when; and
- How much money is budgeted to fund these activities.

Strategies to remember to consider in the development of your plan:

- Always develop marketing and communications plans based on understanding the target groups' needs and available products (trails, programs and events);
- Ensure opportunities for regular dialogue with partners and "clients" as well as mechanisms for feedback;
- Identify, design, and develop appropriate marketing methods, tools and programs to reach target markets;
- Use existing channels of communication to reach target markets – such as schools, health departments, churches, seniors' groups, etc;
- Develop and distribute accurate and relevant trail and activity information;
- Focus on increasing the public's understanding of the benefits of participation, such as health, connectivity, environmental, social etc.; and
- Consider what PR medium is most practical for you to use in terms of access and affordability? Give consideration to advertising, collaborations, annual reports, networking, TV, radio, newsletters, classifieds, displays/signs, posters, word of mouth, direct mail, special events, brochures, neighborhood newsletters, etc.

B) Brand your trail or experience

Your trail or your trail based experience is a part of your identity. Naming your organization or one of your activities should not be taken lightly, but it should be fun. Like commercial company and product branding, the brand you choose should express a benefit to your target audience and appeal to their personality traits.

Ultimately you should be able to decide on a word or phrase that identifies your product or service, such as "Hike Ontario, Experience it one step at a time" or "Celebration of Trails," and make sure the names you generate sound right with these identifiers.

Think About How It Looks

Usually a name is successful because it's paired with an effective visual image. Different type fonts, for example,

are used to convey elegance or perhaps joviality, reinforcing that aspect of the name or giving a not-particularly-elegant or jovial name a new dimension.

Test your ideas with your stakeholders

Create a list of your ideas and ask a small group of your stakeholders for input. Ask these people not only their order of preference but also what each name connotes. Keep in mind that if you're contemplating a cute or timely name, is it an in-joke or will it grow stale over time? Will your name remain appropriate if your organization expands its mandate?

When creating a brand that will ultimately form your identity it may be useful to remember:

Don't be a copycat

It is not in your interest to copy or borrow from an established identity. A look-alike, sound-alike name, resembling the personality of an established, legendary, or well known name will be fruitless in the long run.

Creativity is a spark of genius. Over-creativity can cause fire and damage

Don't get too creative. Do not twist, bend, stretch, exaggerate, corrupt or modify alpha-structures to their extremes in naming. It may result in difficult, confusing, unpronounceable and only silly names.

Choose a universal name and brand

Do not underestimate your trail or activity. No matter how small or local the project may be right now, think of the future and its endless opportunities. A name is only good when it is free and clear to travel around the globe, and transcend local users.

C) Provide clear and accurate trail information

Providing clear, accurate trail information is essential not only for increasing trail use but also as tools for current trail users. "Know before you go" is a slogan developed by Get Active Now for a program designed to provide trail information for people with disabilities; it included the location, length, grade, width, tread, degree of difficulty, available amenities, connectivity, and features of interest along the trail. All trail users benefit from this type of information and every effort should be made to provide it through web sites and printed material. The internet has become the most important tool for promoting trails and their use, and for disseminating current information about the trails as routes and conditions change.

Trail Navigation Information is designed to help people find their way to the trail and to navigate their way along the trail without getting lost, potentially enjoying and learning through interpretive information about the points of interest along the way.

D) Create a website providing easy access to current information and virtual experiences

The old adage, "if you build it, they will come," could not be further from the truth in the world of the Internet. Your web site is only one of millions that are trying to attract visitors. No matter how much money you spend having your site designed, or how much great information you make available, if you don't actively and constantly market your web site, people simply won't visit it. They won't even look for it because they won't know it's there.

An effective web site that will assist in increasing trail use by hikers and walkers should:

- Be well designed and attractive with good graphics and pictures;
- Be easy to navigate;
- Reflect the needs of the target audience;
- Provide key information - general description, length, difficulty, permitted uses, trail use and safety guidelines;
- Have a good map and adequate directions to get to the trail head and access the trail;
- Include contact details for more information;
- Include Resources that can be downloaded; and
- Include Links to other relevant trail and community web sites.

If you have an expansive budget there are numerous options available for marketing your website. However, if you are able to commit the time, these six key tips will increase your web visits in a very cost effective manner.

Add new content to your web site at least once a month

Remember that your web site is a living marketing tool. Unlike brochures that are typically written to stand the test of time, your web site, on the other hand, is a living document. New content gives people a reason to come back. If you have valuable content that is regularly updated, visitors will be compelled to return. Ideally, your visitors will also forward you web address on to friends and colleagues.

Promote your web site in your e-mail signature

Since your e-mail recipient is already online, there is no better time to encourage him to visit your site. Use a creative quote or eye-catching information tag that will entice them to visit your site.

Promote your web site on all of your printed materials

Include your URL on every piece of printed matter you produce. Don't forget to include it on business cards, letterhead, a prominent page of your newsletter, direct mail appeals, all your brochures, and event posters.

Collect e-mail addresses whenever you collect other contact information

The reality is that the best marketing strategy for your web site is going to be based on e-mail communications. Whenever you have an opportunity to ask someone for their phone number and address, ask them for their e-mail address too. Add space to write an e-mail address on your donation tear-offs. Ask for e-mail on raffle ticket stubs and by all means, give people a reason to leave their e-mail address with you at the web site itself.

Create an e-newsletter to stay in regular touch with people

This strategy to get people to visit your web site actually serves a much more important goal as well: a regular e-newsletter will allow you to create a dialogue between your organization and the people who support you. This dialogue will deepen the relationship between you and your supporters.

Link users to create a community

Host trail events or "open houses" to promote and encourage involvement and ask people to visit your "virtual trail" Then offer chat rooms or on-line communication forums for trail users to communicate. Ensure that you maintain an accurate up-to-date database of trail users including local community media contacts. Honour your

supporters by protecting their personal information, do not sell or trade these lists.

E) Establish mutually beneficial marketing relationships

Collaborative public relations involves creating and nurturing partnerships and alliances with other groups and organizations to further mutual goals. Partnering with other organizations to raise awareness about your trail and/or activities will come naturally if you have already taken the time to form these linkages.

Examples of collaborative marketing include:

- Hike Ontario provided an annual marketing campaign during Ontario Hiking Week in late September, providing opportunities and resources for all hiking and walking clubs across the province
- A group of similar organizations -- such as charities with a focus on health prevention -- work together to organize a walk-a-thon, information sessions or awareness campaigns on the benefits of hiking and walking
- A group of partner organizations from across different geographical areas -- for example, all hiking and walking clubs in southwestern Ontario -- work together to develop public relations and educational materials to highlight opportunities in their specific region
- Local voluntary organizations work together through the Volunteer Centres to provide media with information and news relevant to the community

Ultimately, efforts are more effective when done in collaboration with others. Collaborative marketing can save the valuable commodities of time, money and resources while also promoting organizations as proactive and progressive. In today's sector climate, in which any organization operating in isolation is bound to struggle for survival, collaborative marketing is a win-win proposition.

F) Make friends with the media

At first glance, the work of walking, hiking and activity based organizations and the goals of the mainstream news media seem to be fundamentally opposed. The issues facing trail groups and activity planners are long-term and complex. They do not easily translate into the mainstream media story model of what news is. Our challenge is to tie the big picture work we do to newsworthy events.

This requires us to think creatively all the time, and to recognize the short-term opportunities that we can use to grab some attention for our long-term goals.

Examples of strategies to enhance your profile in mainstream media and get noticed:

- Issue an innovative press release that is factual but amusing and gives the media an angle as to why they should cover your event
- Link your activity or event to a holiday or larger scale event e.g. Halloween Hike for Families, Ontario Hiking Week event
- Volunteer to do "free" seminars on your expertise at high profile events. In addition, invite your media contacts to watch you in your element

The Five Best Practices

- Build your “buzz” factor. What makes your trail or activity unique? Everyone has an angle. Use yours to the hilt
- Cultivate contacts. Any time you meet a press person take their card and they are no longer a stranger the next time you make your story pitch
- Send out a tip sheet to different publications specifying your expertise. (Just like this one - I am an expert on getting media!)
- The infamous celebrity affiliation. Whom do you know that hikes or walks your trail? Ask your famous hiker if they will give a testimonial on your trail
- Write a letter to the editor on a topic that you know well. There is free publicity if the article is published

Case Studies: MARKET THE EXPERIENCE

Title	Case Study Number
Exciting and Natural Promotion	4.6
Family Passport to Trail Adventures	4.7
Gottawalk Week	4.8
Hamilton Walks	4.9
Walking Works/ Hiking Spree	4.10
Media Coverage	4.11
Trail Guide Books	4.12
Trail Brochures	4.16
Trail Information on the Web	4.17
Trails – Health Events	4.18

Best Practice #5: EVALUATE AND MODIFY THE PROGRAM

Snapshot

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you won’t know when you got there” or “If you don’t know where you’re going, you’ll end up somewhere else”. Whichever version you prefer, the point is the same: we need goals to provide direction—and to provide a basis for measuring our progress.

Measuring your performance is crucial to future or continued success.

To truly increase trail use amongst hikers and walkers, there must be a measurability to the trail experience itself; a means of understanding successes and possible alternatives. This evaluative process is an integral practice in ongoing trail use growth and diversification. The evaluative process can address changes needed, opportunities unforeseen and measure success.

Objectives

- Provide accountability for program performance and spending
- Provide information for stakeholders
- Meets the requirements of funders
- Help one make better decisions about program direction and set goals, priorities and make better decisions about allocation of resources
- Improve program design, implementation and management
- Build pride and confidence in your trail or trail based activity
- Build cohesion and enthusiasm

Big Picture

The following are the **strategies** for increasing trail use of hikers and walkers by evaluating and modifying the program.

- a) Develop measurable indicators of success
- b) Evaluate
- c) Analyze the Results
- d) Modify Elements of the Program to Overcome Barriers and Achieve Objectives

A) Develop Measurable Indicators of Success

Success Indicators are quantifiable measurements, agreed to before project or activity implementation, that reflect the critical success factors. These indicators are quantified by specific measures for example, number of participants, percentage of non-traditional users or participants level of satisfaction.

Success indicators and their measures need to link directly to project goals and objectives since they provide the

objective and measurable criteria by which you will judge the degree of success you have had in reaching your stated goals and objectives.

Developing good success indicators also ensures that your goals and objectives are measurable.

Success indicators should:

- Be results-focused i.e. refer to results or outcomes of the activity and not the activity itself;
- Be challenging but feasible;
- Involve a meaningful comparison - a comparison over time, a comparison with other similar activities or (preferably) a comparison against a reasonable standard;
- Be measurable, using quantitative or qualitative measures. In developing indicators, consideration should be given to data availability and data collection, given the resources available;
- Refer to a result or outcome that can be reasonably attributed to the project activity; and
- Be as valid (directly related to the work done and not attributable to other factors) and reliable (able to be replicated) as possible.

B) Evaluate

The concept of program evaluation can include a wide variety of methods. There are numerous books and other materials that provide in-depth analysis of evaluations, their designs, methods, combination of methods and techniques of analysis. However, you do not have to be an expert in these topics to carry out a useful program evaluation. The "20-80" rule applies here, that 20% of effort generates 80% of the needed results. It's better to do what might turn out to be an average effort at evaluation than to do no evaluation at all.

Above all, an evaluation must provide usable information. It must enable project managers, for example, to guide and shape their projects toward the greatest effectiveness.

Common methods of evaluation and testing include:

- Interviews
- Questionnaires
- Observation
- Discussion
- Survey
- Analysis of records and data

Key considerations for designing your evaluation;

- For what purposes is the evaluation being done, i.e., what do you want to be able to decide as a result of the evaluation?
- What kind of information is needed to make the decision you need to make?

- How can information be collected in a reasonable fashion, e.g., questionnaires, interviews, examining documentation, observing participants, conducting focus groups among user, etc.
- When is the information needed (so, by when must it be collected)?
- What resources are available to collect the information?

C) Analyze the Results

Once data collection is completed, the process of data analysis begins and the effects of the program emerge. A basic tool for analyzing data is descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis may be as simple as summarizing or averaging the results: What was the total event participation? What is the total number of trail users in a defined period of time?

Participant based statistics will likely be relatively straightforward: for example, the number of persons participating in an organized event, the number of volunteer hours committed to the event, the number of volunteer hours committed to trail maintenance, etc. Descriptive information should be presented objectively, in quantitative terms where possible.

A strong evaluation analysis will:

- Quantify results over comparable periods
- Identify factors influencing results – such as weather, construction on trail, etc.
- Include ongoing meetings with trail partners and participants to evaluate and assess
- Begin early in the event or activity planning stage
- Summarize and communicate information about progress on a result in a way that allows planners to make a decision
- Report the findings in a easily accessible and usable format to internal and external stakeholders

D) Modify Elements of the Program to Overcome Barriers and Achieve Objectives

The sole purpose of evaluation is to positively influence future decisions. Your evaluation report needs to provide specific recommendations for actions that will change or improve your trail or trail based activity.

Case Studies: EVALUATE AND MODIFY THE PROGRAM

Title	Case Study Number
Trail Improvements	1.6
Volunteer Programs	1.10
Volunteer Vacations	1.11
Becoming an Outdoor Women	2.2
Trails for All Ontarians	2.4
Young Hikers Program	2.16
Themed Hikes In Provincial Parks	3.2
Exploring Toronto Program	3.6
Exciting and Natural	4.6
Shifting Gears Transportation Challenge	4.15

The Trail Experience in Ontario



An Overview of the Trail Experience in Ontario

An understanding of the trail experience is critical to developing strategies for increasing trail use. The trail experience, in the broadest sense, consists of three elements - the trail, the trail user and the activities on the trail. It is also important to understand the barriers and factors that may prevent people from using trails.

Providing great trails and great activities on those trails to meet the needs of the current and potential trail users will result in increased use of pedestrian based trails

The Trail

Fundamental to the trail experience is the trail itself. The lack or shortage of trails, trails that are not nearby or easily accessible; poorly designed, constructed and maintained trails; inadequate signage; and the lack of trail amenities are factors that have a negative impact on trail use. Trail use can be increased by providing:

- A diversity of trail types that differ in length, difficulty and landscape;
- Safe and accessible trails that are well designed, constructed and maintained;
- Good signage to and on trails;
- Necessary and enhanced amenities, e.g., parking; and
- Trails that connect trails, communities, centres of activity, businesses

Good trails are a result of good planning and management. This involves:

- Appreciating the values of trails;
- Having strong community support and engagement;
- Bringing trail interests together to communicate and resolve issues;
- Developing strong partnerships;
- Developing strategic and operational plans for trail development;
- Establishing and maintaining effective trail management organizations;
- Obtaining and providing adequate and accurate trail information;
- Securing sufficient funding, in kind and volunteer contributions

There are over 64,000 kms of trails in Ontario, falling into several distinct types:

- Footpaths with natural surfaces
- Multi-use tracks with manufactured surfaces
- On-road bicycle routes

- Walkways, boardwalks, and sidewalks
- Utility corridors and former rail lines
- Forestry and mining access roads designated as trails, and
- Waterways and portage routes.
- Land-based trails have a variety of uses and activities:
 - Pedestrian uses: walking, hiking (backpacking), snow shoeing, cross-country skiing;
 - Non-motorized assisted uses: cycling, (roller)blading, dog sledding, horse-back riding, skijoring, kick sledding; and
 - Motorized uses: snowmobiling, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), 4x4s, dirt bikes.
- Waterway trails, used by paddlers (canoeists and kayakers) and are often connected by footpaths where portaging is required.

The Ontario Trails Strategy

The Ontario Trails Strategy is a long-term plan that establishes strategic directions for planning, managing, promoting and using trails in Ontario

Vision of the Ontario Trails Strategy:

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

Who developed it?

- Government and stakeholders in a collaborative and highly consultative process.
- Ministries responsible for tourism, transportation, agriculture, food, and rural affairs; citizenship, culture, public infrastructure, finance, natural resources, northern development and mines, Aboriginal affairs, environment, former Management Board and the office of the Attorney General
- Stakeholder organizations represented trails, the agricultural community, the municipal sector, landowners, foresters, fur traders, and environmental, cultural/heritage, conservation/stewardship, outdoor recreation and tourism interests

What types of trails will the Strategy focus on?

The Ontario Trails Strategy focuses on all single and shared-use outdoor designated trail networks in urban, rural and wilderness settings that are used for recreation, active living, utilitarian and tourism purposes including but not limited to:

- Trails with natural (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing) or treated surfaces (e.g. bicycle greenways/paths/lanes)
- On-road bicycle routes
- Walkways, boardwalks and sidewalks
- Trails located on transportation and utility corridors

- Access roads (i.e. for forestry and mining) “designated” for trail use
- Trails that are integrated with public transit services
- Waterway routes (e.g. along designated Canadian heritage rivers including the French, Humber, Mattawa, Rideau and Thames Rivers) and portage routes

Core Values of the Ontario Trails Strategy

- Respect private and public lands, including agricultural lands, Crown lands and the traditional land-use areas of Aboriginal communities
- Protect, conserve and appreciate the environment and cultural and natural heritage features
- Provide a variety of trail opportunities in keeping with the diverse nature of Ontario’s population
- Value regional differences and support local decision-making
- Adopt good planning principles and approaches

Hike Ontario’s Position on the Ontario Trail Strategy

A new and exciting era in trails is upon Ontario with The Ministry of Health Promotion successfully releasing the Ontario Trails Strategy. This Ontario Trails Strategy development, is a long-term plan that establishes strategic directions for planning, managing, promoting and using trails in Ontario.

The Ontario Trails Strategy speaks to many key issues for the Ontario trails community and we all have a role to play. As a strategy document, it recognizes diverse challenges in the trail community while also illustrating Ministry commitment to sound strategic directions with Ontario’s trails. It speaks appropriately to strengthening collaboration between stakeholders in trails, enhancing the sustainability of trails in Ontario , enhancing trail experiences for all users, educating people about trails and their environments and fostering better health and stronger economies through trails.

