



Our Commitment to **INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION**

2024-2025 REPORT



Prepared April 2025



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About this Report

Trans Canada Trail is honoured to partner with Indigenous communities on various projects, initiatives and activities. This report provides an update, organized by Call to Action, on the collaborative work undertaken by Trans Canada Trail between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025.

- ✓ An investment of over \$525,000 was made in community Trail projects to support Indigenous communities. These projects were undertaken in all provinces and two territories; details can be found under *Language and Culture, Sport and Reconciliation*, and *Youth Programs*.
- ✓ All support provided to Indigenous communities for youth-related activities, including the Youth Employment Program and Trail Crew Training, can be found on [page 22](#) under *Youth Programs*.
- ✓ Other sections include *Professional Development and Training, Business and Reconciliation*, and *Media and Reconciliation*, covering learning activities, operations and communications, respectively.
- ✓ Our Commitment to Indigenous Reconciliation is unwavering — a commitment that drives our actions year after year. To read our full Commitment, please see [here](#).

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Indigenous Advisory Committee members for your invaluable feedback, guidance and expertise:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| ▶ George Lafond, Chair and
Trans Canada Trail Board Member (BC) | ▶ Catherine Langille (ON) |
| ▶ Kevin Eshkawkogan (ON) | ▶ Richard Peter (BC) |
| ▶ Donald Hanson (NS) | ▶ Lois Phillips (NWT) |
| ▶ Andrea Lafond (SK) | ▶ Rob Thomas (NL) |
| | ▶ Ramzey Zallum (AB) |

Land Acknowledgement

The recognition of territory shows respect for Indigenous peoples. It testifies to their presence, both historical and current, and ensures a sharing of knowledge between current and future generations.

This recognition and respect are crucial to the establishment and maintenance of healthy and reciprocal relationships, and contributes to reconciliation, a process to which Trans Canada Trail is committed. While acknowledging traditional territory is highly desirable, it is only the beginning of the process that is needed to cultivate strong relations with First Nation, Inuit and Métis Peoples.

Trans Canada Trail acknowledges that:

the Trans Canada Trail is situated on the traditional territory of First Nation, Inuit and Métis Peoples from coast to coast to coast. Trans Canada Trail also acknowledges that the Trail includes land and water routes that were created and used, both historically and presently, by Indigenous peoples as seasonal travel and trade routes. We support community efforts to sustain a relationship with Indigenous peoples based on respect, dignity, trust and cooperation, in the process of advancing truth and reconciliation.

To demonstrate our commitment:



- We support Indigenous leadership as they work on Trail development projects on traditional territories.
- We encourage Trail groups to develop partnerships with local Indigenous communities, and to recognize and honour First Nation, Inuit and Métis Peoples by acknowledging the traditional territories through which the Trail passes.
- We have established an Indigenous Advisory Committee comprised of individuals from Indigenous communities to provide guidance and advice to Trans Canada Trail staff as it relates to Indigenous communities and culture.

Language and Culture

Call to Action 14:

We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

14 (i)

Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.

14 (iv)

The preservation, revitalization and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.

14 (v)

Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.

Actions Completed



Sunset Beach Interpretive Panel (SK)

Development and installation of interpretive signage that focuses on local Indigenous history, storytelling, and information on the flora, fauna, bird species and aquatic habitat.



City of Guelph – Decolonizing Place Narratives (ON)

This art installation is a collaboration between the City of Guelph (Parks and Recreation: Trails, Guelph Museums, and Culture) and the Decolonizing Place Narratives Research Collective, co-led by Indigenous knowledge keepers, artists, scholars and residents.



Decolonizing Place Narratives art installation

Scan to listen to
the song, Ziigwaan
(Spring), by the
Manitou Mkwā Singers



Lennox Island First Nation (PEI)

Benches and picnic tables were installed, along with interpretive signage describing the Seven Sacred Teachings.



Bench installation,
Lennox Island First
Nation, PEI

Station Uapishka (QC)

This project involved the development of a rest area and lookouts, along with interpretive panels that cover traditional Innu traps, with concept development through interviews with Innu Elders.

