
**Canadian Trails Federation
2010 Strategic Planning**

January 15, 2010

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2010 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Executive Summary

The Canadian Trails Federation (CTF) held a strategic planning workshop on Friday, January 15, 2010 attended by the Board of Directors / CTF members.

During the workshop, an environmental scan was completed which identified CTF successes and shortfalls and internal and external factors that CTF needs to be aware of in setting a strategic plan.

As an output of the workshop, a new vision and mission were developed:

Vision statement

The Canadian Trails Federation is a united voice for trails throughout Canada which will link communities and meet the needs of diverse cultures and trail users for their outdoor recreation and healthy living.

Mission statement

The Canadian Trails Federation will:

- promote the recreational use of trails for healthy living and the enjoyment of Canada's unique landscapes
- create the conditions which will lead to the development of sustainable trails
- facilitate the sharing of information and resources
- promote the responsible use of trails

The following is a list of the goal statements that were developed based on workshop discussions:

1. To be the pre-eminent voice on all recreational trails in Canada, facilitating national trails policy and programming.
2. Establish programs and services that respond to the needs of diverse trail groups and stakeholders
3. Strengthen CTF as an organization

A fourth goal re: education and training was suggested for Board consideration in view of discussions on the possibility of a National Trails Symposium.

Objectives under each goal have been developed and the next step is to set action plans for the objectives, outlining what specifically will be done, by whom, with

timelines and budget considerations. As part of the action planning, CTF should also consider what can be done with volunteer resources only and what can be achieved with an investment in staff resources. This would be the content of the second stage of a facilitated strategic planning workshop or could be undertaken by the Board independently.

CANADIAN TRAILS FEDERATION (CTF)

2010 STRATEGIC PLANNING

I. Introduction

The Canadian Trails Federation (CTF) held a strategic planning session on January 15, 2010. CTF has not had a strategic plan in the past and this meeting was Stage 1 of a two stage process to develop a plan to guide CTF in its operations.

A list of those in attendance is included in Appendix 1.

The meeting included the following

1. Overview of the benefits of strategic planning
2. Environmental Scan / Situational Analysis:
3. Identification of potential strategic priorities
4. Initial Action Planning

II. Benefits of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning refers to identifying a few well-defined strategies within a framework of identified opportunities. No organization can be all things to all people and so it is important that resources are concentrated on issues that are important to the membership and over which the organization can have some control or influence.

The benefits of strategic planning include:

1. Strategic planning helps to clearly define the purpose of the organization, establish realistic goals and objectives consistent with the mission, in a defined time frame, and within the organization's capacity for implementation.
2. Strategic planning helps communicate goals and objectives externally.
3. Strategic planning allows the Board to develop a sense of ownership of a plan.
4. Strategic planning ensures the most effective use is made of the organization's resources by focusing the resources on key priorities.
5. Strategic planning provides a base from which progress can be measured.

Simply put, strategic planning involves asking two questions:

1. What are the most important issues that need to be addressed?
2. How shall we respond?

A strategic plan is only beneficial to an organization if it is used. There should be regular reviews of what has been accomplished against plan (quarterly, semi-annually, at least annually). Plans can be modified as new demands or opportunities arise, but there should be an assessment of what happens to the existing plan and organizational resources if new initiatives are pursued that were not originally contemplated.

III. Environmental Scan / Situational Analysis

Participants took part in an environmental scan / situational analysis which involved looking at CTF's successes, current internal strengths and weaknesses and external factors that could influence future opportunities and threats.

Prior to the meeting, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire to provide preliminary feedback on these issues, in order to help focus discussions and encourage participants to reflect on topics that would be addressed at the planning session. (Of 15 surveyed, 13 completed the survey and their responses are included in Appendix 2)

A summary of the responses generated from the survey and the planning meeting are provided below:

1. Successes & Shortfalls

When asked in the survey what have been CTF's most important successes, the following summary of responses was reported:

- CTF is a national network for trails for sharing information / best practices
- CTF provides a national voice on trail issues
- CTF has represented non motorized trail interests and projects in the NTC
- CTF has raised the profile of trails
- Success in access to funding

In terms of areas where expectations were not met or where progress was less than expected, the two issues that were most often cited were:

- Lack of clarity re: role/mandate of CTF
- Lack of dedicated human and financial resources

2. Internal Factors - Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the organization and something over which an organization tends to have control. They are an organization's present assets and liabilities and include things like membership, human resources (staff & volunteers), financial resources, technology, programs and services.

