



Greenways Nova Scotia

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Special points of interest:

- **Who has trail clout in the province?** Read our “Who’s who” and find out.
- **What’s the plan?** Greenways NS has one!
- **What’s healthy and what’s not– latest research**

Inside this issue:

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Who’s Who in the Zoo?....

By popular request, here is a guide to the web of trail-related organizations in Nova Scotia– who’s running them, who’s paying, and how it’s costing us.

The Trans Canada Trail (national)

In 1992, Canada celebrated its 125th anniversary. Communities held parades and parties, and a new national dream was announced- the Trans Canada Trail.

Railway companies were leaving. They were ripping up the ties, and leaving an empty corridor running through historic communities and beautiful countryside. The Rails to Trails Conservation movement

emerged internationally with a vision to address this new reality and provide a double benefit: the conservation of the actual rail beds as connected corridors which could be re-converted for railway use one day, and green, healthy trails connecting communities for alternate forms of transportation. In the summer, there would be walking/hiking and cycling, or canoeing on water routes. In the winter, there could be cross-

country skiing, snowshoeing, and if appropriate, snowmobiling. Canadians were urged to donate to this new “National Dream”. Many Nova Scotians bought their “metre of trail.” ATV’s were around, and asking for access. TCT did not want them on trails, but conceded “reluctantly” to allow them in remote areas where community trail-building groups would be scarce.

(cont’d on pg. 2)

Debunking the Health Benefits of OHVing.

Acadia University professors teaming up with Nova Scotia Emergency Physicians have taken apart the claims made by a York University Study that riding an Off-Highway Vehicle provides enough physical activity to qualify as a health benefit. The Nova Scotia team has established

that the evidence points quite the other way, and their peer reviewed critiques have been recently published in prestigious international journals of Health Promotion and Applied Physiology.

The York University study was conducted by their Physical Activity and Chronic Disease Unit, and its claims have been widely disseminated by the Canadian Off-Highways Manufacturers (COHV) (cont’d on pg. 2)

Debunking....(from p. 1)

throughout North America and accepted uncritically by numerous OHV user groups and other agencies. This is not surprising, as the study was co-funded by COHV and the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (formerly HPP— see p. 8— Note that HPP was under public scrutiny at the time for provincial policies favouring the use of recreational Off-highway vehicles on Nova Scotian

trails as a priority.) The papers critiquing the York University study received no external funding.

The Nova Scotia team found that even if the claims of physical activity benefits could have been substantiated, the health risks of driving OHVs, particularly All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) are huge. In the USA alone, the economic burden of morbidity

and mortality from AT- V-ing is estimated by the US Centers for Disease Control to be US \$3.24 billion every year. In Canada, the combined burden of AT- V-ing and snowmobiling is comparable on a per capita basis to US figures. Smartrisk, the Canadian agency entrusted to conduct epidemiology studies of injury and death in Canada estimated the (cont'd on pg. 4)

Trans Canada Trail

Canadians throughout Canada are making history. The Trans Canada Trail, when complete, will be the longest trail in the world, extending over 16,000 kilometers. Get involved, be excited and be part of history.

From the landowner surveys of Annapolis and King county Trails Societies— 2004-2006

Who's Who (from pg. 1)

A non-profit with a national staff, the TCT has two separate Boards, many community volunteers, countless donors big and small, and a pres-

tigious list of sponsors or “partners”: Parks Canada, Heritage Canada, The Globe and Mail, Watt International, The Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation, Loblaws, RBC, Raleigh Canada, ESRI Canada Ltd., and Keen. It hopes to complete the trail for

Canada's 150th in 2017. In March, 2009, TCT put an end to lingering ambiguity around its position on ATV's. See Greenway Vision and Policy at tctrail.ca. Through this policy, TCT commits to safe and enjoyable trails of high standards for (cont'd on p. 5)

Are you interested in volunteering your time in support of the development of the Dominion Atlantic Railway – Annapolis County as part of the Trans Canada Trail network? (circle one)

We get letters...