Echo Valley – Indigenous Art Installation (SK)

Installation of three steel art panels, designed by Treaty 4 artist Harley Sinclair, incorporating the culture of First Nations in Echo Valley.



Indigenous art
installation, Echo
Valley, SK

Coin Rendezvous Corner Trailhead for Crow Wing Trail (MB)

The project included construction of a trailhead including rest area, green space, electric charging station, and interpretive storyboard panels depicting local Francophone and Métis history of the area.

Bragg Creek Kiosk (AB)

A trail kiosk was created and includes interpretive information on Indigenous history, trail etiquette and wildlife. A panel about Chief Tom Snow, the Chief after whom the trail is named, can also be found in the kiosk. The completed panels are in English and Nakoda.

Tuktoyaktuk (NWT)

The project included the painting of the Trans Canada Trail monument and design of signage artwork.

Wagmatcook Trail Branding, Art and Signage Design (NS)

Signage added to this trail includes Indigenous art and traditional information about sweetgrass and medicines as well as community history and folklore.

Bealach Brèagha with Mi'kmaq Translation (NS)

New signs were added to the trail with Mi'kmaq language.

Town of Truro – Cobequid Trail with Mi'kmaq Translation (NS)

New signs were added to the trail with Mi'kmaq language.

 Trailhead Design and Consultation (ON)

Hamilton Region Conservation Authority worked with the local Indigenous community to design a trailhead sign featuring Anishinaabemowin, with the intention to enhance environmental education and strengthen their relationship.

 Boom Camp Trail Interpretive and Trailhead (ON)

Updated over-30-year-old trail signage that was only in English to panels that showcase English, French and Anishinaabemowin.

 Canadore College/Nipissing University (ON)

New Trans Canada Trail signage with Nipissing and Odawa languages was designed and installed along the trail.

 Whitecap Dakota (SK)

A signage project that was managed by Whitecap Dakota First Nation. The completed panel includes some Dakota text.

 Meeting Hub and Interpretative Signage (MB)

Signage was installed at the Hub Kiosk and other locations. The project was completed in collaboration with Turtle Lodge in Sagkeeng First Nation and the completed panels included Anishinaabe values of respect towards the land.

Actions Underway

 Splatsin First Nation Interpretive Trail (BC)

Funds are being used to begin the planning and design work for a culturally focused interpretive trail in Mosquito Park.

 Winnipeg: Inwewin Agwajiing (MB)

This project entails turning a storage container into a learning opportunity — a multimedia, audiovisual experience. The goal of this project is to create a didactic, talking, audio-enhanced, physical sculptural mural, with audio in Anishinaabemowin and English. It will be irresistible to touch and explore.

 Link Pathway (AB)

This project supports the signage components of Link Path Phase 1, which is about 4 km from Coaldale to Hwy 512. It includes Trans Canada Trail wayfinding signage and custom directional signs with the Blackfoot language included.

 Forest of Hope – Potlotek (NS)

This project will result in the installation of Trans Canada Trail signage in the Mi'kmaq language, along the Bras d'Or Lake Water Route.

Sport and Reconciliation

Call to Action 89:

We call upon the federal government to amend the Physical Activity and Sport Act to support reconciliation by ensuring that policies to promote physical activity as a fundamental element of health and well-being, reduce barriers to sports participation, increase the pursuit of excellence in sport, and build capacity in the Canadian sport system are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples.

Call to Action 90:

We call upon the federal government to ensure that national sports policies, programs and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples.

Actions Completed

The following groups were provided with resources and funding to conduct stewardship activities along their trails to repair, upgrade and preserve them for community use:

- Samson Cree Nation (AB)
- Dzawada’enuxw First Nation (BC)
- N’Quatqua First Nation (BC)
- Penelakut Tribe (BC)
- Sauteau First Nation (BC)
- Skidegate Band (BC)
- Skowkale, Aitchelitz, Yakweakwioose First Nations (BC)
- Stswecem’c Xget’tem First Nation (BC)
- Elmastukwek First Nation (NL)
- Penwaaq L’nu’k (NL)
- Wekoqmaq First Nation (NS)
- North Slave Metis Alliance (NWT)
- Point Grondine Reserve (ON)
- Wikwemikoong Development Commission (ON)
- Whitecap Dakota Nation (SK)

Other supported trail projects that were completed include:



N’Quatqua First Nation (BC)

Support allowed for the re-opening of two trails that are commonly used by community members. These trails had previously been closed due to their condition.



