



# ANNUAL **REPORT** | 2021

[www.sasktrails.ca](http://www.sasktrails.ca)

## The Saskatchewan Trails Association (STA)

was incorporated in July 2004 with the mandate to promote the development and use of recreational trails throughout the province. The STA was created through a stakeholder process led by the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**David Powell** - President

**Alan Otterbein** - Vice President

**Trish German** - Treasurer

**Ryan Goolevitch** - Secretary

**John Meed** - Board Member

**Anna Ringstrom** - Board Member

**Curt Schroeder** - Board Member

**Chris Exner** - Board Member

**Pat Rediger** - Administrator/Ex-Officio Member

**Joe Milligan** - Ex-Officio Member

**Andrew Exelby** - Ex-Officio Member







CORE FUNDING  
**SPONSORS**



Saskatchewan  
Parks and Recreation  
Association

# YEAR IN REVIEW

## PRIORITY ONE:

*Continue to be an effective and well-governed board of directors*

The STA developed a strategic plan in 2019, which has since guided our efforts since its creation. The board operates under a governance model in which the strategic plan is reviewed regularly and financial accountability is practiced.

Our strategic plan has four priorities and the actions that are taken on these priorities are reviewed at each board meeting. The decisions reached by the board are based on the impact these decisions will have on meeting these priorities.

## SOCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2021

**3,500**  
INSTAGRAM  
Followers



**2,100**  
FACEBOOK  
Friends



**1,300**  
TWITTER  
Followers





## PRIORITY TWO:

### *To be a resource for accurate trail location and operational information accessible to the public and the membership*

The STA has a variety of tools and resources to assist members, stakeholders and the general public on finding the most accurate information on trails in the province.

Our website remains one of our primary methods of reaching the public, members and trail enthusiasts. It contains information on trail maps, safety, etiquette, environmental awareness, bridge designs, landowner agreements, processing donations, and promoting the benefits of trails. Our blogs



remained popular this year with our active and frequent postings. Posts ranged from “Preparing for Tick Season” to “Churchill River Water Legacy Project” and “The Benefits of Membership”. You can read all of the posts at <https://sasktrails.ca/blog>.

We continued to be active on social media over the past year, sharing information on trails that people should visit and illustrating these posts with videos, photos and the perspectives of people who have visited them. By the end of the year, our followers had reached almost 2,100 on Facebook, nearly 1,300 on Twitter, and about 3,500 on Instagram. Our total following now exceeds more than 7,000 people.

Our 5<sup>th</sup> annual *Give Us Your Best Shot* photo contest was our most successful to date. Similar to previous years it began on Saskatchewan Trails Day, the first Saturday of June, and concluded June 30. Entries were made by posting a picture of your favourite trail on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, using

the hashtag, #SaskTrailsPhotoContest. We had more than 840 photo entries, over twice as many as the previous year.

Applicants were allowed to enter as many photos as they chose. We were very impressed with the quality we received, so much so that we increased the prize pool from an overall top prize winner of a \$200 gift card from Cabela’s to two more prizes of \$50 gift cards as honourable mentions. The winner of the contest was **Kerri Ludvigsen** for their outstanding photo of the trail at Ness Creek (see far left). Honorable mentions go to: **Jeff Thorlakson** (Fort a la Corne, left) and **Kate Luff** (Prince Albert National Park, page 2-3). After the contest was over, we encouraged people to continue to post their photos so that we could promote trails on our social media accounts.

We promoted **Saskatchewan Trails Day** through social media and our blog where we encouraged the public to enjoy the trail network, while adhering to provincial health standards. We recommended that if people were looking to find trails in isolated locations, they should visit the STA’s online trail directory. This also allowed us to bring attention to donating to the trails and the annual photo contest.

We continue to distribute important information on a monthly basis about members and key stakeholders in the community regarding trail updates, funding and promotional initiatives through our e-newsletter *Tails from the Trails*.

**STA’s strategic plan  
can be found online at:  
<https://sasktrails.ca/about-us>**

## SECTOR VISION

Our sector vision reflects the preferred state for trails in Saskatchewan. The vision inspires people, stakeholders and members to work towards achieving that future and creating outcomes that members and others can support.

*We envision a sustainable, coordinated network of rural and urban trails throughout Saskatchewan which are designed and maintained to standards that meet a diversity of user needs and enhance the health, tourism and economic prosperity of Saskatchewan communities.*



## PRIORITY THREE:

*To move into greater alignment with the National Recreation Framework and the priorities of the recreation section of the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund*

### Churchill River Water Trail Legacy Project

Developing quality recreational opportunities for people in northern and Indigenous communities is a key priority for the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust, which is our core funding agency. Last year we completed the Churchill River Water Trail Legacy Project with the help of northern volunteers, private businesses and the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport. This project is about improving the outdoor recreation experience along canoe routes in northern Saskatchewan.



The Churchill River system is a world class destination for thousands of canoeists, kayakers and anglers from around the world. It is also home to multiple First Nations communities whose people continue to use the land and waterways as they have for thousands of years. With all of this activity, one of the biggest challenges is dealing with human waste. Most, if not all, of the back country campsites are experiencing serious issues with human waste and the existing pit toilets.