“The track bed in one area is causing flooding.”

We hear from people all over the province, and they tell us how trails are affecting them. Here are their concerns.

(Names and identifying markers are omitted)

“Nice to know that maybe our voices will be heard over the noise. If one complains or phones the RCMP, then we could face some form of retribution.”

“It is downright amazing and sickening the way \$800,000. has been found to build a ‘grade separa-

tion’ for ATVs at the In-gramport roundabout while Active Living/Transportation continues to get little more than lip service.”

“Sadly, with the emphasis on developing multi-use trails in my province in recent years, it has become

(cont'd on pg. 3)

next to impossible to escape the "noise of engines" outside of our two meager national parks."

"Annapolis Valley Trails [Society] just walked in and started operating. They had one meeting and we went but all it was, was promotional. Most important questions were dodged. When we inquired about policing it was left to the land owner reporting the problems to the RCMP."

"I totally support your efforts and thank you for them."

"We have stopped walking the trail because of the ATVs and snowmobiles."



"You can't walk or cycle on that rough gravel they use. It's only good for the machines. And then they churn it up and make it even worse."

In reference to Quebec's "Route Verte", the cycling success story of the country:

"It was that strategy coupled with their risk analysis of what kinds of users could co-use the trail which led to the ban of powered wheeled vehicles. At the municipal level arrangements were made between atv clubs and Landowners to ensure the atv crowd had an alternative to the publicly funded active-living trail."

"Some excellent articles. Now, if everyone in the Province would/could read it."

"Participants on a walking trail and motorized vehicles do not mix.... We would like to have the peace and quiet a non-motorized trail would give us."

"Congratulations on your wonderful work."

"I agree with your vision but see no where do you mention the use of snowmobiles on these trails."

From *Greenways Nova Scotia* 's Strategic Plan: there is a better way.

The importance of Physical Activity and the role of off-road trails

Physical activity is known to be protective of health, and inactivity is a contributing factor to obesity and the resulting diseases associat-

ed with obesity: diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, and depression. The corollary is that increased physical activity improves physical and mental health and helps to decrease chronic disease and its economic burden on our health

care system. Off-road trails specifically designated for Active Transportation contribute substantially to an increase in physical activity. The city of Oakville, Ontario noted that a 5% increase in community walkability (cont'd on pg 10)

Off-road trails specifically designated for Active Transportation contribute substantially to an increase in physical activity.

Quebec's "Green Way-the "Route Verte"

Route Verte Signage:

"Trail reserved for cyclists
and pedestrians."



La Route Verte in Quebec consists of 4,000 kilometres of interconnected trails province-wide. In 2000, Route Verte cyclists spent a total of \$95.4 million. It is estimated that as of 2010 that amount has increased to around \$134 million. This spending in Quebec generates over \$38 million in government revenues and helps support 2,861 jobs.



This trail on the "Route Verte" is well-used by walkers and cyclists for daily activity, connects with the entire provincial route, and runs beside a well-known tourist attraction.



Debunking....From pg. 2

Smartrisk, the Canadian agency entrusted to conduct epidemiology studies of injury and death in Canada estimated the economic burden in Canada of snowmobiling and ATVing combined to be around \$380million a year.

economic burden in Canada of snowmobiling and ATVing combined to be around \$380million a year. Added to these costs are the yet to be quantified environmental and social costs including the devaluing of homes near OHV trails.