Splatsin (BC)

A new loop of trails for the enjoyment of all community members was completed.



Splatsin, BC

Chawathil First Nation – Trail Planning (BC)

Funds were used to create a preliminary design for a network of trails following creeks within the community.

Sambaa K'e First Nation (NWT)

This project increased community access to traditional trails used for traditional harvesting and recreation.

Kahnawà:ke (QC)

A new community trail was created, and included the installation of several benches and picnic tables.

Potlotek First Nation (NS)

Development of a new trail system through the Forest of Hope, a forest in the community dedicated to raising awareness about suicide prevention and promoting healing while contributing to a healthy, sustainable forest.

With the support and funding from Trans Canada Trail, Potlotek First Nation has been able to expand upon an existing trail in our community. A trail that goes far beyond recreation. For us, it is about connection and healing.

The trail isn't just a path through the woods; it's a pathway to self-discovery.

Veronica Bernard,
Potlotek First Nation

In addition to the completed trail projects, several First Nations joined the Trans Canada Trail network:

Sentier Nepisiguit Mi'gmaq Trail (NB)

This trail runs parallel to the Nepisquit River in northern New Brunswick, reaching Nepisiguit Protected Area and Mount Carleton Provincial Park.



Sentier Nepisiguit
Mi'gmaq Trail, NB

Potlotek First Nation, Forest of Hope Trail (NS)

The addition of 1.2 km of greenway multi-use trail. The Forest of Hope Trail is in the heart of Unama'ki (Cape Breton) in Potlotek First Nation. The trail offers an immersive experience, with intentional spaces for reflection, benches to be in nature, art to observe, and places for healing and spiritual renewal.

Benoits Cove First Nation (NL)

Registration of East Blow Me Down Trail leading from the Indigenous community of Benoits Cove to the Blow Me Down Ophiolite Massif. This will provide recreation opportunities with incredible sights for community members and the increasing number of tourists to the community.



East Blow Me Down Trail, NL

Beardy's & Okemasis' Cree Nation (SK)

The Pêmiska Trail goes through Duck Lake and the Beardy's & Okemasis' community.



Pêmiska Trail, SK

Actions Underway

Pêmiska Tourism (SK)

The funds will be used to support the ongoing upkeep of the designated Trans Canada Trail section of this trail, ensuring it remains safe, accessible and enjoyable for all users.

Inuvik Accessible Trail Upgrades (NWT)

This initiative involves upgrading the trail infrastructure to meet accessibility standards, allowing individuals of all abilities to experience and enjoy the trail system.

Tsal'alh First Nation (BC)

Community members are being employed to clear old trails so that they could be used for seasonal culture camps.

Skeetchestn Indian Band (BC)

Trail maintenance is being undertaken, including levelling out the walking surfaces, replacing lumber on walking ramps and installing handrails.

snpink'tn Rail Corridor (BC)

Trans Canada Trail is working with snpink'tn Indian Band to conduct a feasibility study on turning an existing abandoned rail corridor into a trail destination for community members and visitors.

 Dzawada'enuxw First Nation (BC)

The local community will create more trails and will be adding picnic tables and a large Adirondack chair.

 St. George's (NL)

Youth and volunteers are working to cut back and maintain an old trail previously used for gathering and ceremonies, but now not easily accessed due to overgrowth.

 Tsiigehtchic (NWT)

This project is a revitalization of an old trail to Swan Lake. Elders reminisce about visiting the lake in the early 1960s and before, and tell the youth that they hope they'll be able to visit this spot one day. The community is revitalizing the trail for the enjoyment of the community.

 Wahnapitae First Nation (ON)

Wahnapitae First Nation is revamping a trail surrounding Bass Lake.

 Beausoleil First Nation (ON)

Funds are being provided for trail maintenance and the purchase of benches to place along the trails.

 Village of Beauval (SK)

Trail maintenance is being conducted so that youth can use the trails in all seasons for learning safety, snaring, hunting, harvesting and more.