Strengths

Based on the survey responses and group discussion at the meeting, CTF's strengths can be summarized as follows:

- CTF provides national representation and one voice for trails
- The membership is diverse and represents all users and all provinces/territories
- There are deep local community connections and CTF can tap into a network at the local, provincial and federal levels.
- Dedicated, knowledgeable, experienced Board
- CTF has a strong sense of mission, commitment to purpose and will to seek success
- CTF has good relationships with other stakeholder groups such as the National Trails Coalition and Trans-Canada Trail

Weaknesses

Based on the survey responses and group discussion at the meeting, CTF's weaknesses can be summarized as follows:

- Lack of clarity re: CTF mandate, objectives, roles
- Lack of clarity re: organizational structure – who are the members, who has voting status, who can speak on behalf of CTF, how are decisions made
- Inherent difficulties of federation
- Divisive history, lack of trust between members, some relationship issues
- Financial resources are lacking
- Human resources – need funding for staff
- Volunteer resources are stretched and there is limited time and energy for addressing the national agenda
- Lack of services/program development
- Communications – internal & external – in need of improvement
- Translation
- Overall difficulty in moving the organization forward due to lack of resources

3. External Factors Creating Opportunities and Threats

There are external factors that are outside of an organization's control but still must be taken into consideration as they can create potential opportunities or threats for an organization. They tend to be related to the environment in which an organization operates and include things like competitive issues, political factors, social factors, economic factors or legislative/regulatory issues.

Participants were asked to look at the environment in which CTF will operate in 2010, and asked to consider what is happening externally that could create potential opportunities for CTF. A summary of the responses generated from the survey and the planning meeting are provided below:

External Factors with Potential to Create Opportunities for CTF

Political Factors

- Political support for trail development
- New federal funding is a possibility
- The interests of various government levels and department are compatible with CTF – e.g. active living, reducing health care costs, active transportation

Economic Factors

- Stimulus funding opportunities are compatible with trail projects – additional job creation projects could be conducive to further trail development
- Tourism/economic development opportunities arising from trail development
- Economic challenges may result in vacation and recreational activities that make use of trails

Social Factors

- Increasing use of & demand for trail infrastructure
- Focus on healthy/active living
- Trail development is compatible with environmental interests
- Trails create opportunities for spontaneous play and nature education for children
- Trails are embedded in Canadian historical conscience

Other Factors

- Other organizations with like mandates could present opportunities for collaboration e.g. NTC, TCT and others
- Success of NTC program may lead to its continuation/expansion

External Factors with Potential to Pose Threats for CTF

Political Factors

- Potential for elections and change in governments at the provincial and federal level.
- Funding sources tend to be at the whim of government
- Lack of certainty re continuance of NTF program

Economic Factors

- Current economic conditions and government funding cutbacks
- Lack of funding for trail maintenance and refurbishment

Legal/Regulatory Factors

- Access to land and water for trail development (public & private lands)
- Definition of multi-use, mixed use, shared use trails

Other Factors

- Conflicts/lack of communication with other stakeholders
- Number of trails focussed organizations and potential for lack of clarity and duplication of efforts
- CTF role not appropriately valued.

IV. Issue Identification & Goal Setting

With the backdrop of the environmental scan and situational analysis, participants next identified potential issues that should be included in the strategic plan.

Participants first identified internal organizational issues that need to be tackled to strengthen CTF as an organization.

Participants then considered specific roles, projects and programs that CTF could undertake. (See Appendix 3 for brainstormed list.)

Based on those discussions, the following are possible goals that could be included in CTF's strategic plan:

Goal 1: To be the pre-eminent voice on all recreational trails in Canada, facilitating national trails policy and programming.

Objectives:

- Promote to the federal government the benefits of investing in recreational trails and encourage setting a national plan for trails with committed funding & implementation strategy for sustainable trail development and maintenance.
- Encourage the development of a national trails inventory
- Objective on access to public/private lands/water for trail development?
- Collaborate with other trails organizations towards presenting united front on trail policy and programming.
 - Support NTC in quest for continued funding.

Goal 2: Establish programs and services that respond to the needs of diverse trail groups and stakeholders

Objectives:

- Promote ongoing sharing of best practices and information resources between trail groups
- Develop guidelines and standards for trail-building
- In support of national initiatives, develop policy guidelines to assist decision-making at the local level
- Be a repository for information on innovative practices in the trails industry
- Conflict resolution resource?