The York scientists claimed that their field measurements of OHV users proved that driving an ATV created enough physical activity to provide health benefits and met the basic guidelines

for physical activity prescription referenced by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and Health Canada. Furthermore they claimed that if users substantially increased their riding time that would meet basic guidelines for improving health. The Nova Scotia team has systematically examined these published findings, and found many errors in the way they used and interpreted their data. They significantly note

that the York study neglected to take into account the safety risks

The Nova Scotia team suggests that the actions and claims of the OHV Industry supported by the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness have parallels with that of the tobacco industry. When the tobacco industry came under fire from the health professions, they continued to claim that smoking was healthy, against (continued on pg. 6)

(Who's Who– cont'd from p. 2)

active and healthy lifestyles, environmental care, the preservation of green space and the encouragement of Active Transportation. Trails not registered as TCT before 2010 must achieve TCT standard, meaning no ATV's and dirt bikes, to have the TCT brand. This applies to the "Western Loop" in the valley, the southwest, and the south shore. TCT now says this loop is "not mandated" as part of TCT, even though communities originally agreed to allow ATV's because they were told this was the only way to "build the TCT" and get funding. (see pg. 1). Trails that are "grandfathered" (built before 2010) will prove a challenge for TCT if it tries to undo their "reluctant" permission which is seen by OHVers as an acquired right. The inch that became a mile resulted in 90% of the province's developed railbeds allowing ATV's, the government itself promoting the idea. TCT is in a tough spot. Given the deep sense of betrayal in many communities, this may threaten the national credibility of the TCT itself.

The Nova Scotia Trails Federation (provincial)

The Trans Canada Trail does not itself build trails, but "partners" with provincial and territorial organizations. In Nova Scotia, the TCT Partner is the Nova Scotia Trails Federation, incorporated in 1989, when Nova Scotia passed legislation to provide a trails framework compatible with the Rails to Trails conservation movement. E.G. Regulations of The Trails Act (8 a and b) state that " No person shall operate an off-highway vehicle on a trail (a) unless the off-highway vehicle is used in an area designated by the Minister for the use of such a vehicle; or (b) unless the off-highway vehicle is required to perform a service, enforcement or maintenance function on a trail." Rails to Trails policy also reflects non-motorized use.

NSTF is an umbrella group for all types of trail users. At some point it began to promote motorized trails, including ATV's and snowmobiles, on the abandoned rail corridors in residential areas, the very places expected to be part of the Trans Canada Trail. The "Nova Scotia difference" was

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a stark departure from Rails to Trails elsewhere in the world, where "Shared Use" generally referred to sharing between walkers and cyclists, and rail trails were for green, human-powered uses in summer.

NSTF "partnered" with TCT by creating a **TCT Committee** which did not reflect TCT culture and values, but those of NSTF: motorized rail beds as the norm. Words like "inclusion" to appeal to our better nature obscured the reality of what was being proposed.

Favours ATV Users on Trail (November, 1999)

"The chairman of the Trans-Canada Trails Committee for Nova Scotia said recently her organization favours all-inclusive use of recreation trails located along abandoned railway corridors. Vera Stone of Halifax said, 'We feel strongly, everybody needs to be included.' She made the comments at a time when the Bridgewater town council is deciding whether motorized vehicles such as all terrain vehicles (ATVs) and snowmobiles should be allowed on

Bridgewater's Centennial Trail. Commenting on the Centennial Trail that runs from York Street to the foot of Silver's Hill, across the former rail bridge, Ms. Stone said it 'is a terrific trail.'" [Bridgewater Bulletin, 9 November 1999]

The TCT maps published by NSTF always included the "western loop", it seems now without TCT's blessing. A major function of NSTF is to provide affordable insurance for trail groups. Having walkers and cyclists use OHV trails lowers rates.

S.A.N.S. (Snowmobile Association of Nova Scotia) (provincial)

The Snowmobile Association of Nova Scotia was incorporated as a non-profit in 1976 . It claims 21 member clubs. SANS was quick off the mark after the province's rail beds were abandoned. The railway companies wanted to be free of the liability of the untended, empty corridors. The snowmobilers wanted to ride on them, so in the interim, they could secure seasonal leases from the railway companies. Snowmobile clubs stepped up to the plate to do trail work such as installing culverts and brushing. Their efforts were considerable, but as their concern was their access and not rail bed preservation, the original grade and structure were sometimes lost, creating drainage

(cont'd on pg. 7)

