

# Shuswap Regional Trails Strategy

## Discussion Paper

### November 17, 2014 (*updated Dec 4*)

**Background and context:** The Shuswap Trail Alliance has done significant work in the past 10 years in promoting non-motorized trails, supporting Secwepemc caretakers and stewards in asserting title and rights to the land, and in encouraging ecological stewardship, promotion, signage and use of non-motorized trails.

Since 2001, a series of planning initiatives and community projects have provided a strategic thread on which a region-wide strategy for non-motorized trails has evolved. In addition, a series of pivotal discussions between Secwepemc leadership and trail user group leadership helped to confirm the need for a region-wide strategy to involve *all* trail user groups (motorized and non-motorized), and make connections to land use, existing land use plans, Secwepemc values, environmental and community health, tourism and economic development.

It was agreed that the time was right to develop a Shuswap Regional Trails Strategy.

**Who is leading the development of this strategy?** A steering committee that includes leadership from the Secwepemc Nation (*Sexqéltkemoc* Lakes Division [Splatsin, Neskonlith & Adams Lake], and the Little Shuswap Band), the Shuswap Trail Alliance, the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Shuswap Tourism, City of Salmon Arm, and Recreation Sites and Trails BC (part of Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations). Additional perspectives will be sought at the November 27, 2014 meeting. The Fraser Basin Council has been retained by the steering committee to facilitate the process.

**What is the purpose of the proposed strategy?** The purpose of the strategy is to protect, enhance and recognize the value and importance of trails<sup>1</sup> as an integral part of the Shuswap. The strategy's process will also serve to demonstrate collaborative management between all orders of government<sup>2</sup>. This strategy will ensure trails are appropriately registered, mapped, developed, maintained, and promoted. It will provide stability and security to all user groups, businesses, and the orders of government who invest in them.

#### Underlying Principles

- Formalize our commitment to collaboration, and to work together
- Protect and promote First Nations' interests
- Reduce/repair ecological damage from all trail use
- Manage land access appropriately
- Ensure long-term value and use of trails

#### Key components of the strategy are envisioned as follows:

- Governance Structure: formalization of a Regional Trails Council for the strategy (including representation, membership, decision making, roles, responsibilities & resources)

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<sup>1</sup> Trails are intended to include all trails, motorized and non-motorized, and trails for a variety of uses including but not limited to recreation, tourism, hunting, access to culturally important sites

<sup>2</sup> Orders of government refer to Secwepemc, local, provincial and federal and do not imply a hierarchy

- Annual Planning Process: creation of an annual planning process in relation to the governance structure and development of annual implementation plans
- Authorization Process and Communications: development of a process that ensures there is consistent, effective coordination between the authorization processes of all orders of government for trail building, use and objectives, as well as communication about the processes
- Maps and Priority Planning Areas: identification of priority planning areas, in which to promote trails for recreational users and tourism businesses, consistent with Secwepemc values, adaptive environmental management best practices, and existing plans (e.g., Okanagan Shuswap LRMP<sup>3</sup>, various OCPs<sup>4</sup>)
- Cumulative Impacts: consider using a cumulative impacts model to assess future trail development and expansion of recreational access (subject to resources available)
- Access management: managing or identifying access to priority planning areas for recreational trail use and tourism business development
- Protocol Development: with all industry sectors (forestry, mining, guide outfitters, trapping, commercial recreation, others) to ensure communication, coordination and collaborative planning for support of areas for recreational and tourism business potential, as well as ensuring culturally sensitive sites are kept confidential
- Hot Spot Pilots: development of recreational access management planning pilot projects in identified “hot spot” sub-regional priority areas throughout the Shuswap as identified through community roundtables
- Greenways: identifying connections between “urban” trails and greenways with front and back country trails
- Best Practices for Trails: promoting the use of established best practices for trail infrastructure, amenities, maintenance, adaptive monitoring
- Existing Trails Inventory: mapping and documentation of existing trails and their use, their history, economic value, tenure and management status, and addressing potential conflicts, and identification of gaps in tenure.