Hike Ontario and many other trail advocates look forward now to working with all trail partners in a coordinated effort to implement the ideals of the Strategy.

Hike Ontario believes strongly that our advocacy and support for pedestrian based trail use is very much in line with many of the goals of the Ministry of Health Promotion. We face a crisis in Ontario with health related issues and walking and hiking trails can be effective tools in promoting healthy living and combating health problems. When walking or hiking the trails of Ontario, you get to experience the vast natural heritage resources of our Province, the significant cultural heritage resources of our past, the recreational resources of a diverse landscape and the social fabric of our trails connecting communities and places together. Include in this the physical and mental health gains from hiking and walking these wonderful trails and you can see the important role that trails, walking, hiking and Hike Ontario plays in the lives of all Ontarians.

Hike Ontario supports the principles put forth in the Ontario Trails Strategy and we lend our resources to the Provincial Government under their leadership and within the principles that we advocate. We recognize the diversity of the trail systems in Ontario , the diversity of the trail stakeholders charged with planning, managing and supporting these trails, and certainly the diversity of the trail users themselves. Not all trails can be all things, to all people and nor should they be. The challenges and opportunities with Ontario ’s trails are ours to face together and Hike Ontario will do so with our best feet forward.

Benefits of Walking, Hiking and Pedestrian Trails

Health

Walking is more than an enjoyable mode of locomotion – it can improve your fitness, health, and mental well being. More than half the body’s muscles are designed for walking; it is a natural movement that is virtually injury-free and once learned as a toddler is never forgotten. Walking refreshes the mind, reduces fatigue, increases energy and relieves stress and tension. Regular brisk walking can reduce elevated blood fats or blood pressure, and improve digestion and elimination. Regular walking also increases the calories you expend and, when combined with healthy eating habits will help you maintain a healthy weight and positive body image. Brisk walking is an aerobic activity, increasing the body’s demand for oxygen. It trains your heart, lungs and muscles to work more efficiently.

Walking can be done throughout the year, with appropriate clothing and footwear, by people of all ages. It is integral to a great many athletic and recreational activities, such as snow shoeing and cross country skiing in winter, running or jogging in summer, as well as many other activities - such as birding, stargazing, and dog walking. For the elderly, walking represents a pleasurable, inexpensive, and often sociable form of exercise to maintain mobility and strength, even when walking aides are required for balance and stability.

Although there is limited demographic and market information about walking, in one survey walking ranked first among physical activities of Canadians and in another, eighty-five percent Canadians indicated they walk for leisure and recreation while an equally large percentage confirmed they would ideally like to walk more often than they currently do.

Active Transportation

Walking as a means of transportation – from home to commuter bus/train routes, to school, to corner store, to local recreational facilities and parks – reduces reliance on the automobile with its costly environmental impact. At the same time it adds a beneficial exercise component to one’s daily routine and, as adults incorporate walking into their activities, so their children learn the value and pleasure of walking.

The top five reasons for walking as a mode of transportation in Canada are exercise and health, pleasure, practicality and convenience, concern about the environment, and saving money. The principle barriers to walking as a mode of transportation, as reported by Canadians in the same survey, are distance, time, weather, inconvenience, and health/disability. In the cited survey, possible changes that would encourage more people to walk for active transportation were identified: better health, better weather; better and safer routes - well-linked networks of continuous sidewalks, walking trails and paths; more pleasant routes and scenery; better maintenance of trails; incentives; and more information on routes.

Active transportation can contribute to national and global commitments for pollution prevention and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions responsible for global warming. Bicycling and walking can help to alleviate some of the negative effects of intense motorization – traffic congestion, air pollution, and destruction of the environment.

Connectivity

The linear nature of pedestrian trails connects community meeting places where families, friends and neighbours can gather safely for recreation – strengthening ties and building friendships. Neighbourhood trails enhance pride in a community as residents and business owners present their “best side” - cleaning and fixing property adjacent to the trail. A popular and well maintained trail can also serve as a focal point and gathering place for special events in a community, leading to greater interaction between residents and improving cohesion within the community.

Trail projects help build partnerships among private companies, landowners, neighbouring municipalities, local government, and advocacy groups. Each trail contains elements of local character and regional influence, and reflects the hard work, enthusiasm, and commitment of individuals, organizations, elected officials, and agencies. All are able to take pride in having worked together to complete a trail project successfully. In addition, when residents are encouraged to become involved in a trail project, they feel more connected to the community.

Economics

Trails provide economic benefits to the communities in which they are located. They attract walkers and hikers from other communities and tourists increasing the benefits to restaurants, local businesses, retail stores, accommodations, and tourist attractions. Property values adjacent to pedestrian trails have been shown to increase in recognition of the unobtrusive, healthy, active places trails provide for community oriented recreation.

There are economic benefits of pedestrian trails to their users, as well. Hiking and walking are affordable forms of recreation, requiring little specialized equipment or training. Most trails are free to the public, although membership in hiking/ walking/ trail clubs does provide support for trail building and maintenance and for costs of organizing hikes or walks.

The market for eco-tourism which is largely based on pedestrian trails in natural environmental significant areas has potential for significant economic growth according to research undertaken for the tourism sector.

Increasingly, governments are recognizing the value of pedestrian trail systems as a means of preserving and accessing the environment to:

- Help protect the habitat for native plants and animals;
- Raise environmental awareness;
- Help mitigate pollution caused by burning fossil fuels;
- Serve as tools in research; and
- Serve as environmental classrooms.

Education

Pedestrian trails provide a unique opportunity for firsthand experiences to educate users of all ages about nature, culture, and history along trails. Trails form natural classrooms and laboratories for observing the environment – habitats of flora and fauna, geographic land formations, the ecosystems of waterways – and for developing respect for nature. Interactive education is enhanced through comprehensive trail guides and strategically placed signage to encourage awareness of the trail's natural, cultural and historic attributes.

Trails are essential features of outdoor education centres, camps, parks, and conservation areas that offer outdoor educational experiences to schools and youth groups. Trails provide access to natural areas to help students "connect" with the natural world, to undertake scientific investigations, express themselves through the visual arts, and to recreate and have fun within the context of both formal and informal curricula.

As urbanization continues and outdoor education funding remains limited, the role of trails in raising awareness of natural environmental values for the public at large become more important than ever.

Environment

Besides the important role trails play in the environmental protection movement by providing access for the

appreciation of the natural environment, trails can also play a major role in securing lands for protection in perpetuity. For example, the Bruce Trail Association (BTA) is the only charitable organization working, with its donors and partners, to preserve public access to the Niagara Escarpment (a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve) while restoring its natural habitat. BTA partners include the Ontario Heritage Trust, Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Authorities, and Ontario Parks. The BTA manages 2320 hectares of Escarpment land with the assistance of more than 100 Stewardship Program volunteers. Volunteers put in roughly 15,000 hours annually to develop and maintain the Bruce Trail for public use. Forty-seven percent of the Bruce Trail is on secure land, safe from development. Fifty-three percent, remains vulnerable to development and refusal of permission to cross.

The Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM), a prominent geological landform located north of Toronto and extending 160 kms from the Trent River to the Niagara Escarpment, although protected by the ORM Protection Act and the ORM Conservation Plan, is also vulnerable to development. Among the objectives of the ORM Foundation, created at the same time as the legislation and regulation, is to provide funds and other property to other Registered Charities to purchase land and build infrastructure for and maintain a trail system on the Moraine for the benefit of the public.

Heritage

Trails have the ability to connect us to our heritage by preserving historic footpaths, transportation corridors – including rail-trails, and providing access to historic places. They give people a sense of place and an understanding of the significance of past events and the evolution of civilization in this country.

Recreation

The recreational value of trails is often their foremost attraction. In addition to the entertainment value of recreation, walking / hiking trails add a significant health and fitness benefit, supporting not only walking and hiking, but running, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, and newer pursuits such as geo-caching as well. Trails also instill a commitment to responsible recreation outdoors, promoting respect for nature and the green spaces in which we play.

Overview of Pedestrian Trails and Hiking in Ontario

Pedestrian Trails in Ontario

There is a wide variety among the hundreds of urban and rural walking and hiking trails in Ontario – from rural footpaths used by a few local residents to paved urban walkways travelled by many; from unmarked footpaths to trails with directional and interpretive signage and amenities; from trails a few hundred metres to hundreds of kilometres in length. Activities on trails vary from self-guided recreational outings to organized events and programs. Many trails are intended for hiking and walking use only. Others are designed and managed for multiple uses. Trails may be located on private land (with permission of the landowner), on municipal, and/or on crown lands.

Trails are a shared responsibility among voluntary and not-for-profit organizations, businesses, and all levels of government. Ontario's trail systems have been built largely by volunteers, such as the members of trail clubs or not-for-profit organizations, although many trails have been developed and maintained by various trail owners and managers:

- Provincial government,
- Municipalities,
- Conservation authorities,

- Community organizations,
- Landowners, and
- Resorts, camps and outdoor education centres.

Trail & Walking/Hiking Organizations and Clubs

There are about 600 local and regional trail clubs / organizations that build, maintain, and promote individual trails or sections of longer trails. These may be trail user organizations, such as hiking or snowmobiling clubs, or trail management associations.

In Ontario, the large number and variety of organizations involved in pedestrian trail activities include informal walking and hiking groups, incorporated not-for profit organizations or clubs at local, regional or provincial levels, and trail management associations that promote, develop and manage trails for a variety of uses that include walking and hiking. Many organizations are dedicated to developing, managing and using one particular trail or trail system; others are devoted to all hiking trails in a jurisdiction or region. For some organizations the primary activity is simply hiking and enjoying the health and social benefits of that activity. Others have mandates for advocacy, promotion, of hiking and walking, and trail development, management and maintenance. A number of other organizations, although not hiking organizations per se, offer hiking or walking as an activity or program. These include recreational, social, community, professional, retirement, and fundraising organizations.

Hike Ontario was established over thirty years ago, as a not-for-profit federation of hiking and walking trail groups in Ontario. Throughout its history, Hike Ontario has advocated on behalf of walkers and hikers and has promoted and facilitated trail development and maintenance throughout the province. It has provided support, educational programs (including Hike Leader training and certification), has facilitated a liability insurance program, and has developed a province-wide standard for risk management on hiking trails. Hike Ontario provides information resources and shared expertise, to encourage walkers and hikers to use the extensive trail network throughout the province and to promote a healthy form of exercise. Hike Ontario participates in the implementation of the Ontario Trails Strategy and represents the walking and hiking community on the Ontario Trails Council. It also represents the province at Hike Canada/En Marche, which is promoting the development of a national hiking trail from coast to coast, and at the Trans-Canada Trail which is promoting a multi-use trail across Canada. Closely associated with naturalist groups, such as Ontario Nature, Hike Ontario also promotes conservation and appreciation of the natural environment while encouraging access to it via pedestrian trail systems.

In addition to Hike Ontario and the many hiking and trail organizations, a number of public sector agencies in health, tourism, education, and recreation, and organizations in the private sector support, promote and offer hiking and walking programs.

Market Segment Profiles

Trail Users

An understanding of the characteristics of people who currently use trails is valuable in identifying the benefits of pedestrian trails and to increasing interest in walking and hiking activities. There are three categories of trail users:

- Those who currently walk and hike on trails,
- Those who are interested but are not active on trails, and
- Those who have no apparent interest but who might use trails if appropriate incentives were offered.

These trail users may be local residents or visitors who travel short or long distances to use trails throughout the province.

The Tourism sector has also conducted research to assist local planners and operators in understanding the market potential for resource-based tourism products. This research is also useful to planners of programs that encourage all potential users of trails for pedestrian based activities such as hiking/backpacking, walking, and cross country skiing. The research also addresses how various market segments can be reached (e.g. media consumption patterns and internet use).

In a general context it is worth noting that:

- Walking ranked first (82%) amongst physical activities of Canadians. (2000 Physical Activity Monitor, CFLRI)
- 85% of Canadians walk for leisure and recreational reasons. 82% of Canadians confirmed that they would ideally like to walk more often than they currently do. (CFLRI 1995/EnviroNics 1998, as reported in Trail Monitor, published by Go for Green)
- The top five reasons for walking as a mode of transportation in Canada are:
 - exercise/health (62%)
 - pleasure (30%)
 - practicality/convenience (24%)
 - environmental concern (10%)
 - saving money (9%)
- The principal barriers to walking as a mode of transportation reported by Canadians are:
 - distance (47%)
 - time (19%)
 - weather (18%)
 - inconvenience (11%)
 - health/disability (11%)

More insight into the current and potential hikers and walkers can be gained through the tourism sector. The Travel Activities and Motivation Survey (TAMS) research done by the Canadian Tourism Commission in 2001 is particularly useful. Although this information was developed to assist local tourism planners and operators in understanding of the market potential for resource-based tourism products, it can also be applied to this project to help understand who the target market is and how to motivate them to use trails in Ontario.

According to the Travel Activities & Motivation Survey (TAMS) Outdoor Segmentation Report, November 2001, Lang Research Inc., the Canadian and American markets may be divided into nine segments with respect to their participation in Outdoor activities in their vacation pursuits. The main segments with interest in outdoor activities are:

- Resort Lovers
- Campers
- Naturalists
- Fitness Enthusiasts
- Golfers

- Sport Enthusiasts
- Outdoor Activists
- Hunters and Fishers

Most of these segments use trails to one degree or another. More detailed information can be found in the report at www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/tourdiv/research/tams.html.

Another study, *An Economic Profile of Resource-based Tourism in Ontario, 2001*, Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation, Resource-based Tourism Unit, Tourism Branch, by Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd. March 2003, describes markets in terms of hard and soft outdoor adventurers. Canadians who have taken leisure trips in Canada and exhibit a particular interest in soft outdoor adventure activities, including hiking/backpacking and cross-country skiing fall under the broad category of Soft Outdoor Adventurers. The report provides the number of Ontario and US residents who took leisure trips in Ontario recently and the types of soft outdoor adventure and other outdoor activities they participated in. The information for activities that could occur on trail events is as follows:

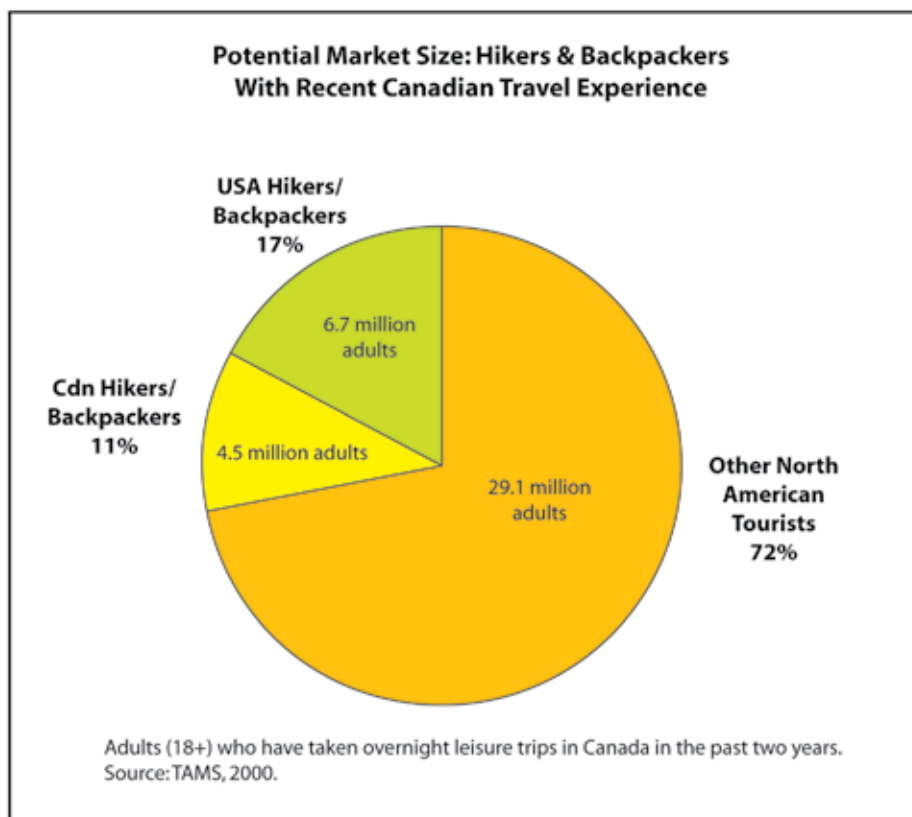
Soft Outdoor Adventure and Other Outdoor Activities Ontario Residents Who Took a Leisure Trip in Ontario Recently

Soft Outdoor Adventurers	2000	Projection to 2026
Hiking/Backpacking	1,091,000	1,258,000
Kayaking or canoeing	1,018,000	1,176,000
Recreational biking	960,000	1,138,000
Horseback riding	316,000	346,000
Bird watching	689,000	924,000

For more info see www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/tourdiv/tourism/resource.html.

The report *A Snapshot of the Hiking & Backpacking Travel Market in North America*, Judy Rogers, Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd., June 2003 makes the following observations regarding market size:

- 11.2 million North Americans are potential customers for Canada’s wilderness hiking and backpacking experiences. There are 4.5 million Canadians (40%). See chart below.
- Ontario under-produces hikers and backpackers as it represents 38% of Canada’s population but only 28% of hikers and backpackers within Canada.



For more information see

http://www.canadatourism.com/ctx/files/publication/data/en_ca/research/_market_research/product_development/travel_activities_and_motivation_survey_tams/snapshot_hiking/tams_hiker_snapshot.pdf

Hike Ontario, Ontario Hikers and Trail Users Survey

Hike Ontario conducted a survey in 1998 to identify attributes of hikers and walkers who were using trails. Of the hikers surveyed:

- 48% were male; 52% female
- 79% were under 50 years of age and of this number, 34.6% were 29 or younger and 44.4% were between 30 and 49 years of age
- 20% of the total number of respondents were between the ages of 50 and 69 years
- Hikers are generally well-educated – the majority hold a college diploma or higher
- Hikers are in the middle to upper income range;
- Autumn is the most popular season for hiking, followed by spring, summer and winter;
- Most hikers hike with friends and/or family; and
- Most hikers stay within 50 km of their community on a typical hiking outing.