Debunking....from pg. 4

mounting evidence to the contrary. In the same way, an otherwise conservative trauma research community has repeatedly shown that ATVing is unsafe at any age and at any speed, yet the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness continues to claim, in the absence of defensible evidence, that OHVing is part of healthy outdoor lifestyle. Given that “there is clear evidence that these pursuits are very dangerous recreational activities with serious health,

environmental, social and economic consequences thus any small fitness improvements are far outweighed by the associated morbidity, mortality and health care costs, recommending the use of these in rural populations for ‘substantial population health effects and health care savings’ is clearly not warranted.” The Nova Scotia team argues instead that garaging their OHVs and going for a brisk walk is far better for their health and safety.

The Nova Scotia team includes Glyn Bissix, PhD. Acting Dean of Professional Studies and Rene Murphy, PhD. Director of the School of Recreation Management and Kinesiology at Acadia University, Dr. Keith MacCormick, MD. Emergency Physician, Annapolis Valley Regional Hospital and Dr. Chris Milburn, MD. Emergency Physician, Cape Breton Regional Hospital. Their articles appeared in the Oxford University Press *Journal of Health Promotion International* and the Springer Press *European Journal of Applied Physiology*.

What is “Community”?

1. People who live there?..

Members of the following communities have contacted us specifically to report hardships caused by the motorized use of rail beds running through. They most often refer to noise, emissions, fear of retaliation, lack of enforcement, and sleep disturbance. They also note the unsuitability of the trails for walking or cycling. The list keeps growing. Keep writing.

St. Peter’s	Lawrencetown	Round Hill
Inverness	Chester	Smith’s Cove
Coldbrook(snow-mobiles)	Summerville	St. Margaret’s Bay
Middleton	Paradise	Chezzetcook
Nictaux	Centrelea	
Brickton	Tupperville	

2. Trail Users ?...

Government bureaucrats dedicated to protecting a policy of motorizing the rail beds like to call these the “Broader community” or “Community of Interest”. The “Community Development Model” often claimed as our “Nova Scotia difference” appears to refer to this definition. This “broader community” seen as primary stakeholders includes

Recreational ATV users	OHV manufacturers
Snowmobile users	OHV clubs , organizations and lobbyists related to these (see “Who’s Who” pg. 1)
Dirt Bike users	
Jeep users	

Greenways Nova Scotia believes that the primary benefit of quiet green corridors is a healthier community. With trails designated as Greenways, citizens of all ages and abilities will enjoy the “commons” of public trails near their homes, resulting in a richer and more cohesive social fabric.

Who's Who– cont'd from p. 5.

issues and difficult cycling paths. S.A.N.S. maps indicate a very large trail network in N.S., most off the beaten path.

S.A.N.S. receives six-figure core funding from permit fees and from the government of Nova Scotia, enough to allow for several paid executive and administrative staff to further the interests of the organization.

All-Terrain Vehicle Association of Nova Scotia (ATV Nova Scotia or ATVANS) (provincial)

ATVANS was incorporated in 1997. Like SANS, ATVANS carved the province into “zones”, arguing for their entitlement to the rail beds within their club’s area. Numbers of their staff /members have attended many community consultations about proposed trails, always arguing forcefully against local residents’ concerns and for ATV inclusion, with a promise of “managing” trails.

ATVANS’ budget ballooned under the previous government, with a six-figure amount, funding at least four salaried positions: Executive Director, Safety management, Trails Co-ordinator, and an administrative office with staff in Sydney. Many thousands of dollars also went for expense allowances for “Zone directors” and executive members, along with money for media and public relations, promotional material, and monies from the OHV infrastructure fund to be funnelled to local ATV clubs involved in trail building. The present government has somewhat reduced the amount it grants to ATVANS. While OHV interests often claim that the “\$40.00 license fee” has paid for most trail construction in the province, at its height those funds came to approximately \$800,000 per year, a drop in the trailbuilding bucket. A large amount of this it would seem has gone to sustaining the organization itself, while taxpayers have borne the majority of the cost of the motorized trails.

