



2024 Annual Report





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. We were created through a stakeholder process led by the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA).

SECTOR VISION

Our sector vision reflects the preferred state for trails in Saskatchewan. The vision inspires people, stakeholders and members to work collectively 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

ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

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

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

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 mission of the Saskatchewan Trails Association 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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: David Powell

Vice President: Alan Otterbein

Treasurer: Deborah Floden

Secretary: Ryan Goolevitch

Board Member: John Meed

Board Member: Chris Exner

Board Member: Matthew Maurer

Administrator/ Ex-Officio: Pat Rediger

Ex-Officio: Joe Milligan

Ex-Officio: Andrew Exelby

STRATEGIC PLAN

The STA developed a strategic plan in 2019, which continues to guide our efforts. This 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. A detailed copy of our strategic plan can be found on our website at: <https://sasktrails.ca/about-us/>.



PRIORITY 1:

Maintain an effective and well-governed board.

The board operates under a governance model in which strategic action items are reviewed regularly, and financial accountability is practiced at all times. This year the board held nine meetings to discuss issues within the trail community.

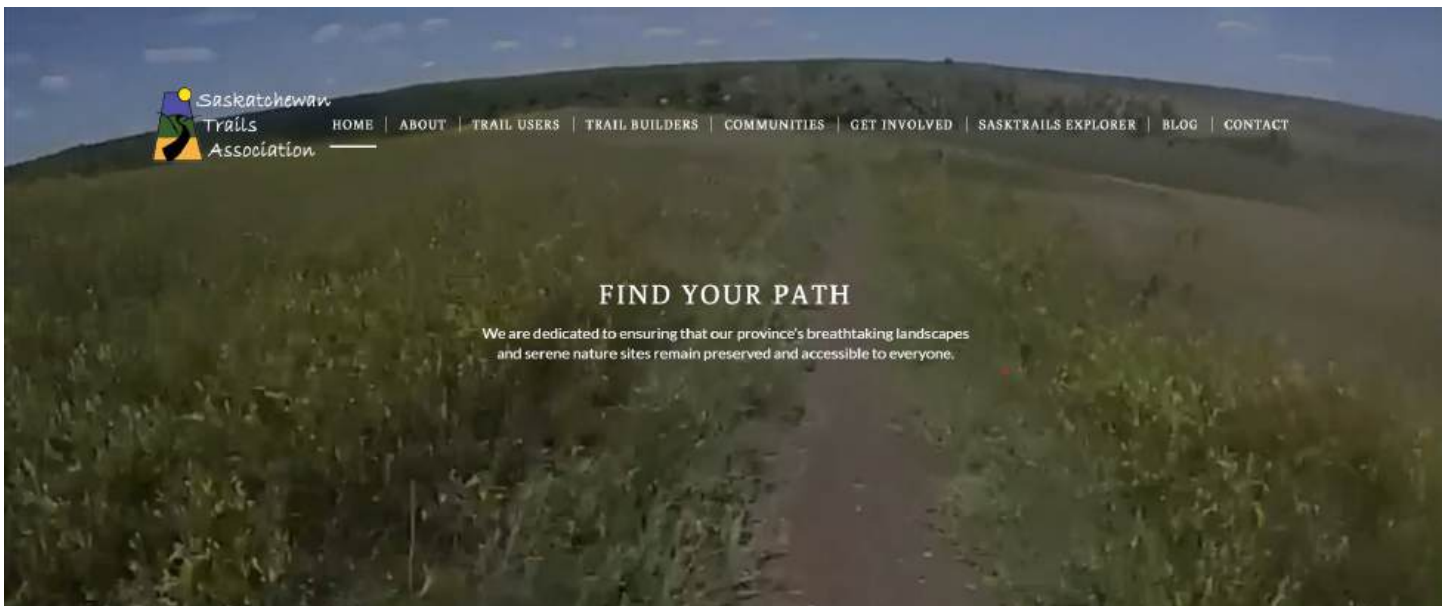
PRIORITY 2:

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

Website (sasktrails.ca)

The STA offers a diverse number of tools and resources to assist members, stakeholders, and the general public in locating the most important trail information within the province. Our website continues to be one of our most important means of connecting with the public, members, and avid trail enthusiasts. The website includes trail maps, safety guidelines, trail etiquette, environmental consciousness, bridge designs, agreements with landowners, donation processing, blogs, and various promotions highlighting the benefits of trails. Our blogs are still popular, ensuring we remain active in this medium with frequent postings.