The most popular types of trails, in order of use, were:

- Long distance hiking trails, such as the Bruce and Ganaraska Trails (38.4%)

- Local / municipal trails (28%)
- Provincial and National Park trails (18.1%)
- Conservation Area trails (7.7%)
- Rail Trails (1.5%)

Regarding membership in clubs and associations, responses indicated the following:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| • Not members of a club or association | 64.8% |
| • Members of a trail association | 18.1% |
| • Members of a sport association | 10.0% |
| • Members of an environmental association | 2.3% |
| • Members of a recreational outing club | < 1.0% |
| • Members of other types of organizations | 4.0% |

Recommendations & Conclusions



The research into and report of the 'Best Practices' for increasing trail usage by hikers and walkers in Ontario accomplishes the following:

- Presents a large amount of data on strategies and "best practices" being employed by large number of organizations, communities, and individuals;
- Offers information that will be useful to trail, health, walking /hiking, and other organizations seeking to realize the greatest benefits from trails in their communities;
- Provides a broad foundation and framework for future work;
- Captures and respectively presents most of the "best practices" that were submitted in response to a 'call for best practices';
- In the absence of scientific data and methodology relative to this subject, presents 'best practices' as success stories.

Given limitations of time, resources and availability of information, this report does not:

- Identify all the strategies and "best practices" that occur; or
- Include a formal or extensive assessment/comparison of strategies and "best practices" to determine the "very best" practices.

This research has revealed a wide range of strategies and 'best practices' for increasing trail use by walkers and hikers being employed by communities, organizations and individuals. There is much to learn from these creative initiatives and successes. The 'best practices' identified in this report may spark the development of new ones. Many of the strategies and 'best practices' identified can be applied by other types of trail uses. Significant increases in trail use is possible if information about these "best practices" is shared throughout the trails community; if these practices are adapted and applied to suit local and specific needs; and if sufficient human and financial are allocated by governments and organizations to plan, develop and sustain these efforts.

To realize the goals of the Ontario Trails Strategy, the identification, assessment, and sharing of 'best practices' should be an ongoing dynamic process. It is hoped that this report serves as a useful, significant catalyst for doing so.

Acknowledgements



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Research and Data Collection

Your Outdoors, Barrie Martin

Writing

Virginia Johnson, Principal writer

Terri LeRoux

Tim Wood

Input & Review

Provided by Hike Ontario's member clubs, affiliate organizations, individual directors and volunteers.

Hike Ontario Member Clubs & Organizations

Avon Trail

100 km hiking trail from St. Marys to Conestogo, northeast of Waterloo. The Avon Trail links the Thames Valley Trail with the Grand Valley Trail. Tel: (519) 273-6199

Bighead River Heritage Association (Trout Hollow Trail)

A walking trail that travels through private property along both sides of the Bighead River. www.bigheadriver.org

Bruce Trail Association

The Bruce Trail is the oldest and longest continuous footpath in Canada. It runs along the Niagara Escarpment from Niagara to Tobermory, spanning more than 850 km of main trail. Nine Bruce Trail Clubs support the Bruce Trail Association. Each Club manages a section of the Trail www.bruce-trail.org

Durham Outdoors Club

The Durham Outdoors Club began with a small group of like-minded individuals who got together informally to enjoy outdoor pursuits in each others company. Hiking, canoeing, cycling, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing are among the clubs more common pursuit. www.durhamoutdoorsclub.ca

Elgin Hiking Trail Club

South Western Ontario's jewel of trails with 41 kilometres of trails through the Carolinian Forests with trail elevations of approximately 70 meters. www.elginhikingtrail.org

Acknowledgements

Elora Cataract Trailway Association

A forty-seven kilometre trailway linking parks, watersheds and communities in south-central Ontario.
www.trailway.org

Friends of the Trail

Incorporated community group managing the Lower Trent Trail, a rail trail, which runs from the Town of Trenton to the village of Glen Ross. www.friendsofthetrail.ca

Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association

Dedicated to the conservation of our natural resources and has as its objective, the establishment and maintenance of a hiking trail for public use from Port Hope to the Bruce Trail near Collingwood.
www.Ganaraska-Hiking-Trail.ca

Grand Valley Trails Association

The Grand Valley Trail is a marked footpath stretching more than 250 km between Rock Point Provincial Park on Lake Erie to the town of Alton, near Orangeville.
www.gvta.on.ca

Guelph Hiking Trail Club

Dedicated to recreational hiking, and to building and maintaining rural trails in the general area between the Grand Valley (Fergus, Elora, Cambridge) on the west and the Bruce Trail (Limehouse--near Acton) on the east. The Club is also involved with others in building multi-use trails on recently abandoned railway lines.
www.guelphhiking.com

Herring Belles Ladies Cross Country Skiing

C/O: Paula Blaser 83 Fairlawn Ave., Toronto, ON M5M 1S6. T: 416-489-1433

Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association

The HVHTA begins in the headwaters of the Humber River near the village of Palgrave and follows the Humber River south through Bolton into King Township and Klienburg in the City of Vaughan. www.humbertrail.org

Huronian Trails & Greenways

Huronian Trails and Greenways (HTG) is a registered not-for-profit charitable corporation dedicated to promote and enable the development of a sustainable network of trails and greenways in Simcoe County , Ontario.
www.simcoecountytrails.net

Lost River Walks, North Toronto Green Community

The objective of Lost River Walks is to encourage understanding of the city as a part of nature rather than apart from it, and to appreciate and cherish our heritage. Create an appreciation of the city's intimate connection to its water systems, by tracing the courses of forgotten streams, by learning about our natural and built heritage; and by sharing this information with others. www.lostrivers.ca

Maitland Trail Association

Following the path of the Maitland River the MTA encourages hiking, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and nature study as a form of recreation along this trail. www.hurontel.on.ca/~mta/

Nastawgan Trails Inc.

A non-profit community based organization that plans, establishes, maintains and promotes a four season non-motorized trail network which, in combination with 2400 km. of interconnected canoe routes, makes the Temiskaming area a world class recreational tourism destination. www.nastawgantrails.com

North Simcoe Rail Trail

A 30 km recreational trail in Springwater Township, for all seasons. www.simcoecountytrails.net

North Toronto Green Community

A non-profit organization working to engage and connect residents, community groups and local businesses to improve our environment, economy and quality of life. www.ntgc.ca

Oak Ridges Trail Association

With over 200 kilometres of trail, ORTA is organized into ten "Chapters" along the Oak Ridges Moraine, so that local knowledge can be used to plan, develop and maintain the trail. The Chapters are: Caledon, King, Aurora, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Uxbridge, Scugog, Clarington, Hope/Hamilton and Northumberland.

www.oakridgestrail.org

Palmerston Trail Association, Inc

The Palmerston Trail Association owns and operates almost 10 km of trails and abandoned rail lines in Minto, On. Tel: 519-343-3711

Rideau Trail Association

A founding member of Hike Ontario, the RTA's purpose is to preserve and maintain a hiking trail from Kingston to Ottawa. In addition to the main trail, there are a number of side trails which are marked by blue triangles. The total length of cleared and marked trails is 387 kilometres. www.rideautrail.org

Street To Trail Association

Street to Trail is a non profit organization that helps people living on the streets of Toronto to rediscover their inner sense of worth, using the healing power of the natural world. Street to Trail organizes wilderness hikes and many other outdoor excursions including trail hikes and canoe trips that help homeless people experience the beauty and therapeutic calmness of nature. www.street-to-trail.com

Thames Valley Trail Association

The TVTA offers recreational hiking and cross-country skiing inside and outside the Thames Valley Region, as well as related social gatherings. They also maintain and develop walking and hiking trails in the London area, maintain over 130 kilometres of hiking trails, and promote hikes of varying difficulty from a one hour stroll to a demanding three day hike. www.thamesvalleytrail.org

The Outing Club of East York

Volunteer organization dedicated to helping people stay fit and to enjoy outdoor activities year-round.

www.outingclubofeastyork.org

Thunder Bay Hiking Association

The TBHA promotes recreational hiking and related seasonal activities such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and backpacking in the Thunder Bay area.

www.tbha.ca

Voyageur Trail Association

The Voyageur Trail is a true wilderness trail in Northern Ontario. A pedestrian trail only--this means that it is made for hiking, backpacking, snowshoeing and bushwhack skiing.

www.voyageurtrail.ca

4 Day Evening Walk Committee

With a relatively small beginning in 1991, the 4 DE Walk now welcomes between 700 and 900 participants every year to their organized activities. Tel: (905) 634-3998

Affiliate Members of Hike Ontario

Hike Canada En Marche

Canada's National Hiking Organization since 1971. For over thirty years, Hike Canada En Marche has been working on the vision of a footpath across Canada. www.nationaltrail.ca

Ontario Nature

Ontario Nature protects and restores natural habitats through research, education and conservation, connecting thousands of individuals and communities with nature. www.ontarionature.org

Ontario Trails Council

The Ontario Trails Council (OTC) - Conseil des Sentiers de l'Ontario - is a VOLUNTEER led, charitable organization, promoting the creation, preservation, management and use of recreational trails in Ontario. www.ontariotrails.org

Trans Canada Trail

An 18,000 - kilometer recreational corridor winding its way through every Province and territory, linking 800 communities along its route. When completed, this will be the longest trail of its kind in the world, connecting our regions, our three oceans and our people in a new way for generations to come. www.tctrail.ca

Waterfront Regeneration Trust

The Waterfront Trail has been an instrumental part of Lake Ontario's regeneration. Along it you will find a 740 km celebration of nature and culture – where peaceful countryside, small towns and big cities are linked in bringing Lake Ontario to this province's residents and visitors, alike www.waterfronttrail.org

ORGANIZATIONS responding to Hike Ontario's research survey

Achilles Track Club
Adventure Earth Centre (NS)
ALS Society of Canada
Advancement of Women & Sport & Physical Activity
Canadian Hospice for Palliative Care
Canadian Ecology Centre
Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority
City of Charlottetown, Parks and Recreation
City of Hamilton
City of Kawartha Lakes
City of Peterborough
City of Richmond Hill
Cleveland Metro Parks (Ohio)
County of Lanark
Cumberland Trail Conference (TN)
Friends of the Haulage Road Trail
Get Active Now
Go for Green
Grand Valley Trails Association:
Haliburton County Community Cooperative
Haliburton Highlands Trails and Tours Network
Haliburton Sculpture Forest
Development Corporation
Kawartha Lakes Green Trail Alliance
Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
Leave No Trace Canada
Maitland Trails Association
Norfolk County Community Services
Oak Ridges Trail Association
Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition
Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion
Ontario Parks
Ontario Trails Council
Orienteering Ontario
Ottawa Public Health
Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto
Peninsula Bruce Trail Club

Prairie Pathfinders
Rainbow Routes Association
Regional Municipality of Durham
Rouge Park
Sir Sanford Fleming College
Street to Trail Association
Sudbury Regional Hospital, Regional Cancer Program
Thames Valley Trail Association
Toronto Bruce Trail Club
Trails Canada
Trails for all Ontarians Collaborative
Trent University Trail Studies Unit
Walk and Bike for Life
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
Waterfront Regeneration Trust
Winnipeg Trails Association
York Region Health Services Department

It should be noted that contact information provided by those submitting information was correct as of March 20, 2007. Hike Ontario assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information relative to submitting organizations, nor as posted on websites of those organizations cited.

Appendix 1



Case Study 1.1: Boardwalks on Trails

Organization: Bruce Grey Trails Network

Contact: 578 Brown St., Box 129
Warton, ON N0H 2T0
(519) 374-1933
info@brucegreytrails.com

Description:

The Bruce Grey Trail Network espouses the importance of boardwalks on trails accomplishes several things. Boardwalks make trails more accessible for people with disabilities, seniors, and young families. They can also protect sensitive areas. An article on the BGTN web site outlines the benefits and highlights some of the trails with boardwalks in the Bruce Grey region.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.brucegreytrails.com/boardwalks.php>

Case Study 1.2: Lanark Trail Corporation

Organization: County of Lanark

Contact: George Pankiw, P.Eng, CHFM
Project Engineer
Public Works Department
(613) 267-1353 ext 113
gpankiw@county.lanark.on.ca

Description:

The County of Lanark has recently formed a corporation is made up of a board of directors from County Council, county staff, adjacent landowners, local municipal reps, public members, and Public Health. There will be 4 sub-committees. Their role is to plan, advocate, educate, market, promote, and partner in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive trail system within the County of Lanark. A copy of Draft Incorporation By-Law and Business Plan is available on their web site.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information - www.county.lanark.on.ca - go to the website and look under services and then County trails.

Case Study 1.3: Leave No Trace

Organization: Leave No Trace Canada

Contact: c/o Calgary Area Outdoor Council

1111 Memorial Drive NW

Calgary, AB T2N 3E4

Toll Free: 1-877-238-9343

info@leavenotrace.ca

Description:

Leave No Trace is promoting a set of principles that define an outdoor ethic and is meant to guide human practice in the outdoors. There are seven basic principles: plan ahead and prepare, travel and camp on durable surfaces, dispose of waste properly, leave what you find, minimize campfire impacts, respect wildlife, and be considerate of other visitors. Leave No Trace provides training to outdoor leaders. This is a standard for outdoor activity that can be adopted for trails and promoted in parks and on private property. This practice will create trails that will appeal to a greater number of users.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

Source of Information: www.leavenotrace.ca

Case Study 1.4: Pathway Patrol

Organization: Ottawa Public Health

Contact: Betty-Ann Hamilton

betty-ann.hamilton@ottawa.ca

613-580-9620

613-580-6744 ext 2618

www.pp-ps.ca

Summer Coordinator - Elanor Fenge

613 - 828-4382

Description:

Pathway Patrol is an organization of trained volunteers who help ensure that pathways are a safe, fun place for recreation and commuting. The patrollers overlook designated pathways in pairs during daylight hours and will walk, in-line skate, or cycle. The Pathway Patrol is a partnership with Ottawa Public Health and involves

volunteers, businesses, health/recreational professionals, politicians, police, EMS, and other community agencies. Patrollers are trained volunteers who monitor pathways from Victoria Day to Labour Day. Approximately 160 volunteers provide service on 200 km of Ottawa trails. The hope is that if people feel safe on the trails they will be more physically active and get out and enjoy the beautiful Ottawa scenery along the pathways!

Patrollers provide these services:

- Provide first aid and emergency care
- Remind users of pathway courtesy and regulations
- Promote safety and active living
- Assist with basic emergency equipment repairs
- Monitor pathway use
- Remove obstacles and hazards from the pathway and report problems to the authorities
- Present at a number of community events

Measures of success: 160 volunteers registered.

More Information: <http://www.pp-ps.ca/>
<http://www.pathwaystohealth.on.ca/patrol.htm>

Case Study 1.5: Trail Standards and Best Practices for Persons with Disabilities

Organization: Trails for all Ontarians Collaborative
Capital Regional District Parks

Contact: Patricia Longmuir
pe.Longmuir@utoronto.ca
416-445-2358
905-430-4343
Brad Drew, Coordinator
Facilities and Capital Development
Parks Central Services, CRD Parks
490 Atkins Ave Victoria. BC V9B 2Z8
Direct: 478-3313 local 234
Office: 478-3344
bdrew@crd.bc.ca

Description:

Trails for all Ontarians, is an initiative that fosters the creation of an inclusive and accessible trail system in Ontario that would provide people with disabilities opportunities to get and stay active. At the time of this study

design guidelines and standards for constructing accessible trails had been drafted and trail pilots had been conducted to test the effectiveness of these design guidelines and standards. The Capital Regional District Parks in BC is committed to ensuring that all visitors are able to experience the natural environment of regional parks and trails. CRD has successfully developed standards and best practices for people with disabilities and has provided access to regional parks and programs that are available to all socio-economic levels. The documents Accessibility and Universal Design: The Official Guide and Everybody's Parks and Trails: A Universal Access Plan for CRD Parks are available on their web site.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.crd.bc.ca/parks/accessibility.htm>

Case Study 1.6: Trail Improvements - Rouge Park

Organization: Rouge Park

Contact: Maryam Nassar, HBEd, HBES
Manager, Interpretation & Communications
Rouge Park
50 Bloomington Road West
Aurora, ON Canada L4G 3G8
905.713.6007
maryam_nassar@rougepark.com

Description:

The Rouge Park has made a number of improvements to their 12 km of trails in Rouge Park in Toronto which have likely resulted in increased trail use and also improved visitor experiences on the trails. Blazing (to Ontario Trails Council standards) and directional signage, grooming, and publicizing of the trails, as well as the fact that they are accessible by public transit have all enhanced the visitor experience. The improvements help to maintain the health of the Park by concentrating negative user impacts into specific, manageable areas. The official trails are publicized with the goal of directing people to those trails so that they do not create their own trails or follow unofficial routes which pose environmental, safety, and liability problems

Measures of success:

The park partner staff at the City of Toronto have received excellent anecdotal feedback from trail users & park visitors when out on the trails. They have also received media coverage commenting on the well-signed trails.

More Information: www.rougepark.com for trail information. Also see newsletters on web site

Case Study 1.7: Trail Master Plan

Organization: City of Hamilton
City of Kawartha Lakes

Contact: Steve Barnhart
sbarnhar@hamilton.ca
Craig Shanks
cshanks@city.kawarthalakes.on.ca

Description:

Several jurisdictions have developed master plans for their trails. The City of Hamilton has developed a trails master plan to organize and prioritize a comprehensive, multipurpose off-road trail system to connect natural areas, cultural features, and major land use destinations within the City of Hamilton. The plan proposed design standards for trail development.

In 2006 City of Kawartha Lakes produced a trails master plan that addresses the need for a comprehensive approach to trails planning and development throughout the City, and provides a framework for future decision-making. It will serve as a long term planning tool to guide the development of new trails and open space linkages, and to assist in negotiations to acquire routes for recreation/transportation as opportunities arise.

