

FINAL DRAFT

TO: TRAIL COUNCIL PLANNING GROUP
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Mission Statement: The Trail Council aims to help the ECGA build partnerships with the agencies, organizations and people responsible for building trails with the objective of completing our route as fully off-road as feasible for public use and enjoyment. It is directly responsible for trail designation, trail policy formulation, and ensuring that we stay on track with our annual trail development blueprint goals in each state.

Place of the Trail Council (TC) within the ECGA organization (See attached chart)

1. The Trail Council is established by and answers to the ECGA Board of Trustees (BOT.) It functions as a committee of the board. The BOT has ultimate responsibility for all trail matters under the Trail Council’s purview. The BOT has the authority to override the TC at any time on any matter.
2. The Trail Council members are appointed by the Chair of the BOT subject to BOT approval. The initial Council membership will be recommended to the Chair by the Trail Council Planning Group, subject to approval by the BOT at the November Board meeting. They will be sent invites to attend the first meeting of the Trail Council in New Haven the morning of November 5th.
3. Cross membership between the BOT and the TC: The Chair of TC sits on BOT. The Chair of the BOT sits on the TC.
4. Cross-communication with the BOT: The Trail Council will report to the BOT on progress and issues at each BOT meeting. BOT members and TC members will be invited and encouraged to attend each other’s meetings as non-voting participants.
 - a. First quarter “visioning” meeting: The TC will be invited to participate in an open “visioning” discussion with the BOT
 - b. Second quarter “strategic planning” meeting: The TC will submit its proposed 5-year plan revisions and budgetary needs related to the Trail Program for the ensuing year to the BOT for its Spring meeting.

Role and Responsibilities

1. Trail development oversight:
 - a. Annual review and update of 5-Year Trail Development Plan (4th quarter meeting)
 - b. Annual Benchmark Assessment (1st quarter meeting)
 - c. Review of quarterly progress reports from Regional Trail Liaisons/Regional Trail Councils (quarterly conference calls)
 - d. Trail signage program oversight (quarterly conference calls)
 - e. GIS map/database oversight (as needed)
2. Trail Designation
 - a. Approval of new trail nominations (quarterly conference calls)
 - b. Review and approval of Trail Designation Policy and Procedures Manual
 - c. Resolution of any bi-state or other routing issues
3. Trail Policy

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- a. Policy formulation or refinement regarding any issues that arise related to the trail
4. Building strategic relationships with people, organizations, and agencies responsible for funding and building trails.

Membership, officers and committees

1. Membership: The TC will aim for approximately 15 members including the BOT Chair, a member from each region, and topical seats for experts in signage, trail planning, project management, advocacy/government relations, and GIS map/database. User groups may also be represented on the Council including cycling, walking, skating, equestrian, disabled. All “seats” need to not always be filled and some persons may fit several seats.
2. How appointed: The BOT Governance Committee will be responsible for recommending new TC members to the Board Chair. Nominations may be made to the BOT Governance Committee by anyone and anyone interested may apply.
3. Members may be individual advocates, members of non-profit organizations, government agency staff, elected officials, or come from businesses
4. Terms: TC members will serve three-year terms with one-third appointed annually in staggered classes.
5. Leadership: Elected by the TC membership at their Fall meeting for the following year.
 - a. Chair
 - b. Vice Chair
 - c. Secretary
6. As the Trail Council begins its work, the following topics or task areas may merit the appointment of a point person or committee to lead the effort:
 - a. State DOT and MPO relations
 - b. Trail Designation
 - c. Planning, budget, benchmark assessment
 - d. Signage
 - e. GIS Map & Database
 - f. Advocacy and Government Relations

Frequency and purpose of meetings and calls

1. Meets in tandem with Board of Trustees
 - a. First Quarter: visioning session in tandem with BOT/annual benchmark review
 - b. Second Quarter- work plan and budget development for following year input to BOT
 - c. Fourth Quarter meeting: to update 5-year plans and Blueprints
2. Quarterly conference calls to review plan progress and act on designations