ATVANS or ATV Nova Scotia has had repeated internal struggles and executive turnover. The present Executive Director was Minister of Health Promotion and Protection

in the previous government under whose regime ATVANS flourished. The new Executive Director’s remuneration was bumped up, well past the previous \$60,000, presumably in recognition of his valuable government contacts.

National Trails Coalition (national)

The National Trails Coalition was formed in 2007. A founding purpose of NTC is the “fostering” of more “multiple-use trail development”. NTC is made up of three organizations: the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO), the Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV), and the Canadian Trails Federation (CTF). One of the first actions of the NTC was to hire Pathways Group, a Toronto firm set up to lobby governments. Pathways’ website features seven team members with extensive ties to past and present governments, both the Ontario government and the government of Canada. NTC was rewarded with 25 million dollars to spend on trail-building projects- most of them motorized trails as indicated on their website- through the federal Stimulus spending program of 2009.

The new Executive Director’s remuneration was bumped up, well past the previous \$60,000, presumably in recognition of his valuable government contacts.

The founding chair of NTC was the same person who was chair of the Nova Scotia Trails Federation. (see p. 2). When he became the new NTC chair, his vacant position at NSTF was shuffled to another powerful advocate for “Shared Use” trails, a recently retired senior bureaucrat from Health Promotion and Protection, (Provincial co-ordinator of outdoor recreation for Sport and Recreation Division), who engineered HPP’s plan to purchase “kiddie ATV’s” with public funds. The public was outraged at the concept of spending taxpayers’ money in this way and the plan was scrapped.

Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) (national)

CCSO identifies itself as the national body for organized snowmobiling in Canada. The CCSO/CCOM serves as the umbrella group for all the snowmobile associations and federations in Canada. The CCSO/CCOM wishes to connect snowmobile trail systems across Canada. Board membership is made up of two representatives from each

(cont'd on pg. 8)

Who's Who (cont'd from pg. 7)

of the 12 provincial and territorial associations, with one vote per province/territory.

Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV) (national)

This is the national organization that speaks for and is funded by the Off-Highway Vehicle manufacturing and sales industry. It gathers sales statistics, funds studies sympathetic to OHV's, and does public relations. It publicizes OHV shows and advocates and promotes OHV use as a healthy activity.

Canadian Trails Federation (national)

This is a national trails organization which has one representative per province or territory. Nova Scotia's representative is NSTF. Trails BC, the provincial partner in British Columbia for TCT, withdrew from this national organization because it felt that support for non-motorized users was being diminished.

"It is very unfortunate that the TCT brand continues to be associated with Phase II developments. The activities of the Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition are not supported by the TCT and, therefore, should not be referred to as TCT." (Correspondence from TCT)

Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition (Kings, Annapolis, and Digby Counties)

AVTC is unique in the province. A mini-version of the National Trails Coalition, AVTC was incorporated as a non-profit agency in 2007, the same year as NTC. It began as an arm of Nova Scotia's Health Promotion and Protection department (HPP), to "support and guide" five trail groups trying to develop the abandoned Dominion Atlantic Railway corridor as a single motorized route from Kentville to Yarmouth . (*Digby Courier*, September 21/07) The founding chair of AVTC was the valley Co-ordinator of Outdoor Recreation , HPP. The registered office was the regional office of

HPP (Registry of Joint Stocks), a direct vertical link to the provincial co-ordinator of Outdoor Recreation in HPP. AVTC had the connections needed to keep ATV's and snowmobiles riding through communities as a priority .

