

# BGTN

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES • BRUCE-GREY TRAILS NETWORK

## Trail Building Tool Kit

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### 8: TRAIL INVENTORY



ALL PHOTOS EXCEPT BIKE BY ALLISON KENNEDY



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# Trail Inventory

**A** trail inventory is the simplest approach to assessing a proposed trail route. It should be conducted in person after the trail route is mapped out and after permission to access the trail is granted from the trail organization/manager.

## 8.1 INVENTORY TIPS

- Study detailed maps before heading out on the trail; pinpoint existing features such as culverts or environmentally sensitive areas. Your regional trail group or municipality should be able to supply you with updated maps. Topographical maps are also sufficient.
- Ask a local landowner or community member who knows the area well to assist in the inventory. He/she may be able to point out hidden areas of interest or trouble spots.
- Take along copies of maps for each person participating in the inventory. Information can be added directly to the maps and a master copy can be made later that includes all gathered information.
- Divide the trail into sections so that the entire area is adequately covered.
- Take along a camera or video recorder to record any 'trouble spots' or areas of interest.
- Inventory the trail in the spring/fall or summer/winter if it is an all-season trail or during what will be considered the busiest seasons. For example, a trail may look dry and overgrown in the summer and wet and clear during the winter, resulting in two very different inventories.
- A GPS unit is great if available to record features.
- Along the way, record all ideas about how to improve areas so they can be discussed at a later date.

## 8.2 WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Topography –Terrain, hills, flat, wetlands
- Natural features, scenic views - wetlands, rivers, cliffs, attractive areas
- Slope and embankments – grade percentage, potential hazards
- Natural buffer zones – shrubs, bush, inclines
- Roadway crossings and intersections – potential hazards, alternate routes to avoid these
- Private lane crossing - driveways
- Access crossings/cattle crossings – agricultural field and tractor crossings
- Creek and wetland crossings – bridges, culverts, low-lying areas
- Adjacent land uses -agricultural, residential, industrial, towns
- Location and condition of fences, bridges, culverts



- Condition of trail surface - stone dust, natural, gravel, asphalt
- Historical features-historical buildings, places of interest
- Vegetation and wildlife - native species, rare species, sightings
- Evidence of vandalism, garbage
- Environmental concerns, sensitive areas - wetlands, breeding grounds
- Possible trouble spots such as private lands, dangerous areas
- Potential economic opportunities (food, fuel, lodging)
- Potential linkages to towns, villages and other trails
- Potential staging areas and access points – area for parking, amenities

### **Recommended Reading**

*Bruce Grey Trails Network Master Plan Design Brief*. ESG International, 2000

*Trail Planning Manual-Trans Canada Trail*. Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, 1996.

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