



Canada's Footpath

Spring-Summer | Issue 3
Celebrating Over 50 Years



The east side of the Rocky
Mountains from Beauvais Lake
Provincial Park

Trail Prints

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hike Canada En Marche, founded in 1971, has been dedicated to establishing a foot trail across Canada for over 50 years bringing a broad spectrum of benefits to Canadians through hiking, snowshoeing and backpacking. The building and promotion of this national trail system includes both public and private partnerships working towards a connected footpath.

Hike Canada En Marche's key initiatives focus on:

- assisting in preservation of our heritage of natural and historic places
- encouraging fitness and healthy outdoor exercise through hiking and walking-related recreational activities. Working with other health promoting organizations to encourage walking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- promoting environmental awareness of our natural surroundings and appreciation for wildlife protection.
- advancing the National Hiking Trail as a national icon to schools, tourism agencies and information media.
- providing tourism opportunities to attract Canadians and international visitors and benefit regional and local economies.
- encouraging the growth of regional and local hiking trails as part of the national hiking trail system.
- strengthening national ties by physical linkage of hiking trail systems and cooperation among supporters of the National Hiking Trail.

Hike Canada En Marche's membership includes representation from provincial hiking organizations or other related sectors. The Board of Directors for Hike Canada over the past year saw an opportunity to increase the level of engagement to move some key projects forward. These initiatives included:

1. Re-design and launch of a new website.

CONT' PRESIDENT MESSAGE

2. Release of new a video highlighting the National Trail System
3. The development of a Strategic Plan
4. Continued work on developing an interactive and downloadable National Hiking Trail map.
5. Review and adopted National Trail Designation criteria.
6. Review of Memorandum of Understanding Agreements
7. Expanded Board of Directors and representation from coast to coast.
8. Continued work on raising awareness of organization and online presence.



Goat River, British Columbia

Hike Canada En Marche encourages all our readers to reach out and make contact if your organization has news items, special announcements, advocacy support needs or other areas of inter-provincial assistance. Hope to see you on the trails this year!

HIKE CANADA LAUNCHES VIDEO AND NEW WEBSITE

Hike Canada En Marche would like to extend a special thank you to Paul Cameron Productions for his time and talents in creating an exceptional video that showcases all the great trail experiences across Canada. View the new video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Etjk6NkoGw>.

Hike Canada En Marche is excited to announce the launch of a new website design that provides a better enhanced experience with resources, news, video, and mapping to come. Check it out at <http://nationalhikingtrail.org/>

MEET THE BOARD HIKE CANADA EN MARCHE

British Columbia	Patrick Harrison, President Hike BC Roy Howard, Director Fraser Headwaters Alliance	Nova Scotia	Claire MacNeil, Director Hike Nova Scotia Michelle Young, Treasurer Hike Nova Scotia
Alberta	Alistair DesMoulins, Director Alberta Hiking Association	Prince Edward Island	Catherine Schaap, Director Island Trails
Ontario	David Francis, Director Hike Ontario Jacquie Van Dyke, Director	New Brunswick	Alonzo Leger, Director Fundy Hiking Trail Assoc.
Quebec	Martin Stampfli, Director Sentier National Quebec Real Martel, Director Sentier National Quebec	Manitoba	Jaime Manness, Director Hike Manitoba
		Saskatchewan	Trevor Finlay, Director
		Yukon	Sue Gleason, Director Peter Long, Director
Newfoundland	Adrian Tanner, Director East Coast Trail Association Kevin Robinson, Director		

How to Contact HCEM:

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National Hiking Trail
Sentier National

LEAVE NO TRACE

Hike Canada En Marche strongly advocates the principles of Leave No Trace. The Seven Principles of Leave No Trace provide an easily understood framework of minimum impact practices for anyone visiting the outdoors. Although Leave No Trace has its roots in backcountry settings, the Principles have been adapted so that they can be applied anywhere — from remote wilderness areas, to local parks and even in your own backyard. They also apply to almost every recreational activity. Each Principle covers a specific topic and provides detailed information for minimizing impacts.

The Seven Principles are well established and widely known, but they are not static. The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics continually examines, evaluates and reshapes the Principles. The Center's Education Department conducts research — including publishing scholarly articles in independent journals — to ensure that the Principles are up to date with the latest insights from biologists, land managers and other leaders in outdoor education.