Goal 3: Strengthen CTF as an organization

Objectives

- Develop a vision statement for CTF, review CTF's mission statement and set obtainable goals
- Review CTF's financial needs and management processes to include annual budgeting
- Review CTF by-laws for anomalies and clarification and provide Board orientation on by-laws
- Determine staffing requirements based on strategic plan objectives
- Build & strengthen membership to include review of membership structure
- Review communications functions to include
 - Website development to enhance communications
 - Clarifying who can speak on behalf of CTF
 - Translation of documents

Possible Goal on Education, Training & Outreach?

- Possible role re: promoting trails to the general public and providing information on access to and usage of trails?
- Possible role re: education and training within the trails industry?
- National Trails Symposium?

V. Action Planning

With key issues for CTF to address being identified, the balance of the meeting was spent beginning to discuss how to respond to those issues. Time did not permit addressing all issues and participants chose to focus on the following:

Goal: Strengthen CTF as an organization

Objectives

- 1. Vision / Mission Statement** - Develop a vision statement for CTF, review CTF's mission statement and set obtainable goals

A mission statement explains what the organization does (its action), for whom and the benefit. A vision statement describes how the future will look if the organization achieves its mission – what the organization would like to happen as a result of its actions. Mission is the action; vision is the result of the action

CTF currently has a mission statement but not a vision statement

CTF's mission is:

To enhance the recreational trails network in Canada by:

- (a) promoting the development and use of recreational trails
- (b) sharing information,
- (c) providing leadership and coordination and
- (d) building consensus within the trails community, both nationally and internationally

The following was put forth as a starting statement for a vision

The CTF is a united, clear, strong voice that supports, enables & sustains a trail system that embraces the needs & interest of Canadians and showcases the diverse cultures and landscapes of Canada

Or, if the preference is to describe how the future will look if the organization achieves its mission, the vision could be stated as:

Vision: A trail system that embraces the needs & interest of Canadians and showcases the diverse cultures and landscapes of Canada

A committee was struck consisting of Jeremy (chair), Ruth, Linda & Linda

The committee met and recommends the following for adoption by the Board to replace the existing mission statement:

Vision statement

The Canadian Trails Federation is a united voice for trails throughout Canada which will link communities and meet the needs of diverse cultures and trail users for their outdoor recreation and healthy living.

Mission statement

The Canadian Trails Federation will:

- promote the recreational use of trails for healthy living and the enjoyment of Canada's unique landscapes
- create the conditions which will lead to the development of sustainable trails
- facilitate the sharing of information and resources
- promote the responsible use of trails

- 2. By-Laws** - Review CTF by-laws for anomalies and clarification and provide Board orientation on by-laws.

It was suggested that clarification was needed on issues such as who serves on the Board and who is eligible to attend meetings.

Committee struck consisting of: Jeremy (Chair), Curt, John, Greg Sharfson (sp?)

Next Steps:

- Review by-laws & report to March 11th meeting
- Consider Code of Ethics for Board – sample provided by Linda

- 3. Financial Management** - Review CTF's financial needs and management processes to include annual budgeting.

Board would like an understanding of CTF's current financial position to include

1. Review/Approval of budget
2. What funds are still available
3. How funds have been spent to date

Financial Committee struck consisting of Terry, Pat, Curt, John & Brendan

Next Steps:

- Committee to meet and will provide requested information for the March 11th meeting.
- Recommend expenditure policy on allowable purposes to be developed

4. Membership - Build & strengthen membership to include review of membership structure.

Review what clarification is needed re: membership categories, structure, and composition. Refer to update from Belleville meeting (John to circulate) and current by-laws.

Next Steps:

- Committee needs to be appointed to undertake this task

5. Strategic Plan

- Draft document from January 15 meeting to be prepared & distributed by e-mail by February 18
- Board comments in two weeks following by March 4th
- Finalize document by March 18th
- Prepare for Stage 2 of Strategic Planning – 2 day workshop in June (provided funding is available)

Appendix 1 - Attendance

Name	Organization
John Cushing	Alberta TrailNet Society
Patrick Connor	Ontario Trails Council
Curt Schroeder	Saskatchewan Trails Association
Brendon McGinn	Prince Edward Island Trails Inc.
Ted Scrutton	Nova Scotia Trails Federation
Poul Jorgensen	New Brunswick Trails Council
Leon Organ	Newfoundland T'Railway Council
Sonia Vaillancourt	Conseil québécois du loisir
Ruth Marr	Manitoba Recreational Trails Association
Linda Morin	Manitoba Recreational Trails Association
Linda Strong-Watson	Alberta TrailNet Society
Jeremy McCall	Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia (ORC)
Terry Norman	National Trails Coalition
Fred de Wit	Equine Canada

Appendix 2 – CTF Strategic Planning Survey

Question 1: What do you consider to be the most important successes of CTF since its inception?

