

Our Commitment to

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT

TRANS CANADA TRAIL
SENTIER TRANSCANADIEN ™/MC

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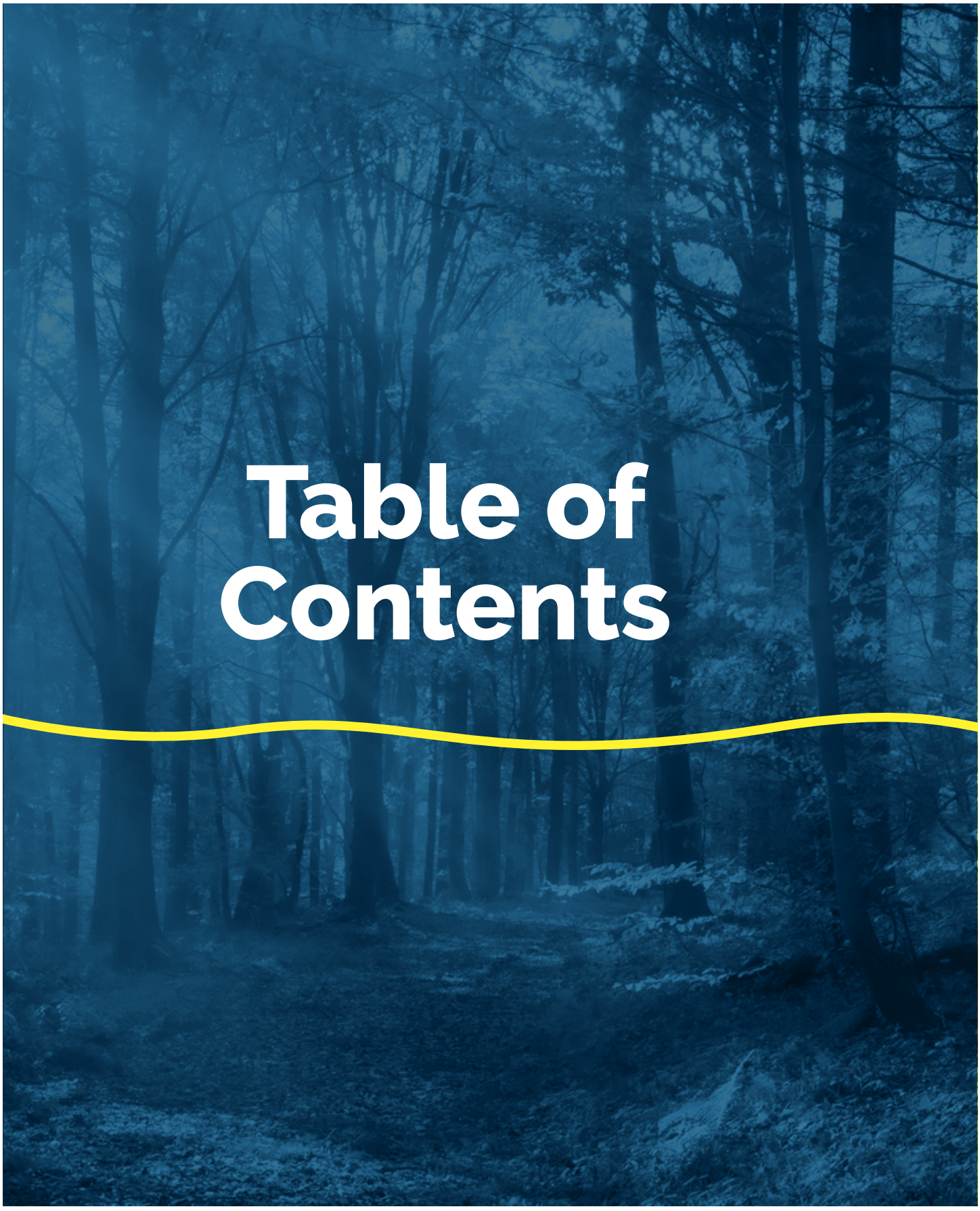