We also made significant upgrades to our on-line trail directory on the website. We placed pins on a map of Saskatchewan which depicts all known trails. There are different colours to highlight STA members. You are now able to click on the pin and information on each trail opens up in a new window.



Social Media

We continue to grow our social media and this year we added Tik Tok and YouTube as part of our service offerings, which also includes Facebook, Instagram, and X. We now have almost 9,000 followers through our various platforms. Our ongoing efforts involve sharing trail information, recommending trail destinations, and leveraging visual elements such as photos and videos

to pique even more interest. We also actively support and promote upcoming events and adventures posted by fellow trail groups, nature enthusiasts, and Saskatchewan residents on our platform. On top of that, we use our social media pages to share important updates about our members, key stakeholders in the trail community, and other groups. It's the best way to keep everyone informed about trail news, funding info, and promotions in our community.

Give Us Your Best Shot Photo Contest

We continued our popular summer photo contest called the "Give Us Your Best Shot Photo Contest". The month-long contest began on June 1 – Saskatchewan Trails Day! – and continued until June 30. This year we did something new: There were three prize packages, each geared to a specific type of adventure: one for the hiking enthusiast, one for the cycling buff, and one for the paddling adventurer. Trail enthusiasts could enter the contest by posting to our socials using **#GiveUsYourBestShot2024** or via email at info@sasktrails.ca.

This year's winners included: Jason Stadnyk, the winner of our hiking package; Ambre Palmer, who wins the paddling package and Deagan Smith, who is the recipient of the cycling package.



As the winner of the hiking package, sponsored in part by Stapleton's Great Adventure Company, Jason Stadnyk received a \$25 Adventure Gear Gift Card (for use in store or online), Mystery Ranch Gallagator 20 18L Backpack, Chinook Adjustable Hiking Poles, two Cotopaxi Tech Bucket Hats, Radiant 300 Rechargeable headlamp and Cenote 2L Hydration Reservoir.



Ambre Palmer, won the paddling package sponsored in part by Fresh Air Experience, and received a Mustang APF PFD, Fresh Air Experience Headsweats FAE Hat, Petzl Tikka Core Light, Original Canada Buff and Nalgene Trail Products Water Bottle 32 oz Wide Mouth.



The cycling package was sponsored in part by Dutch Cycle and Deagan Smith receives an Evoc Hydration Hip Pack Pro, Finish Line – Dry Lubricant, Park Tool – AWS-10 Folding Hex Wrench Set, Two 49N-Patch Kits and a Knog Plus Lights-Plus Front in Black.



Thanks again to everyone who submitted photos and showed interest in the contest. We hope these photos inspire you to get out and enjoy Saskatchewan's beautiful trails.



Tales from the Trails

Tales from the Trails is our monthly e-newsletter that is distributed to all members and stakeholders. This newsletter is your go-to source for staying connected with the trail community across the province. Each issue contains the latest news, updates on trail projects, upcoming events, and funding opportunities for trail development and maintenance.

SaskTrails Explorer Magazine

SaskTrails Explorer is a new twice-annual digital magazine that promotes the trail community in Saskatchewan. The magazine was launched in December to showcase the winter activities and trails in the province, and will be published again in May as trail enthusiasts prepare for the spring, summer and fall trail seasons. The magazine is intended to highlight trail developments in the province, discusses trail issues, provides updates from important trail stakeholders, and provides information on events and activities on the trail network. This is an on-line digital magazine using the latest communications technology.