**What are the proposed outcomes of the strategy? Why is it needed?**

- Widespread buy-in, support and collaboration of all trail user groups, industry sectors, and governments on how to protect, enhance and recognize the value of trails
- Alignment of Secwepemc laws, values & principles with existing government plans and trail and tourism values
- Provide clarity around priority planning areas for all trail user groups, industry sectors, and governments, and improved communication and protocols
- Mid-level planning guidance for industry sectors at the operational level
- Increased value and security of the trail system assets, through consistent Shuswap trail design and sign standards, which will facilitate effective marketing
- Increased awareness of historical and cultural significance of trails
- Minimization of user conflicts on trails
- Optimization of limited shared resources through collaboration

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<sup>3</sup> Land and Resource Management Plan

<sup>4</sup> Official Community Plan

### What are the deliverables or final products of the strategy?

- A formal commitment to work together, as evidenced by either a signed agreement, LOU, and establishment of a Regional Trails Council
- A strategy document, with components identified above and an implementation section, outlining how to move forward with components
- Maps of priority planning areas, both paper copies and digitized polygons that can be used by governments, industry sectors and trail user groups

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on accomplishments to date, community and leadership consultation, higher level planning, and best practice reviews. They are offered as a framework from which to shape the strategy.

#### 1. Vision - draft components of a vision statement

- a. Collaboration of multiple stakeholders including all orders of government, trail user groups, industry sectors
- b. Secwepemc are reinstated as caretakers and stewards
- c. Value of trails contributes to triple bottom line: healthy environment, healthy communities, and healthy economy
- d. Shuswap is known as a united destination trail centre that has trails for all uses

#### 2. Values

- a. *Yucwmenúl'ecw* the responsibility of taking care of the land & its resources (Secwepemc) and recognition of Aboriginal title and rights
- b. Commit to Shuswap Trails vision of collaboration
- c. Commit to a suite of values based on *Respect, Cooperation, & Stewardship*

#### 3. Underlying Principles

- a. Formalize our commitment to collaboration, and to work together
- b. Protect and promote First Nations' interests
- c. Reduce/repair ecological damage from all trail use
- d. Manage land access appropriately
- e. Ensure long-term value and use of trails

#### 4. Governance

- a. Establish a regional trails council - inclusive, consensus-based, mandated,
- b. To oversee the strategy, consult on annual planning, and collaborate on stewardship efforts
- c. Link to existing regional, inter-regional and provincial efforts (BC Trail Strategy, Outdoor Recreation Council)
- d. Acknowledges Aboriginal title and rights, demonstrates the principles of the Tsilhqot'in (William) case, recognition of Secwepemc decision making authority
- e. Favour a community development approach over an administrative model
- f. Dynamic, resilient, lean, active, engaging - combines local wisdom and knowledge with researched knowledge
- g. Meets once or twice a year at most
- h. Include a smaller steering committee and resourced annual coordination
- i. Terms of Reference to be developed

#### 5. Annual Planning Cycle - establish an annual planning cycle as follows:

- a. February - Regional Trail Council meets, reviews and approves annual work plan for coming season, and annual report for previous year
- b. March through October - implementation of annual work plans
- c. November - Regional Trail Council meets, discusses previous year, initiates winter planning

