

The Rose Point Recreational Trail Management Plan



Rose Point Recreational Trail Management Plan

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Abstract

The Rose Point Recreational Trail in Seguin Township extends 6.5 km from Forest Hill on James Bay Junction Road South along the rail bed of the Canada Atlantic Railway to the intersection of Glen Burney and Rose Point Roads. The Trail is an important link in the Park-to-Park and Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs trail systems. The rich history, geology and nature found along this Trail provide a stunning environment for users to enjoy. Enthusiasts include snowmobilers, ATVers, hikers, cyclists, runners, dog walkers and cross-country skiers. As Trail use increases, careful management is required to balance the competing needs of various users to ensure that all have a positive experience. The Management Plan establishes the permissible uses, the four-season maintenance of the Trail and sets up the parameters for the Trail Committee and Council to oversee future use and development. The Plan allows for signage and partnerships with other community groups. The goal of the Plan is to preserve and promote the Trail as a destination for present and future generations to enjoy.



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Location

The Rose Point Recreational Trail extends 6.5 km from Forest Hill on James Bay Junction Road South along the rail bed of the Canada Atlantic Railway to the intersection of Glen Burney and Rose Point Roads in Seguin Township. It is an important link in the Park-to-Park Trail; a 230 km multi-use trail which joins Killbear Provincial Park to Algonquin Provincial Park. The Rose Point Recreational Trail is a part of the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club's Trans Ontario Provincial (TOP) Trunk Trail and the 210 Feeder Trail to Parry Island.

1.2 Economic Resource

The development of the Rose Point Recreational Trail as a destination ensures that it will continue to be an economic driver for the entire area. It attracts hikers, dog walkers, runners, cyclists, wildflower and wildlife viewers, skiers, ATVers and snowmobilers. As a part of the Park-to-Park Trail system and the TOP Trail System it provides more economic impact than a stand-alone trail.

1.3 Natural Features and Wildlife

The Trail runs through rock cuts, vast wetlands and up the beautiful Boyne River Valley. The rail bed of the Canada Atlantic Railway provides a solid base for the Rose Point Recreational Trail. Users have an opportunity to see a variety of wildlife including moose, deer, beaver, otter and an abundance of song and marsh birds. Several species-at-risk make their homes along the Trail. The Trail is located within the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve and has been designated an "Amazing Place" within the Ontario Amazing Places Project. The Trail passes through the Rose Point Trail Wetland, a provincially designated significant wetland.

1.4 Historical Setting

In the 1890's, J.R. Booth built a railway from Ottawa to Depot Harbour. Built as the Ottawa, Arnprior, and Parry Sound Railway, it became part of the Canada Atlantic Railway when the first full train ran in 1898. The Canada Atlantic Railway ran from Depot Harbour on Georgian Bay to Swanton, Vermont; US lines connected it to New York and Boston. A 6.5 km section of the rail bed became the Rose Point Recreational Trail.



Many small communities were established along the rail line and many are still inhabited today; others are just reminders of a once prosperous past. Scotia, Sprucedale, Bear Lake, Whitehall, Maple Lake, Rose Point, and Depot Harbour are all examples of communities that owed their existence to the building of the Railway and their demise to its closure.

The Village of Carrington is another place that was prominent in the area.. In 1886, Carrington became known as Parry Harbour when the Town of Parry Sound acquired property on the south side of the Seguin River. Parry Harbour boasted a population of 200 and had services such as a sawmill operated by the Guelph Lumber Company, planing mill, shingle mill, two hotels, a church, two blacksmith shops, a wagon shop, a post office and a telegraph office.

Rose Point once boasted a popular summer resort/hotel operated by W.F. Thompson, and later by his son Guy. The hotel was accessible by rail or by boat from Parry Sound. Activity boomed in the summer when many events and regattas were held. Tourists would take the steamer to Rose Point, catch the train at the Rose Point Station to Swords (nee Maple Lake), take the stagecoach to Rosseau then paddle canoes down to Gravenhurst where they would catch the train home again. Many of these tourists came from the United States for the pristine wilderness experience and fabulous fishing opportunities.

In 1902 the Canadian Northern Ontario Railway (CNoR) built an 8 km section of track from Parry Sound to the Canada Atlantic Railway. The intersection of the two lines was named James Bay Junction for the proposed line from Parry Sound through North Bay to James Bay. The line was surveyed north of Parry Sound but never constructed. James Bay Junction boasted a store and a post office as well as a mill on the Boyne River Operated by Jim Vance.