Table of Contents

About this Report 4

Acknowledgements 4

Land Acknowledgement 5

Language and Culture 6

Actions Completed 7

Actions Underway 10

Sport, Truth and Reconciliation 12

Actions Completed 13

Actions Underway 20

Youth Program 21

Actions Completed 22

Actions Underway 24

Professional Development and Training 25

Business Truth and Reconciliation 28

Media Truth and Reconciliation 30

About this Report

Trans Canada Trail is committed to building and sustaining relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities based on **respect, dignity, trust and cooperation**. Through partnerships, shared initiatives and ongoing dialogue, we continue to support trail initiatives in First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities. This report highlights the work carried out by Trans Canada Trail from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, that aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Approximately $530,439 was invested in community Trail projects led by or in partnership with Indigenous communities across almost every province and all territories. These initiatives supported a range of priorities and programs. This report also reflects ongoing efforts to strengthen our approach to truth and reconciliation, which includes learning from Indigenous partners, reimagining advisory structures and fostering relationships based on respect, accountability and learning.

Advancing Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation remains an ongoing responsibility and an integral part of Trans Canada Trail's work. This commitment continues to guide our actions, partnerships and priorities across the organization.

Our full Commitment can be found here.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the 2025-2026 Indigenous Advisory Committee members for your invaluable feedback, guidance and expertise.

- **George Lafond (BC),** Chair and Trans Canada Trail Board Member
- **Kevin Eshkawkogan (ON)**
- **Richard Peter (BC)**
- **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 truth and 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. It includes land and water routes that were created and used, both historically and presently, by Indigenous peoples. We are committed to sustaining relationships with Indigenous communities based on respect, dignity, trust and cooperation, and support community efforts to advance 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

Winnipeg Trails – Multilingual Trans Canada Trail Wayfinding Signage 2025 (MB)

Through this project, wayfinding and trail signage in the City of Winnipeg were updated in English, French, Cree, Ojibwe and Michif to improve the trail user experience.

City of Saint John – Mi'kmaq/ Wolastoqey Signage (NB)

The City of Saint John re-signed the route with custom wayfinding signage that included English, French, Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey.



Winnipeg – Inwewin Agwajiing (MB)

A multimedia "talking mural" was developed to support outdoor language learning in Anishinaabemowin and English, using drawings and audio recordings to share words related to movement, nature and outdoor exploration.

Blueberry Run Trail – Trans Canada Trail Wayfinding Signage with Indigenous Content (NS)

New trail entrance and wayfinding signs were installed at key locations along Blueberry Run Trail where signage was previously absent.

Actions Completed (cont.)

Peterborough GreenUP Association – GreenUP Ecology Park Planting Project (ON)

Native trees and shrubs were planted along the Trans Canada Trail through GreenUP Ecology Park, and educational signage was installed featuring Anishinaabemowin, developed in collaboration with Curve Lake First Nation.

Forest of Hope – Potlotek Trans Canada Trail Wayfinding Signage with Mi'kmaq Language (NS)

Trans Canada Trail signage was added along the Bras d'Or Lake Water Route, featuring the Trans Canada Trail logo in the Mi'kmaq language.



Link Pathway – Siksikáí'powahsin Signage (AB)

This project involved the installation of signage along Link Path Phase 1, including Trans Canada Trail wayfinding signs and custom directional signs featuring Siksikáí'powahsin, the Blackfoot language.

Woodstock Trans Canada Trail Association – Trail Care Event (NB)

A community Trail Care event was held featuring a medicine walk led by an Elder and Knowledge Keeper, along with family activities and volunteer trail maintenance to support community connection to the land and local history.

Actions Completed (cont.)

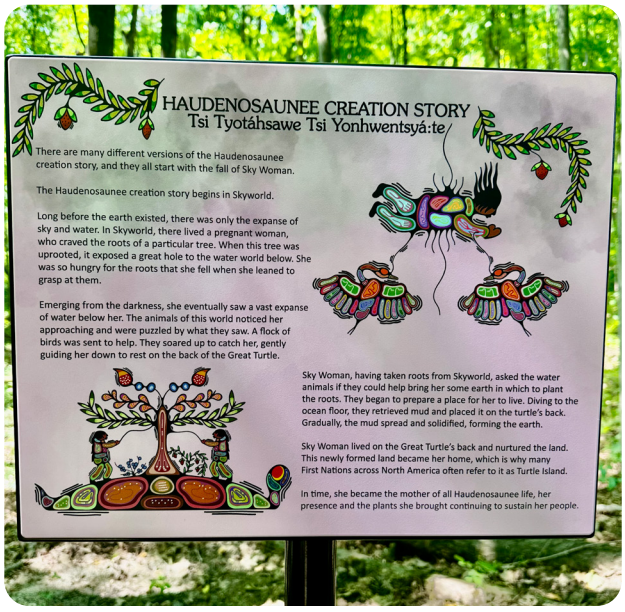


Falcon Lake East End Trailheads with Indigenous Interpretation (MB)