- Bringing trail builders together to network.
- Creating national community around trails, especially non-motorized but motorized as well.
- I feel CTF has achieved significant success in bringing together trail organizations at all levels to the point that much valuable information has been shared and funding avenues established to realize much needed trail improvements.
- Bringing all of the provincial trails organizations together to discuss topics of common interest. Becoming a partner in the National Trails Coalition and getting substantial funding from the federal government.
- Establishing a round table of provincial and territorial trail representatives to share knowledge, experience and information resources towards advancing successful approaches to trail development and related issues. Involving provincial and territorial government reps in this discussion with the result that they have set up a parallel forum between governments that will provide input to discussions on national issues relevant to trails
- Successfully participating in and representing non motorized trail interests and projects in the NTC
- Raising the profile of trails and accessing funding.
- Collaboration with All Provinces
Securing funding
- Implementing the 2009 NTC Trail Funding program for its non-motorized member organizations
- NTC funding
- that the program funds were actually delivered to the various trail organizations and groups
- Not as familiar with the past. Perhaps the creation of a national group focused on trail - filling a gap. Also getting additional funding for trail construction through NTC, although the way in which this was achieved is the opposite of a success.
- undertaking insurance study with Trans Canada Trail; insurance being an important issue;
- sharing information; seeing what other provinces are doing in terms of projects, policies, and studies; learning about best practices (bridge design, enforcement);
- promotion of International Trails Day;

- Terry Norman's leadership as President from inception
- Our involvement with CTF is rather recent, we only just joined this spring, so we are not in a position to comment on all CTF's successes since inception, but certainly having a strong voice to raise trail issues on the national scene has been a real plus, particularly for smaller regions like ours whose needs are often not heard or understood far beyond our own back yards.

Question 2: Are there any areas where your expectations were not met or where progress was less than you had expected? If so, please specify

- Lack of core funding for a national office.
- Need to get sustainable funding for staff resources and a national office.
- Still a very "loose" organization, no staff to take in inquiries from outside interest group.
- An attempt to develop a national approach to insurance and liability issues was started but had to be dropped because not all required information could be made available particularly from certain provinces that represented the largest liability exposure.
- A lack of dedicated human and financial resources does not allow the organization to pursue or develop and support programs or initiatives that would benefit the organization, its members and other stakeholders.
- Greater detail re vision, goals, objectives, etc. through its bylaws would bring clarity to the organization mandate, support improved communications between members and could help avoid or eliminate areas of misunderstanding or friction that have developed in the past
- I would say that there is not a clear understanding among provincial and territorial trail organizations on the role of CTF vis-a-vis local organizations. It seems that some groups feel dictated to by CTF.
- A mandate for the organization It has been discussed several times.
We need clear direction
- Failure to adequately address budgeting issues and use of funds related to the NTC Trail Funding program.
- Failure to budget overall.
- A poor start and inconsistent follow-through to design of a logo for the CTF, a potentially expensive item which is difficult to justify as a priority at this time.
- The NTC funding fiasco, which continues. This relates in part to governance issues or lack of clarity, lack of clarity on the mandate of the organization. Unrelated to the organization, it is also due to some of the personalities involved.
- Level of cooperation between provincial/territorial nfp trail agencies.
- I was surprised at how informally it had been established and maintained through the

years. This realization helped to lower my expectations of the organization but creates worries that we are getting in over our heads with NTC.

- timelines that were presented to the organizations and groups were too short for a lot of them to avail of the program
- Not really, as I mentioned earlier our involvement with CTF is quite recent, and it came about as a result of the NTC funding program, which was a real boom for trail building in the territory.

Question 3: Strength & Weaknesses are internal to the organization and reflect present status on factors such as:

- **Membership**
- **human resources (staff & volunteers)**
- **financial resources**
- **programs and services**
- **technology**

Looking at CTF as an organization and the way it operates, what do you think are its strengths?

