

# Bighorn Committee Future State

October 10, 2024

# Meeting etiquette

- We understand there are different perspectives in how this group operates and how the Bighorn is currently being used, however everyone has equity in their perspective and hold valid concerns in this conversation.
- To have a productive meeting we require respect and decorum. Respectful comments on issues and use of the region are encouraged; personal or disrespectful comments will not be tolerated.
- Everyone has equal opportunity to be heard. Only one speaker at a time.

# Questions

For the Terms of Reference review, we developed some questions for you to consider and answer:

1. What value do you and your sector receive from participation on the committee?
2. What has the committee been particularly successful at over the years?
3. Where are the opportunities to improve the functioning of the committee?
4. If you were to suggest modification to the committee membership, what would you suggest?
5. Do you feel the purpose of the committee, as established in 2002 for the purposes of implanting the access management plan, is still relevant in the 2024 context?
6. Do you have any general comments for potential future state of the Committee?

# Bighorn Backcountry Monitoring

Standing Committee

Bighorn Backcountry Access Management Plan

<b>Area of Representation</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Alternate</b>
Clearwater County	Neil Ratcliffe	Gennifer Mehlhaff
Eco Tourism	TBA	Marla Zapach
Equestrian	Doug King	Jay Mills
First Nations	Barry Wesley	Charlie Abraham
Fishing and Hunting	Larry Schmidek	Phil Lacerte
Fixed Commercial	Adena Earl	Travis Earl
Guides and Outfitters	Lorne Hindbo	Jim Turner
Hiking	Simon Dyer	Ernst Bergmann
Mountain Biking	Loyal Ma	Dominik Kmet
Parks Canada	Vinton Lovell	Benjamin Curry
Staging Area/Trail Adoptee	Dale Marshall	Suzanne Comfort
Summer Motorized	Dennis Shafer	Garett Schmidt
Trapping	Rod Burns	Jeremy Cooper
Winter Motorized	Michael Doyle	Troy Dezall
Winter Non-Motorized	Mike Adolph	Doug Ritchie
Youth Member	TBA	TBA

- 16 areas
- 15 active
- 8 responses (some areas had multiple responses)

# What we heard

- Terms of reference (ToR) not being followed
  - Some believe all operational items should be vetted by the committee; some think approval by committee is required
- Better governance is required (i.e. ToR)
  - Should be cap on term; multiple reps from same sector attending; not always respectful interaction and that should be sharply addressed
- Too many things are happening that committee is not being engaged on
  - Mostly for capital investments (e.g. DTC staging and camping upgrades)

# What we heard

- Only those that volunteer should be on the committee; should only have local representatives
- Some areas do not feel like they are being heard or respected
- Things were better in the earlier years; group was more productive
- Some areas believe the Bighorn is for locals and therefore the committee should be local representation

# What we heard

- To truly succeed we need: higher level planning, review of IRPs, rigorous monitoring and reporting, and subsequent performance metrics
- Future state:
  - Committee has lived past mandate and not relevant in current land management context
  - Trails Act framework supersedes committee
  - More merit addressing higher level items – policy, plans, emerging initiatives

# Trail management system

## 1. Trail management planning

Trail management plans can be developed to identify permitted activities on trails or within trail networks, and to identify locations for new trails. These plans consider public safety, user experiences and other public land uses. As part of the process, Indigenous communities and organizations, recreation partners and affected stakeholders have opportunities to share their experiences and concerns, as well as provide input and advice into the trail management plan.

## 3. Trail manager

The Alberta government can manage a designated trail or appoint a recreation partner as a trail manager, who is authorized under a Trail Agreement to maintain trails and trail infrastructure.

## 5. Recreation funding

The province has allocated funding to support maintenance and development of safe and sustainable trails. Funding is provided to many recreation organizations to develop and maintain trails for hiking, biking and other activities. Additionally, trail managers can apply for funding for recreation management projects on public land trails through Alberta's Public Lands Trail Grant Program.

## 2. Trail designation

Public land trails can be:

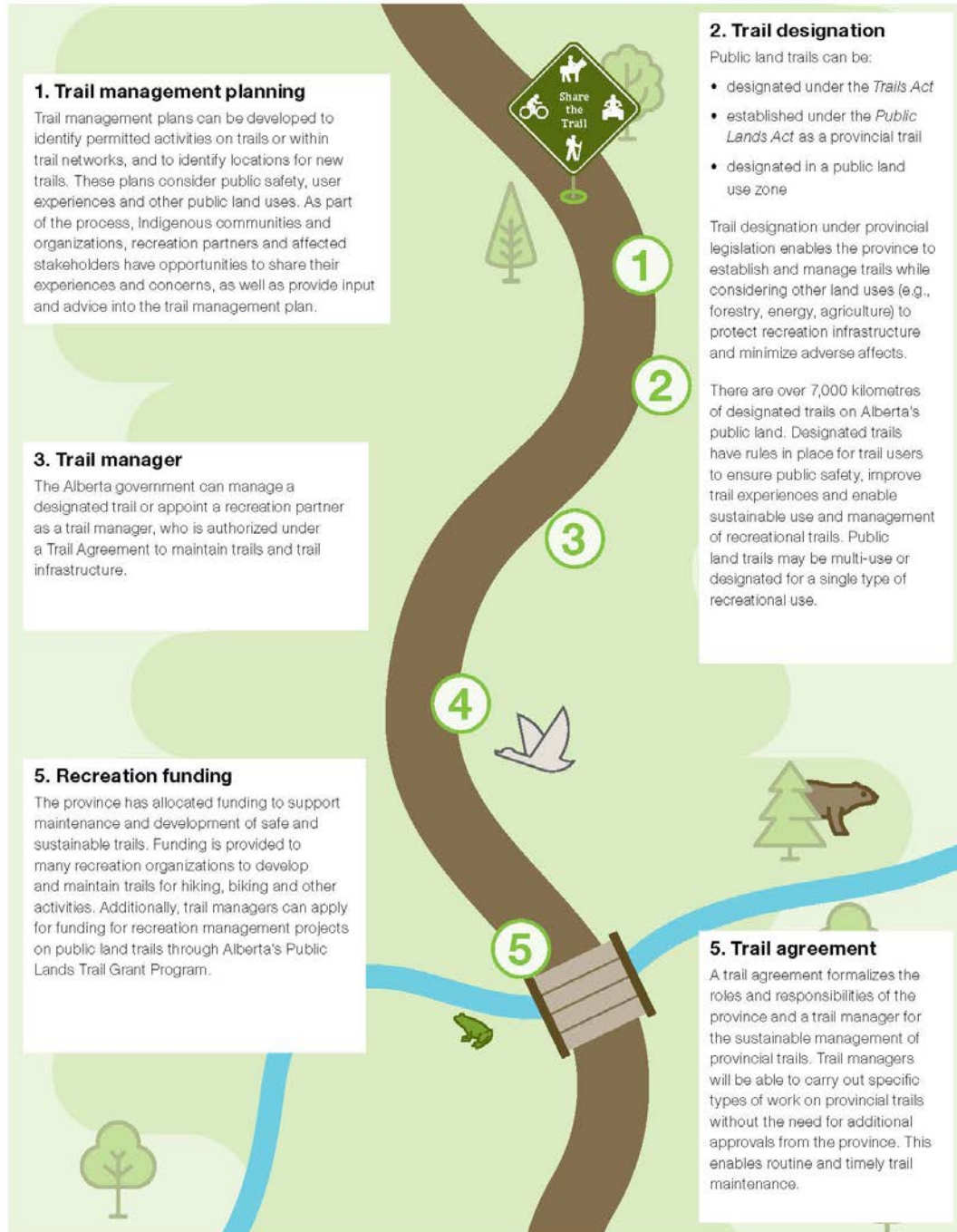
- designated under the *Trails Act*
- established under the *Public Lands Act* as a provincial trail
- designated in a public land use zone

Trail designation under provincial legislation enables the province to establish and manage trails while considering other land uses (e.g., forestry, energy, agriculture) to protect recreation infrastructure and minimize adverse effects.

There are over 7,000 kilometres of designated trails on Alberta's public land. Designated trails have rules in place for trail users to ensure public safety, improve trail experiences and enable sustainable use and management of recreational trails. Public land trails may be multi-use or designated for a single type of recreational use.

## 5. Trail agreement

A trail agreement formalizes the roles and responsibilities of the province and a trail manager for the sustainable management of provincial trails. Trail managers will be able to carry out specific types of work on provincial trails without the need for additional approvals from the province. This enables routine and timely trail maintenance.



Provided to you as handout





# A potential future state

To ensure Trails Act mandate is met while preserving a broader, long-standing perspective, create two groups:

1. Recreation partners/Trails Manager working group
  - Active partners; look for coordination and workplan efficiencies; share expertise; pooled training; discuss new recreation management topics and input on existing
2. Integrated Land Management committee
  - Broad stakeholder group to provide a broad perspective on land management and topics (e.g. policy, plans, emerging issues)

# Currently active partners and Trail Managers

- Alberta Off-highway Vehicle Association\*
  - Bighorn Heritage ATV Society
  - Rocky ATV Club
  - Clearwater Trails Initiative
- Alberta Snowmobile Association\*
  - David Thompson Snow Riders
- Friends of the Eastern Slope Association
- Nordegg Off-Road Cycling Association
- Nordegg Trail Society
- Baseline Mountain Bike Club
- Alberta Hiking Association
- Alberta Wagon Trekker's Association\*\*

\*Trail Managers

\*\*On pause

There are several equestrian groups that we work with on an ad hoc basis (i.e. not annual)