Indigenous consultation and storytelling work was undertaken to support trail naming, place-making and interpretation, including an Anishinaabe blessing ceremony and plans for a digital story map.

Dundas Valley Conservation Area – Basadinaa Interpretive Sign Panels (ON)

Indigenous interpretive signage was installed for the new Basadinaa Indigenous Trail to support visitation and strengthen partnerships with local Indigenous communities.





Actions Underway

Itijjagiaq Trail – Trans Canada Trail Wayfinding Signage with Inuit Languages (NU)

Cabin and Trans Canada Trail signage featuring Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English and French were installed along the Itijjagiaq Trail, with additional support provided for trail maintenance and signage installation.

Splatsin First Nation – Interpretive Trail Planning (BC)

Planning and design work began for a culturally focused interpretive trail in Mosquito Park, supporting cultural preservation, environmental stewardship and community engagement across generations.

Abegweit First Nation – Piecing Together Our History (PEI)

Elders' interviews will inform trail interpretation through QR codes, audio, signage, benches and other digital resources to share the community's history with visitors.

Friends of Laura Secord – GuideTags Digital Interpretation Platform (ON)

The GuideTags platform will be upgraded to support GPS-triggered multimedia storytelling along the Laura Secord Legacy Trail, Niagara Indigenous Heritage Trail and other trail routes.

Actions Underway

Potlotek First Nation – Digital Art and Storytelling Project (NS)

QR code digital art and storytelling will be installed along the trail to share local community stories and the history of the trail.

Amisk Wacîw Mêskanaw/Beaver Hill Road Trail Signage (AB)

Interpretive and wayfinding signage was developed for the trail following consultation with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, including a Cree trail name and wayfinding symbol reflecting the route's historic significance.

Bras d'Or Lakes – Grand Narrows Waterfront Signage (NS)

Trail signage was planned for the Grand Narrows Waterfront, including road signs, enhancements to existing signage and interpretive panels with local Indigenous information.







SPORT, TRUTH 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.

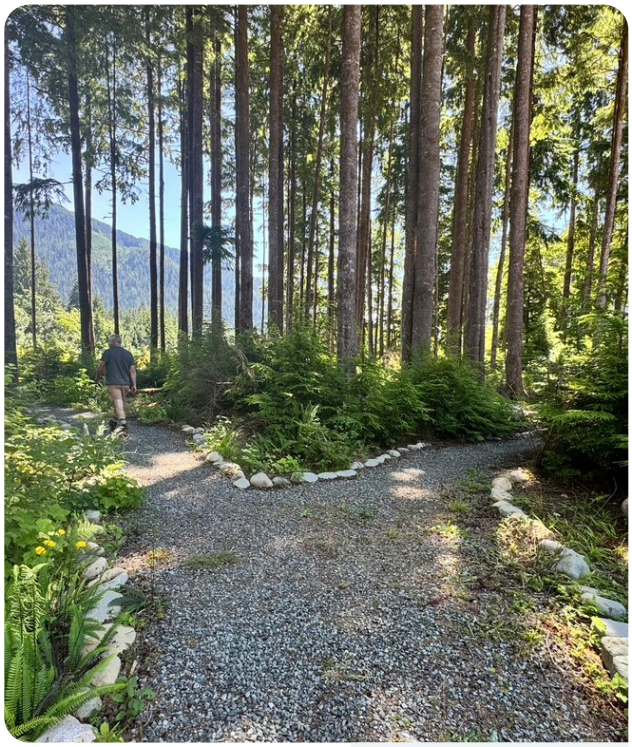
Call to Action 90

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

Actions Completed

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

- Beardy's & Okemasis' (SK)
- Chawathil First Nation (BC)
- Wahnapitae First Nation (ON)
- Tsal'alh First Nation (BC)
- Skeetchestn Indian Band (BC)
- Sambaa K'e First Nation (NWT)
- We'koqma'q First Nation (NS)
- Potlotek First Nation (NS)
- Yellow Quill First Nation (SK)
- Elmastukwek First Nation (NL)
- Ditidaht First Nation (BC)



Ditidaht First Nation



Skeetchestn Indian Band - Credit: Barbra Deneault



Yellow Quill First Nation - Credit: Randall Kehrig

Actions Completed (cont.)