- willingness to work together
- representation from most areas of the country
- commitment to achieve broader goals
- membership
- Speaking with one Voice for Trails
- Together representatives of users of non-motorized trails.
- Make representation of its members
- Have the resources to finance participation in meetings
- involvement of directors
- membership - member organizations are very knowledgeable but limited (in terms of available time)
- represents through its member organizations a significant cross section of the volunteer trail development and trail user community
- dedicated Board individuals that have stayed with and support the organization
- National representation, including government.
- Equal partner with other national trail organizations on the National Trails Coalition Board
- Membership: National representation which is broadly based among many different types of organization.

- Adequate financial strength thanks to the NTC funding.
- The strength of CTF is that it can represent provincial and territorial trail groups to various community levels and also to government in promoting trail building and trail use.
- Experienced trail people on the CTF Board of Directors. Truly representative of all trails in Canada.
- Unfortunately, it seems rather weak as an organization. A strength might be its potential, connection to key issues such as health, active living, recreation. The basis of the organization is small, but the volunteers seem very dedicated and are probably some of the most knowledgeable people in Canada about trails, especially with a grasp of both on the ground realities of building, maintaining, promoting and using trails, plus a good grasp of the big picture and politics. Despite some of the negatives and personality conflicts, strong desire and will to seek success.
- The People that are at the table they are very passionate for trails
- Very diverse group
- communication across Canada
- now, have a broader representation across the country, especially from Quebec, most of which a result of the National Trails Coalition membership requirements;
- using the Conference Call mechanism for communication among all members; done regularly, once every three months.
- general acceptance, recognition, and encouragement among members of their plans for trail projects, and studies.
- this organization is slowly growing into an organization that should and ultimately be bigger than the Trans Canada Trail organization
- Having representation across the country, giving a common voice to all the trail associations and clubs, especially the smaller groups in rural regions that don't have the benefit of the larger, well funded organizations to see their dream projects come to fruition.
- A great place to meet other involved in the trail business and share resources, ideas and stories.

Question 4: Looking at CTF as an organization and the way it operates, what do you think are its weaknesses?

- Financial
- No permanent human resources
There are no services
- There is a lack of sustainable financial resources, therefore also a lack of staff and other resources (office/equipment, etc) to help build and support the organization and any programs and services it hopes to develop and deliver.

- Lack of funding
Lack of staff
Lack of program development
- Financial and human resources (staff).
- Membership: Lack of documentation of the membership, including accurate details of the member organizations.
- Volunteers: They are stretched, but are essential as we cannot afford paid staff.
- Meeting minutes and related documentation: We need more consistency in following up on business between meetings. It always takes a long time to get the minutes and action items from the last meeting. Given the spread out nature of the CTF Board it is essential to have timely and accurate information.
- Anomalous nature of organization: Given that the principle raison d'etre of the CTF at present is the NTC Trail Funding program, but that it can only represent the non-motorized members of its provincial and territorial organizations, this leaves the CTF in a sensitive and potentially difficult situation with respect to the motorized organizations which belong to its members.
- Its weakness lies in the fact that as a federation it is cumbersome at times to establish a meaningful relationship with parties to the federation. Much like the provinces and the federal government, I think.
- partisanship, special interest groups trying to gain leverage
- lack of clarity on mandate and policy plus organization;
- few resources especially financial and those that exist seem to have strings attached, but this is not clear;
- volunteer base already overcommitted on other work and organization;
- conflict with TCT (although that may be changing);
- conflict between motorized and non-motorized;
- personality conflicts;
- membership is a mixture of volunteers and those paid to do trail work for associations.;
- absence of clear linkages to government staff at all levels plus the volunteer communities of many kinds;
- the immensity of the task of a national trails association given the size of the country, geographic and other differences and especially the different users.
- Clear Mandate and Vision
- Personalities
- lack of funding
- not all the right partners at the table
- only financial revenues from members to pay for Conference Calls, and some trips to Conferences.

- no revenues for staff, maybe two needed.
- we want to have national trail user associations to be members, but we must indicate what the benefits will be for them. We have set a membership fee of \$300 for these 'associate' or 'corporate' members.
- presenting proper timelines for meetings and events that allow enough time for people to be present
- Needs to somehow secure more permanent operating funds, to enable CTF to hold meeting, workshops, assist regions in establishing strong local associations, etc.
- Improve web site and on-line resources for members.
- CTF is seen as the voice of the non-motorized trail sector and should remain as such, but maintain an open relationship with other trail user groups.

