

December 12, 2019

Regional District of East Kootenay
19-24th Avenue South
Cranbrook, BC V1C 3H8

Dear Friends of the Trail,

After almost 15 years with Trans Canada Trail, I will be leaving to pursue new opportunities, effective March 31, 2020. Before saying goodbye, I wanted to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to all of our donors, friends, partners, volunteers and government supporters for all that has been done in the development of The Great Trail of Canada. This past year, was one of many achievements and continuing progress in ensuring the ongoing sustainability and improvement of our national Trail. We were thrilled to be honoured, in November, with the Canadian Museum of Nature's *Inspiration Award* for Best Non-Profit in Canada and are so grateful for all who played a vital role in getting this accolade. Thank you!

Support for the Trail – Celebrating our Military Connection

This fall, we were proud to fete the Canadian Military Engineers (CME) in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and to thank them for their long-standing friendship and collaboration. As part of their 100th anniversary celebrations in 2003, the CME worked on a number of projects over a three-year period and delivered 64 new and restored bridges across the country. Their efforts were instrumental in ensuring that The Great Trail was connected in time for Canada's 150th anniversary celebrations, and in creating a lasting legacy that all Canadians can enjoy for generations to come.

Although the Trail is now connected from coast to coast to coast, bridge maintenance and construction continue to be critical in ensuring the continued connection of and accessibility to the Trail. We look forward to new discussions with the CME on possible future collaborations.

It's Better Together

We continued to grow our audiences, increase our profile, and encourage domestic and international audiences to step out on the Trail. Togetherness – the beauty of doing things in good company – was at the heart of the initiatives we undertook this year.

We successfully piloted three Better Together meet-ups. These guided Trail experiences, along the Trail in British Columbia, Manitoba and Nova Scotia, drew crowds of outdoor enthusiasts. Families of new Canadians were invited to join our meet-ups through our partnership with the Institute of Canadian Citizenship, making for meaningful and memorable experiences with new friends.

Thousands of Canadians took part in The Great Trail Treasure Hunt, and together submitted over 8,000 contest entries. With record-breaking media mentions and participation, the Treasure Hunt has become a cherished public engagement initiative.

Viceregal Patron

Her Excellency the Right Honourable
Julie Payette
Governor General of Canada

Présidente d'honneur vice-royale

Son Excellence la très honorable
Julie Payette
Gouverneure générale du Canada

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Regional District of
East Kootenay

Trail Projects

We continue to support many important projects this year, including major repairs to provide safer and easier access to the Trail (Petit Témis, QC); and infrastructure improvements to the Riverfront Bridge (Moncton, NB) and the St. Thomas Elevated Park (ON). In collaboration with our partners in Manitoba, we installed a bridge over Hanson Creek; and we completed a roadway to greenway conversion in Baie-St-Paul, QC. We were thrilled to add a new greenway section – the Pioneer Footpath – the first section of The Great Trail in Labrador.

We also provided technical and financial support for signage projects across the country. In Alberta, we installed signs and wayfinding arrows in Calgary, and on the Trail section from Banff Centre to the Cave and Basin National Historical Site. We also installed a new totem counter in St-Jérôme, QC, and, nature conservation interpretive panels in Yorkton, SK. In recognition of our supporters, we added new panels to six pavilions across the country.

This fall, we received over 150 project requests for financial support through our major funding program, the Capital Improvement Plan. We look forward to supporting as many Trail partners as possible, in their work to develop new and innovative projects in the coming year. With a renewed focus on maintaining the existing greenway sections and increasing their numbers, improving the quality of The Great Trail and being inclusive, next year's projects will support the development of active transportation routes; improvements to accessibility; increased signage; and repairs to sections damaged by natural disasters.

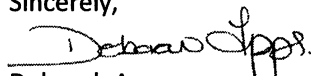
In closing, I'd like to tell you what an honour it has been to lead this organization during both the challenging and the rewarding times. During my tenure, TCT raised over \$120 million in support of the Trail, the most successful initiative of its kind in Canada; the organization acquired national and international recognition through its communications strategies, events and tourism outreach; and we celebrated the full connection of The Great Trail in 2017, as part of Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation. All of this was accomplished through a passionate team effort among a dedicated staff team, national volunteers and generous donors, as well as support from all levels of government, and Canadians inspired by our vision. Together we achieved a bold, some would say crazy, dream to connect Canada and Canadians, through the development of a national Trail.

It has been a great honour to lead this iconic project toward 2017 and beyond. The memories of the people I met, of the communities visited and of the kilometres travelled will be forever imprinted on my heart. Thank you for having joined me on this great journey.

If you have any questions, or would like additional information on the Trail, please feel free to contact my office at ceo@tctrail.ca or at 800-465-3636 x. 4341.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Deborah Apps
President & CEO

wishing you and yours all the best for the holiday season; may 2020 provide you with many opportunities to spend time on our national Trail with friends and family.