The magazine is distributed directly to all members, and via a link to our approximately 9,000 social media followers. Current and past issues will be archived on our website at [Home | Saskatchewan Trails Association \(sasktrails.ca\)](https://www.sasktrails.ca).

The launch issue contained a wide range of articles including profiles of the Hudson Bay Ski Club, Carlton Trail Ski Club (Humboldt), Esterhazy Cross Country Ski Club, Wâhkôhtowin Trails (Creighton), the Saskatoon FatLanders Fat Bike Brigade, and the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association. We also featured a Guide to Snowshoeing in Saskatchewan, How to Dress for a Winter Hike, the skate trail at Echo Valley Provincial Park, and other noteworthy items.

PRIORITY 3:

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



Buffalo Pound Trail Enhancement Project

The STA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, and with funding from the Trans Canada Trail (TCT), made significant progress in enhancing the trails at Buffalo Pound Provincial Park this year. These improvements will expand accessibility, enrich recreational opportunities, and highlight the park's natural and cultural heritage.

A major focus of the project was rerouting 2,380 meters of TCT trail off the road and onto adjacent land, creating a safer and more enjoyable experience for hikers, trail runners, and mountain bikers. This new multi-use trail will also accommodate snowshoeing and fat

biking during winter. Notable improvements include:

- Brushing, soil conditioning, and trail widening along 1,500+ meters near the bison compound.
- Installation of a new bridge over a drainage feature west of the compound.
- Accessible connections, including a natural surface ramp and firm parking spaces, to the boardwalk at Nicolle Flats Marsh.

To integrate the TCT more seamlessly, the

bison compound fence was moved 3-5

meters south, eliminating the need for visitors to walk 830 meters along the roadway. Future plans include extending the compound to preserve natural grasslands and engaging local First Nations as part of reconciliation efforts. This expansion will offer unique opportunities for visitors to view the bison while



enjoying the northern boundary of the TCT. These efforts solidify Buffalo Pound Provincial Park as one of Saskatchewan's premier recreational hubs, offering mountain biking, hiking, trail running, bird watching, paddling, and more.

Katepwa Point Accessibility Project

A new, fully accessible dock has officially opened at Katepwa Point Provincial Park, underscoring the STA's ongoing commitment to making outdoor recreation more inclusive and enjoyable for all visitors.

The dock has been carefully designed with universal accessibility in mind, featuring a gently sloping ramp, non-slip surfaces, and a specialized transfer system. These features allow seamless access from a wheelchair to a paddle boat or other water vessels, such as kayaks and canoes, ensuring that individuals of all ages and abilities can enjoy being on the water.



The initiative is part of the government's efforts to enhance accessibility within the park system. This latest addition at Katepwa Point Provincial Park demonstrates the commitment to making parks open and welcoming for everyone, providing more opportunities for outdoor enjoyment regardless of mobility or physical ability.

The project was funded through a combination of provincial funding and the Trans Canada Trail with the STA acting as project manager. The new dock is a significant step forward in making Saskatchewan's natural attractions accessible to everyone, enhancing both the park and trail experiences by offering safe and easy access to the water for people with disabilities, parents with strollers, and seniors using walkers.

This installation is part of a larger initiative to improve accessibility throughout Saskatchewan's provincial parks. Future plans include upgrading pathways, adding more seating areas, and enhancing signage to further support inclusivity and accessibility.

SaskTrails Storyteller



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 regarding their favorite hikes or trail gear. As part of our commitment to youth, the STA successfully received funding through the Trans Canada Trails Green Jobs Initiative and the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association's Parks for All Grant to hire Ella Ruter as our first-ever SaskTrails Storyteller. Ella is a Regina resident who is currently residing in Montreal and taking her undergraduate degree in Journalism at Concordia University. She has experience in

journalism, including writing, editing and producing.

