

Proposed Multi Use Recreation Trail - Thunder Bay to Nipigon

Background

The communities of Thunder Bay, Shuniah, Dorion, Red Rock and Nipigon are proposing a multi use recreational trail be created from the decommissioned CN Kinghorn rail line running from Thunder Bay to Nipigon.

- CN is interested in leasing the entire length of the 111 km rail bed for use as a multi purpose trail system.
- When the former Kinghorn line was decommissioned, the rails were removed and the rail bed was left in place.
- This proposed trail will link Thunder Bay, Shuniah, Pass Lake, Dorion, Hurkett, Red Rock and Nipigon.

Progress

A working group has been set up by the 5 municipalities and a concept report has been completed on this proposal. Public open houses and a feasibility study of this proposed trail corridor are currently being conducted with support from the Trans Canada Trails organization. The public meetings are to educate the public and to seek their comments on the proposal. An on line survey is also being used to gather citizen input.(see below). The feasibility study is looking into the challenges to developing and maintaining a trail including converting the 13 rail bridges into recreational bridges. This feasibility Study is expected to be ready in late spring 2011.

Next Steps

The feasibility study including the assessment of the 13 rail bridges is expected to be completed in late spring. The Working group will then have to review the report and determine the next steps. To be approved in principle, the proposal will need public support and the support from each of the municipalities in which the rail bed is located.

If such a trail corridor is approved, the intention is that it will be made part of the Trans Canada Trail system. The Trans Canada Trails are seeking to complete a national trail by 2017, Canada's 115th anniversary.

Trail Management Process

The Trans Canada Trail system promotes trail uses such as non motorized summer activities of walking, running, and cycling and winter uses such as skiing snow shoeing. The Trans Canada Trail system allows the option of snowmobile use with certain controls

A management plan will be developed with public input to address issues as to the range uses, conflicts between uses and specific issues along the main corridor.

A volunteer organization will need to be formed to oversee the on going maintenance of such a trail.

CN as the owner of this decommissioned railway continues to be responsible for policing the uses of this land and rail bed. If a long term lease is obtained for a trail system, the OPP will then have responsibility for policing the trail corridor.

Trail Benefits

Studies of trails across North America have concluded that recreational trails are a positive factor in retaining and increasing property values in and around the trail corridors. This proposed multi seasonal, multi use trail system will encourage people of all ages and abilities to be physically active and enjoy the outdoors.

This proposed trail system will link together the communities along the route and can link with other trail systems which currently exist and those in development. For example, it can link in with the City of Thunder Bay recreational trail system and the proposed waterfront trail. This trail can become a crucial central link to both the Trans Canada Trail system and to the international trail system extending along the North shore of Lake Superior from Minnesota.

Provide Comments

To provide comments on this Multi use trail proposal fill out the on line project survey.

Simply click on the link below and it will bring you to the survey. Complete the survey and hit the "Done" button at the bottom of the page to submit. (The survey can be done in 10 -15 minutes)

Survey Link -----> www.surveymonkey.com/s/3K3RK2V

Contact

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