In 1923 CNR (both the Canada Atlantic Railway and CNoR became part of Canadian National) constructed a roundhouse, station, water tank, coal chute, office and bunkhouse called Royal York at South Parry. South Parry never grew because workers continued to walk the 20 minutes from Parry Sound rather than relocate.

The Trail crosses the Boyne River three times creating opportunities to view stunning natural environment. Lumber companies flooded the river to create a means of getting their logs to Georgian Bay. This practice often flooded township roads making them impassable. The Conger Lumber Company conducted the last log drive in 1904.



2.0 Development of the Management Plan

2.1 Background

Foley Township was given the rail bed to develop a recreational trail by the Canadian National Railway in 1990. When Christie, Foley, Humphrey, Rosseau and part of Monteith amalgamated in 1998, ownership passed to Seguin.

In March 2004, the Council of Seguin Township struck a Committee of Council called the Rose Point Recreational Trail Committee (herein referred to as “Committee”) to make recommendations and to draft a management plan to plan for the future of the Trail. The first Management Plan was the result of the joint effort of the Committee, Seguin Township and members of the public.

2.2 Management Plan

(a) Purpose

The Rose Point Recreational Trail Management plan provides direction to achieve the goals and objectives of the Rose Point Recreational Trail.

(b) Roles

The Committee is responsible for pursuing the goals and objectives of the Management Plan, for overseeing the maintenance of the Trail, and for making recommendations to Seguin on the administration of the contract with the contractor for maintenance and management services.

Seguin is responsible for the administration of the contract. The contractor is responsible to Seguin and shall report to Seguin’s designated agent.

2.3 Public Consultation

The original Rose Point Recreational Trail Management Plan was developed through an extensive public consultation process including:

- Advisory committee and planning team input
- Public Meetings
- Adjacent landowner consultation
- Stakeholder consultation, and



- Council approval

2.4 Statement of Issues

The Rose Point Recreational Trail Management Plan provides strategies to address the following major issues that were identified through public consultation and by the Committee.

- Uses Allowed
- Access
- Trail Maintenance
- Funding
- Management Relationships

3.0 Goals and Objectives for the Rose Point Recreational Trail

3.1 Goal

The Rose Point Recreational Trail is, and will always remain, a trail. Management of the Trail will provide for and encourage safe and responsible use for a variety of recreational purposes while ensuring the protection of the environment and the historic value for future generations.

4.0 Objective

The objective of this Plan is to aid Seguin, the Committee and the contractor in preserving the integrity of the Trail and to provide guidance with trail maintenance, governance and development. The consensus of the public input was that the public wanted the Trail maintained as a trail and did not want to allow any access that would alter the trail experience. The Rose Point Recreational Trail is a valuable asset of municipal infrastructure and should remain in municipal hands.

4.1 Management Structure

The Committee is responsible for monitoring trail maintenance by the contractor. The Committee will set out the terms of engagement for a contractor to maintain the Trail and recommend a candidate to Council for engagement. The term of the contract is four years. Capital replacement of infrastructure is outside the terms of the contract. It is the responsibility of the Committee and Seguin to secure funding for capital replacement. An annual budget will be prepared by the Committee and recommended to Council for approval.



4.2 Closure of the Trail

Council may close the trail at any time for any reason. The Trail will be posted closed at all access points.

4.3 Un-Authorized Trail Uses

The following are prohibited users of the Trail: cars, trucks and motorcycles, except those authorized by Seguin and legal non-conforming uses.

4.4 ATV's and Snowmobiles

ATV's will be permitted on the Trail between April 1 and November 30. ATVing will be promoted and encouraged through organized ATV clubs and associations. A Memorandum of Understanding will be signed with ATV groups for social events and club use of the Trail.

Snowmobiles will be allowed on all sections of the Trail identified as OFSC prescribed trails. A Memorandum of Understanding with the South Seguin Snowmobile Club and the Township will be entered into for use of the Trail. Snowmobiles will have exclusive motorized use of the Trail between December 1 and March 31. Snowmobile users will respect and share the trail with other winter users. Snowmobiling will be promoted and encouraged in conjunction with the South Seguin Snowmobile Club.

4.5 Restricting Motorized Vehicle Access

Cars, trucks and motorcycles, except as noted in Section 4.3, are not permitted. Trail use by motorized vehicles would result in a high level of wear and tear which in turn would increase maintenance costs.

Ninety degree crossings at recognized crossings by commercial or residential parties may be permitted by authorization issued by Seguin.