The SaskTrails Storyteller shared her personal stories, experiences, and reflections about Saskatchewan's trail network. Her stories highlighted the diverse ways in which people connect with trails, from hiking, biking, and skiing to the cultural and natural heritage discovered along the way. These stories are designed to inspire others to explore the trails and foster a deeper appreciation for Saskatchewan's outdoor spaces.

Here is an overview and links to the stories she created:

Topic	Location
Avonlea Badlands	https://sasktrails.ca/the-mystic-avonlea-badlands/
Lumsden	https://sasktrails.ca/step-into-a-country-pace-lumsden-trail/
Sand Dune Trail	https://sasktrails.ca/experience-the-sand-beneath-your-feet/
Exploring Echo Valley Provincial Park	https://sasktrails.ca/exploring-echo-valley-provincial-park-a-hikers-haven/

Topic	Location
McKell Conservation Area	https://sasktrails.ca/mckell-conservation-area/
Condie Nature Refuge	https://sasktrails.ca/finding-refuge-at-condie/
How to Have a Great ATV Experience	https://sasktrails.ca/for-a-great-atv-experience/
Northeast Swale	https://sasktrails.ca/northeast-swale-connecting-with-the-past-and-growing-our-future/

PRIORITY 4:

To effectively support and grow membership.

We've got a bunch of ways we help boost our membership and help it flourish. Being the go-to spot for trail lovers in the province, we're all about spreading the word and giving a shoutout to our members. Whether it's on our website, through our blog, or on social media, we're here to share information and promote our awesome members. But that's not all, we're also there to provide financial support directly and lend a hand when our members are hustling to secure their own funding.

STA Member Trail Grant

The STA supports its members through its annual Member Trail Grant Program. This year we provided funding to the Prairie Sky Trails Association, Hudson Bay Ski Club, and the East Qu'Appelle Cartel.

Sunset Beach at Lake Diefenbaker has over 3 km of recreational trails for walking, hiking, and bicycling. The trails are located along the Lake Diefenbaker shoreline, offering spectacular views of the lake and amazing sunsets. The trails also include various rest stops with benches and garbage cans, some with picnic tables and fire pits.

New Interpretative Trail Signs at Sunset Beach at Lake Diefenbaker



This spring, with financial assistance from the STA, Prairie Sky Trails Association installed new interpretive signs along the trails that feature information about the local plants, fish, birds, mammals, and macroinvertebrates, with images of some of the most common of each that can be found in the area.

Additional signs include information about Lake Diefenbaker, Indigenous history of the area, original homesteaders of the Sunset Beach location, and local historical site, Bonnie View Church. Each of the 10 signs include a QR code that when scanned will take the reader to a webpage with further information about the topic.

The trails at Sunset Beach are accessible, and an all-terrain wheelchair is also available for use. There is a trailhead kiosk which shows the full trail map layout including rest stops, and information about each of the trails. There is an accessible public washroom located near the trail entrance as well.



Hudson Bay Ski Club Trail

Improvements

With assistance from the STA

Membership Assistance Grant Program, the Hudson Bay Ski Club was able to enhance the signage for its Pineview Nordic Ski Trail. Some of its trails now cross each other and signs were needed to alert skiers and other users throughout all seasons. Some distance markers had deteriorated and were replaced. The club also installed a more visible sign at the turnoff on Highway 9.

East Qu'Appelle Cartel Trail Upgrade

The East Qu'Appelle Cartel completed its Esterhazy Mountain

Bilking and Walking Trail upgrade thanks to assistance provided by an STA Membership Assistance grant. Funding from the grant supported the Cartel in

purchasing five large trail signs (3' x 2'), which will be installed at five locations along the Esterhazy Regional Park trail system.

The signs provide visitors with information on trail guidelines and etiquette, such as a reminder to keep dogs on a leash, that earbuds are not recommended, cyclists to wear a helmet and yield to walkers, and to avoid using the trail in muddy conditions. Accompanied by beautiful photos of picturesque trail scenery and a map of the complete trail, the signs are an informative addition to the beautiful trail system near Esterhazy.