Trail Master Plans contribute to increased trail use by determining the existing and potential trails, guiding the development of those trails, promoting good trail management and insuring users needs are understood and met.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information:

Hamilton -

<http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/cityandgovernment/citydepartments/publicworks/capitalplanning/openspace/trailsmasterplan.htm>

City of Kawartha -

<http://www.city.kawarthalakes.on.ca/Community/ParksRec/ParksTrailsForestry/trailsmasterplan.htm>

Guelph - <http://guelph.ca/living.cfm?itemid=68045&smocid=1965>

Markham - http://www.markham.ca/Markham/Channels/planning/studies_pathways.htm

Saugeen Shores - <http://www.town.saugeenshores.on.ca/main/parksandtrails.htm>

Richmond Hill - http://www.richmondhill.ca/subpage.asp?textonly=&pageid=prc_trails

York Region -

<http://www.region.york.on.ca/Departments/Planning+and+Development/Pedestrian+and+Cycling+Master+Plan.htm>

Richmond Hill

http://www.richmondhill.ca/subpage.asp?textonly=&pageid=prc_trails

Case Study 1.8: Trail Training Workshops

Organization: Sir Sanford Fleming College

Contact: Albert Street South

PO Box 3000

Lindsay, ON K9E 5V6

Phone: 705-324-9144

Fax: 705-878-9312

Instructor: Allen MacPherson

Description:

Providing training in all aspects of trail development builds capacity for organizations to develop great trails and trail activities and thus the potential for increasing trail use. Sir Sandford Fleming offers one or two day specific trail building workshops with as much practical or hands on opportunities for participants. Workshop topics include signage plans, construction techniques for building sustainable trails, using natural material, or designing trails for accessibility for all Ontarians using simple techniques. Short courses provided at convenient times at a low cost will ensure trails get built to a safe and enjoyable standard. The key is to provide practical instruction based upon proven successes that can be universally applied. Core training is the same but the type of audience and trail experience being developed may be different. For example, a children's trail will require more specific construction techniques to ensure safety (large rock removal, movement or route selection).

The Celebration of Trails program (see Case Study #3.4) offers event development workshops to provide information, resources, and ideas for planning events on trails.

Measures of success:

It is a best practice because it establishes recognized trail standards that can be expected by users. It provides specific problem solving techniques to ensure these standards are applied properly. It is education with a broader perspective to trail use.

More Information:

Trail Construction Workshop

http://www.flemingc.on.ca/Courses/CourseDescription.cfm?Course_Code=RECR051

Trail Design and Construction

http://www.flemingc.on.ca/Courses/CourseDescription.cfm?Course_Code=FREC002

Trail Planning Workshop

http://www.flemingc.on.ca/Courses/CourseDescription.cfm?Course_Code=RECR052

Trail signage and Maintenance

http://www.flemingc.on.ca/Courses/CourseDescription.cfm?Course_Code=RECR053

Case Study 1.9: Trails Studies Unit

Organization: Trent University

Contact: Trails Studies Unit

Trent University

Peterborough, ON K9J 7B8

Phone: 705-748-1419

Fax: 705-748-1801

Allen MacPherson: al_macpherson@sympatico.ca

John Marsh: jmarsh@trentu.ca

Description:

The Trail Studies Unit is a resource centre comprising over 1500 references on trails. These include trail plans, design manuals, user studies, impact studies, guidebooks, interpretive brochures, and trail magazines. The catalogue is computerized allowing the selection of references by subject, author and location, and the production of bibliographies. On-line access to the catalogue is planned. The centre also includes a slide and video collection relating to trails. The resource centre is expanding constantly, so contributions of trail publications are welcome. The centre is located in the Environmental Sciences Building, Trent University. It is staffed and is open for use Tuesday to Thursday from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Additional resources are available in the libraries of Trent University and Fleming College, Lindsay.

Measures of success:

There is no other place in Canada that has as much information about trails in one place. Learning from others will ensure quality and safe trails resulting in more use. As they say – you don't have to reinvent the wheel- your issue or problem probably has been documented at the Trail Studies Unit. There are resource people available to assist you in your trail plans. It may be possible to have research done by students to assist in the development of your trail. All of this helps ensure success. In the past it has been measured by number of internet contacts, visit to the office and material received to be added to the library.

Source of Information - <http://www.trentu.ca/academic/trailstudies/trail.html>

Case Study 1.10: Volunteer Programs

Organization: Various

Contact: Hike Ontario

www.hikeontario.com

Bruce Trail Association

www.brucetrail.org

Oak Ridges Moraine

<http://www.oakridgestrail.org/index.html>

Michael Meek
Communications Coordinator
Cumberland Trail Conference
19 East 4th St.
Crossville, TN 38555
(931) 456-6259
cumberlandtrail@rocketmail.com
www.cumberlandtrail.org

Description

Volunteer programs are a way of introducing people to trails and trail management. Ontario's trail system was largely built by volunteers. Most trail organizations such as Hike Ontario, the Bruce Trail Association, and the Oak Ridges Trail Association have volunteer programs offering a wide variety of opportunities. Successful volunteers can result in increased organizational capacity and a strong voice for the activities of the organization. Through word of mouth volunteers will promote increased involvement and use of trails. The Cumberland Trail Conference (CTC) has had success in attracting people to hiking trails through volunteer programs. They are a nonprofit organization dedicated to building the Cumberland Trail, a 300+ mile hiking trail that spans the entire state of Tennessee. CTC has developed a strong core of volunteers by tracking the number of hours an individual donates, and then recognizing these individuals at an awards ceremony. They run two major volunteer programs a year. In the Cumberland Trail Breakaway program they work with college students under the auspices of ASB - alternative spring break. College students from across the country donate their spring breaks to building trail; in return, they receive free lodging and meals. Students love this program, and most colleges participate year after year. In 2006 over 200 students that participated during the 5-week program. CTC also runs a Big Dig program, which is similar to the ASB program, but here the volunteers are of all ages. This program runs for 6 weeks, and people volunteer when it is convenient to them. Long time volunteers who have learned the ins and outs of trail building are given leadership positions on the trail crews. Additional volunteer opportunities and experiences are listed on web site under "activities".

Measures of success: The Bruce Trail Association has 750 volunteers. In 2006 over 200 students that participated during the 5-week CTC program.

More Information:

Cumberland Trails conference - www.cumberlandtrail.org
Hike Ontario - <http://www.hikeontario.com/getinvolved/volunteer.htm>
Bruce Trails Association -
<http://www.brucetrail.org/volunteer.asp?id=%7BDC4AF215-4890-4616-8970-AF8D275AA5EB%7D>
Oak Ridges Trails Association <http://www.oakridgestrail.org/volunteer.htm>

Case Study 1.11: Volunteer Vacations

Organization: American Hiking Society

Contact: <http://www.americanhiking.org/events/vv/index.html>

Description:

The Volunteer Vacation program of the American Hiking Society offers the opportunity for people to see new trails and help maintain them at the same time. The vacation schedule is posted on their web site and vacations can be booked on line. The web site states "On an American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacation, you visit stunning backcountry locations to construct or rebuild footpaths, cabins and shelters. In the process, you meet new people, explore canyons, peaks and valleys, enjoy quiet evenings around a fire and come home refreshed and rejuvenated. Volunteer Vacations are more fun than work! And best of all, the trips are only \$130 (\$100 for American Hiking Members)!"

Measures of success:

There are testimonials in the website and stories in the "Hiker's Journal" section. This is a unique way to get trail maintenance done at a lower cost. It encourages people to get involved in trail work while enjoying the back-country.

More Information: <http://www.americanhiking.org/events/vv/index.html>

Case Study 1.12: Ontario Trails Strategy

Organization: Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion

Contact: Ministry of Health Promotion

777 Bay Street, 18th Floor,

Toronto, ON M7A 1S5

Phone: 416-326-8475

Description:

The Ontario Government in conjunction with key stakeholders has developed the Ontario Trails Strategy (OTS) with the following vision: "A world-class system of trails that captures the uniqueness and beauty of Ontario's vast open spaces and natural and built cultural/heritage resources. People and places are connected through quality, diverse, safe, accessible and environmentally sensitive urban, rural and wilderness experience trails for recreational enjoyment, active living and tourism development." The implementation of the OTS will result in increased trail use by providing a strategic context, resolving critical trail issues and funding initiatives designed to encourage trail use.

More Information: <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/sportandrec/trails.asp>

Case Study 1.13: Trail Design and Construction Guidelines and Standards

Organization: Various

Contact: Various

Description:

There are a number of manuals that present trail design and construction recommendations and specifications. These manuals have been created by and for specific organizations and/or jurisdictions (municipal, provincial, and national). The application of these guidelines and standards will insure that trails are consistently well designed, safe, easily found and followed, and have a distinctive visual identity – factors that are essential for increasing trail use. Following standards is a “best” practice in itself but there is considerable variability among the manuals. The scope of this project did not allow for the acquisition and comparison of these manuals. Here are a few examples.

Parks Canada probably has the most comprehensive manual that can apply to many landscapes throughout Ontario. It is titled Trail Manual- Minister of the Environment (1985) Parks Canada

The Waterfront Trail has produced Design, Signage and Maintenance Guidelines: Waterfront Trail to guide the development of their trail.

<http://www.trailsCanada.com/documents/Trailpaq.bibliography.june.2001.doc>

BC Ministry of Forests trail standards is part of their Recreation Manual and can be found at

<http://www.tsa.gov.bc.ca/publicrec/manual/chap10/chap10.htm>.

New Zealand’s Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures can be obtained on-line at

[http://www.standards.co.nz/webshop/?action=viewSearchProduct&mod=catalog&pid=8630:2004\(SNZHB\)](http://www.standards.co.nz/webshop/?action=viewSearchProduct&mod=catalog&pid=8630:2004(SNZHB))

See Data sheet 1.5 for trail standards for people with disabilities.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information:

A listing of other manuals can be found at

<http://www.trailsCanada.com/documents/Trailpaq.bibliography.june.2001.doc>

Case Study 2.1: Ability Trail Challenge

Organization: Huronia Trails and Greenways

Contact: David Francis
(905) 729 4545
davidlfrancis@gmail.com

Description:

The Ability Trail Challenge introduces disabled groups to trail participation. This initiative identifies and develops a resource list of accessible trails for wheelchairs including access points, wheelchair accessible facilities, and transportation capacity. It will also identify and develop a list of trail accessible equipment within Simcoe County including location and availability for use on trail systems. A backcountry "trailrider" and a team of trained sherpa to use the "trailrider" will be provided. Simcoe County Trails will work with Simcoe County Association for the Physically Disabled to recruit a local leader and instruct in the program. This will include dealing with risk management, signup procedures, leadership, fitness training, mentoring, promotion, marketing, and group building. A brochure will be distributed to the physically disabled community, outlining the program.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.simcoecountytrails.net/readytoexplore.html>

Case Study 2.2: Becoming an Outdoors Woman Program & Beyond BOW

Organization: Becoming an Outdoors Woman
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

Contact: Assistant Director Peggy Farrell
1-877-BOWOMAN
peggy.farrell@uwsp.edu
Jane Beggs
Woman's Outdoor Weekend
P.O. Box 2800,
Peterborough, Ontario,
K9J 8L5
Phone: (705) 748-6324
E-Mail: wow@ofah.org

Description

Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) is about becoming more competent, more confident, and more aware in the outdoors. BOW is an outdoor skills program that offers women a chance to grow. Over 20,000 women attend BOW events every year. More than 80 weekend-long workshops are held all across North America annually. The

workshops introduce women to a variety of activities equally balanced between hunting and shooting, fishing, and non-harvest sports like canoeing and camping. Participants choose from a list of over 20 activities, including many that require and encourage trail use. Beyond BOW is an extension of the BOW program that encourages day trips and shorter workshops throughout the year. Many of these Beyond BOW experiences are organized hikes of varying lengths. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters offers a similar program in Ontario called Women's Outdoor Weekend (WOW!).

Measures of success:

This program began in 1991 and is now offered in more than 40 states, several Canadian provinces, and New Zealand. It has expanded to include Beyond BOW experiences and supports research about women in the outdoors.

More Information: <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/bow/>
<http://www.ofah.org/programs/WOW/Contact.cfm>

Case Study 2.3: Children's Hikes

Organization: Maitland Trail Association

Contact: Maitland Trail Association,
Box 443, Goderich, Ontario N7A 4C7

Description:

The Maitland Trail Association offers special children's hikes. Some examples include:

A Family Hike Along the Easter Bunny Trail – This is a spring hike in the lovely Maitland Woods, where youngsters encounter some of the Easter Bunny's long-eared, fluffy tailed, treat-carrying helpers as they walk along the trail. The children also search for Easter items in 4 sections of the trail (toy bunnies, baskets, eggs, and ducks and chicks). The searching slows down the walk so that they observe what is around them instead of racing from one treat station to another. Helpers have the opportunity to point out specific spring flowers and other points of interest.

Sifto Loop Adventure Hike for Children – This is a Canada Day adventure hike along the Sifto Loop trail, looking for special items that are obviously Canadian. The children find the items and check off on their lists. Each participant is given a evergreen seedling to take home, plant, and nurture. Refreshments are also provided after the hike.

Haunted Halloween Hike - Children are encouraged to wear costumes and as they walk the trail, at the four or five 'stations' they meet a character who asks a Halloween riddle, or asks them to make a scary noise, or make a scary face and then give them a Halloween candy.

Trail Clean Up – This often involves high school students as part of their required volunteer hours for their high school credit.

Measures of success: none provided

Source of Information: <http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>

Case Study 2.4: Trails for all Ontarians Collaborative

Organization: Trails for all Ontarians Collaborative: Get Active Now

Contact: Patricia Longmuir

pe.Longmiur@utoronto.ca

416-445-2358

905-430-4343

Frank Prospero

(519) 568-7083

info@getactivenow.ca

Description:

This is an Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant that is focused on developing best practices for trails for people with disabilities. This initiative is about creating an inclusive and accessible trail system in Ontario that would ensure that anyone interested in walking or hiking as an active living opportunity can "Get Active Now". A network of accessible trails all across the province would provide another option for Ontarians with disabilities who want to get and stay active.

Working with Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) and many organizations, "Get Active Now" is developing a simple and standardized format for conveying the "know before you go" conditions on every trail to all potential users. Trail users will know in advance how physically challenging or difficult the trail is, whether there are bridges or stairs, what the parking at the trailhead is like, and more. Information will be widely available on trail layout, length, grade, width, tread, as well as the surrounding environment and ecosystem, scenic interest, and historical significance. Information on what trails in Ontario are accessible is also being compiled. "Get Active Now" is a one window source of trail information for Ontarians with disabilities interested in exploring the trails in their community and across Ontario.

Measures of success:

This group is conducting trail pilots (Second Pond, Oak Ridges Trails Association). They have support from a wide variety to trails organizations and have created mechanisms for input for the community they are serving. They have also received recognition from several organizations through electronic articles and newsletters.

The Canadian Paraplegic Association Ontario

www.canparaplegic.org/on/level2.tpl?var1=story&var2=on20060411135542

Oak Ridges Trails Association – New Release

www.oakridgestrail.org/NewsDocuments/News%20releaseSecord.pdf

SPH planning and Consulting

<http://www.sph-planning-consulting.ca/news.php>

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre

http://www.wyemarsh.com/pdf/TAOC_news06.pdf

More Information: <http://www.getactivenow.ca/>

Case Study 2.5: Earth Adventures - 25 Nature Trails for Fun and Discover

Organization: Adventure Earth Centre

Description:

This is a trail guide book for 25 trails in the Halifax region, with a twist. The book combines trail information and exciting environmental education activities for kids. It is aimed at providing information and guidance to any leader wanting to provide an outdoor experience for children. Activity markers have been included on all the trails so that kids can search for and collect symbols as they complete the trails. There is a central website that encourages families to register and track their progress. This concept has also been implemented in Moncton, NB.

Measures of success:

This is a very innovative approach to getting children and families out on trails. It has been adopted in other areas and is focused on urban areas but can be translated to rural settings quite easily. It combines environmental education and trail use. It also has an interactive website that encourages children to try more than just one hike.

More Information: www.earthed.ns.ca.

Case Study 2.6: First Trails

Organization: Huronia Trails and Greenways

Contact: David Francis

(905) 729 4545

davidlfrancis@gmail.com

Description:

This program aims to introduce and explore historical native trails with local First Nations groups. Participants will meet to discuss and locate native trails in Simcoe County. A group will be formed to explore and map these trails with GPS technology and, where possible, try to develop landowner agreements for marking the trails for future aboriginal exploration. Simcoe County Trails will work with existing first nations organizations and work with local

leaders on historical research. They will also instruct in the program development including; risk management, GPS training, mapping technology, leadership, fitness training, youth mentoring, promotion, marketing, and group building.

Measures of success: none available

More Information: <http://www.simcoecountytrails.net/readytoexplore.html>

Case Study 2.7: Children's Summer Hike-Camp Experience

Organization: Maitland Trails Association

Contact: Wendy Hoernig

P.O Box 443

Goderich, ON

N7A 4C7

w.hoernig@gmail.com

Description: (adapted from website article)

For the third year in a row, the Maitland Trails Association is taking a limited group of children (ages 7-12) to introduce them to hiking in a 'hike immersion' environment. This outing has been a great success in the past. The hike will cover 2 sections of the Maitland Trail over a two day period, and a camp out on the night in between. Tents, sleeping bags, and food will be car-ferried to the camping site so that the children need only carry their day packs with their lunch and drinks, and any other extras they might need during the day. Activities and games will be part of each day's hike to make it both a learning experience and a lot of fun. The pace will be geared for children, however as the days will be fairly active, (the trail has lots of ups and downs), the children taking part should be both eager to go and fairly fit. On the hike, the children are given a booklet with a 'scavenger hunt' list (bugs, plants, birds, amphibians etc) to try to spot as well as pages on which to sketch discoveries. Safety rules are introduced (via a quiz) at the first rest stop. Since the trail follows a shallow river, this makes river edge and river bottom investigations and water play part of the activities. Variations on this theme could be planned in other areas.