 Wanuskewin Path of the People Repairs (SK)

Repairs are being undertaken on the Trans Canada Trail section of the Meewasin Trail through Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

 Chawathil First Nation (BC)

This project is focused on safety and active transportation, to advance a section of multi-use pathway adjacent to the Chawathil First Nation and along Highway 7. A second project by Chawathil First Nation will create a preliminary design of a second section of the trail network within the community.

World Trails Conference



Performance at the conference



Panel: Trails, tourism and reconciliation

Delegates arrived in Ottawa on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which was considered in the development of content, programming and communication. Governor General Mary Simon provided a letter of recognition to the conference, recognizing the event and Indigenous communities' relationship to trails in Canada and around the world.

Orange shirt pins, designed by Indigenous artists from across Canada, were given to all delegates. Patrick Hunter, a two-spirit Ojibwe painter, was commissioned to create a painting illustrating the conference theme — this was reproduced as gifts for delegates and speakers.

Elder Vincent Kicknosway opened the conference with welcome remarks and territory acknowledgement. Space was provided for smudging at the conference, as well as resources directing attendees to local events for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

A keynote panel and breakout sessions focused on trails, tourism and reconciliation. Speakers included Kevin Eshkawkogan, President & CEO, Indigenous Tourism Ontario; Kylie Ruwhiu-Karawana, Managing Director, TRC Tourism; Kevin Seesequasis, Director of Community & Tourism Development, Beardsley's & Okemasis' Cree Nation.

The conference gala featured fiddling, dance and song by three young Indigenous artists (Aiden Wrigly, Feryn Karahkwiiiohhstha King, Theland Kicknosway).

Bursaries were provided to six Indigenous delegates (five youth and a group leader), providing the full cost of registration, food, transportation and accommodation at the conference.

Youth Programs

Call to Action 66:

We call upon the federal government to establish multi-year funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation, and establish a national network to share information and best practices.

Actions Completed

 First Journey Trails (BC)

Indigenous youth were hired for trail construction, maintenance, education and conservation.

 Trails BC (BC)

Several Indigenous youth were hired to engage in trail planning, construction, maintenance, education and consultation, as well as in Indigenous engagement activities.

 snpink'tn (Penticton Indian Band) (BC)

Several Indigenous youth were hired to engage in trail construction, maintenance, communications and Indigenous relations.

 N'Quatqua (BC)

Seven Indigenous youth participated in Trans Canada Trail's Trail Crew Training program.

Wikwemikong Development Commission (ON)

Youth were hired to perform several tasks to upgrade the trail.



Wikwemikong
Development
Commission group

Saskatchewan Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport (SK)

Indigenous youth were hired for trail maintenance and conservation.

Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services (SK)

Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services (RT/SIS), in partnership with the Province of Saskatchewan, provided Trans Canada Trail’s Trail Crew Training to individuals accessing their services.

2024 Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP)

Trail Crew Training was provided to 120 Indigenous youth, in partnership with the Outland Youth Employment Program.

Carcross/Tagish (YT)

Several youths were hired for trail construction and maintenance of a trail system in the area, as well as dirt jump park development.



Trail construction
and maintenance

snpink'tn (BC)

The Moccasin Mile Trail is used by snpink'tn community members and the snpink'tn Cultural School. Planning, community engagement, youth program development and trail building were all undertaken with support from Trans Canada Trail.

Tsawwassen First Nation (BC)

Youth were hired to plan, design and install local First Nation art, signage and maps along the trail.

Actions Underway



Potlotek First Nation (NS)

Planning is underway to deliver Trans Canada Trail’s Trail Crew Training to students of the NSCC Environmental Technician Program and Potlotek community members. The training will be delivered to Potlotek High School students in the future.



Our partnership with Trans Canada Trail has been incredibly meaningful to OYEP and the Indigenous youth we serve. By supporting culturally relevant land-based learning and connection to trail systems, the partnership has helped foster pride, leadership and a strong sense of belonging among our participants. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to reconciliation through action and relationship-building.