Question 5: Opportunities & Threats tend to be external to the organization. They relate to the environment in which CTF operates and reflect how the organization and its members will be affected in the future by factors such as

- **competitive issues (e.g. relationships with other stakeholders)**
- **political factors**
- **socio-demographic factors**
- **economic factors**
- **legislative/regulatory issues**

What is happening externally that could create potential opportunities for CTF?

- We have a minority government. Trail projects are 'good news projects' that result in tangible infrastructure and visible community benefits. MP's have been impressed with the positive responses and support they receive from the public for their support of trail initiatives. Constituent and MP support for trail initiatives encourages ongoing gov't involvement in trail programs
- The 'successful' NTC program has provided a platform for ongoing discussions with federal and provincial governments re enhanced and sustainable funding for trails in this country
- The quality of life and active living opportunities provided by trails support prov. and fed. government objectives around improved health for citizens and reduced health care costs.
- Trails and sustainable transportation initiatives support green communities and conscious environmental and health choices. Trails benefit the environment in many ways - focus recreational use in managed corridors; provide wildlife corridors and habitat, etc.
- There is a steadily growing public demand for and use of trails. This represents an opportunity to mobilize the public in support of enhanced funding for trails
- Trails provide the opportunity to educate youth about nature and to promote responsible behaviour and stewardship of the world we live in
- Unemployment remains high. Although the federal government had indicated that it would shift away from job creation programs in the coming year (towards a focus on the

environment), there may still be an opportunity to access funding for job creation projects given current challenges in the area of employment

- New Federal funding if it is accessed in 2010
- Develop national approaches to address common concerns
- national standards for trail development
- Opportunities to develop internal resources to better meet the needs of the organization
- Opportunities to promote organization.
- Opportunities to develop cross jurisdictional resources.
- Exchange of practices and ideas with membership
- Building on the success of the program of the CNS to demonstrate the ability of users of trails for projects when they have the resources
- Building community around trails, nationally.
- Continue as a partner on the National Trails Coalition board to hopefully secure future federal trail funding for members.
- Build on the relationship with the TCT.
- Sharing ideas and information about provincial and territorial trail organizations and the way they do their trail business and are otherwise organized.
- Potentially obtaining support from other jurisdictions when important issues arise in any one province or territory
- The opportunity to take advantage of the health life-style issues that are not being adequately addressed.
- Building capacity for trail building and management.
- Developing a stronger relationship with the federal government.
- Maybe more money; changes in TCT and potential for more collaboration;
- Trends towards GHG gas reduction, awareness of fitness etc. leading to greater public awareness and demand for trail building and use.
- NTC Funding
- Political support on the vision
- Higher profile
- Certainly getting funding from the federal government through the National Trails Coalition;
- being a member organization of the National Trails Coalition - much higher profile
- being the voice of the "non-motorized" trail community, even though some of our members do have overall trail user representation (including motorized);
- a coordination role at the national level to generate policy and action of certain key

issues (insurance, standards).

- increased funding
- more multipurpose funding for trails
- teaching programs for trail development construction
- Many of the other trail user groups (i.e. snowmobilers, ATV) have the backing of corporate sponsorship which greatly enables them to promote their individual agendas. CTF should look at similar arrangements with groups such as outdoor equipment manufacturers and retailers (i.e. MEC) to provide funding and support for non-motorized trail activities.
- Work closely with other stakeholders - trail user groups to mitigate possible trail use conflicts.
- Promote trail use as a mean of developing healthy, sustainable communities and for promoting a personal healthy lifestyle.
- Engage youth, hiking doesn't seem to be a popular with young people, as it is with the aging boomers.
- Focus on not only building the venues (trails), but also on the activity (hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, etc). Sponsor events that get people out on the trails.

Question 6: What is happening externally that could pose a threat to CTF?

- Competition from other competing agencies who want to control funding or maintain their image as the premier national trail agency.
- Not taken seriously by provincial/territorial governments due to infighting
- Fragility of relationships when core values of members are compromised.
- Credibility of organization can be compromised when slinging mud at other organizations.
- Visions of Grandeur
- Current economic conditions and government funding cutbacks
- Change in governments at the provincial and federal level.
- There are other national trail initiatives that are seeking federal funding and are positioning themselves for success in this area. Messaging from these organizations could impact CTF in a negative way and affect future federal funding for CTF and NTC. CTF needs to consider messaging, branding, partnership and communications strategies, etc. to be able to survive and be successful.
- Lack of funding for a national office.
- Lack of a sense of national community and identity among members.
- An out of date set of bylaws.
- The relationship with the NTC. We have already learned that this is an area where we

have to scope out and agree just how this relationship will work.