Other supported trail projects that were completed include the following:

Bebamikawe Memorial Trail – Resurfacing and Boardwalk (ON)

Trail resurfacing and boardwalk installation were completed on sections of the Bebamikawe Memorial Trail to improve access through wet areas and support ongoing trail use.



St. George's – Falls Trail Restoration Planning (NL)

Planning work began for the restoration of the culturally significant Falls Trail, including trail flagging, permitting and administrative preparation to support future trail development.

Abegweit First Nation – Best Practices Learning Visit (PEI)

A learning visit to Fort Folly First Nation was supported to explore best practices from their cultural walks and sister trail partnership with Fundy National Park, with learnings to be shared with Abegweit First Nation and other Indigenous communities in the Trans Canada Trail network.

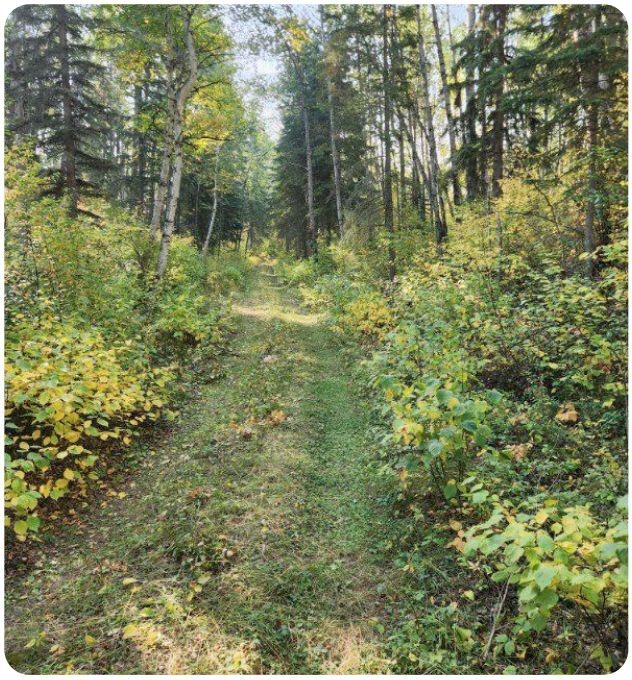
Skowkale, Aitchelitz and Yakweakwioose First Nations – Trail Maintenance and Accessibility (BC)

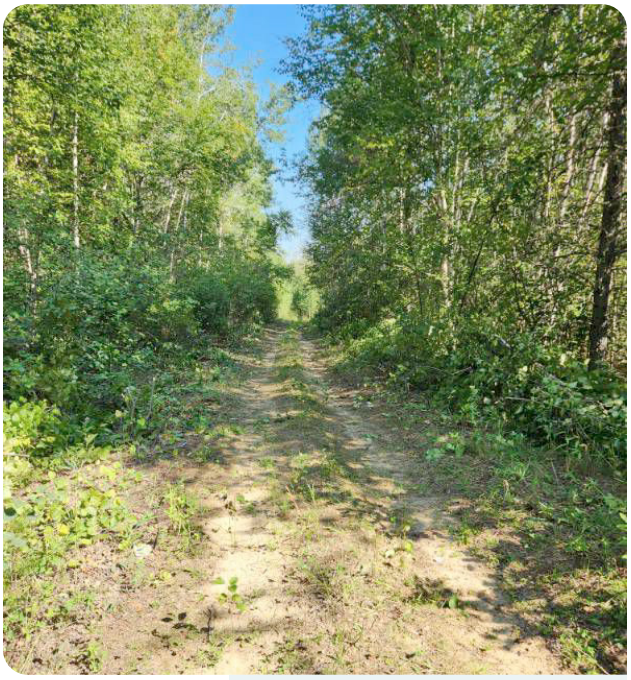
Trail maintenance and accessibility improvements were completed on the Ts'lhimexósem Trail and Sq'ewqéyl I:mex Xalh Walking Path, including upkeep, condition surveys and surface improvements to better support Elders and people with mobility challenges.