Ceilidh Milligan,
OYEP National Manager



The National Youth Employment Program was a big help for Singletrack to Success (S2S) to provide summer employment for Carcross youth. This year we had more applicants than we had money for, and this program bridged the gap and allowed the crew to work longer in the season — at their request!

Perhaps most importantly, this program links these young people to the national trail community which makes them feel like they are part of something that extends beyond the small town of Carcross to the rest of Canada. This excitement translates to the work they do, which is appreciated by our community of trail users. In short, we are thrilled with the current direction of Trans Canada Trail and look forward to working with you in the future!

Derek Crowe,
Carcross/Tagish Limited Partnership

Professional Development and Training

Call to Action 57:

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism.

Actions

Between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, several Trans Canada Trail staff participated in training opportunities related to Indigenous history, culture and reconciliation.

Indigenous Canada (University of Alberta)

Explores key issues facing Indigenous peoples today from a historical and critical perspective.

Tackling Structural Racism (Native Studies, University of Alberta)

Grounded in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action, this micro-course introduces key anti-racism concepts that are applied to education, social services, policing and legal systems.



Business and Reconciliation

Call to Action 92:

We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources.

Actions

✔ Conference Attendance

International Indigenous Tourism Conference, organized by the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC)

✔ Hiring

Trans Canada Trail has advertised positions on Indigenous job websites, and we are in the process of re-evaluating how this is done to obtain more applications from First Nation, Métis and Inuit applicants. Among non-Indigenous applicants, we consider and value education and knowledge in colonization and reconciliation, and experience working with Indigenous communities. Consequently, many of our employees understand the impacts of colonization and the importance of advancing reconciliation.

✔ Indigenous Advisory Committee

A meeting was held to collect members' perspectives — representing Indigenous communities in Eastern, Central, Western and Northern Canada — and ideas for the World Trails Conference, as they pertain to respecting and recognizing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and the Indigenous youth attendees.

Media and Reconciliation

Call to Action 84 (iii):

Continuing to provide dedicated news coverage and online public information resources on issues of concern to Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, including the history and legacy of residential schools and the reconciliation process.

Actions

✔ Training and Teaching

The Trans Canada Trail Board participated in a Blanket exercise, facilitated by Teresa Joudrey of Santele’s Healing Circles.

✔ Board Meeting and Reception (Fall)

A Board reception was hosted at Dakota Dunes Resort on the Whitecap First Nation in Saskatchewan. Speakers included Betty Nippi-Albright, MLA for Saskatoon Centre, and Kevin Seesequasis, Director of Community & Tourism Development, Beady’s & Okemasis’ Cree Nation. Guest speaker Chief Darcy Bear of Whitecap First Nation met with Trans Canada Trail’s Board of Directors. Board members toured Wanuskewin Heritage Park, a cultural centre that works to advance the understanding and appreciation of the evolving cultures of the Northern Plains Indigenous Peoples.

✔ Board Reception (Spring)

Elder Edith Picard opened the reception with welcome remarks and territory acknowledgement. Board members took a guided tour of Musée Premières Nations and visited Onhwa’ Lumina, a night walk experience that celebrates Huron-Wendat culture.

✔ Media

Interviews and content were featured in several Indigenous community outlets, including Windspeaker Radio, Indigenous Lands and Resources, and Indigenous Business and Finance Today.



Trans Canada Trail Web Stories

- ✓ [How Trail Tourism and Indigenous Experiences Can Contribute to Reconciliation and a Resilient Trail Sector](#)
- ✓ [Marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- ✓ [A Newly Installed Art Installation in Echo Valley Provincial Park Showcases the Region's Indigenous Culture and Language](#)



News Stories

- ✓ [Recognizing Indigenous Languages Along the Trans Canada Trail](#)
- ✓ [Marking National Indigenous Peoples Day](#)



Storymap

- ✓ [Recognizing Indigenous Languages Along the Trans Canada Trail](#)



Trail Profiles

- ✓ [Trail profile: Pêmiska Trails and video for profile](#)
- ✓ [Trail profile: Bebamikawe Memorial Trail and video for profile](#)
- ✓ [Trail profile: Amisk Wacîw Mêskanaw Beaver Hill Road Trail and video for profile](#)



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