Seguin will consider a user pay system for users other than snowmobiles (which have their own trail pass system but should still pay into the system). Monies collected will help finance repair and upkeep of the Trail surface and bridges.



The Committee is responsible for developing recommendations to Seguin for the rules of the Trail with regard to vehicle access, and for educating enforcement and Seguin officials on those rules.

5.0 Trail Maintenance

5.1 Objective

The objective is to preserve the Trail in a usable state for permitted users so that all can use it safely and enjoyably.

5.2 Maintenance Contract

The Committee is responsible for drafting details and tendering of the maintenance contract as well as recommending the contractor for Council approval. An annual review of the contractor's works shall be held between the Committee and the contractor. A report to Council will be circulated.

5.3 Trail Maintenance Plan, Budget and Work Schedule, Trail Inspections and Preventative Maintenance

Trail inspections shall be completed at least once a week as per liability insurance requirements (Appendix 1 – Trail Inspection Form). Trail inspection forms will be completed and kept on record by the contractor and a copy forwarded to Seguin and through Seguin to the Committee. The Committee shall review Trail inspection forms and make recommendations where appropriate. Preventative maintenance schedules shall be based on the work schedule determined by Seguin and the contractor.

5.3.1 Approval for Trail Maintenance

Seguin is responsible for all plans for Trail maintenance.

5.3.2 Work Permits

The contractor shall ensure that all requirements of federal, provincial and municipal legislation are met before work commences.

5.3.3 Trail Surface

The recommended Trail surface is a minimum of "A" gravel which will retain the natural look of the Trail as well as providing a desirable trail experience.



5.3.4 Flooding

In areas subject to flooding, the Trail shall be raised to a sufficient level to enable its use.

5.3.5 Beaver Control

In areas where beaver activity results in flooding of the Trail, Seguin shall encourage the management of the beaver both on the Trail and on nearby lands. Seguin should consider hiring a licensed trapper to undertake beaver control on those nearby lands where the property owner is in agreement. The use of beaver baffles will be implemented to reduce the turnaround maintenance time in areas of high beaver activity and historical flood potential.

5.3.6 Bridges

There are three bridges along the Rose Point Recreational Trail. In order to ensure the upkeep of these bridges, a bridge inspection will be completed by a certified engineer every two years or as deemed necessary in conjunction with other township bridge studies. Any work recommended from the inspection will be written into the preventative maintenance work schedule and capital replacement plans.

5.3.7 Ditches and Culverts

Ditches and culverts shall be monitored and cleared of debris. Culverts will be installed to accommodate the heaviest permitted use of the Trail (e.g. emergency or maintenance equipment). Culverts and ditches need immediate attention when flooding and washouts occur. In areas where the Trail is covered by water, or may potentially be covered by water, drainage will be improved. Ditches shall be cleared of trees and other vegetation that may block drainage.

5.3.8 Garbage Removal

“No Trace” use of the Trail shall be promoted and trail users will be required to carry out what is carried in. User groups shall be required to take responsibility for their own garbage removal.



5.3.9 Trail Clean-Up

Clean up days, sponsored by trail users and other community groups, shall be encouraged to educate the public about the purpose of the Trail and to keep the trail clean.

5.3.10 Site-Specific Values

The Committee and its partners shall ensure there is no impact to the natural or historic aspects of the Trail. Remnant historical features shall be left for their historical interpretive value unless they pose an unsafe condition.

5.4 User Education and Safety Objectives

- To promote “no trace” use of the Trail
- To promote and encourage safe and responsible year round use of the Rose Point Recreational Trail
- To encourage consideration, cooperation and compromise among trail users
- To encourage self-regulation among trail users.

5.4.1 Signage

All signage will require Seguin approval. Signs should be compatible with Seguin Township Recreational Trail signage. All signs will be posted to inform and educate users as to activities that are allowed (posted as a multi-use trail), encouraged or prohibited. All trail signs (OFSC and Rose Point Recreational Trail signage) will be placed on posts, not trees or other structures along the Trail. When appropriate, the place or time an activity is being conducted will also be posted. Trail work signs will be placed on the Trail in both directions to warn trail users of machinery or maintenance vehicles.

5.4.2 Self-Regulation

The contractor shall refer incidents of inconsiderate use to any relevant self-regulating body to take appropriate action and copy the Committee on any action.

5.4.3 Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs

Local snowmobile clubs shall continue to sell permits and self-regulate members of their user group through the trail warden program according to the management policies.



5.4.4 Individual Trail Users

Individual trail users shall be encouraged to report any incidents of inconsiderate use to the Township of Seguin By-Law Enforcement Department.