Walton Gorge, New Brunswick

www.leavenotrace.ca

START YOUR JOURNEY FROM COAST TO COAST



East Coast Trail, NL



Hanson's Creek, Manitoba



Board Walk PEI



Mile's Canyon Trail
Yukon



Chilkoot Trail



Victoria Falls Rapids, Ontario

Ganaraska Hiking Trail Wild Wonders

Wilderness hiking, two hours outside Toronto? Absolutely! In Central Ontario, the National Hiking Trail follows the Wilderness Section, a portion of the 550 km Ganaraska Hiking Trail. Over 70 km of the Ganaraska Wilderness Section of the Trail traverses the rugged Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Provincial Park (QEII). QEII is a roadless bounty of wetlands and granitoid rock barrens, and one of the largest and least disturbed natural areas in Central Ontario. Over 30,000 hectares, it is host to significant animal and plant species, including the Five-Lined Skink (Ontario's only lizard), Spotted Turtle, Eastern Hognose Snake, New England and Hayden's Sedge, and eight species of carnivorous

plant. The many rock ridges and barrens separate small lakes, streams, and rivers. Beaver dams abound and periodically alter the topography, contributing to the rugged and challenging hiking trails.

The Ganaraska Wilderness Club (GWC), the provincial park staff, and the park itself provide countless opportunities for education and recreation. Phil Careless, the park's biologist, can often be seen educating visitors about the flora and fauna close to the hiking trail. GWC members are eagerly waiting for the access road to the Victoria Falls trail head to open on May 15 after the spring flooding to install the seasonal foot crossing near the mouth of Montgomery Creek. Until then, hikers can either wade across the creek or cross on the fallen tree (aka, the "Four Brothers") that spans the creek, about 250 metres upstream from the private bridge.

You can explore QEII throughout the year independently or as part of a group led by an experienced leader from the GWC. GWC led hikes include: Guided day hikes, multi-day backpacking trips, off-trail exploratory hikes, and maintenance hikes. All explore the forests, rock barrens, vistas, and viewpoints overlooking the highlands at the east end of the park. Duration and length of each hike is dependent on trail and weather conditions. GWC hike leaders are affectionately referred to as "Wild Things", in part for their respect and appreciation of the beauty and ruggedness of the Wilderness Section/QEII. Come out and join the growing number of hikers to QEII! Visiting hikers need to be prepared to use appropriate route finding and safety practices as interior travel beyond access points require complex navigation. Cellular reception is sparse and cannot be relied upon. As long as visitors are well prepared, they can hike, snowshoe, and backcountry camp on designated sites. GWC hiking events can be found at [facebook.com/ganaraskawildernessclub](https://www.facebook.com/ganaraskawildernessclub)



Ganaraska Hiking Trail



HIKE NOVA SCOTIA

A beautiful National Hiking Trail of Canada is the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail located in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia! It is part of the Inverness County Trail System. This trail is approximately 92 kms. Here we have featured a small section of the trail (22 kms). The Ceilidh Coastal Trail section of the National Hiking Trail runs Canso Canal to Chisholm's Brook, Long Point; you access the Troy Station Trailhead at 0621276 E 5060816 N — 0617365 E 5074458 N



Claire MacNeil, National Hiking Trail Director, enjoys walking, snowshoeing and cross country skiing on this trail. Her friends, Darine, Douaa and Yasmine enjoys taking Claire's dog, Dee, for a hike. They have been in Canada for three months and this is their first time on this trail. It is wonderful to have these new Canadians hiking on the National Hiking Trail.



Foret-Ouareau
Photo-Louis-Coutu
Tourisme-Lanaudiere-Quebec

Coordination of the National Hiking Trail Sentier National au Québec

Overview

2020/2021 has been a very special year for the managers of the Sentier National due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many challenges had to be overcome to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of trails, continuance of upgrade work as well as the reception and the safety of practitioners. Rando Québec was there to support all of the actors and to continue to energize the SNQ project despite the demanding health and social context.

Coordination et development

Constant monitoring was carried out throughout the year with all SNQ managers in order to respond to the challenges they face and to support them operationally, strategically and politically. Numerous regional meetings have been organized in order to work on improving the safety and quality of the hiker experience, via the SNQ committees created by Rando Québec and coordinated by the outdoor development agents of the URLS.

In addition, RQ ensures a presence and involvement in many regional coordination committees or committees reporting to MRCs to defend and develop the SNQ project, while seeking new support, political and financial.



Belvedere-chute-Falls-Lookout-Photo-Claude-Fortin

Coordination of the National Hiking Trail Sentier National au Québec

Some examples of topics covered during these meetings:

- Regional emergency measure plans and the safety of hikers
- Promotion and enhancement of hiking and long-distance hiking routes
- The challenges of over-use of the environment and

challenges of new practitioners

- The creation of regional hiking networks in conjunction with the SNQ
- The place of the SNQ within Sépaq (Québec parc system)
- The accommodation and service offer on the Sentier National route
- The organization and harmonization of information relating to the National Trail

All of these discussions allowed the community to take stock of their situation and to plan the short and medium term orientations concerning the SNQ in their region. This also made it possible to reinforce the idea that we have of the future of the SNQ, by working on the mythification of the existing route while aiming to move towards a network of national trails of Quebec, which would allow the further development of other existing routes in the territory, which are not currently integrated into the national project.