Esterhazy Mountain Biking and Walking Trail

Trail Guidelines and Etiquette

No ATV or motorcycles.

Avoid parking in Parkland College lot and in front of the blue maintenance shed at golf course.

Dogs must be on a leash and waste must be picked up.

Leave no trace, pack it in, pack it out, no trail mods!

Be aware, earbuds not recommended.

Cyclists wear a helmet and yield to walkers.



Avoid use of trail in muddy conditions.

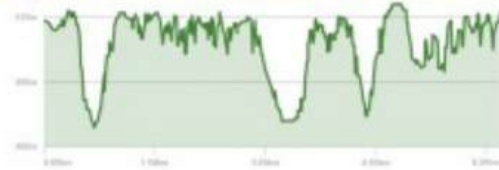
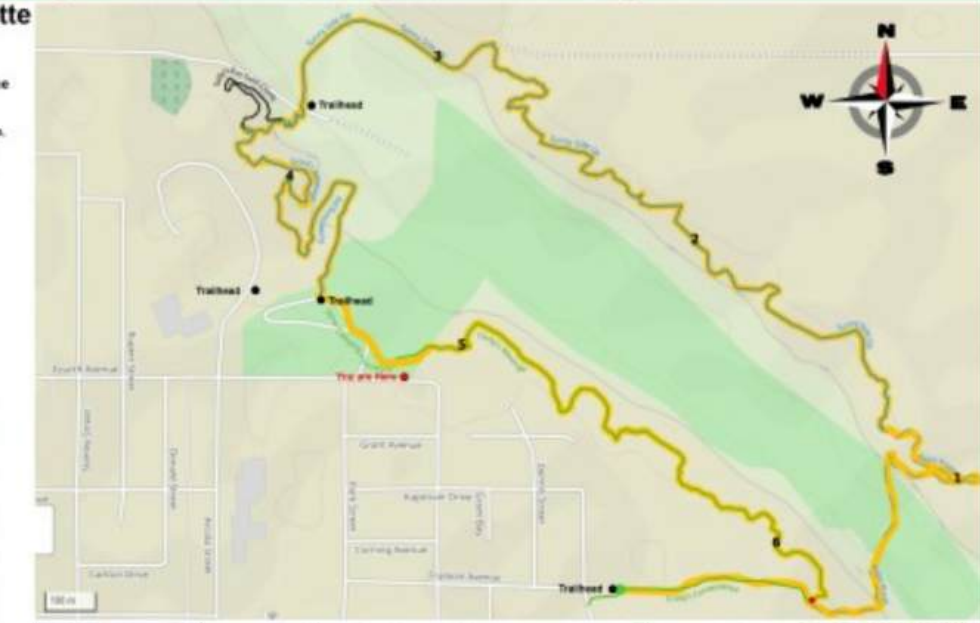
This trail is maintained by the EQC Cycling Club.

To donate send an e-transfer to eqc@tfgroup.ca



This trail is unsupervised, use at own risk.

In case of emergency call 911





6 km	104 m	104 m	513 m	2 km	2 km	2 km	Waterfall
Distance	Climb	Descent	High Point	Dist Climb	Dist Descent	Dist Flat	



Esterhazy Regional Park

World Trails Conference

The World Trails Conference in Ottawa brought together more than 100 speakers from all over the world to engage with this year's conference theme, "Connection to people, places and the planet." With support from the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation's Leadership Development Grant Program, the STA was able to send two representatives to the conference including David Powell, President; and Pat Rediger, Administrator.



This conference – the first of its kind held in Canada – provided meaningful conversations about the future of trails and their impact on communities, nature and well-being. These topics are of significant value to the local trail community including addressing the pressing concerns of climate change, biodiversity loss, and the need for sustainable

practices. Other sessions of value featured using trails as a catalyst for positive change, focusing on revitalizing communities, nurturing art and culture, and harnessing technology to enhance the visitor experience.