"The Coalition" as AVTC was known , organized itself around a full-time position for a Trails Co-ordinator, one of their directors who at that time was chiefly known for unsuccessfully suing the town of Annapolis Royal on behalf of ATV riders when the town chose to prohibit Off-highway vehicles in town. (Having won their case, Annapolis Royal built a Greenway network for their residents, an ongoing community benefit for them.) The bulk of the salary for the Trails Co-ordinator came directly from HPP, with smaller contributions of \$5000. each from Digby, Kings, and Annapolis Counties. More recently, AVTC has reformed its image, with new bits of funding from the vari-

ous towns in the valley (2010) , presenting itself as a kind of in-house trailbuilding resource for different kinds of trails. 2011 found them still claiming to represent TCT. (Kings County Trails Committee meeting). At last May's TCT committee meeting of the Nova Scotia Trails Federation, the AVTC Trails Co-ordinator reported. The minutes of that meeting (May 14, 2011, Holiday Inn, Truro) state that they were "looking at marketing opportunities for 21 sections in the valley that TCT will open this summer. There will be a large scale branding initiative for the 200 kms of trail." The "openings" took place on October 26

and were photo-ops at sections that had been opened months or years ago. TCT in correspondence with us has said, "It is very unfortunate that the TCT brand continues to be associated with Phase II developments. The activities of the Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition are not supported by the TCT and, therefore, should not be referred to as TCT." (Feb 1, 2012).

The Government of Nova Scotia

The Health portfolio responsible for trails has been variously named Sport and Recreation, Health Promotion and Protection, and at present, Health and Wellness. The government of Nova Scotia, through its Health Promotion (cont'd on pg. 9)

Who's Who (cont'd from pg. 8)

Department has supported and funded motorized trails for many years. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of public money from the B-Fit (health infrastructure) program went toward building them. HPP has funded studies hoping to advance such trails- \$100,000 to study the condition of the three Trestle bridges being torn down now [ed.possibly DNR funds], \$10,000 to partner with the COHVC to create a now-discredited study at York university claiming that ATV riding is healthy, a portion of the \$30,000 study to put ATV's on Liverpool's Trestle Trail. Outdoor Recreation has been the lead agency of the Health Ministry pushing these trails. (see p. 8)

The Minister of Health and Wellness has declined at least three requests to meet with us.

The Department of Natural Resources

Nova Scotia owns the rail beds of most of the province, with the exception of some urban areas, through DNR. DNR gives final authorization for uses of the rail beds. They have created a special OHV division, and have on their staff a significant number of senior bureaucrats dedicated to the vision of "Shared Use " (motorized) trails. In 2006 DNR created a special OHV advisory committee . The idea of balanced oversight, with representatives from municipalities, doctors, environmentalists, and landowners soon vanished as these quickly saw that OHV interests controlled the committee. Two new interdepartmental trails and Active Transportation committees were created this year. The effectiveness of these committees in creating any kind of balance or advancing Greenways trail development has yet to be seen.

The Federal Government

Sometimes funds for motorized trails are matched or enhanced with Federal monies as well, as when ACOA granted the Clare trail group \$402,135 to transform an abandoned railway line in Clare into a section of the "Trans Canada Trail," as it was announced at the time. See pg. 7 for reference to the NTC's role in the 25 million dollars of Stimulus funds spent largely on motorized trails .

Political Leaders

While we have met with a number of MLA's who are sympathetic with the principle of Greenways and see the logic of their benefit, not one of the three leaders, including the Premier, has been willing to move toward changing the motorized-by-default policy which violates both the Trails Act and the Off-Highway Vehicles Act. We hope that this will change, especially in the light of the recommendation by the Expert Panel on Parks and Trails (DNR Strategic Review). This panel noted the problems created by "Shared Use (motorized) trails and stated that the policy needs re-visiting. This is the second time an expert or voluntary panel has advised the government to revisit its OHV policies which are working for no one it seems. It is time for the government to follow the advice of those who know best.

"Shared Use" and the Rest of the Country

"Shared Use" motorized trails do not work. Nova Scotia has the dubious distinction of actually promoting them as a good thing. MASS LBP, an independent consulting firm , has surveyed trail stakeholders across the country and has concluded that "Despite a few positive examples, on balance most respondents felt that shared use of trails, whether between skiers and snowmobilers or hikers and ATVers, was not working." TCT found the same thing in their considerable research as they prepared their Greenway vision. Had they surveyed adjacent landowners they would have had an even stronger result.