- The lack of available funding as governments seek to address deficit and budget issues.
- Trans Canada Trail sees itself as the pre-eminent trail organization in Canada and it perceives CTF as a threat. Constant bickering from some elements of the non-motorized trail community undermines the potential for growth.
- Possibly no more money and reduction in provincial trail association moneys and support;
- ongoing division by NTC issues;
- ATV damage and conflict and no success in bridging the differences and finding common ground;
- volunteer burn-out not just from time but from conflict
- Competition for funding
- Take over from the motorized lobby groups
- monies, funding
- what other stakeholders are doing - duplication of effort
- federal election
- green development
- lack of funding
- timing of funding allocation
- Funding, we need to keep the virtues of trails on the minds of local and national legislators to ensure long term funding is available.
- Aging demographic, what sort of trail activities will the boomers be interested in a few years and will there be another generation of trail users coming along to take their place?
- Land use questions, ensure access to public lands and work with private land holder to allow access.

Question 7: Member Issues

What are the most important issues facing CTF's members over the next three years? (What problems and/or opportunities do our members have that CTF can address on their behalf? What do we need to focus on to be relevant to our members?)

- effective representation from all user groups and agencies involved with trail development and operation in Canada
- Representation of non motorized trail is of prime importance if we are to continue with the NTC relationship.

- Credibility and trust between membership and executive, ntc board members
- Continuing funding from federal Government
- maintaining and developing access to the natural environment
- Support volunteer organizations
- Having access to funding for trail maintenance and services, not only for development
- Convince policymakers of the importance of trails and invest
- A successful review, improvement and member acceptance of CTF mission, goals and objectives and of the organization's bylaws to support ongoing commitment and good communications between members.
- Enhancing the organization's voice to government by growing the associate membership base (other national organizations)
- Securing more federal funding support potentially through the transportation tax or another sustainable funding mechanism that can continue to be allocated to trail building at the local community level.
- Discussions with the federal (and provincial) government re the values of securing and protecting abandoned rail lines and other linear infrastructure that could support trails. Land access for trail and other public purposes is becoming increasingly difficult to secure and appropriate opportunities need to be identified and protected from other developments
- On going communication.
- Need for our own AGM separate from the TCT AGM.
- Renewal of the federal trail funding program.
- ORC BC needs to develop a strategic plan which will develop its role and provide for adequate funding of its office in future.
- ORC BC will need to learn how best to deal with the anomalous situation arising from its representation of the NTC Trail Funding program for non-motorized trails vs. the fact that ORC has a number of motorized organizations as members also.
- Promotion, funding, etc.
- CTF needs a communications campaign to become more visible.
- Non-motorized complaints about ATVs need to be addressed.
- communication of best practices, lessons learnt = sharing knowledge;
- promotion and marketing collaboration and efficiencies;
- money;
- forum to assist in common problems (especially ATVs)
- That will be decided when there is a clear mandate
- Monies
- uncertainty of direction because of uncertainty of funding

- need to address if we will be more than a information sharing organization, and in addition delve into policy areas with new user group members.
- For us in the north, with our limited populations and great distances between communities, maintaining viable trails organizations and attaching volunteers is always a challenge, we need the support of national groups such as CTF to help us survive.
- CTF needs to look at ways to support their members in the smaller regions.

Question 8: Organizational Operational Issues

Looking at how CTF operates as an organization, what do you see as priority internal issues for the next 12 months? i.e. what do we need to do to operate more effectively and efficiently?

- BC and NB trail organizations do not represent all their provincial stakeholder groups and therefore cannot speak on a number of issues without conflict.
- Transparency, openness, effectiveness
- Set obtainable goals
- provide translation of documents
- Having permanent staff
- Clarify the mission of representing non-motorized trail
- Clarify our relationship with the CNS
- Communications - visioning and strategic planning - ensuring involvement and commitment from all provinces and territories - getting all the ducks in a row.
- Need a national office.
- Build and strengthen membership.
- Develop membership programs.
- Get the Board to work more effectively
- Develop an effective budgeting process
- Adequate funding levels.
- Getting funding to hire staff.
- I don't see or understand if there really is an organization right now. Clarity on governance and how decisions are made and who can speak on behalf of CTF for starters. Key to decide if it is just an organization of organizations or something else.
- Staffing
- tidy up our communication differences (e-mail vs. telephoning)
- have a chat room on the Internet;

- see how the website can be used to facilitate our communication on issues
- The single biggest issue facing CTF is funding, without a proper operating budget there is no way they can promote the interests of their members and provide a strong voice at the national scene.

