



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

New Research Finds That the Trans Canada Trail Plays a Pivotal Role in Bolstering the Environment, Economy and Health of Canadians

Annual economic impact of Canada's national trail is \$23.1 billion

Montreal, September 19, 2023 – A groundbreaking new study, “The Benefits of Connecting Canadians,” finds that the Trans Canada Trail (the Trail) plays a pivotal role in bolstering Canada's environmental resilience and economic development, and the health and well-being of Canadians.

The pioneering study – a first of its kind in Canada – was commissioned by Trans Canada Trail and conducted by Econsult Solutions, a Philadelphia-based firm that specializes in economic consulting and analytical services for businesses, governments, and non-profit organizations in a wide range of industries.

The study captures the overall benefits of Canada's national trail – the world's longest, at 28,000 km – and features local case studies from across the country. Data sources include national survey findings, trail use data and information from Statistics Canada. These data sets reveal that the Trans Canada Trail's impact in Canada is extensive, as captured in three broad categories:

- 1. Environmental resilience:** Trail networks – particularly those in urban settings – help to preserve green spaces and provide access to natural environments. The benefits for climate and nature that are supported by the ecosystems protected by the Trans Canada Trail (including flood mitigation, carbon sequestration and extreme weather protection, among others) amount to an estimated \$82 million annually.
- 2. Economic development and tourism:** The Trans Canada Trail is an asset for recreation and transportation, an iconic tourism destination, and an opportunity for people to connect with uniquely Canadian and Indigenous experiences. Every year, Trans Canada Trail users spend \$13 billion on accommodation, meals, services and other goods at businesses near the Trail. This economic activity supports more than 221,000 jobs. The combined effect of direct spending, job creation and downstream economic activity culminates in an estimated annual economic impact of \$23.1 billion.
- 3. Health and well-being:** With more than 2.6 million physically active trail users annually, the Trans Canada Trail contributes significantly to Canadians' physical and mental health. Leveraging projected per-person healthcare costs, the study estimates that using the Trail for physical activity results in \$1.7 billion in annual healthcare savings, and \$62.6 million in mental healthcare savings.

“The release of this study coincides with escalating trail use in Canada and around the world, as well as the growing popularity of trails as a tourism destination,” says Eleanor McMahon, President & CEO of Trans Canada Trail. “Quantifying the benefits of Canada’s national trail, and identifying it as a tool for economic growth, public health enhancement, disease prevention and environmental protection provides critical information to trail groups, partners and funders, all of whom contribute to the viability of trail networks in Canada,” said Eleanor McMahon.

These findings reinforce the Trans Canada Trail’s inherent value to people, communities and the planet. The study’s insights will inform Trans Canada Trail’s ongoing priorities including work to build the capacity of local trail groups, and decisions related to trail development, climate readiness and tourism strategies.

“In an era marked by climate emergencies, significant economic challenges and stress on the healthcare system, this study underscores the importance of trails and the significant contribution they make to our national and local economies – and to quality of life in Canada,” says McMahon.

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Interviews are available upon request (in English and French) with Eleanor McMahon, President & CEO of Trans Canada Trail.

Resources

- Read the report: [The Benefits of Connecting Canadians](#)
- Explore the interactive [Trans Canada Trail map](#)
- Download the [Trans Canada Trail Media Kit](#)
- For images and b-roll of the Trans Canada Trail, visit the [photo gallery](#) and [video gallery](#)

Media contact

Allison Leonard, Director of Communications, Trans Canada Trail

aleonard@tctrail.ca

1-800-465-3636 ext: 4388

About Trans Canada Trail

The Trans Canada Trail (the Trail) is the longest recreational trail in the world, spanning over 28,000 kilometres on land and water. Linking three oceans – the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic – the Trail connects 15,000 rural, urban and Indigenous communities across every province and territory. It is a ribbon that connects Canada’s diverse landscapes, seasons, people and experiences, and fosters unity, collaboration and connectedness. Trans Canada Trail is a registered charity and stewards this national trail in collaboration with local Trail partners. With funding from the Government of Canada through Parks Canada, and investments from all levels of government and generous donors, Trans Canada Trail is the largest investor in trail infrastructure projects in Canada, supporting improvements, growth and enhancements for generations to come. tctrail.ca

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