Measures of success:

The two-day hike has been running for four years and has had favourable media coverage. The website indicates that the children are excited and eager to do more hiking after the trip. Quote from website: "These hikes have always been the slowest travelling hikes imaginable, because the children see SO much. Each is eager for the others to see their discoveries – and this sharing tends to make them VERY observant.....and they love it."

More information: <http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>

Article in Focus: <http://www.focusnewsmagazine.com/story.php?id=237902> (scroll to the bottom)

Case Study 2.8: Monday Moms - Maitland Trail Association

Organization: Maitland Trail Association

Contact: Wendy Hoernig

P.O. Box 443
Goderich, Ont.
N7A 4C7
w.hoernig@gmail.com
519-524-6976

Description:

Maitland Trail association recently initiated a “Monday Moms” program in which they encourage groups of young mothers to meet for weekly walks in the various communities in the county. Each area can have their own group. Membership is fluid to accommodate changing needs and conditions for young mothers. The idea is to encourage mothers to get into the habit of regular exercise with their infants and young children and to make exercise a normal part of life. The Health Unit and the Rural Response Initiative are very supportive. This is scheduled to be featured in the Trail Talk column in the hopes of sparking the initiation of new groups.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>

Case Study 2.9: Street to Trail

Organization: Street to Trail Association

Contact: Paul Mackle

Street to Trail Association

P.O. Box 745

31 Adelaide St. E. Toronto, ON M5C 2J8

416-532-0983, or paulmackle@yahoo.com

Description: (from the web site)

“Street to Trail is a non profit organization that helps people living on the streets of Toronto to rediscover their inner sense of worth, using the healing power of the natural world. Street to Trail organizes wilderness hikes and many other outdoor excursions including trail hikes and canoe trips that help homeless people experience the beauty and therapeutic calmness of nature. Street to Trail is based on a belief that through getting troubled people away from the city to participate in a wilderness trip they can benefit positively by having an increased self-confidence, a positive environment to overcome addictions, find new meaningful relationships, and rediscover long lost feelings of peace and most of all, hope. Street to Trail has trips scheduled all throughout the year. Typically, they run every second weekend, with half of them being a Saturday day-hike and the other half being multi-day trips to the wilderness, either canoeing or hiking. There are occasionally overnight bicycling trips through rural Ontario.”

More Information: <http://www.street-to-trail.com/index.html>

Case Study 2.10: Trail Considerations for Engaging Girls and Women

Organization: Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS)

Contact: Karin Lofstrom, Executive Director

N202 - 801 King Edward Ave.

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

K1B 5N4

ph.: 613-562-5667

direct line: 613-562-5800 x 6043

klofstrom@caaws.ca

Description:

Women want to use running and walking trails in their communities, but there are some things to think through when creating a trail, or updating an existing one, that will appeal to females of all ages. CAAWS has compiled a number of items to consider, starting with policy and program details, through to design, promotion, language, and signage.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: www.caaws.ca

Case Study 2.11: Translation of Trail Information

Organization: Oak Ridges Trail Association

Contact: Harold Sellers

Executive Director

(905) 853-3518

hikerharold@rogers.com

Description:

The Hike Ontario Trail Users Code, ORTA Trail Guidebook, and ORTA Brochure are being translated into five non-English Languages spoken in Ontario (Chinese, Portuguese, Punjabi, Tagalog, and French). The hiking trails sector in Ontario presently functions almost entirely in English. Very little is published in French and, to the best of our knowledge, nothing is offered in other languages of Ontario's visible ethnic communities and new Canadians. This project will address this deficiency with the goal of encouraging increased trails use by ethnic groups. A new page will be created on the Oak Ridges Trail Association website where these documents will be made available. Multilingual links will guide visitors to the language of choice. These documents and activities can either be applied directly to other trails or will provide a valuable lesson that may be applied to other trails. This will provide a foundational experience on which to expand this program to other areas of the province.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.oakridgestrail.org>

Case Study 2.12: Walking tour of Canada

Organization: Go for Green

Contact: Active & Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Unit 16, 5480 Canotek Road

Ottawa, ON K1J 9H6

Tel: (613) 748-1800 Toll free: (888) 822-2848

Fax: (613) 748-0357

asrts@goforgreen.ca

Description:

This is a school challenge to track the number of kilometres walked and map it across Canada. As the students “Walk” through each province/territory, you’ll find loads of information that relates to history and social studies. Participants can also use the Travel Mode Calculator to compare how various modes of transportation impact climate change and the health of our environment. The Walking Tour of Canada is a great web-based resource to encourage students to incorporate walking, cycling or inline skating into their daily lives. There are also curriculum resources for teachers. This program will hopefully result in more students waking on trails in the vicinity of their schools.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://asrts.goforgreen.ca/english/index.aro>

Case Study 2.13: Wilderness Access

Organization: BC Mobility Opportunities Society

Contact: Pacific Spirit Regional Park

4915 West 16th Avenue in Vancouver

604-222-1312 bcmos@disabilityfoundation.org

Description

“The British Columbia Mobility Opportunities Society is an independent, charitable society dedicated to enriching the lives of people with significant disabilities through challenging wilderness recreation activities. Throughout the spring and summer season, Wilderness Access offers various day trips with the TrailRider geared toward different

abilities, interests and goals. Some people might want to get out and climb a steep mountain, while others might be more interested in wilderness appreciation and awareness.” This organization offers day hikes, theme hikes, special expeditions, camping trips, and kid’s adventure days.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: http://www.reachdisability.org/bcmos/h_page.htm

Case Study 2.14: Youth Trail initiatives - Simcoe County

Organization: Huronia Trails and Greenways

Contact: David Francis
(905) 729 4545
davidlfrancis@gmail.com

Description:

Youth Trail Patrol Program will involve youth at risk in learning and becoming active on trails. Existing Trail Patrollers would train Youth Trail Patrollers (YTP) about location of trails, access points, and permitted activities. They would teach YTP how to be trail ambassadors and how to speak with other trail users and direct them to appropriate trails. They would be taught First Aid, CPR, Conflict Resolution, Risk Management, Natural History, and how to educate users about preventing damage to the trail. Trail users may experience a problem while on the trail. Whether it’s a flat tire, a sprained ankle, heat stroke, or your sled is out of gas, youth trail patrollers are there to help. Youth Trail Patrollers will carry bike repair kits, wrench sets and cellular phones in case of emergency. They can provide emergency phone numbers and directions to local emergency centres. Youth Geocaching Program will help young people learn respect for the environment and geocaching skills, while being active on trails in Simcoe County Forests. Youth group leaders will be trained on how to put together a geocache, to place the cache, to respect the environment, to seek permission for placing the cache, to register the cache site, to monitor and maintain the cache, create and send out travel bugs, and learn how to seek out caches. Advice will be given on how to research buying and using a GPS, and to apply for part funding for a GPS unit.

Youth Hiker Program – Backcountry Explorer is a program designed to introduce young people to hiking skills and opportunities. Involves a one-day training program for 10 – 16 age group, covering clothing, layering, footwear, dealing with weather extremes, summer and winter, local trail systems, map and compass, GPS, backpack and equipment, hydration, shelters, survival skills, risk management and a test hike.

Youth Hiker Program – Urban Explorer is a program designed to introduce young people to exploring urban trails and their opportunities. Involves a one-day training program for 8 – 14 age group, identifying local urban trails systems, how to use them, types of use, exploring, creating expeditions, identifying destinations, creating links, who manages, who maintains, trail patrol, weather conditions, clothing, safety, geocaching, layering, footwear, dealing with weather extremes, summer and winter, local trail systems, map risk management and a test hike.

Youth Hiker Program – Winter Explorer is a program to introduce young people to exploring trails during the winter and their opportunities. Involves a one-day training program for 10 - 16 age group, identifying weather conditions, types of clothing, safety, layering, footwear, dealing with weather extremes, night expeditions, snowshoeing, flashlights, star identification, tracks, hypothermia, heat management, food, drink, risk

management, survival, planning an expedition and a test hike. Coordinating the Summer Cadet Trail Program – Will focus attention on Simcoe trails development and maintenance during the Base Borden Summer cadet program in July and August.

More Information: <http://www.simcoecountytrails.net/readytoexplore.html>

Case Study 2.15: Achilles Rail Trail Relay

Organization: Achilles Track Club

Contact: Bodil Burn
wawhenwe@sympatico.ca
705-745-5001
www.achilliestrackclub.ca

Description:

Each September, the Peterborough Achilles Track Club organizes a 91.0 km relay along rail trails from Kinmount to Lindsay to Peterborough along a gentle route designed to accommodate runners of all abilities. A great team event with emphasis on fun and safety for everyone. Each team must have at least one person with a disability. The Achilles Track Club of Peterborough is part of a worldwide organization that encourages people with and without disabilities to participate in running.

Measures of success: The number of teams participating increases each year.

More information: <http://www.achillestrackclub.ca/>

Case Study 2.16: Young Hiker's Program

Organization: Hike Ontario

Contact:
Hike Ontario
1-800-894-7249 or (905) 833-1787
info@hikeontario.com

Description:

The Young Hikers Program aspires to introduce youth (under the age of 29) to the joys and benefits of hiking, through a variety of mediums such as Youth Hike Leader Certification Youth Risk Management Training and youth volunteer opportunities. The Young Hikers Program promotes hiking as a way of improving health, gaining valuable leadership experience, fulfilling school academic requirements, and earning fulfilling awards. The goals of the program are:

- To introduce hiking to youth as an easy, fun, and low cost recreational activity
- To get youth interested in hiking as a way to explore nature, to get physically fit, and to learn leadership skills
- To provide youth based service providers with valuable resources and certifications that assist them in the development and delivery of quality youth programs and lessons
- To provide local hiking and trail clubs with a program that can be implemented in their local community
- To raise the profile of hiking in Ontario by preparing youth for memberships in hiking clubs
- To raise the profile of Hike Ontario as the source for hiking support, education and representation in Ontario
- To assist government in their goals of improving youth health in Ontario
- To create a self-sustaining program fuelled by youth for youth.

Measures of success: Forty courses/programs were held 05/06 reaching a total of 986 youth. One course was run in partnership with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards (DEA) program and was incorporated into the DEA Preliminary Training program.

More Information:

<http://www.hikeontario.com/services/younghikersprogram.htm#two>

Case Study 2.17: Trails and the School Curriculum

Organization: Oak Ridges Trail Association

Bruce Trail Association

Conservation Halton/Willow Park ecology Centre/Ontario Trails Council

Contact: Harold Sellers

Executive Director

(905) 853-3518

hikerharold@rogers.com

The Bruce Trail Association

PO Box 857

Hamilton, ON L8N 3N9

Telephone 905.529.6821

Toll Free 1.800.665.HIKE

info@bruce-trail.org

Conservation Halton

Mountsberg Wildlife Centre,

2259 Milborough Line,

Campbellville, ON. L0P 1B0
1-905-854-2276 www.conservationhalton.on.ca

Description:

Several organizations are encouraging use of trails by schools by demonstrating how trails and activities on trails through outdoor education programs can help achieve the expected outcomes of the Ontario Curriculum.

The Bruce Trail Association (BTA) is donating 850 copies of the upcoming 24th Edition of its best-selling Bruce Trail Reference Guide, to select youth groups and school children along the Niagara Escarpment. Some of these guidebooks will go to groups participating in the Explore Your Bruce Trail school program where the BTA and its volunteers will work with participating teachers to integrate the Explore Your Bruce Trail school program into the current curriculum.

The Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) receives requests from local schools for guided walks on the Oak Ridges Moraine. These students are learning about the Oak Ridges Moraine and GTA's Green Belt in a geography or social science class. What better way to help them appreciate the value of these in ecologically sensitive areas than to provide them with a first hand, hands on experience hiking a portion of the Oak Ridges Trail.

Kicking it up on the Trails is a day program offered in conjunction with outdoor education organizations of Halton Region. Working with Conservation Halton and the Willow Park Ecology Center, we are providing an opportunity for teachers to get children outdoors to learn enviro-ethics while experiencing physical activity. The Kicking it up on the Trails program teaches Grade 6-8 youth awareness of the values of land conservation, orienteering, enviro-ethics, and appreciation and use of trails.

Measures of success: In 2006 the Oak Ridges Trail Association gave guided hikes for approximately 300 school students. Nearly 500 students participated in Kicking it up on Trails in 2006.

More Information: <http://www.oakridgestrail.org/index.html>
www.bruce-trail.org

Case Study 2.18: "How to" Resources for Hikers

Organization: Various

Contact: Various

Description:

There are a number of resources available that provide information, tips and equipment for hiking and walking, particularly for identified groups. Some examples:

Activity Facts Sheets for Walking and Hiking

Available from Get Active Now, Active Living Resource Centre for Ontarians with a Disability. See <http://www.getactivenow.ca/index.asp>. Get Active Now is a charity focused on improving the lives of Ontarians with disabilities. Their goal is to inspire, encourage and support all Ontarians of all abilities to Get Active Now by

providing information and practical tools on healthy living, with particular focus on recreation, sports and physical fitness.

Hiking with Kids

Mountain Equipment Coop has tips for hiking with kids at

http://www.mec.ca/Main/content_text.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302881810&CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198674020647&en=june0621

The TrailRider

The TrailRider – a multi-terrain, single-wheeled chair powered by two able-bodied people. The TrailRider is a revolutionary mobility device that provides unparalleled wilderness access possibilities for persons with a disability. Futuristic, lightweight and highly manoeuvrable, the TrailRider carries its occupant across rugged terrain, over sand, rocks, and through shallow streams with the help of two able-bodied individuals (known as “sherpas”). The vehicle comes equipped with a specially designed “Mummy Bag” that protects the occupant against wind, rain and cold. The Mummy Bag’s fabrication is ideal for those who, because of circulation or other problems related to their disability, find it difficult to maintain adequate core body temperatures. While many paraplegics can participate in wheelchair sports and other activities, quadriplegics, as well as those with multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, arthritis, ALS or neurotrauma cannot. These people have a special need for new and stimulating environments to alleviate the routines and restrictions demanded by their condition. The TrailRider’s benefits are much greater than simply providing physical access to the wilderness; the TrailRider helps increase community by joining together people with disabilities and their able-bodied counterparts in mutually rewarding recreational activity. For those who have suffered a disabling injury or illness, the vehicle means being able once again to hike with friends and family. For more information, please contact Paul Gowan, BCMOS, at 604-688-6464 (x132), or pgowan@disabilityfoundation.org

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: See above

Case Study 3.1: The Arts and Trails

Organization: Various

Contact: Haliburton Sculpture Forest

Box 210

Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0

Phone: 705-457-3555

Fax: 705-457-3398

info@haliburtonsculptureforest.ca

Huntsville Festival of the Arts

Rob Saunders, General Manager

Box 5465, Huntsville, Ontario, Canada, P1H 2K8

1-800-663-ARTS (2787) 705-788-2787

info@huntsvillefestival.on.ca

Description:

The Sculpture Forest was created in Glebe Park near the Haliburton campus of Sir Sandford Fleming College. It is a unique outdoor collection of sculptures by Canadian artists. The trails in the Sculpture Forest provide changing perspectives of the forest and the sculptures in each of the seasons. Huntsville Festival of the Arts tries to find new and exciting fringe events for the Festival. The Arts Walk is one of these events. Artists were positioned along 1 km of the Hunters Bay Trail where they worked, displayed, and talked about their art. The focus is on artists creating their works in the natural environment.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: www.haliburtonsculptureforest.ca

<http://www.huntsvilleforester.com/1154527792/>

Case Study 3.2: Themed Hikes in Provincial Parks

Organization: Ontario Parks

Contact: Sheila Wiebe

Park NHE Specialist

Bronte Creek Provincial Park

1219 Burloak Drive

Oakville, Ontario

L6M 4J7 905-827-6911 ext 228

sheila.wiebe@ontario.ca

Description:

Provincial Parks have a long tradition of providing themed guided hikes with professional, knowledge and competent interpreters such as those offered at Bronte Creek Provincial Park. Bronte Creek Provincial Park offers a variety of staff led themed hikes throughout the year. Some examples include:

- Tyke Hike – This is a new and popular hike for children and parents offered in the fall during the week at 10 am. It is aimed at a young audience and increasing their awareness of trails and nature/ heritage around them to expand their perceptions of their small world. These hikes appeal to the 5 senses.
- Creature of the night (e.g., coyote, owl, bats, moths) – This hike tends to attract an older, or more general family, audience. It encourages “city folk” to get outside at night in the woods and to learn about night animals. Hike leaders dispel myths around coyotes, bats, owls etc. This hike will attract approximately 50-100 people per hike.
- Halloween Night - offered Saturday night prior to Halloween.
- New Years Eve Coyote Howl Hike - The New Years Eve hikes are popular, especially for families who are looking for a different way to celebrate and spend Dec. 31

Measures of success: The success of the themed hikes is judged based on the number of people who attend, general comments/questions from group, and formal feedback. Tyke hikes are attracting an average of 15 people, which is considered quite well attended. Another success is that despite the poor weather, the New Years Hike attracted approximately 80 people. Tracking about whether program participation translates into increased trail use is not being done currently, but is planned for next year. Apart from dog walkers, Bronte Creek Trails do not get used as much as the Park would like them to have. Trails are used daily/ weekly by our dog walkers. Overall trail use might represent 1/4 of our annual visitation.

More Information

www.BronteCreek.org or www.OntarioParks.com (events).

Case Study 3.3: Candle Lit Walk

Organization: Maitland Trail Association

Contact: Wendy Hoernig

P.O. Box 443

Goderich, Ont.