- d. November through February - technical committee members develop annual work plans, evaluate progress against strategy
- 6. Recreation Access Management, Area Priorities and Maps**
  - a. Inventory all existing & proposed recreational access (trails, off-road vehicle (ORV) tracks, routes)
  - b. Agree on Hot Spot - High Priority Areas - development of pilot projects for issues/zones to address (*see list below*)
  - c. Connection of trails and recreation access to identify areas/zones and development of objectives that define suitability for front & backcountry recreation/tourism
  - d. Link objectives to related community, regional, and provincial plans (Okanagan Shuswap LRMP, Shuswap River Watershed Sustainability Plan, OCPs, Greenway/Parks/Active Transportation strategies, Shuswap Trail Strategy, Shuswap Tourism Strategy)
- 7. Authorization Process**
  - a. Commit to regional consultation process prior to submission to Front Counter process (Appendix 1, Shuswap Trail Protocol, including a Secwepemc LOU)
  - b. Utilize annual planning cycle to review new plans for approval
  - c. Establish MoUs/LoUs and Partnership Agreements to formalize commitments
  - d. Establish stewardship agreements with commercial guide operators and events
- 8. Stewardship** - Adopt regionally applicable tools to ensure consistent quality and value, excluding culturally sensitive trails to be identified by Secwepemc
  - a. Shuswap Trail Design standards - *"Well designed, well signed, well maintained, well promoted"*
  - b. Shuswap Trail Sign standards
  - c. Shuswap Environmental screening and adaptive planning tool
  - d. Preliminary Archeological Reconnaissance (PAR) and Traditional Use Studies (TUS), when needed
  - e. Shuswap Trail Maintenance Standards
  - f. Shuswap Risk Management Protocol - for field work and programs, training

### Maps and Priority Planning Areas

The following area-based priorities emerged from a review of consultations and community planning throughout the region. They include known concept proposals and are assembled to provide a starting point for discussions in identifying priority areas for sub-regional Recreation Access Management Planning ahead:

1. East Shuswap/Eagle River Valley sub-basin:
  - Queest, Owlshead, Eagle Pass, Griffith, Joss, English
  - Gorge/Perry/Eagle/Wap drainage
  - Anstey Highland Traverse
2. Sicamous to Armstrong Rail-Trail Greenway Corridor
  - Rosemond Lake, Turtle Bay
  - Enderby/Splatsin Active Transportation Plan
3. Shuswap River Sub-Basin:
  - Mara Mtn, Hunters Range, Enderby Cliffs/Reeves Lake
  - Shuswap River - Kingfisher to Mara (link with River Planning), Hidden Lake, Enderby/Splatsin Active Transportation Plan
4. Mount Ida - Sacred Circle
  - Haines Creek, south slopes
  - Salmon Arm Greenways - north slopes

5. West Bay/Switzmalph/Salmon Arm Sub-Basin
  - West Bay greenway/Hwy 1 Parallel trail
  - Tappen/Sunnybrae Parallel trail
  - Glen Eden/Tappen Connector
6. Inner Shuswap (South/Blind Bay/Eagle Bay/Skimikin)
  - Reinecker/White Lake Connector
  - Blind Bay/Eagle Bay/Sorrento Parallel trails
  - White Lake/Eagle Bay/Cinnemousoun Narrows connector
  - Loftus Lake
7. Falkland Sub-Basin -
  - Glenemma Multi-Use Trail Plan
  - Falkland River greenway,
  - Falkland area falls, caves, Pillar Lake, Joyce Lake
  - Estekwalen Mtn route/Tuktakamin Mtn trail
8. Little Shuswap Lake/Adams River Sub-Basin (ALIB, Neskonlith, LSIB, Chase)
  - Scatchard Mountain/Turtle Valley/Phillips Lake
  - Neskonlith Meadows/Skmana Lake/McGillvary Lake trails
  - Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park
  - Little Shuswap/Squilax lake connectors
  - Chase/Adams Lake/Neskonlith Parallel road trails
9. North Shuswap Highlands
  - Crowfoot/Mobley/Grizzly/Angle Highland (Historic Route)
  - Adams/Lichen/Pukeashun/Humamilt/Momich
  - Seymour Sub-Basin - Seymour River, Hunakwa Lake, Upper Seymour Valley, Grace/Cottonwood
  - Squilax/Scotch Creek/Anglemont roadside Parallel trail
10. Community Greenway Connectors, Parallel Paths, and Active Transportation links (consider addressing as combined planning effort)
  - Parallel Pathways - Sorrento, Blind Bay, Squilax to Anglemont, Ranchoero
  - Parallel Cycle Touring Routes - all areas (see Cycle Touring Map)
  - Community Greenways/Active Transportation Plans - Sicamous, Enderby, Splatsin, Salmon Arm, Switzmalph,