After researching this challenge, project proponents determined that a Urine Diverting Vermicomposting Toilet (UDVT) could address this issue. Although the COVID outbreak delayed last year's intended installation date, STA is happy to announce that the first UDVT – purchased with funds raised through donations, raffle tickets and the Give a Sh\*!

event – has finally been installed by volunteers on Barker Island. It is located along a popular canoe route in northwest Saskatchewan. Thank you everyone for supporting this important initiative!



*The above accessible multi-use trail in Douglas Provincial Park now includes 2.4 km of compacted crusher dust and boardwalks constructed over wetlands, allowing people with disabilities to explore one of the most scenic outdoor trails in Saskatchewan.*

### Douglas TCT Accessible Trail Project

With funding support from the Trans Canada Trail (TCT), the STA partnered with the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport to redevelop an existing trail in Douglas Provincial Park to become an accessible trail, allowing people with disabilities to experience a scenic outdoor trail. The accessible portion of the trail is 2 metres (m) wide and approximately 2,000 m in length. The project included 1,000 m of existing park trail that was upgraded and added to The Great Trail network.

The accessible multi-use trail now includes 2.4 km of compacted crusher dust and boardwalks constructed over wetlands. Visitors to the park will be able to enjoy beautiful vistas of Lake Diefenbaker, visit a fen, view wildlife and appreciate native prairie. We believe that the trail has now brought the provincial park's portion of The Great Trail to a whole new level, creating a Destination Trail for a more inclusive and wider range of users.

As part of the trail's reveal, we worked with the Ministry and TCT to develop a promotional video and media release.



**VIDEO LINK**

## Wascana Trails All Persons Walk

This project involved the development of 550 m of trail featuring kiosks and interpretive panels as well as signage for the visually impaired. Wascana Trails has a natural land protrusion that extends east from the parking lot to a beautiful vista. Repairs were done to the Viewing Area, and a 147 m long pathway was created to facilitate wheelchair accessibility and add features for those with visual impairments. A railing was created to wrap around the front of the hill to prevent people from walking down the slope. This project also involved refurbishing 2,400 m of the existing TCT and its connectors.



## Cypress Hills Trails

The STA also partnered with the Ministry and TCT on another project at Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park. This project consisted of three main elements.

Various enhancements and repairs were done to existing trails, including the creation of backcountry picnic sites, trail reroutes, boardwalk and footbridge replacements, tree removal, and extensions of existing trail pathways.

New Trail Head Signage that includes pertinent info and trail waypoints were developed. Two new trailheads were created in the West Block of the park at Conglomerate Cliff and another area.

Finally, a new path was created as an “All Season Trail” for winter activity access.



## Youth Programming

The STA believes that youth are the future leaders of our provincial trail movement due to their enthusiasm and love of the outdoors. We engage youth through our social media, photo contests and by inviting them to share their stories of their time on the trails. As part of our commitment to youth, the STA successfully received funding from the Student Employment Program with the Government of Canada to hire a summer student for eight weeks. This year we hired Jasmine Wang, a student at McMaster University pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Engineering. She worked on our social media posts, website blogs, and newsletter.



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## ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

The STA will play a key role in the development of this sector vision. Our organizational vision defines this role.

*We envision the STA as being the key resource in the province for trail information in the areas of best practice, standards, funding and usage.*



## PRIORITY FOUR:

### *To effectively support and grow the membership*

There are several initiatives that we use to support and grow our membership. In addition to being a central resource and provide information sharing and promotion for our members, we provide direct funding support and assist members with their own funding initiatives.

#### STA Member Trail Grant

The STA supports its members through its annual **Member Trail Grant Program**. In 2021, we provided \$500 grants to Candle Lake, the Town of Outlook, St. Walburg and Manitou Beach. Projects from the previous year that were delayed due to the pandemic were also completed this year, including Foam Lake and the Qu'Appelle Valley Nordic Ski Club. The STA provided \$1,000 to each of those projects.

#### Candle Lake

The Candle Lake Trails Advisory Board (CLTAB) is comprised of volunteers appointed by the Resort Village of Candle Lake Council. CLTAB meets regularly and works with the Council to plan new routes and maintain existing trails to ensure residents and visitors can enjoy a safe and varied outdoor experience year-round.

This project involved several sector elements such as:

- **Deep Bay to Telwin Trail:** Three new trail head structures were constructed and a map outlining the trail was created and posted at six intersections along the trail as well as at the three entrances.
- **West Side Trail:** A trail head was constructed, transported and installed at the north end of the trail. It also featured a trail head map, trail name and activity signs.
- **West End Trail:** New trail head map signs were installed as well as name and activity signs on four existing trail head structures.
- **Existing Trail Repair:** Damaged trail name and activity signs were replaced on existing trail head structures. Damaged directional signs on existing trails were also replaced.

STA provided **\$500 GRANTS** to  
Candle Lake, the Town of Outlook,  
St. Walburg and Manitou Beach.