Actions Completed (cont.)

Village of Beauval – Sipisishk Cultural Activity Trails (SK)

Maintenance and restoration work was completed on the Sipisishk Cultural Activity Trails to support year-round land-based programming, cultural learning, harvesting and improved access for youth, Elders and community members.





Credit for both photos: David Roy

BC Marine Trails – First Nations Engagement, South Coast (BC)

First-year engagement work was undertaken to strengthen relationships with First Nations, support respectful marine recreation and prepare for Nation-led conversations about visitor use, data and trail planning across marine sites.

Actions Completed (cont.)

Wanuskewin Path of the People – Trail Repairs (SK)

Trail repairs were completed on the Wanuskewin trail network to improve surface conditions, support safe recreation and maintain access to culturally significant areas within the park.



Snpink'tn – Kettle Valley Rail Trail Assessment (BC)

An assessment was completed on Kettle Valley Rail Trail lands owned by the Penticton Indian Band to inform future public access, trail connectivity, cultural interpretation and trail development planning.

Pêmiska Tourism – Trail Care Events and Revitalization (SK)

Community trail events and seasonal revitalization activities were supported, including Elder honorariums, trail cleanup, landscaping and tipi restoration to create a welcoming space for gatherings and cultural activities.

S.A.Y. Lands – Riparian Restoration and Tree Planting (BC)

Trees and native shrubs were planted along the Little Chilliwack River, with invasive species removal and habitat restoration work completed to strengthen riparian health, improve habitat connectivity and support long-term climate resilience.

Actions Completed (cont.)

North Slave Métis Alliance – Old Fort Rae Trail Maintenance (NWT)

Trail clearing and maintenance were completed at Old Fort Rae, including work on the Beaver Rock Trail and surrounding access routes to improve safety, accessibility, wildfire preparedness and access to culturally significant areas.



Chawathil First Nation – Highway 7 IR4 Functional Design (BC)

Functional design work advanced for a priority multi-use pathway segment along Highway 7 to support safer walking and cycling connections for Chawathil First Nation community members.

Beardy's and Okemasis' Cree Nation – North Pasture Trail Revitalization (SK)

Trail cleanup, maintenance and site restoration were completed on the North Pasture multi-use trail network, supporting recreation, traditional activities, community gatherings and ongoing stewardship of the land.

Actions Completed (cont.)



Beausoleil First Nation – Douglas Lake Trail Maintenance (ON)

Within this project, trail maintenance was completed on the Douglas Lake Trail/Zyigaans Miikan, including repairs to benches and signage and the purchase of equipment to support ongoing upkeep of this recreational and culturally significant trail.

Chawathil First Nation – Community Trail Planning Program (BC)

Planning and preliminary design work advanced for a second creekside trail segment, supporting safer off-street walking and cycling connections within the community.

N'Quatqua First Nation – Lost Valley Trail Access (BC)

In this project, access was restored to the Lost Valley area by clearing overgrowth, improving community access to culturally important harvesting areas and supporting land-based knowledge-sharing.

Penwaaq L'nu'k – Joe-Mic's Walking Trail (NL)

Trail restoration work was completed on Joe-Mic's Walking Trail, including resurfacing, vegetation clearing, route extension and safety signage, with preparation underway for future bilingual English–Mi'kmaw interpretive signage.



Credit: Jasen Benwah

Actions Completed (cont.)

We'koqma'q First Nation – Trail Support Program (NS)

Trail enhancements included installing fencing and guardrails and adding gravel to cover exposed roots, reduce tripping hazards, and improve safety and accessibility.



Snpink'tn Rail Corridor Feasibility Study (BC)

A feasibility study was undertaken with snpink'tn to inform future trail planning while supporting community priorities and protection of the land.

Inuvik – Trail Upgrades (NWT)

Trail upgrades were completed, including bridge replacement, railing installation and minor gravel work to improve accessibility and support safer trail use.