N7A 4C7

w.hoernig@gmail.com

519-524-6976

Description:

The Candlelit Walk has been held annually for many years and is an extremely popular local event. It is the opening event for the town's Winterfest. The trail is lit by candles protected by large clear pop bottles on wooden stands (designed by a member). Approximately 100 candles are put out along a 1 km circle trail in the Maitland Woods, a trail just on the edge of town. In addition, the products of a local candle-lantern making workshop are hung along the trail. These are made of tissue paper, white glue, and bamboo strips, producing very colorful, creative results. The location is advantageous because it is quite sheltered and maintains a beautiful and serene trail experience, even on a blustery night. In addition, there is a large event centre adjacent to the trail where hot cocoa, hot cider and cookies are offered after people have walked. The walk attracts hundreds of people, from grandparents to babies on parent's backs or on toboggans when there is snow. It is a great fundraiser and PR event for the trail association.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>

Case Study 3.4: Celebration of Trails

Organization: Kawartha Lakes Community Futures Development Corporation and partners

Contact: Andrew Wallen

Chair, Celebration of Trails Committee

(705) 328-0261

awallen@kawarthasmallbusiness.com

Description:

The Celebration of Trails is an annual autumn celebration of trail events and communities that occurs in City of Kawartha Lakes and the Counties of Haliburton, Northumberland, Peterborough, Hastings and area communities. The events occur on trails throughout the region during the months of September to November. The Celebration strives to promote physical activity and active transportation; foster community participation, cooperation and pride; enhance local economies; and support the development and use of area trails. It embraces existing trail events and stimulates the development of new events including community events that provide opportunities for local residents to get physically active and signature events that attract visitors to the area in the autumn.

This initiative involves a coordinated regional approach to program and market development that connects and markets the unique trail activities, events and experiences under a regional brand image, theme and marketing plan. The entire project is governed by a management committee consisting of trail, health, tourism/economic development, and/or municipal representatives from the five participating Counties; and is guided by an Event Strategy and a 5 Year Business Plan. The Celebration of Trails is a regional initiative of the Community Future Development Corporations of Eastern Ontario. This project has been made possible by funding from the Eastern Ontario Development Program, Communities in Action Fund, and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Measures of success: 15 events registered for 2006, its first year.

More Information: <http://www.celebrationoftrails.com/home.html>

Case Study 3.5: Programs in Conservation Authorities

Organization: Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority

Contact: Gord Geissberger
Coordinator, Community Outreach
Central Lake Ontario Conservation
Ph: (905) 579-0411, ext. 142
Email: gord@cloca.com

Description

Conservation Authorities throughout Ontario offer interpretive programs to the general public on the summer and programs to schools during the school year. The Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority programs often utilize trails at various conservation areas within the Authority to access areas of natural and heritage significance.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: www.cloca.com
<http://www.cloca.com/events/index.html>

Case Study 3.6: Exploring Toronto Program

Organization: Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto

Contact: Keely Forth
Recreationist
Children's Garden & Exploring Toronto Programs
Parks, Forestry and Recreation
City of Toronto
416-392-1329
kidsgrow@toronto.ca

Description:

The Exploring Toronto Program was initiated in 1997 in conjunction with the Toronto Discovery Walks, which are a series of self-guided walks with signage. The Program takes groups of children, youth, and adults on interpretive hikes with interactive activities throughout using the Discovery Walk system. A manual was created, Exploring Discovery Walks with Children, to allow teachers and group leaders to do their own walks and activities if our staff were not available.

Website description: "Exploring Toronto staff is available on a first come, first served basis to lead groups of children, youth and adult ESL groups through Toronto's neighbourhoods and natural spaces. Each exploration tour lasts 1-2.5 hours, taking participants through Toronto's parks, ravines, gardens and neighbourhoods along Toronto's Discovery Walks. Hands-on activities inspire environment and heritage appreciation while promoting a

healthy and active lifestyle. Activities include plant and animal identification in their habitat, role playing the cycle of an oak tree, First Nations storytelling, visual arts, poetry and more!”

Measures of success:

The program has been quite successful and has actually been a model for other municipalities like Richmond Hill which recently created a similar hike program. The Exploring Toronto Program has worked with diverse groups and communities including the CNIB, various multi cultural community groups, ESL groups and special needs organizations. We have found the program very successful in including children, youth and adults from diverse communities and backgrounds.

More Information: <http://www.toronto.ca/parks/programs/exploring.htm>

Case Study 3.7: Gentle Nature, Gentle Walking

Organization: Huronia Trails and Greenways

Contact: David Francis
(905) 729 4545
davidfrancis@gmail.com

Description:

The purpose of this program is to introduce seniors groups to loop trail walking with nature interpretation. The program include a pre walk nature talk about the trail to be visited, arranged transportation to the trail, warm-up exercises, an interpretive walk, cool down exercise, and social hour with coffee and snacks.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.simcoecountytrails.net/readytoexplore.html>

Case Study 3.8: Geocaching

Organization: Canadian Ecology Centre

Contact: Bill Steer
Director of Education
6905 Highway 17 West, P.O. Box 430

Mattawa, Ontario, P0H 1V0
Phone: (705) 744-1715
Fax: (705) 744-1716
info@canadianecology.ca

Description:

Geocaching encourages people to get outside and use their navigation and GPS skills. Many caches at the family/introductory level entail driving a car to a convenient location and searching with a little challenge. This may be clue interpretation or walking off the trail for a short distance. The intermediate type of cache increases the time, distance, and physical/mental ability of locating the cache. It may require a great deal of searching in a densely wooded or wetland area. Using a trail system may be required. It may require the 'thinking' of how to get to an area that seems a little inaccessible. The third level is the challenging section where caches may be hidden well from sight, where time getting to a destination increases, along with an increased level of physical and mental ability. Finding these caches requires planning with an advanced degree of effort. Map reading is important. There is a wide range of geocaching events. For example, the Rainbow Routes Association offers GEOCACHE - HIKE AND SEEK, a fundraising event involving using a GPS unit, and hidden playing card on selected trails.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.geocachingontario.com/>
www.rainbowroutes.com

Case Study 3.9: Hike for ALS

Organization: ALS Society of Canada

Contact: Joe Mangoff, Event Director
Hike 4 ALS, ALS Society of Canada
jpm@als.ca
1-800-267-4257 x 210

Description:

Hike for ALS is a community hike series occurring on selected trails across Canada. To make fundraising easy, each registered participant sets up a personal webpage with access to online fundraising tools. Hikers get the chance to spend the day outdoors, hiking 10 km along community trails.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information - <http://www.als.ca/hike4als/>

Case Study 3.10: Hiking Festivals

Organization: Various

Contact: Haliburton Highlands Trails and Tours Network
Lindsay Elder

General Delivery
Carnarvon, Ontario K0M 1J0
705.489.4049
info@trailsandtours.com

Bruce Peninsula Hiking Festival
Frank Schoenhoeffer
519-395-4935
hikefest06@yahoo.ca

Hike the Highlands Festival
P.O. Box 23
Ingonish Beach, Nova Scotia
B0C 1L0
Tel: 1-902-285-2289
Toll Free: 1-888-897-4094
Email: 4seasons@ns.aliantzinc.ca

Toronto Trails Festival
Tom Fiore, Director
Momentum 1
Tel/Fax: (416) 598-3300 x1
Email: tomfiore@momentum1.org

Description:

The **Hike Haliburton Festival** brings together organizations and individuals in the community to provide hiking experiences to both local residents and tourists. This is a three day event with over 30 guided themed hikes. Other festival events include the Blast Off BBQ and the Blister Ball (dance). The festival is held the weekend after Thanksgiving to extend the season for the tourism industry in the area. The festival benefits from tremendous volunteer support from hike leaders, meeters and greeters, and assistance with event organization.

The **Bruce Peninsula Hiking Festival** is held in Tobermory on the first weekend in October in conjunction with Bruce Trails Day. This two day festival includes approximately 18 guided hikes and feature presentations.

The **Hike the Highlands Festival** is a 10-day Festival that consists of 18-guided hikes geared for both new and experienced hikers. This year's Festival runs from September 15 - 24, 2006, the "Indian Summer" of Nova Scotia. The Toronto Trails Festival, now in its 4th year is an annual celebration of the joys of walking and hiking in Toronto, is held in the fall.

Measures of success:

The Hike Haliburton Festival is in its fourth year and has seen tremendous growth in participation each year. Hikers are choosing the festival as a destination for a weekend away in the fall. Year one – 500 participants; Year two - 00 participants; Year three - 1100 participants.

More Information - http://www.trailsandtours.com/hike_haliburton.php
<http://www.pbtc.ca/festival.html/>
<http://www.hikethehighlandsfestival.com/index.html>
<http://torontotrailsfestival.theplatformgroup.net/>

Case Study 3.11: Interpretive Signage

Organization: Various

Contact: John Clark, President
Thames Valley Trail Association
c/o Grosvenor Lodge
1017 Western Road
London, Ontario N6G 1G5
Office: (519) 645-2845
john.clark@sympatico.ca

Waterfront Trail
Waterfront Regeneration Trust
372 Richmond Street West
Suite 308
Toronto, Ontario M5V 1X6
(416) 943-8080
info@wrtrust.com

Description:

The Thames Valley Trail Association is installing interpretive signs along the trail. These will be placed in locations where local plants, animals and other features may be observed. As well as being educational to anyone using the trails, they will make the trails more interesting and attractive.

Together with 27 community partners, the Waterfront Trust has secured funding to expand and enhance the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail and Greenway. An important aspect of that program was the interpretation of over 20 waterfront habitats including the use of interpretive signage.

Interpretive signage can be found on many trails in Ontario. Providing opportunities for learning about the natural, cultural, and historical features of a particular area provides incentive for users to explore trails on a self guided basis.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.thamesvalleytrail.org/index.html>
<http://www.waterfronttrail.org/projects.html>

Case Study 3.12: Motivated Hike Leader

Organization: Various

Contact: Not provided/available at the time of research.

Description:

Individuals who are motivated to hike and walk will motivate others to do the same. This includes individuals who are willing to organize the hikes, asking friends and others if they want to hike, sending out weekly notices of upcoming hikes, finding interesting places to hike, and encouraging camaraderie on the hikes. Organizations should identify and recruit individuals who are willing to take this on and support them in every way they can.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: Not provided/available at the time of research.

Case Study 3.13: Walking Clubs

Organization: Various

Contact: Jane Miller

Discover Norfolk County

Active Living Coordinator

Norfolk County Community Services

Recreation Division

(519) 426-8866 ext. 240

jane.miller@norfolkcounty.on.ca

Cheryl Neisen

Fitness Coordinator

Bayview Hill Community Centre

Richmond Hill, ON

(905) 508-5995 ext. 223

cneisen@richmondhill.ca

Description:

There are many examples of walking and hiking clubs throughout Ontario. Clubs are great ways of bringing groups of like minded people together to use trails, discover new trails, socialize and spread the word about hiking.

The **Discover Norfolk County** Walking Club is in its fourth season for the program and it is growing each year. The group meets on Thursdays at 5 p.m. at different locations in the County. The club walks all the trails, which are numerous, and discovers new ones. In addition the group will walk the towns, villages, etc. The club produces a calendar of dates and locations and distributes it out to people who are interested. In addition, the calendar is in the Activity Guide which goes out to every household in Norfolk County. This program is free to anyone in the community and the club will arrange car pools for those that do not want to drive. The initial intention of the club was to create an interest for people to start their own walking clubs in their communities, which has happened in some areas. This group, however, enjoys the discovery of the trails (in other areas) and the social part of hiking with the same group as well. The great benefit has been that once people enjoy a new trail they go back at other times and take family and friends.

The **Tuesday Trompers** of the Maitland Trail Association meets weekly at 9 am for one hour walks around the town or village, on sections of the Maitland Trail or other conservation areas for an approximately one hour hike/walk. The core group continues to hike (and/or cross country ski) all winter long.

The Town of Richmond Hill has teamed up with the Oak Ridges Trail Association to form a **Richmond Hill Hiker's Club**. The participants have the option to register for the full series which consists of eight walks or single session registration is also an option

Measures of success:

The success of the Norfolk program has grown each year with good marketing. There are statistics on the numbers of participants for the last 3 years. This is a unique program where it travels to different locations each week. The average number of participants this year has been 15-18 people each hike. The new Richmond Hill Hiker's Club had a great response with 60 people registering for their first walk (Sunday, October 1, 2006).

Source of Information: www.norfolkcounty.on.ca

<http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>

http://www.canadatrails.ca/hiking/hk_clon.html

Case Study 3.14: Orienteering

Organization: Orienteering Ontario

Contact: 2163 Third Side Road

Campbellville, Ontario

LOP 1B0

416-410-4586 or 1-888-810-9990

admin@orienteering.on.ca

Description:

Orienteering is an outdoor activity involving navigation with map and compass. It is a motivator for many people to get out on trails. Orienteering Ontario is the provincial body representing clubs in Ontario. Their web site lists a number of events, as well as information about orienteering and how to get involved. The site includes specific sections on youth and school programs and information about involving young people in the activity.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

Source of Information - <http://www.orienteering.on.ca/>

Case Study 3.15: Saturday Morning Walks

Organization: Thames Valley Trail Association Inc.

Contact: John Clark, President

c/o Grosvenor Lodge

1017 Western Road

London, Ontario N6G 1G5

(519) 645-2845

john.clark@sympatico.ca

Description:

For the last few years the Thames Valley Trail Association has been leading very easy walks on Saturday mornings. These have been planned in conjunction with the Middlesex London Health Unit in order to encourage people to get out and exercise. These walks have become very popular and they are now held every Saturday starting at 9:00 am. The hikes last approximately one hour. Generally, the walks alternate between a walk through a London park and through one of the ESA trails, which have more rugged trail systems. Hikes are open to all ages.

There are six environmentally significant areas within London, each one with rugged walking trails. Before joining the walks, many of the participants did not know these areas or the trails existed. The walks make extensive use of these areas as well as the pathways in the parks.

There is a pool of leaders for the walks. Most of them now have taken Hike Ontario's "Standard Hike Leader Course". These walks are meant to encourage people to walk more, so the slowest walkers are always considered. The group is kept together by strategically placing stops along the route. Participants are asked to sign a Waiver/sign-in sheet for safety reasons. If anyone feels they have to leave for any reason, a member accompanies them back. There is a leader and a sweep with every group and with a large group there are experienced members throughout.

The walks are open to anyone, but minors must be accompanied by a guardian. Participants are expected to wear suitable footwear and dogs are not allowed. Most participants are seniors or adults. There are some younger couples and some children although this is an area for improvement.

Measures of success:

There have been an average participation of 35 people per walk, some are members and some are not. The numbers of public participants fluctuates much more depending on the weather than does the participation of hiking club members. There are quite a few regular attendees from the general public. Many of the members on the walks began as non members.

More information: www.thamesvalleytrail.org

Case Study 3.16: Hike for Hospice

Organization: Canadian Hospice for Palliative Care

Contact: Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association
Annex B, Saint-Vincent Hospital
60 Cambridge Street North
Ottawa, ON K1R 7A5
613-241-3663 or 1-800-668-2785

Description:

On the Sunday, May 7, 2006, thousands of people across Canada laced up their sneakers and hiking boots to support the Fourth Annual 'Hike for Hospice Palliative Care' In support of Hike for Hospice day, sponsored by the Canadian Palliative Care Association, over 100 Hospices across Canada host hike events on the same day to raise awareness of and funds for palliative care in their communities.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: http://www.chpca.net/events/hike_for_hospice_palliative_care.htm

Case Study 3.17: Trail Clean-ups

Organization: Friends of the Haulage Road Trail

Contact:

Hike Ontario
1-800-894-7249 or (905) 833-1787

Description:

Trail activities can also include work parties for constructing and maintaining trails. Such activities encourage trail use. For example, six years ago Clyde Carruthers and his wife, Rosemarie, founded a neighborhoods group called "Friends of the Haulage Road Trail". They work with the City of Niagara Falls to maintain and improve the Haulage Road Trail. The Friends of Haulage Road Trail officially "adopted" the Haulage Road Trail several years ago under the City of Niagara Falls "Adopt-A-Trail" Program. Under this program, they agreed to organize a minimum of 3 trail clean-ups a year. They credit these trail clean-ups with helping to increase the number of trail users. They usually invite the press to these events and regularly get news coverage.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: Not provided/available at the time of research.

Case Study 3.18: Trail Stroller Striding

Organization: Huronia Trails and Greenways

Contact: David Francis
(905) 729 4545
davidlfrancis@gmail.com

Description:

The purpose of this program is to develop local Trail Stroller Striding groups in each municipality, 18 in total. Participants meet two mornings per week at 10 am for a one hour program of striding out combined with a warm-up and stretching program. Simcoe County Trails is researching paved trails suitable for strollers, recruiting and training local leaders in the program, including risk management, signup procedures, leadership, fitness training, mentoring, promotion, marketing and group building.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.simcoecountytrails.net/readytoexplore.html>

Case Study 3.19: Kawartha Trails Day- Community Awareness Event

Organization: Kawartha Lakes Green Trail Alliance

Contact: Barb MacPherson
705-324-3222
Barb_macpherson@sympatico.ca

Description

This is an annual event held at the same time each year in an effort to increase awareness of the importance of local trails within City of Kawartha Lakes for health, recreation, and the environment. It is focused on residents in order to encourage walking and cycling activities as well as fund raising.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.trailsforhealth.ca/>
<http://www.oakridgestrail.org/NewsDocuments/KawarthaTrailsDay.pdf>

Case Study 3.20: Easy Walks

Organization: Various

Contact: Bruce Peninsula Trail Club

P.O Box 2

Tobermory, On

N0H 2R0

pbtc@sympatico.ca

The Toronto Bruce Trail Club

Box 44, Station D

Toronto, Ontario M6P 3J5

Canada

(416) 763-9061

information@torontobrucetrailclub.org

Description:

Some organizations and programs offer “easy walks” designed for the novice or the less experienced. This represents a “best practice” as it is a way of giving novices introductory experiences and encouraging them to use trails again building on the distance travelled and difficulty of the trail. One potential pitfall for organizations offering “easy walks” is knowing who the walk is being offered to and what constitutes an easy walk. The **Bruce Peninsula Trail Club** offers “easy walks” that are 5-7 km long which may be easy for their intended hiker but may not be an easy outing for other potential hikers.