#### **Key Input Sought at November 27 Meeting**

- Do you support the development of the strategy?
- Do you support the proposed vision of the strategy?
- Do you support the values and underlying principles?
- What geographic areas of the Shuswap do you support for trails-based activities?
- What trail use designations do you support for each (Key Questions: are existing designations desirable, what needs to be designated, where would it conflict with industrial use? Secwepemc values?)
- Are there any existing unauthorized trails that have temporal/spatial conflicts with other uses?
- Do you support the governance principles outlined for a Regional Trails Council? What perspectives need to be involved? Is it workable as presented?
- Do you support the proposed annual planning cycle?
- What is your feedback on the proposed authorization/tenure/permitting process? Is it overly cumbersome? Are there efficiencies to be gained? What steps are missing?

### **Next Actions**

- November 27 Regional Leadership Meeting
- Assemble feedback notes, follow-up with regional leadership and groups
- April 2015 DRAFT strategy ready, including area priorities, and final inventory tables/maps
- May 2015 Revised strategy complete, commitments
- June 2015 implement priority area planning
- Sept 2015 Implement Trail Council and annual review process

### **Resources**

Each of the following below have a live link to a website. See [www.shuswaptourism.ca](http://www.shuswaptourism.ca) or [www.shuswaptrails.com](http://www.shuswaptrails.com) for most of them:

**2002 Shuswap Tourism Opportunity Strategy**

**2006 Shuswap Trails Concept Study**

**2007 Shuswap Trails Strategy**

**2010 Shuswap Tourism Strategy**

**2010 Shuswap Trails Adaptive Management Planning Tool**

**2011 Shuswap Trails Protocol**

**BC Trails Strategy**

## Appendix 1 - Shuswap Trail Protocol/Authorization 12 steps

### Shuswap Trail Protocol

The Shuswap Trail Alliance – Updated: Oct 16, 2011

#### Know the Layers

- The Environment/Ecology – Riparian, Wetlands, Watersheds, Critical Habitats, Red/Blue Lists
- Secwepemc (Shuswap) Nation – Sexqueltquin (Adams Lake), Qw7ewt (Little Shuswap), Sk'atsin (Neskonlith), Splatsin
- Provincial/Federal Government – Natural Resources, MoE, DFO, BC Parks, Rec Sites and Trails. . .
- Municipal/Regional Districts – Staff/ Councils, Parks Commissions, Greenway Liaison Committee,
- Land Tenure Holders – Forestry, Range, Mining, Trapping, Harvest, Tourism. . .
- Private Land Owners/Local Residents
- Recreational User Groups – Hiking, Mountain Biking, Equestrian, Nordic Ski, Snowshoe, ATV, Off-road Motorcycle, Snowmobile, Fish & Game, Nature Viewing, Camping, Berry Picking. . .
- Safety – RCMP, Fire Protection, Search & Rescue. . .

#### “So You Want to Build a Trail” Steps

1. Get connected – find out how: call the Shuswap Trail Alliance (250-832-0102). . .
2. Do your homework – check with area trail stewards, research the “layers”, look at maps/Google Earth/GeoBC Online/Front Counter BC Online, study sustainable design standards, find out about other’s plans, talk to people. . .
3. Get permission to explore on the ground
4. Find the Lines (GPS/mapping)
5. Conduct Environmental Screening
6. Write up a draft plan (include design, build, maintenance, and budget)
7. Bring plan to the local Stewardship Advisory or Lead Steward
8. Submit for First Nation (Lakes Division/Little Shuswap), Stewardship Partners, Land Management, and key stakeholder review (see layer contacts). . .
9. Revise lines and plan (as required), and resubmit for review. . .
10. Apply for Authorization – Front Counter BC, Municipal/Regional Government, Private Owner, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Environment. . .
11. Upon authorization – Build, Monitor, Maintain, Adapt. . .