Mary's Harbour – Husky Hill Hiking Trail Improvements (NL)

Trail improvements were completed on the Husky Hill Hiking Trail, including resurfacing wet areas, adding trail markers, constructing bridges and clearing brush to improve safety, accessibility and user experience.

In addition to the completed trail projects above, Chippewas of Rama First Nation added a new section of Trans Canada Trail.

Rama Rail Trail Extension (ON)

Trans Canada Trail was pleased to support work for a proposed 2-kilometre active transportation extension of the Rama Rail Trail, developed in connection with Chippewas of Rama First Nation, contributing to the expansion of the Trail network and local connectivity.

Actions Underway

Miawpukik First Nation – Walking Trail Extension (NL)

Trail extension work will be supported on the Miawpukik Walking Trail, including new rest areas, outdoor facilities and steps to improve access and user experience.

Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Renewal Project – Indigenous Communities (ON)

The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail renewal will be guided by the Williams Treaty Champions Group to support Indigenous storytelling, ceremonial spaces, access to traditional harvesting territories and Indigenous participation in trail governance.

Echo Valley Provincial Park – Trail Paving Phase One (SK)

Trail paving was supported as the first phase of a future All Persons Trail, which will connect accessible park features and include audio tour and sensory elements.

North Slave Métis Alliance – Trail Maintenance Phases 1–4 (NWT)

Trail assessments, vegetation clearing, historical trail reclamation and firebreak restoration will be completed to improve trail safety, access and wildfire preparedness.

YOUTH PROGRAM

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

Potlotek First Nation – Trail Crew Workshop (NS)

Planning was completed for Trail Crew Training, and a virtual youth-led workshop on health and trails was delivered to Potlotek summer students after wildfire-related trail closures prevented in-person delivery.

Grass Grows Rivers Flow Inc. – Youth Wage Subsidy (MB)

Youth employment supported trail maintenance, construction and planning activities to strengthen sustainable trail development.

We'koqmaq First Nation – Youth Wage Subsidy (NS)

Youth supported tourism, education, communications and event planning activities that promoted trail use, cultural engagement and inclusive storytelling.

TrailsBC – Youth Wage Subsidy (BC)

Youth engaged in Indigenous art and native plant learning, creating artwork for public display and building knowledge of traditional plants suitable for trail environments.

Beardy's and Okemasis' Cree Nation – Youth Wage Subsidy (SK)

Youth supported trail maintenance, education and conservation activities.

Potlotek First Nation – Youth Wage Subsidy (NS)

Youth supported seasonal trail maintenance, signage and small infrastructure improvements, including work on benches, picnic tables and other trail features, while contributing to respectful land-based stewardship.

Actions Completed (cont.)

Outland Youth Employment Program – Trail Week Programming

Trail Week programming was delivered at six camp locations, engaging Indigenous youth in hands-on trail work, environmental stewardship, land-based learning and green career pathway development.







Actions Completed (cont.)

Wikwemikong Tourism – Youth Wage Subsidy (ON)

Youth supported summer trail maintenance and improvements, received training in outdoor equipment, safety and navigation, and contributed to tourism and conservation through ongoing trail stewardship.

Thessalon First Nation – Youth Wage Subsidy (ON)

Youth supported trail cleaning and maintenance, created trail markers, identified potential trail routes and helped promote local trail use through communication and knowledge-sharing activities.

Carcross/Tagish – Trail Crew Workshop (YT)

Youth workers received training in sustainable and respectful trail building on Indigenous Traditional Territory, strengthening technical and soft skills through hands-on trail maintenance and construction activities.



Actions Underway

Tsawwassen First Nation Youth – Youth Wage Subsidy (BC)

Tsawwassen First Nation youth will support trail stewardship, community engagement and Indigenous knowledge-sharing, while building leadership skills and strengthening land-based connections with neighbouring Indigenous Nations.

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, 2025, and March 31, 2026, several Trans Canada Trail staff participated in training opportunities related to Indigenous history, culture and Truth and Reconciliation.

Indigenous Evaluation Summit (Carleton University, Ottawa)

A staff member attended the Indigenous Evaluation Summit in Ottawa this year. The summit provided an opportunity to learn from Indigenous evaluators, Knowledge Keepers and practitioners about culturally grounded approaches to evaluation, accountability, relationship-building, and truth and reconciliation.