The Exploring Toronto (Data Sheet #3.6) and the **Urban Hiking program** provide opportunities to hike in Toronto. The Urban Hiking program focuses on novice walkers becoming involved in gentle walking in the parks and then, if they wish, participating in our club’s more strenuous hikes and being exposed to the wider world of hiking. The Toronto Bruce Trail Club and Toronto Parks and Recreation (City of Toronto) signed a partnership agreement to promote and implement the urban walking program.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.pbtc.ca/>

<http://www.torontobrucetrailclub.org/>

The Power of Movement: Toronto Parks, Forestry, and Recreation

Jaime Carmichael 416-338-MOVE

<http://www.torontobrucetrailclub.org/time-limited-value/torontoparks-dept-hikes.htm>

Case Study 3.21: Walks on the Wild Side

Organization: City of Richmond Hill

Contact: Tracey Steele
Town of Richmond Hill
225 East Beaver Creek Rd
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 4Y5
Phone: 905-771-2476
Fax: 905-771-2481
tsteele@richmondhill.ca

Description

Walks on the Wild Side is an interpretive program developed through a strategic alliance between The Optimist Club of Richmond Hill and the Town of Richmond Hill Parks, Recreation and Culture Department. It focuses on the Town's Natural Heritage System and is designed to inspire learning about nature and environmental protection, while providing additional recreational opportunities that promote health and well-being. The first phase of the program has resulted in the production of a Resource Manual that will be useful to instructors who lead interpretive nature walks, and anyone else seeking environmental information specific to Richmond Hill. The Resource Manual features four strategically located nature trails and fifteen environmental themes based on the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum. In the future, the Walks on the Wild Side Program will also involve summer camp programs, interpretive signs, and a series of brochures containing supplemental interpretive information.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More information:

<http://york.cioc.ca/details.asp?RSN=14076>
http://www.richmondhill.ca/subpage.asp?textonly=&pageid=prc_trails

Case Study 3.22: Winter Hiking

Organization: Various

Contact: Various
See More Information

Description:

One way of increasing trail use is to encourage people to walk and hike throughout the year particularly during the months November to March. Winter use of hiking trails can involve snowshoeing or hiking. Numerous trail clubs, parks and resorts offer snowshoeing experiences. Interest in winter hiking in low snow conditions is also growing. Hike Ontario has a very useful fact sheet on winter hiking conditions. See

<http://www.hikeontario.com/bulletin/factsheets/fact16.htm>

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information:

<http://www.snowontario.ca/snowshoeing.cfm>

<http://www.trailsandtours.com/category/snowshoe>

<http://www.county.simcoe.on.ca/discover/simcoe/outdoor-activities/snowshoeing/>

<http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/parkzine/art2-19-12-2003.html>

Case Study 3.23: Trail Event Planning Manual

Organization: Simcoe County Trails

Contact: David Francis

davidfrancis@gmail.com

(905) 729 4545

Description:

Simcoe County Trails has produced a trail event planning manual which provides a summary of the main points to be considered by organizers of trail events, particularly those using public trails either urban or rural. The information and advice contained in this manual is fairly comprehensive and intended as a guide. Templates and forms for various aspects of a trail event are also available.

Measures of success: none provided

More Information: <http://www.simcoecountytrails.net/RE/Planning.html#planning>

Case Study 3.24: Hike Leader Certification

Organization: Hike Ontario

Contact: David Francis

Chair, Hike Leader Certification and Awards Committee

(905) 729 4545

davidfrancis@gmail.com

Description:

Hike Ontario has developed standards and training programs for Hike Leaders that are used by community colleges, universities, hiking clubs and outdoor training organizations for course delivery. Currently, Hike Ontario offers Standard Hike Leader, Youth Hike Leader and Wilderness Day Hike Leader certification courses. In addition we are planning to offer the Wilderness Trip Hike Leader course in the future. These Hike Leader course are recommended by Hike Ontario for any individuals and/or groups interested in leading organized hikes and walks

in Ontario . They are excellent forums for learning some of the necessary and important tools in leading hikes or walks.

Measures of success: At present there are over 500 certified hike leaders from across Canada who have taken the Hike Ontario Certification program.

More Information: <http://www.hikeontario.com/services/hikeleadercert.htm>

Case Study 3.25: Hike Leader Resources

Organization: Various

Contact: Various

Description:

Having well trained and effective guides and hike leaders will provide hikers and potential hikers the confidence to use trails. A good hike leader will help insure a safe and enjoyable outing and be able to interpret natural, cultural and heritage features in the trails. In addition to the Hike Leader Certification described in 3.24 there is a variety of hike leader resources available including: Hike Leaders Guides and Manuals Some organizations such as the Rideau Trail Association have develop guides and resources for their leaders that provide pertinent information on leading safe, professional, and enjoyable hikes. See <http://www.rideautrail.org/leaders.htm>

There are also a number of organizations offer workshops, information and courses related to leading groups on trails. These organizations include:

Hike Ontario www.hikeontario.com, Ontario Trails Council <http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca>, Interpretation Canada <http://www.interpcan.ca/new/> , the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario <http://www.coeo.org/> and the Ontario Camping Association <http://www.ontariocamps.ca/>

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.hikeontario.com/services/hikeleadercert.htm>

Case Study 3.26: Record Breaking Walk

Organization: Ontario Trails Council

Contact: Ms. Suzanne Jelley

1-613-389-5215

admin@ontariotrails.on.ca

Description:

The Ontario Trails Council, along with Parks and Recreation Ontario and Hike Ontario, supported an attempt to break a Guinness Book of World Record. The goal was to attempt to break the world record on September 30th, 2006 at 12:00 noon eastern standard, 11:00 central time; by having over 78,000 people walk/hike simultaneously on a series of 1 km trails across Ontario. Over 50 communities and trail organizations throughout Ontario registered their community for the attempt. The attempt took place in a variety of conservation areas, authorities, municipal trails and provincial parks. While the record was not broken this event motivated several thousand people to get out hiking.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/gbwrfacts2.htm>

Case Study 3.27: Hiking Packages

Organization: Various

Contact: Various

Description:

There are a number of resorts, tourist operators and tourism organizations that offer backpacking and hiking packages. These packages include guided hikes, accommodation, food and other value added activities. The packages can be single or multi-day experiences. Hiking may also be part of other types of experience packages. Hiking packages attract participants from Ontario, other provinces and other countries. The Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation through its web site does an effective job of promoting hiking packages. Some examples of these packages include Quinte Trek, Climb to "The Crack" and Beyond, Dog Lover Fall Hikes, and Almaguin Woods and Water.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.ontariotravel.net/>

<http://www.ontariooutdoor.com>

Case Study 4.1: Articles on the Benefits of Walking and Hiking

Organization: Various

Description:

Promoting the benefits of hiking and walking helps encourage trail use. There are several sources for articles and information on those benefits including:

Hike Ontario - <http://www.hikeontario.com/benefits/benefitsoftrails.htm>

Go for Green through their Trails Canada and Active and Safe Routes to School program -
<https://secure.goneeshopping.com/gfgEshop/greenshop/index.aro>
<http://asrts.goforgreen.ca/english/benefits.aro>

The Heart and Stroke Foundation posts articles promoting the benefits of various forms of exercise including hiking and walking. Visit or www.heartandstroke.ca and
<http://ww2.jumpropeforheart.ca/Page.asp?PageID=1613&ContentID=20691&Content TypeID=1>

Measures of success: The Heart and Stroke Foundation reports, however, that they get more women between 40 and 65 visiting the site, as well as people with heart disease or stroke or with a family history of these diseases.

Case Study 4.2: Routes For Nature and Health

Organization: City of Charlottetown, Parks and Recreation

Contact: Sue Hendricken, Manager
Parks and Recreation
City of Charlottetown
PO Box 98
Charlottetown PEI
C1A 7K2
phone: 629-4022
shendricken@city.charlottetown.pe.ca

Description:

The City of Charlottetown has a new program for promoting the "Routes For Nature and Health", a 40 km linear green space connector throughout the City. The route was launched in the Fall of 2005 and new promotions include updated maps and brochures, as well as signage at trail entrances showing special features along the trail (distances, start and finish points, etc.). They are also adding trails as a GIS layer on their system to use for tracking of maintenance and capital improvements and have started parks patrol in the summer months to enhance security.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca

Case Study 4.3: Active Transportation - Rural Community

Organization: Haliburton County Community Cooperative

Contact: Kate Hall

Community in Action Coordinator

P.O. Box 1449

Haliburton, Ont. KOM 1S0

(705) 286 – 2411

www.haliburtoncooperative.on.ca

ulinks@on.aibn.com

Description

Active transportation initiatives promote the use of trails by encouraging people to walk (or cycle) in school or work and to “park the car and get moving” in their everyday activity. There are a number of active transportation projects in Ontario, many of them funded by the Ministry of Health Promotion through the Communities in Action program. While several larger communities are implementing active transportation, rural communities are slow to do so. The Village of Haliburton is one rural community that has made significant progress including the development of an active transportation plan, “Walk, Bike and Be Active” maps and signage, installation of bike racks, and the development of the Head Lake Trail which connects many elements/areas of the village. Future active transportation activities, while continuing in the village of Haliburton will now focus in the town of Minden and the Riverwalk Trail.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://haliburtoninaction.r8.org/>

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

http://www.goforgreen.ca/home_e.html

Other Active Transportation sites

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/active_trans.htm

<http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/>

http://www.railtrails.org/whatwedo/information/active_comm.asp

<http://www.activetransportation.org/>

<http://www.activelivingbydesign.org/>

<http://www.torontocat.ca/TCAT%20Home.html>

Case Study 4.4: Conquer Simcoe

Organization: Huronia Trails and Greenways

Contact: David Francis

(905) 729 4545

davidfrancis@gmail.com

Description:

Families and seniors prove their activity level by walking ten Simcoe County Trails in County Forests. The Huronia Trails and Greenways is creating logbooks and badges so they can track usage and distribute badges. To receive an award and badge participants complete ten loop trails in Simcoe County Forests and register their name on the geocaching web site.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.simcoecountytrails.net/readytoexplore.html>

Case Study 4.5: Durham Lives!

Organization: Regional Municipality of Durham, Heart Health Project

Contact: Chris Arnott RN, BScN

Public Health Nurse

Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters

P.O. Box 730

Whitby, ON L1N 0B2

Phone 905-668-7711 ext. 2950

Toll Free 1-800-841-2729

chris.arnott@region.durham.on.ca

Description:

Durham Lives! is Durham Region's Heart Health Project, a Ministry of Health funded program. The mandate is to promote healthy living through eating healthy, being physically active and being smoke-free. It is comprised of sub-groups, one of which is the Activity Trails group. A number of strategies have been used including the creation of a Durham Trails map, which generated significant media coverage. In addition, they have offered

'Walking Workshops', where they promoted 'Walk this Way', a free-self help walking program accompanied by local trails information. The promotion of these workshops also helped to promote trails use. Partnering with the OTC, Durham Lives! also used their "Take to the Trails" initiative to promote physical activity on trails. They are involved in policy development, advocating for trails in the municipal plan and play a role on committees within the region's Planning Department. Their "Action Hero Search" is an innovative way of identify community leaders in promoting physical activity and use of trails.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

Source of Information: <http://www.durhamlives.com/>

Case Study 4.6: “Exciting and Natural” Promotion

Organization: Lakehead Region Conservation Authority

Contact: Richard Boon
Community Relations Officer
Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
P.O. Box 10427 130 Conservation Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T8
(807)344-5857 Fax (807)345-9156
richard@lakeheadca.com

Description:

In the past year the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority has developed an “Exciting and Natural” theme to promote increased use of their Conservation Areas most of which feature a variety of hiking trails. Posters have been developed which are displayed in the office, at trade shows, and other public displays. A small business cardsized hand out was also printed with the “Exciting and Natural” theme, listing the Conservation Areas. The “Exciting and Natural” logo is being incorporated into Conservation Area brochures as they are updated.

Measures of success: At trade shows and displays the posters have attracted attention and generated discussion as they were intended to.

More Information: <http://www.lakeheadca.com/>

Case Study 4.7: Family Passport to Trail Adventures

Organization: Prairie Pathfinders
Winnipeg Trails Association
REI

Contact: Janice Lukes
mrta@mts.net
www.mrta.mb.ca/wta

prairiepathfinders@shaw.ca

REI - www.rei.com

Description:

Passport programs can be effective in promoting trail use. A passport program for trails acts as an incentive for people to visit several trail destinations. The destinations might be along one trail or several trails in a region. Typically, it is a booklet that is given to or purchased by a trail user. When the person visits each trail destination

during specified period of time, their passport gets stamped. When the trail user visits all or a specified number of destinations they receive something of value, i.e., special recognition, discounts and/or a prize. The Prairie Pathfinders and the Winnipeg Trails Association are ran a summer program called "Family Passport to Trail Adventures" to encourage Winnipeggers, especially families, to use the trails in Winnipeg. Two Ontario examples include a one day event, "Take Heart, Start Walking – Ontario Trails: Yours to Explore" hosted by the Algoma Health unit and "Your Pedal Passport", an initiative of the Waterfront Trail. The Waterfront Trail program although geared to cycling serves as a possible model for a hiking passport program.

REI, an outdoor store in the U.S. and a National Trails Day sponsor, is encouraging kids and their parents to hit the trail with its new Passport to Adventure program. See http://www.rei.com/stores/kids_passport.jsp

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: www.prairiepathfinders.mb.ca

www.internationaltrailsday.com/eventdetails.asp?eventid=230

<http://www.waterfronttrail.org/trail-itineraries.html>

Case Study 4.8: Gottawalk Week

Organization: Ottawa Public Health

Contact: Joan Grant

Ottawa Public Health

613-580-6744 ext.24395

Description:

"Gottawalk" is a coalition of individuals and organizations dedicated to the promotion of walking. Its objectives are to increase the number of individuals and families in Ottawa who walk and to decrease the incidence of chronic disease. In 2006 provided guided walks as part of Tulip Festival. They also promote the Commuter Challenge and Sunday Bike Days, which are effective in introducing people to trails.

Measures of success:

Guided walks at the Tulip festival have increased participation (234 people participated in 2006 up from ~ 70 in previous years).

More Information: <http://www.ottawaheartbeat.com/projects.htm>

Case Study 4.9: Hamilton Walks

Organization: City of Hamilton

Contact: Linda Godin, BPE, MA

Physical Activity Specialist
Chronic Disease Prevention, Adult Healthy Living
City of Hamilton Public Health Services
905-546-2424 x2244
lgodin@hamilton.ca

Description:

The Hamilton Walks is a health strategy that involves the promotion of walking opportunities in Hamilton. The Hamilton Walks initiative promotes the use of trails through calendars that identify trails, trail organizations, walk/trail tours, trail clean-up days, and walking groups who use the trails. They will also be developing a Hamilton Walks into Fall Calendar to compliment their spring calendar. Hamilton Walks also advocates for more accessible, barrier free, safe, and pleasant walkways (trails). One example of this is the response to the Hamilton Trails Master Plan, where they offered the following suggestions. (1) Consider incorporating recommendations from the Ministry of Health Promotion Ontario Trails Strategy, (2) Develop a comprehensive trail promotion approach (review inventory of existing and up-to-date maps and trail resources, and develop a comprehensive walking/hiking booklet, (3) Expand the safety and community involvement component.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: www.doitwell.ca and click on Hamilton Walks.

Case Study 4.10: Walking Works/Hiking Spree

Organization: Cleveland Metro Parks
Metroparks Serving Summit County (Ohio)

Contact: Bob Hinkle, Chief of Outdoor Education
Cleveland Metroparks
(216) 341-9225
rdh@clevelandmetroparks.com

Description:

A wellness walking program called "10,000 Steps (or "Walking Works") provides inexpensive pedometers and logbooks with the goal of doing 10,000 steps daily which has been clinically shown to lower blood pressure, reduce weight, and maintain fitness. This one has been especially popular on suburban and urban hiking trails. The program has been encouraged by corporate groups, as well through a partnership with Cleveland Metroparks. Cleveland Metro Parks also promotes trail use by providing "hiking sticks" – broom handles with the wooden threads cut off and drilled with a leather or rope hand strap inserted (sold for about \$2). A commemorative shield is produced annually which can be purchased at nature centers for a nominal sum after the person shows a validated checklist of a certain number of trails (or miles) hiked. The hiking sticks are quite the collector's item, especially after 10 or so annual medallions are affixed to them. The incentive of earning badges for each hike to place on a walking stick attracts new park users and encourages repeat visitation to the hiking trails within area parks."

More Information: <http://www.clemetparks.com/events/walkingworks.asp>

Case Study 4.11: Media Coverage/Relations

Organization: Various

Contact:

Bruce Grey Trails Network
578 Brown St., Box 129
Warton, ON N0H 2T0
(519) 374-1933
info@brucegreytrails.com

Description:

Maintaining a high profile for trails in local, regional, and provincial media is one way of increasing trail use. In recent years, trail organizations and communities have done much related to trail development. It is important to communicate that success and the availability of trails at every opportunity. A well implemented communications plan that includes media relations is essential to successful trail programs.

The Maitland Trails Association reports that one of their club members writes a hiking column "Trail Talk" on a volunteer basis that is published biweekly in a free newspaper that goes out to all of the households in the county. This keeps news of hiking events, new trails, interesting trail experiences, constantly in the public eye and has proved to be an extremely valuable, free public awareness tool. Similarly, the Bruce Grey Trail have a writer that writes and submits interest articles on an ongoing basis that provide details and anecdotes of local trails and trail experiences. The articles are posted on their web site.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>
<http://www.brucegreytrails.com/mediacoverage.html>

Case Study 4.12: Trail Guide Books

Organization: Various

Contact: See below

Description

Good trail information is essential for increasing the use of trails. Many organizations have produced trail guides; booklets that help promote trails and provide critical trail information. The trail guides might be developed for a specific trail or a number of trails in a particular region. There is a wide diversity in types of trail guides developed. Trail guides are different than trail brochures (see Case Study# 4.16) in that they provide more detailed information about trails, are usually sold and are kept as references.