The provincial partners of TCT in both BC and New Brunswick are struggling with the aggressive defiance and political lobbying of ATV riders and organizations, who do not hesitate to make unauthorized use of Greenways, destroying them. New Brunswick has lost 300 kilometres of Greenway because of the surface destruction caused by this unauthorized ATV use. These are not known as "Shared Use" trails , but as vandalized trails. Newfoundland's trails are also in poor shape because they have permitted ATV use. Greenways Nova Scotia stays in touch with these provincial groups. (cont'd on p. 11)

A better way...(cont'd from p. 3)

could add as much as 32 minutes more per day per person of physical activity, and a .23% reduction in body mass index.

Walkability and safe cycling routes are known to contribute to population health, and are the most affordable and accessible health benefits available for Nova Scotians. A mapping project of NSPACTS in conjunction with the Applied Geomatics Research Group of the Nova Scotia Community College indicates that up to 40% of civic numbers in rural areas in Nova Scotia are within 1 kilometre of the abandoned rail corridors which have been motorized by government policy. The Can Mac Economics Study in 2004 noted a large interest in the abandoned rail corridor as a place of walking and cycling, with 85% asking for restrictions on ATV and motorized use of the rail bed.

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute notes that municipalities with fewer than 500 residents are more likely to have trails which allow off-highway vehicles. The larger the community, the more likely to have non-motorized Active Transportation trails, but the smaller the community, the more likely trails are to be motorized. As the rail beds in Nova Scotia were specifically designed to run through rural communities, most with fewer than 500 residents, nearly 90% of the developed rail bed in the province has been motorized.

Van Blarcom and Janmaat found that allowing ATV's on a trail reduces the number of Active Transportation users by approximately 50%. In their study of one 28 kilometre section of rail trail alone, this would result in a loss of between 2.2 million to 3.8 million in health cost benefits .

What kind of trails do Nova Scotians really want?

Those who live in the communities through which the railroads used to run consistently report a desire for non-motorized trails, whether those communities are urban, suburban, or rural. In Glace Bay, in 2009, the Cape Breton Regional Municipality surveyed all landowners within 60 metres of the DEVCO rail bed, a potential Active Transportation trail. 76% of those within 20 metres of the rail bed, 68.8% of those between 2—40 metres, and 70.8% did not want ATV use of the trail.

Snowmobiling was opposed to a lesser degree, but still not supported by the majority. In other words, the people who actually live near the railbeds, those most likely to use them, are asking for a non-motorized Active Transportation trail.

As indicated above, in Annapolis County, 85% wanted restrictions on ATV's on the rail bed. In Paradise, 76% of adjacent homeowners stated that they believed motorized use of the trail would be deleterious to their health, their homes, and their environment. In Smith's Cove, a citizen's petition found that 95% of landowners did not wish motorized traffic. In Cambridge/Coldbrook, 85% said the same. In St. Margaret's Bay, 86% of homeowners did not want ATV's on the trail, but 90% wanted to be able to walk on it. The Town of Annapolis Royal found that 82.4% of residents wanted their non-motorized rail trail to remain so. Gardiner Pinfold in A Survey of Hiking Trail Users, 1999, found that 75% of respondents did not wish to share trails with ATV's.

And why should they have them?

Creating a culture of physical activity in communities near the rail beds of the province will include non-motorized Greenways and will create considerable savings in health costs as citizens use the trails for recreation and activity. Further, it is known that Active Transportation infrastructure- trail corridors and bike lanes-is cost effective, as cycling continues to grow as a means of daily trips to work, visit, or shop.

Active Transportation trails are also huge economic drivers in the tourism industry. (see Route Verte, pg. 4 for some hard data) "Cycle tourists "stay longer, spend more and participate in more activities than non-cycle tourists. They do no harm to the environment and generally strive to have little impact on it as they travel.