There were also sessions on how diverse participation, community collaboration and innovative operational models contribute to the trail sector, with a strong emphasis on education, inclusion and knowledge sharing. Sustainability was a key focus, with several sessions dedicated to discussing how trails can minimize environmental impact while maximizing user experience.

New technologies, such as digital trail mapping and GPS-based trail management systems, were showcased, offering tools that could greatly benefit trail systems in Saskatchewan. These innovations not only enhance the user experience but also provide crucial data that can aid in the maintenance and protection of trail ecosystems.

Pat Rediger also presented on our Churchill River Water Trail Legacy Program during the Trails of Canada session.

Another prominent discussion topic was the economic benefits of trail tourism. The session on “Trails as Economic Drivers” featured case studies from countries like New Zealand and Switzerland, where trails have become significant sources of revenue by attracting tourists and supporting local businesses. Saskatchewan,



with its vast landscapes and natural beauty, stands to gain from developing trail tourism. By improving trail networks and promoting them both domestically and internationally, the province can enhance local economies while encouraging eco-friendly tourism. Moving forward, the STA will explore how to develop partnerships and engage with the broader trail community to ensure that the province’s trails remain accessible, sustainable, and culturally significant.

Annual General Meeting

The guest presenter at our annual general meeting was Ric Driediger, a seasoned adventurer and passionate canoe enthusiast, who has been instrumental in helping people explore the pristine wilderness of the Churchill River system in northern Saskatchewan for several decades. He served as the owner of Churchill River Canoe Outfitters for 35 years before recently retiring to embark on his own canoeing adventures. Ric is also the author of *Paddling Northern Saskatchewan: A Guide to 80 Canoe Routes*, and *Stories From the Churchill*. Ric shared his knowledge and experience about the Churchill River canoe routes.

Canadian Trails Federation

The Canadian Trails Federation (CTF) is a collaborative network comprising provincial and territorial trail organizations across the country. The STA takes pride in being an active participant in this alliance, where we consistently represent our province on a national platform, exchanging valuable insights and sharing best practices. The CTF is also a member of the National Trails Coalition (NTC), which encompasses representatives from the snowmobile and ATV communities.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to our strategic priorities, there were other highlights to share this year.

Thank you to Outter Limits!



The Saskatchewan Trails Association (STA) is thrilled to receive a \$5,000 donation from Outter Limits, raised through their recent Fun Run! The 24th Annual Outter Limits Fun Run took place on Saturday, Sept. 20 at Waskesiu. Outter Limits is based at 630 Broadway Avenue in Saskatoon and has been family owned and operated

since 1987. It also has a seasonal location from May to September at Waskesiu. Outter Limits specializes in outdoor apparel and gear for various activities. With a focus on quality and functionality, the store offers a range of products to cater to outdoor enthusiasts and adventurers seeking reliable and durable clothing and equipment options.

This funding will be used to support our Membership Assistance Program, which provides funding, resources, and guidance to local trail groups, which assists them to maintain and develop their trail systems. This program not only supports trail upkeep but also enhances safety and accessibility, ensuring that everyone can enjoy Saskatchewan's beautiful outdoor spaces.

Thanks to Outter Limits and their supporters, these funds will help us continue to build, maintain, and expand trails for all to enjoy — connecting people to nature and each other.



STA Becomes QCM Pledge Charity

Run Regina, which operates the Queen City Marathon, has approved the STA becoming a pledge charity for next year. Runners can now designate the STA as an organization that they are raising funds for as part of their commitment to run in the race. The charities are listed at <https://raceroster.com/events/2024/81026/gms-queen-city-marathon-2024/fundraising-organizations#event-description>.



*Thank you to all those who donated
their time, energy and funds to the trail
community this year!*

Thank you to our core funding supporters:



Saskatchewan Parks
and Recreation
Association

FUNDED BY



SASKATCHEWAN TRAILS ASSOCIATION

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