5.4.5 Other Law Enforcement Agencies

The contractor shall report any other unlawful activity to the appropriate agency and copy the Committee. Examples of these groups would include the Ontario Provincial Police, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Officers, Municipal By-Law Officers, The Ministry of the Environment, and Federal Fisheries Officers.

5.5 Revenue Generation

Tax receipts can be issued by Seguin Township for donations towards the Trail. The Committee should exercise this benefit with any fundraising activities for capital development and replacement.

6.0 Development Policies

6.1 General

Any proposals for development must be reviewed by the Committee to recommend to Council a course of action. All proposals must be consistent with the goals and mandate of the Management Plan and the Official Plan of Seguin.

6.1.1 Replacement

The Committee is responsible for making recommendations for capital improvement or replacement for inclusion in Seguin's Capital Plan.

6.1.2 Services

The Committee should review any proposal for use of the Trail for utility corridors (i.e. natural gas, hydro) and make recommendations to Seguin when appropriate. The utility should pay a yearly rental fee and upgrade the Trail at the time of installation of services.



6.1.3 Hunting

Hunting from the Trail is strictly prohibited.

6.2 Commercial Development

There will be no commercial development along the Trail.

6.3 Future Non-Conforming Uses

Future non-conforming uses of the Trail should not be permitted.

6.4 Trail improvements/Amenities

As resources permit, the Trail surface shall be upgraded to accommodate cyclists. Other amenities including benches, signage and parking shall be at the discretion of the Committee.

6.4.1 Trail Links

The Committee shall encourage trail links and spurs from the Rose Point Recreational Trail if they enhance the trail experience and are not detrimental to the surrounding area. Linking trails must be publicly accessible and fit into the scope of the Official Plan of Seguin Township.

6.4.2 Trail Surface

At minimum, the Trail surface will be upgraded to “A” gravel to accommodate all users. “A” gravel will reduce the dust on the Trail and provide a smoother ride for cyclists. The surface shall be improved as funding permits.

6.4.3 Parking and Rest Stops

The Committee shall advise Seguin on parking needs. Rest Stops may be created at vistas along the Trail. Stops should be large enough to permit snowmobiles to pull off the groomed trail.

6.4.4 Maps and Brochures

The Committee may recommend that Seguin publish maps and brochures to raise awareness and promote the Trail.



6.4.5 Interpretive Programming and Services

The Committee may wish to implement an interpretive program and other services it sees as beneficial to the trail experience.

7.0 Plan Review and Amendment

The committee is responsible for the review of the Management Plan every four years. The resulting plan shall be recommended to Council for approval. Management Plan amendments require the approval of Council.

8.0 Implementation

As per Sections 4.1 and 5.2 the Committee is responsible for recommending to Council a contractor for Trail maintenance. The term of the Maintenance Agreement is 4 years at which time the Committee shall review and recommend for approval by Council a contractor for the next 4 year term. The Committee shall produce a 4-year maintenance plan and make recommendations concerning capital projects; both to be reviewed annually. These plans and recommendations are subject to the approval of Council.



References

Archives, Parry Sound Library

Archives, West Parry Sound District Museum

Arthur Anderson & Co., Arts and Adventure Tourism Destination / Comprehensive Feasibility Study – Final Report, 1998, Toronto

Chisholm, Bernadette, Conversation, 2004, Parry Sound

Ecologistics Ltd., Winter Gold – Report on the Economic Sustainability and Development of Snowmobiling in Ontario, 1998, Ontario

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Seguin Trail Management Plan, 1992, Parry Sound District

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, The Massasauga Provincial Park Management Plan, Parry Sound District

Park-To-Park Trail Association Inc., Trail Inspection Form, 2003, Parry Sound

Research Resolutions & Consulting Inc. Northern Landscapes Opportunities for Nature-Based Tourism in Northern Ontario, 2004, Ontario



Appendix 1

TRAIL INSPECTION FORM

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

Trail Location From:

_____ To _____

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Trail surface in good repair? | Y | N |
| 2. Signs in good repair and visible | Y | N |
| 3. Is the area clean and free of debris? | Y | N |
| 4. Culverts and/or drainage operational? | Y | N |
| 5. Trail free of obstructive trees and overhanging branches? | Y | N |
| 6. Evidence of prohibited use? | Y | N |
| 7. Barriers in place? | Y | N |
| 8. Are you aware of any recent complaints? | Y | N |

ACTION REQUIRED

ACTION COMPLETED
DATE/SIGNATURE



Appendix 2