## OUR MISSION

Our mission defines the organization's purpose and primary objective. The mission informs the key measures of our long-term objectives and the ends that we are working towards.

*The STA's mission is to assist local trail groups to develop and market their trails, to promote trails in the province, and to advocate to key stakeholders on the importance of trail maintenance and development.*



## Outlook

The Town of Outlook is a walking community, and over the years the beautiful trail along the river has been neglected. They have an amazing group of volunteers and recreational staff that feel passionate about maintaining their walking trails so it can continue to be used safely.

Due to a high concentration of Dutch Elm disease in the area, removal of overgrowth on the trails was required as well as the removal of Dutch Elm branches. They also required loose gravel along the trail, a bench and a new trail map.

The trail is approximately 15 km long and runs from the Lutheran Collegiate Bible Institute all the way to the Big Orange Bridge on the south side of the Riverview Golf Course. The trail runs through the Outlook Regional Park, which allows out-of-town guests and local members to enjoy the walking trail. The maintenance project began by removing overgrowth on the trails and Dutch Elm branches. Once the grass started growing, the community placed loose gravel along the path.



## St. Walburg

The trail in St. Walburg is part of The Great Trail, and they made significant improvements with new drainages and substates. The trail was in need of a new rustic sign that would enhance the entrance to their wonderful trail. Volunteers worked long and hard to complete this project.

## Manitou Beach

Manitou Beach established its trail system six years ago, and with the support of volunteers and the Resort Village of Manitou Beach, it has maintained, improved and added to the system over the years. The current system consists of three trails: 5+ km, 2 km and 1 km in length. The trail head sign was faded and needed to be renewed due to a new location, as well as changes and additions to existing trail signs. The trail signs provide users with their location and sights in the area.

## Foam Lake (2020)

With support from the STA, Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, the Town of Foam Lake, and Foam Lake RM, Team Nature Trails volunteers replaced signs, updated boardwalks and platforms, and placed new identifying and directional markers and signs. They also built a bird blind for visitors to watch migration. The volunteer crew remains intact and committed to working towards accessible trails where all can come to enjoy nature, learn about birding, flora and fauna, and stay active and healthy.

## Klinger's Trail

Klinger's Trail celebrated its official opening on July 31. Special guests included Laura Ross, Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport; Hugh Nerlien, MLA for Kelvington; and Jason Tokarchuk, Green Water Park Manager. The day long event included volleyball and Holy Board Tournament as well as games and activities for children. There was also a beer garden, entertainment and silent/live auction during the day.

Friends and family of Kleon Swahn (aka Klinger) rallied together to incorporate this walking trail in his memory. Kleon was born and raised in Rose Valley, and he spent a lot of his childhood years at Marean Lake. He married Jamie Schweitzer from Archerwill and had two children, Braden and Kiana. He worked his dream job with SaskPower for 23 years, until he was killed in a workplace accident on December 20, 2014.

The Klinger's Trail Group created an 8 km trail that joined the communities of Marean Lake and Greenwater Lake. It meanders through dense bush mostly in Greenwater Park, and it has scenic views of the lake and shoreline. There are six smaller bridges as well as a large 40' bridge. The trail consists of base gravel with crusher dust topping. There are rest areas along the way with sponsor benches provided. The trail was greatly needed to display the beautiful terrain, but to also offer a safer walking path for users instead of walking on grid roads that are dusty and dangerous.

The local trail group started construction in July 2020. This project was a labour of love and was two years in the making. Through STA's Charitable Giving Program, we issued charitable receipts on behalf of this project. We also promoted the project on our social media accounts and website.

## Elbow Trail

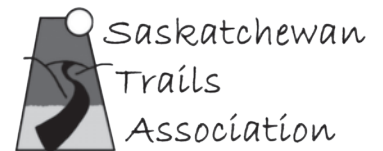
Another member that is part of our Charitable Giving Program is the Elbow Trail Group. We have been involved with the group since its inception, and we continue to issue charitable receipts on their behalf. Funds collected this year are being used to maintain the existing trail.

The trail head, which connects to the TCT, can be found at the local golf course. The trail starts with an easy walk through prairie land where you can get a great view of Diefenbaker Lake as well as the boats lined up in the Elbow Marina. The trail then takes you back to the golf course, where you are welcomed by chairs and a phenomenal view. The remainder of the trail is approximately 6 km in length and covered by trees.

## Canadian Trails Federation

STA is a member of the Canadian Trails Federation (CTF), a coalition of provincial and territorial trail organizations in Canada. We continue to represent our province at the national level and share best practices. The CTF is a member of the National Trails Coalition (NTC), which includes representatives from the snowmobile and ATV communities. The NTC has been advocating to the federal government for a three-year, \$60 million trail building fund. The STA has lent its support to these advocacy efforts and will continue to do so in the future.

CTF has been conducting a strategic review of its operations and is updating its bylaws. A member survey was distributed to help develop strategic priorities for the upcoming year.



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## **SASKATCHEWAN TRAILS ASSOCIATION**

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