Typically trail guides can/should include:

- What you need to know before you go
- What to expect on the trail
- Maps and information to locate and navigate around the trail
- Interpretive information on the natural, historical, and cultural features along the trail.

Good examples are the trail guides are those produced by the Pathways to Health Trail - Your Guide to Area Paths and Trails program in Ottawa. A group of partners from the Nortel family, City of Kanata, City of Nepean, and Ottawa Public Health has been working together to enhance opportunities for active living by producing booklets marking local trails and recreational pathways. The group has produced 5 booklets in an effort to make it easy for walkers, joggers, and cyclists to access and use the network of pathways. They provide detailed maps and information on how to access trails from several neighbourhood communities in Ottawa.

Some references have been published by hiking "celebrities" and trail experts, Hiker Mike's Best Hikes: The Megacity and Beyond by Mike Kirby (ISBN: 155046289X) and Ontario Provincial Parks Trail Guide by Allen MacPherson (ISBN# 1-55046-447-7). See below for more information on trail guides.

Measures of success: none provided

More Information:

Ottawa - <http://www.pathwaystohealth.on.ca/about.htm>

Grand Valley Trails Association: <http://www.gvta.on.ca/news.html>

Maitland Trails Association: <http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>

Oak Ridges Trail Association: <http://www.oakridgestrail.org/guidebook.htm>

Trans Canada Trail http://www.tctrail.ca/catalog.php?cat_id=1&lang=en

Lanark County - <http://www.healthunit.org/physact/home/walking.htm>

Algonquin Provincial Park -

<http://store.algonquinpark.on.ca/cgi/algonquinpark/index.html?id=9dBuxNjQ>

<http://www.trailsCanada.com/documents/Trailpaq.bibliography.june.2001.doc>

Case Study 4.13: Peterborough Walks

Organization: City of Peterborough

Contact: Susan Sauvé

Transportation Demand Management Planner, Ontario

(705) 742-7777 x.1485

SSauve@city.peterborough.on.ca

Description:

The City of Peterborough promotes trail use and active transportation through the Peterborough Walks program involving a marketing campaign, workshops, and the distribution of pedometers. A web site promotes the personal, community and environmental benefits of active and efficient forms of transportation. A partnership with Kawartha Tourism has been developed to revamp trail maps and put all maps online.

More Information: <http://www.peterboroughmoves.com/>

Case Study 4.14: Active and Safe Routes to School

Organization: Go for Green

Contact: Unit 16, 5480 Canotek Road

Ottawa, ON K1J 9H6

Tel: (613) 748-1800

Toll free: (888) 822-2848

asrts@goforgreen.ca

Description:

Active and Safe Routes to School is a national program of Go for Green that encourages the use of active modes of transportation to and from school (e.g. walking, cycling). International Walk to School Day/Month is the annual premier event of the ASRTS program. Go for Green supports individual communities and provides national marketing for this initiative.

Measures of success:

This program, widely advertised and well known, is applicable in both rural and urban settings and has the potential to reach the majority of school-age children in Canada

More Information: www.saferoutestoschool.ca, www.walktoschool.org

http://www.goforgreen.ca/asrts/home_e.html

Case Study 4.15: Shifting Gears Transportation Challenge

Organization: City of Peterborough

Contact: Susan Sauvé

Transportation Demand Management Planner, Ontario

(705) 742-7777 x.1485

SSauve@city.peterborough.on.ca

Description:

This is a month long challenge between 20 Peterborough workplaces to see who has the most employees that walk, cycle, carpool, or take transit to work. This challenge gets a lot of people walking and cycling that wouldn't otherwise be active, and many use our trails in the process.

Measures of success:

This is a successful program. An increase in walking and in taking active transportation to work has been documented through a survey. The "Shifting Gears Transportation Challenge" is significant because it runs for a month, which gives people more of a chance to establish habits.

More Information: www.peterboroughmoves.com

Also, Peterborough Green-Up does an annual report on Shifting Gears. The contact is Lisa Scott at 705 745-3238. Copies of all the survey work are available.

Case Study 4.16: Trail Brochures

Organization: Various – see below

Contact: See below

Description:

To increase trail use, trail users need accurate and useful information. Trail brochures are an effective way of promoting the use of trails. The purpose and type of brochures varies greatly. Some are used as "lure" pieces for a single trail or a system of trails; other are used to navigate around a trail and/or provide interpretive information. Brochures may be produced "in-house" or designed and printed professionally. Brochures differ from trail guide books (see Data Sheet # 4.12) in that they have less information and detail, and are easier to update.

A trail brochure to lure users to a trail or trail system will/should:

- Be well designed and attractive with good graphics and pictures
- Reflect the needs of the target audience
- Provide key information - general description, length, difficulty, permitted uses, trail use and safety guidelines
- Have a good map and adequate direction to get to the trail head and access the trail
- Include contact details for more information
- Support another map or brochure that gives more detailed information about individual trails

A good example is the brochure recently produced by Rainbow Routes called Trails: A Guide to Non-motorized Trails in Greater Sudbury.

A trail brochure used to navigate around a trail or trail system will/should:

- Be well designed and attractive with good graphics and pictures
- Reflect the needs of the target audience

- Provide key information - general description, length, difficulty, permitted uses, trail use and safety guidelines
- Have a good map of the trail drawn to scale and relevant features
- Interpretive information on natural, historical and cultural features
- Contact details for more information

A good example would be the brochure for the Gordon Glaves Memorial Pathways produced by the City of Brantford for a section of the Trans Canada Trail.

More Information: www.rainbowroutes.com
www.brantford.ca

Case Study 4.17: Trail Information On the Web

Organization: Various, see below

Contact: See below

Description:

The internet has become the most important tool for promoting trails and their use. An effective web site trail will/should:

- Be well designed and attractive with good graphics and pictures
- Be easy to navigate
- Reflect the needs of the target audience
- Provide key information - general description, length, difficulty, permitted uses, trail use and safety guidelines
- Have a good map and adequate directions to get to the trail head and access the trail
- Include contact details for more information
- Resources that can be downloaded
- Links to other relevant trail and community web sites

See below for examples of trail related websites that are effective for promoting trails use. Please note that some web sites better serve the general trail consumer with access to large amounts of information and are more likely to result in more trail use than sites that encourage/require the visitor to become a member first.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information:

<http://www.trailscanada.com/index.htm>

<http://www.tctrail.ca/>
<http://www.canadatrails.ca/>
<http://www.trailsandtours.com/>
<http://www.trailsforhealth.ca/>
<http://www.bluewatertrails.com/>
<http://www.brucegreytrails.com/>
<http://www.rainbowroutes.com>
www.oakridgestrail.org
www.bruce-trail.org

Other:

<http://www.americanhiking.org>
<http://www.hikeontario.com>
<http://www.active2010.ca>

Case Study 4.18: Trails-Health Events

Organization: Ontario Trails Council

Contact: Executive Director:

Mr. Patrick Connor CAE
1-613-531-5437 or cell 1-613-484-1140
execdir@ontariotrails.on.ca

Administration:

Ms. Suzanne Jelley
1-613-531-5437 admin@ontariotrails.on.ca
Phone: Toll Free 1-877-ON-TRAIL (1-877-668-7245)
Web Site: www.ontariotrails.on.ca
1655 Perth Road, Glenburnie, ON, K0H 1S0

Description:

The Trails Health initiative of the Ontario Trails Council encouraged the health community to hold events on trails throughout province during the week of May 28-June 4, 2006. Twenty Health Units organized events on trails to increase public awareness and use of trails as a means of staying healthy. The events were promoted through a marketing campaign with a theme "Ontario Trails: Yours to Explore", brochures, posters and web site. This initiative encourages all trail enthusiasts to contact their local health unit for more information on how they can work with the Healthy Heart Programs to increase public awareness of trails and trails-health.

Measures of success: This program has been accessed by a variety of municipalities that differ in size and population.

More Information: http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/trail_links_healthevents.htm

Links to Individual contacts for each health unit are on this website.

Case Study 4.19: Walk and Bike for Life

Organization: Walk and Bike for Life

Contact: Gill Penalosa

905-399-1314

2328 Woodfield Road

Oakville , ON

L6H 6Y6

president@walkandbikeforlife.com

Description:

Walk and Bike for Life exists to:

- Promote walking and cycling as recreational activities and as active transportation;
- Promote greenways, trails and parks, as great places that can be enjoyed by all, regardless of gender or age, and social, economic or ethnic background; and
- Educate people about the benefits of walking and cycling as activities, and greenways, trails and parks as places critical to environment protection, economic development, and public health.
- President Gil Penalosa is a dynamic, engaging presenter who has done considerable research resulting in compelling examples and evidence of best practices for walking, cycling, and active transportation. He has made presentations throughout the world and comes highly recommended as a guest speaker.

Measures of success: Accolades on web site.

More Information: www.walkandbikeforlife.com

Case Study 4.20: Walk For Wellness

Organization: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Contact: Barb Armstrong,

Fitness Supervisor

37 Sandford Drive, 4th Floor

Stouffville, ON L4A 7X5

Phone: 905-642-7529 ext.328

Fax: 905-642-3940

Description:

Stouffville is running a family or adult program called Walk for Wellness. During fall and spring leaders facilitate

interpretive walks on the trails, highlighting birds, wildflowers, history etc. The main concept is that participants learn where trails exist and are able to be more comfortable returning for a walk with friends or family. It runs one night a week. This is a lifestyle program offered through the fitness section.

Measures of success: It has been well received averaging 10 to 12 participants for each walk during spring 06 and fall 05.

More Information: www.townofws.com

Case Study 4.21: Walk to Win - Maitland Trail Association

Organization: Maitland Trail Association

Contact:

Hike Ontario

1-800-894-7249 or (905) 833-1787

Description:

Maitland Trail Association has partnered several times with the local Health Unit in a campaign called "Walk to Win". The following excerpt from a newsletter describes how it worked. "The Walk to Win' campaign is designed to encourage people of all ages to get out and walk/hike to enhance both their fitness levels and their enjoyment of life. There are great prizes to be won at the two draws. You can enter a ballot for every walk/hike of 1 hour or more that you take. Get your ballots at your local public library, Tourist Information Booth or the Huron County Health Unit, fill them out, and place them in the ballot box at the same locations. Last year's event was a great success, with over 500 entries and lots of happy winners! Actually – we maintain that everyone is a winner because they all get fitter and enjoy fine outdoor experiences while they are also earning ballots to enter the contest."

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.maitlandtrail.cjb.net/>

Case Study 4.22: Waterfront Trail Starter's Kit

Organization: Waterfront Regeneration Trust

Contact: 372 Richmond Street West

Suite 308

Toronto, Ontario M5V 1X6

Telephone: (416) 943-8080

E-mail us: info@wrtrust.com

Description:

The Waterfront Regeneration Trust is a group responsible for the Waterfront Trail along the shores of Lake Ontario. They are producing a Waterfront Trail Starter's Kit that will detail five, 2 hour round trip hikes on sections of the trail in ten different communities. It will include maps, distances, and itineraries. A pin and certificate will be sent to those who accomplish all five trips.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.waterfronttrail.org>

Case Study 4.23: York Region Physical Activity Network

Organization: York Region Health Services Department

Contact: Anne Marie Lee, R.N., B.N.Sc., B.Ed.

Public Health Nurse

Healthy Lifestyles Division, Public Health Branch

York Region Health Services Department

4261 Highway #7 East, Suites B6-9

Unionville, ON L3R 9W6

Tel.: 905-940-1787 ext. 4299

Description:

The York Region Physical Activity Network (YRPAN) encourages an increase in trail use via our monthly event calendar. The calendar provides York Region residents with information about physical activity opportunities. Submissions for events that promote the use of trails include hiking events from Harold Sellers (Oak Ridges Trail Association) on a monthly basis and occasionally for events organized in the York Regional Forests by the Natural and Forestry Services Section of York Region Transportation and Works Department. Submissions are also made from community organizations promoting walks and hikes. The event calendar is posted on the York Region Health Services website and on the website of Hearty Party, a member of YRPAN. The link for the calendar is also included in the Healthy Measures E-bulletin, which is sent bi-weekly to approximately 850 subscribers. The calendar is also forwarded to all YRPAN members (representatives from various organizations throughout York Region) to promote in their communities. York Region Health Services' Chronic Disease Prevention Team also participates in various initiatives that encourage the use of trails including; the Trail Guide Planning Committee, offering a series of six walking & stroller walking programs, providing the train-the-trainer stroller walking program, and partnering with the Natural Forestry Services Section to promote trails. They are also active members of the Town of Markham's Cycling & Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan Committee.

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information:

<http://www.region.york.on.ca/Services/Public+Health+and+Safety/Food+and+Nutrition/Healthy+Measures+Events.htm>

Case Study 4.24: Where the Trails are - Rainbow Routes Association

Organization: Rainbow Routes Association

Contact: Debra McIntosh
Executive Director
200 Brady St.
PO Box 5000, Stn A
Sudbury, ON P3A 5P3
Tel: 705-674-4455 x 4603
Fax: 705-671-6767
deb.mcintosh@sudbury.ca

Description:

In the winter of 2005, RRA had public consultations regarding trails in Greater Sudbury. The overwhelming message that came back was that people did not know where the trails were. In response RRA have done the following:

1. Produced a broadsheet map of the city indicating where all the trails are located with descriptions of the trails (pictures as well to entice people to the trails). It is accessible in both official languages.
2. Revamping the website away from being about our organization and more toward giving the site visitor what they really want (trail maps, discussion forum).
3. Developed comprehensive and consistent trail signage that is easily recognizable as trail signage. This includes Trail Head signs, Trail information Signs (placed in places that will help to educate non-trail users) and Roadside Directional signage to direct people to a near by trail.
4. The creation of a pop up display unit to promote our trail brand. The display will be used at wellness fairs, in the malls, public building, tourist attractions and public events.

Measures of success: There has been an increase in the number of hits on the website.

More Information: <http://www.rainbowroutes.com>

Case Study 4.25: Let's Get Moving for the Health of It

Organization: Sudbury Regional Hospital, Regional Cancer Program

Contact: Nicole Gauthier

Regional Cancer Program

ngauthier@hrsrh.on.ca

(705)522-6237 x 2533

Description:

The Let's Get Moving for the Health of It campaign is designed to increase community mobilization and capacity for change. The campaign encourages citizens in Northeastern Ontario to advocate for supportive environments that would support physical activity (i.e. the use of trails)

Measures of success: A baseline policy/environmental scan and gaps analysis was conducted with NEO. The scan will be redone at the end of the campaign.

Case Study 4.26: The Walking Program

Organization: British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association

Contact: Trina Sporer

Active Communities Program Manager

Ph: 604.629.0965

tsporer@bcrpa.bc.ca

Description:

The BCRPA, with funding from ActNow BC and in partnership with 2010 Legacies Now, has developed informative and user-friendly walking program resources to guide communities, worksites and individuals implementing or reviewing current walking programs. The walking program resources are relevant province-wide and offer useful ideas, easy-to-use tools and practical strategies to consider as walking programs are designed, implemented or revised.

The key components of the guide include:

- Walking Program Resource Guide: For communities/worksites/individuals interested in creating and enhancing a walking program in their community
- Walk Leader Handbook: Resource for individuals leading the walks
- Walking Handbook: Distributed to participants of walking programs, for use on walks
- Pedometer Handbook: Assists individual walkers in choosing a pedometer and using it effectively

Measures of success: Not provided/available at the time of research.

More Information: <http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/walking/>

Appendix 2 - Project Methodology



Extensive research was undertaken to obtain to the best possible information on the strategies, methods and opportunities for increasing the use of trails by walkers and hikers. The following approach was employed:

The Research Consultant

- Identified challenges to increasing trail use;
- Identified possible strategies, methods and opportunities to overcome these challenges;
- Identified key contacts and created a database of contacts;
- Sent a call for “best practices” to a large number of contacts and posted it on several web sites
- Develop and conduct telephone interviews with key selected contacts;
- Developed and completed a data sheet for each “best practices” submitted;
- Conducted web site search for “best practices”
- Reviewed existing resources, manuals, promotional material, and programs; and
- Analyzed, consolidated, organized and summarized data.

The Consultant focused on activities and initiatives that increase trail use by identified user groups including:

- children and young people;
- older adults;
- women and girls;
- low-income families;
- people with disabilities; and
- visible / ethnic minorities

The Consultant consulted and obtained information from the following stakeholders including:

- Trail Organizations - local, provincial, national, international including member organizations of Hike Ontario
- Trail owners and managers
- Health Organizations – Health Units, NGO’s
- Tourism organizations
- Organizations representing identified user groups
- Provincial and municipal governments
- Parks and Conservation Authorities
- Educational institutions

- Representatives of identified user groups
- Trail users
- Experience providers, e.g., event planners, businesses
- Other organizations - service organizations

Despite the time of year (July/August) and the short timelines to reply, the response to the call for “best practices” was excellent. Seventy “best practices” were submitted by enthusiastic stakeholders. Additional “best practices” were identified through web searches and interviews with selected individuals.

The scope and time frame for the project was limited, and therefore it was not possible to conduct an exhaustive cataloguing and assessment. “Best practices” in this context should be considered as “success stories” and not “best practices” in the strictest sense. That said, there was a concerted effort to capture key and consistent information about each “best practice” including:

- Name and description;
- Name and contact information of organization involved;
- Outcomes and benefits;
- Identified user group;
- Measures of success; and
- Sources for more information.

This information, albeit largely subjective, provided some measure of “bestness”. Another measure of success was the willingness and enthusiasm by which individuals and organizations submitted and shared information about their “best practice”. Just knowing what others are doing to increase trail use and how they are doing is the true value of a project such as this.

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Phone: 1-800-894-7249

Email: info@hikeontario.com

Website: <http://www.hikeontario.com>

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