Question 9: What should CTF start doing that it is not doing now?

- more face to face sit down discussion and negotiations, mediation on complex issues.
- For those who can't participate in conference calls - communicating to the membership via newsletter or email updates
- more flow of information
- Thinking outside of the box
- provide translation of documents
- Having permanent staff
- Clarify the mission of representing non-motorized trail
- Clarify our relationship with the CNS
- Consulting with its members regarding what this national organization should and could be and what it can best do to serve member interests and needs. Identify what resources are needed to be successful. The strategic planning meeting is a key step in this process but may not have sufficient breadth of input to complete the task.
- Build a functioning website.
- Budgeting.
- Distributing meeting minutes in a timely way after meetings.
- Lobbying the federal government.
- communicating
- communicating with all trail groups
- get into the policy area at the national level;
- find the means to generate revenues for a full-fledged organization
- Find more effective ways to communicate with the membership. Improve the web site, develop a newsletter, etc.
- Start promoting the virtues of trails amongst our leaders and senior government officials.

Question 10: What is CTF doing now that it should stop doing?

- some members are promoting singular agendas and not looking at the broader picture
- making deals behind closed doors that put the membership in awkward positions
- Stop wasting time and get on with the job of building an organization.
- Put the logo project on hold to save money and develop a better idea of its identity before developing a logo.
- letting members speak or submit proposals and positions on behalf of the CTF without the knowledge let alone the agreement of the members
- infighting
- stop competing with TCT

Question 11: Please list any specific issues that you would recommend be addressed during the planning session.

- motorized vs. non-motorized use of trails and a common position on cooperative approaches
- Validity of position to represent motorized and non motorized trails.
- Understanding developed of role of TCT and role of CTF - that they can work together.
- Role of CTF members as NTC board members.
- Governance
- Clarify the mission of representing non-motorized trail
- plan to make to ensure the renewal of the program (role of each provincial representative)
- The plan for the translation resources and human resources permanent
- Confirming the organizational mandate - i.e. - does it represent provincial and territorial trail councils; does it represent particular trail uses; does it represents all things to do with trails. What does it wish to achieve? What is the big picture idea for this organization?
- Membership categories.
- A look at the bylaws.
- Mandate
- communications;

- type of organization;
- how we can convey to national user group organization the benefits of CTF membership;
- relationship to other stakeholders - areas of duplication.
- planning for next fiscal year
- identify other potential sources of funds
- Work with other stakeholders to ensure long term funding is available for trail groups across the country. Continue relationship with NTC.

Question 12: Other comments not covered by the survey?

- I think that you have got it. Perhaps TCT should be at the table as well.
- excellent idea to have this strategic planning session and to bring in our network for face to face meetings.
- Need to consider bilingual communications in our organization.
- Good luck! The will is there but there is history and personalities that need to be addressed in order to allow the organization to move forward.
- this organization is jumping on the flavor of the month we need very clear direction first it was the insurance then the NTC funding. Other that that we have had no projects or initiatives

Appendix 3 – Potential Areas of Focus

During the planning meeting, participants were given an opportunity to brainstorm potential programs/areas of focus for CTF. The following is a list of options generated. Participants were then given 6 dots and told to place 3 next to their top priority, 2 next to their second priority and 1 next to their third priority. Lastly, participants were given 3 dots and given the option of putting them next to any item that they would personally be prepared to volunteer to work on. The list shows which items are considered highest priority and which could attract volunteer resources.

Topic / Program	Priority	Volunteer
Ottawa presence, political connectivity	15	7
Information resources & Best Practices	18	1
Trail guidelines / structures – best management practices	13	1
Encourage national plan for trails with committed funding & business plan (inputs from local level but national ask)	11	2
Supporting NTC in quest for continued funding	3	5
Facilitate stakeholder relations with those that influence our mandate	4	2
Member support & capacity building	4	1
Policy guidelines to support national initiatives to assist decision-making at local level	5	
Promotion / Marketing trails	3	1
Identify all potential stakeholders	2	2
Trails inventory (facilitate – not develop)	2	1
Environmental	1	
Public education re: trail use		
Managing risk		
Consideration of national program e.g. Rails to Trails, funding/tax considerations		
Holding others accountable to carry through on commitments		
Innovative practices in trails industry		
Dispute resolution		
Leadership development		