Cyclists are frequent users of Bed and Breakfast lodging. In rural Nova Scotia, these are a major part of our tourism industry, and are in need of a revitalized interest from tourists, whose numbers have fallen so greatly in the past few decades.

Property Values

Statistical analysis of property values in both Canada and the United States indicate that the closer a home is to a Greenway, (cont'd on p. 12)

Who's Who (cont'd from pg. 9)

The Community Development model

This is offered by NSTF as the special way we do things in Nova Scotia - a policy to be defended against Greenways. We have found no such model anywhere in N.S. law or Rails to Trails policy, or in the experience of communities. The "community meetings" to decide on trail use were promotional and dominated by OHV club members, including ATVANS staff who travelled the province pressing for OHV access. The word "community" in this case appears to refer to the "broader community" (p.6) consisting of OHV interests and OHV users seeking trail access through communities.

Communities and landowners

Those struggling with the impact of motorized trails on their lives have little recourse. Complaints seem to be deflected to the very individuals who have been dedicated to the motorized model of trail building. Motorized trails bring Off-highway vehicles near people's homes, through their properties, and on rural streets/roads and sidewalks on their way through to the trails in communities. Not only this, but the people who live in these communities have lost the health and social benefits of green and healthy trails.

So there is the story: OHV interests are backed by government policy, millions of dollars, paid executive staff, senior bureaucrats in two ministries, and OHV organizations funded by their industry and our government. There is no comparable funding or structure for Active Transportation Greenways in Nova Scotia, and none for communities (local residents) seeking to build green community trails for the benefit of their population.

Greenways Nova Scotia (Nova Scotians Promoting Active Transportation on Community Trails or NSPACTS)

This is us. We are the only provincial organization which advocates for and builds Greenways in Nova Scotia. We are comprised entirely of community volunteers, trail builders, experts in health, traumatic injury, recreation, financial services, community development. We are also the only organization pertaining to trails in Nova Scotia which speaks for actual communities.

Creating **Greenway** Nova Scotia
A NSPACTS Initiative



We're on the Web

<http://nspacts.ca/>

To request a copy of our Strategic Plan with full documentation and action plan, , or to write to us, contact us at admin@nspacts.ca

A Better Way (cont'd from pg. 10)

the more its valuation. A study by the Government of Canada using 1991 prices in three communities found that the closer to a greenway, the more valuable a home, providing an increase of 8% in tax revenue to municipalities from these neighbourhoods. A home 30 feet from a Greenway was prized.

Conversely, recent tax appeals by residents of St. Margaret's Bay and Smith's Cove determined that homeowners adjacent to the motorized rail beds there were subject to public nuisance and they received tax rebates of at least 5%.

Attracting business

Community infrastructure is known to be a factor in a business decision to locate in a given area. A Greenway is a valuable asset which attracts not only home buyers but those seeking to locate business. As well, the businesses associated with hiking and cycling tourism include restaurants, bicycle sales and repair, souvenir and map shops, and outdoor outfitters.

So when are we going?



Motorized trails cost 3-4 times as much as Active Transportation trails to maintain. Note damage starting to show on this trail.

Reducing spending

Greenways do not have to be built to the same width as the present motorized trails. Bridges, many of which are necessary on Nova Scotia's rail beds, cost considerably less for Greenways as they are narrower. Similarly, less surface material is required. Maintenance costs of a non-motorized trail are one-third to one-quarter that of a motorized trail.

Greenways are usually not used at night, while a recurring problem with motorized trails is unlawful or nuisance activity late at night. The darkened trails are inaccessible to police vehicles, which makes catching offenders virtually impossible. With a reduction in these incidents of late-night noise, drunk driving, vandalism, property damage, and damage to farmers' fields including theft, there is a reduction in the cost of law enforcement and emergency medical service.

There is so much to be gained. And so little to lose.

That's up to you, and to us, and to all Nova Scotians.