Indigenous Procurement Event (Canadian Council for Indigenous Business)

One Trans Canada Trail staff member attended an Indigenous procurement event hosted by the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business. The event focused on economic truth and reconciliation, supplier diversity and strengthening relationships between Indigenous businesses, corporate organizations and government.

Aboriginal Worldviews and Education (University of Toronto)

To better inform our written content, our communications staff participated in this course so they can apply learnings to content development. Topics include historical, social, and political issues in Indigenous education; terminology; cultural, spiritual and philosophical themes in Indigenous worldviews; and how they can inform professional programs and practices, including but not limited to the field of education.

Actions (cont.)

International Indigenous Tourism Conference (IITC) (Edmonton)

Staff attended this this three-day event that brings together tourism professionals, industry and community leaders, entrepreneurs and partners from across Canada and around the world who are dedicated to promoting and celebrating the richness of Indigenous tourism.

Trans Canada Trail's Trail Leadership Team Meeting (Winnipeg)

The Trail leadership team participated in learning activities in Winnipeg, including a guided tour and discussion with Adrian Alphonso. The experience reinforced the importance of truth telling as a basis for truth and reconciliation, enriching staff understanding of how Indigenous histories, languages, stories and relationships to place should be integrated into trail planning, interpretation and engagement.



BUSINESS TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Calls 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

Strengthening Indigenous Guidance and Accountability

The Trans Canada Trail Board of Directors and senior management have worked together to renew and strengthen the role of the Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC). The renewed approach allows the IAC to collaborate more closely with senior management and provide guidance on truth and reconciliation commitments, strategic priorities, language and engagement, trail and land-related matters. This also enables a reciprocal way of working with Indigenous members and communities. New IAC members were recruited during the reporting period, focusing on lived experience, cultural knowledge, community connections, and expertise to ensure Indigenous voices continue to be integrated in programs, partnerships, and decision-making.

MEDIA TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Calls 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

Storytelling

Through storytelling, Trans Canada Trail works to elevate Indigenous voices, trail partners and experiences. Content published by Trans Canada Trail this year included:

- Exploring Whitehorse Along the Trans Canada Trail
- Exploring Montreal's Indigenous Heritage with Skawanoti
- Trail Crew Training in Manitoba
- How Potlotek's Forest of Hope is Building Community and Helping to Protect Mental Health
- Marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Pêmiska Trails: A Fascinating Journey Through History on the Trans Canada Trail
- Winter at Its Best With Pêmiska Tourism
- Trans Canada Trail at the International Indigenous Tourism Conference
- The Basadinaa Experience in the Dundas Valley Conservation Area on the Trans Canada Trail
- Cathy's Trans Canada East Blow Me Down: Awe-Inspiring Hiking

Social media

Social media content focused on celebrating Indigenous-led tourism, trail stewardship, community initiatives and important national days of recognition across the Trail network. These included posts related to:

- Caycuse Campground Connector Trail within Ditidaht First Nation Territory
- Trail Builders of Tomorrow Program
- The International Indigenous Tourism Conference
- Potlotek Forest of Hope Trail in Potlotek First Nation
- Pêmiska Trails in Beardy's and Okemasis' Cree Nation
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Actions (cont.)

Media

Throughout the year, we were able to share and promote Indigenous trail experiences in media, including Indigenous community outlets. Coverage included:

- Trail of Hope: Hundreds Attend Potlotek Light-up Event
- Elmastukwek First Nation Gets Funding for the East Blow Me Down Trail
- Community Celebrates Meaningful Ramara Trail Extension
- Building Stronger Indigenous-owned and Operated Businesses Together

Events

Because Trans Canada Trail events take place on Indigenous traditional territory across the country, we work closely with trail partners and Indigenous communities to find opportunities for Indigenous speakers and content at events. Last year, Darren Yelton of the Coast Salish Nation spoke at a board reception in Vancouver about his craft, his artwork and relationship with Trans Canada Trail.

Marketing

Trans Canada Trail partnered with Pêmiska Tourism to provide an exceptional experience and promote Indigenous tourism, history and culture along the Trans Canada Trail. As part of the **#BlahstoAhhhs** contest prizing, we were able to offer a getaway for two at Pêmiska Lodge.



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