GRA project in Québec

We continue to develop the vision of a GR Quebec project.

GRs (Grande Randonnée) are hiking trails in France that are usually hiked over several days or weeks. The first GR in America, GRA1 is the Québec section of the IAT (International Appalachian Trail) in the Gaspésie region. Discussions with the French hiking federation are going well and we work together to allow a field visit of potential Quebec routes as soon as the health situation allows.

We hope to be able to homologate a GRA2 by the end of 2022.

Support for PSSPA (QC Financial aid program for trails and sites) funding requests

Rando Québec actively supports SNQ managers in the preparation of financial requests relating to the upgrading and improvement of the National Trail. We are here to answer their questions regarding the admissibility of a project, the directions taken and the budgets requested. In addition, we analyze each file at the request of the MEQ (Responsible QC ministry), in order to define the level of priority for each of them and their relevance in the SNQ project.



White Horse Walks

GREETINGS FROM THE YUKON

In the Yukon to have a true national hiking trail, a route through the north across or north–south will be a challenge; the Yukon does deliver outdoor adventure trail experiences routed in its deep history in trade routes while working and living the land.

Looking north to the Yukon, there are a few resources to reference when planning your hiking excursions:

- whitehorsecwalks.com - promote walking, with a strong focus on Whitehorse with over 700 km of trails in Whitehorse. One could easily spend lots of time there, even in the winter. Check out Google Earth based maps such as <http://www.whitehorsecwalks.com/docs/2018/2018WalkingInWhitehorse.pdf>
- Yukonhiking.ca is a good look at hikes mostly outside of Whitehorse.
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/happyhikersyukon> is a large(4.7k) mixed hiking resource on hike possibilities
- <https://pburbridge.exposure.co> exploring the Yukon and surrounding areas by whatever means necessary.
- <https://canoltrail.wordpress.com/> Canol Heritage Trail, a guide for hikers, bikepackers and other adventurers. A glimpse into the NWT.

But the real reality is people have lived in parts of the north for thousands of years and used routes for their seasonal rounds and for trade.

- <https://www.heritageyukon.ca/sites/default/files/TheKohluxMap.pdf> - a look at the making a relatively recent map
- <https://native-land.ca> - a modern look at traditional lands
- <https://yukon.ca/en/your-government/about-yukon/find-yukon-first-nations-traditional-territory-map-data>

CROSS CANADA TRAIL EXPERIENCES



ALBERTA NEWS



Larches and fall colours from near
Great Divide Trail km 41

The Alberta Hiking Association (AHA) has been active advocating for the interests of hikers in the province. Following the outrage expressed by many Albertans at the Government's abandonment and partial reinstatement of the 1976 Coal Policy, the Alberta Government formed a committee to solicit Albertans' views on what a new coal policy should look like. The coal exploration done prior to the partial reinstatement damaged several areas popular with hikers in SW Alberta in particular. The AHA wrote to the Coal Policy Committee detailing its concerns that the Eastern slopes of the Rockies were important for recreation, wildlife and for the water supply for all the prairie provinces. The letter also stated that the "AHA believes that coal mining is fundamentally incompatible with the environmental and aesthetic values which make the

Eastern Slopes so special and allowing coal mining in these areas will have unacceptable net-negative economic and social impacts through damage to recreation and tourism values." The chair of the Coal committee reported in September that Albertans want a broad policy that balances economic, environmental and recreational needs over an entire landscape not just the how and where of mining. The committee was only tasked with the latter. The report was supposed to have been released to the public at the end of 2021. We are still waiting!

The AHA was also in discussions with the provincial government regarding their proposed Trails Act. While the AHA supports the designation of trails and the importance of them to Albertans, the legislation seemed to allow for the delegation of authority for some trails to partners. The legislation was vague with no mention of how partnerships would be funded and too much was left to minister's discretion. It is now law. AHA will continue to work with Government on specifics.

Meanwhile, most hikers assume that their hiking places will remain for ever and continued to hike in the fall then turned to winter activities. All the province endured a long spell of cold weather in the second half of December which kept most people at home. Hiking is considered by many to be a summer activity and skiing is considered to be the main winter activity. In the past few years snowshoeing has increased greatly in popularity and many summer hikers are now snowshoeing or hiking in the winter. This is due to the availability of good quality snowshoes and traction devices that can be strapped on hiking boots. Hiking has increased in popularity particularly in the last 2 years and this applies in the winter as well. The AHA facebook page had 5000 members 2 years ago. Now there are 45,000. Many people are snowshoeing up ridges and/or searching out frozen waterfalls in the Rockies and it is clear that some have no knowledge of avalanche danger. There are luckily other members of the page that try to let people know that they need to learn about safety in avalanche terrain before doing some of these trips in the winter. If you check out the AHA facebook page you can read about some of these activities and see some really fine photos.



Skiing back north on Cameron Lake.
GDT km 26.5 at far end