

## SMBA Policy for Trail Maintenance, Adjustments, and Development

This policy details the process by which proposed trail maintenance, adjustments, and development are approved annually by the SMBA and outlines maintenance standards to be upheld on existing trails. This policy directly informs the SMBA's *Annual Operating Plan* and is crucial to meeting the goals in the *SMBA Management Plan*.

### Process for Proposed Trail Adjustments and Development

#### Step 1: Submit Proposals

Proposals for trail adjustments or new trail development can be put forward to the SMBA Executive by October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Proposals may be submitted by any SMBA member or the *SMBA Trail Management Subcommittee*. In order for the Executive and SMBA membership to make an informed decision, each proposal for a new trail must include the following information:

- difficulty level,
- style,
- length,
- TTFs to be included,
- linework/route (e.g. walked, flagged, GPSed),
- value or special components of proposed trail (e.g. connections to trail networks, viewpoints, terrain),
- maintenance considerations (e.g. overhead hazards, foliage, soil, drainage),
- estimated costs,
- funding options, and
- environmental considerations. Recognizing that meeting the trail objectives would be terrain dependent.

For proposed trail adjustments, the following information must be presented to the SMBA Executive and Membership:

- Location
- Value/Purpose
- Description of how the adjustment will enhance or alter difficulty of trail
- Description of how the adjustment will enhance or alter style of trail

#### Step 2: SMBA Executive Review

Executive to review proposals and come to an agreement on which proposed trail adjustments and/or new trail development will be presented to SMBA membership. This review will occur prior to the SMBA Annual General Meeting (AGM).

### Step 3: SMBA Membership Feedback

The Executive will review any proposed trail adjustments and new trail developments with the SMBA membership at the AGM. Detailed feedback will be recorded and communicated to the Executive.

### Step 4: SMBA Executive Approval and Incorporation into Operating Plan

The Executive will review membership feedback and finalize decision on proposed trail adjustments and new trail development with the Trail Management Subcommittee. Approved proposals will be incorporated into the *Annual Operating Plan* for the following season.

### Step 5: Funding Strategy

The Executive will prepare a funding strategy to implement the *Annual Operating Plan* including trail maintenance, approved adjustments, and approved new trail development. The Executive will work with the Trail Management Subcommittee to develop a plan to secure funding.

### Step 6: Implementation

The Trail Management Subcommittee will lead the implementation of the *Annual Operating Plan*. Maintenance will be implemented through work bees, the Adopt-A-Trail Program, the Trail Brigade and where necessary, preferred and experienced contractors. While the majority of trail adjustments and development will be executed by preferred and experienced contractors, the Trail Brigade will also actively partake in key projects. All trail maintenance will follow the SMBA standards outlined below. All trail adjustments and development will also reflect the Whistler Trail Standards and IMBA standards. Any work conducted, including adjustments, development, and maintenance, must be led by someone who is well-versed in the aforementioned trail standards and the practical application of them.

The Trail Management Subcommittee will be accountable to manage new trail development including; working with RSTBC to secure approvals; working with the Executive to engage stakeholders; and, implementing the funding strategy approved by the SMBA.

The Trail Management Subcommittee will regularly update the SMBA Executive on the progress of the *Annual Operating Plan*. These regular updates will allow for the Executive and Trail Management Subcommittee to be adaptable and address unforeseen circumstances that may require within season changes to be made to the *Annual Operating Plan*. Examples of circumstances that may result in within season changes to the plan include, but are not limited to:

- 1) unanticipated funds becoming available for trail adjustments and/or development,
- 2) weather events that cause damage to existing technical trail features (TTFs), the fixing of which may need to be prioritized over other proposed work, and
- 3) limitations in the resources and/or capacity necessary to finish all of proposed work.

The need to communicate within season changes to the *Annual Operating Plan* to the SMBA membership will depend on the scale of the change and will be at the discretion of the Executive and the Trail Management Subcommittee.

## Trail Maintenance

As with trail adjustments and development, trail maintenance will be outlined and prioritized in the SMBA's *Annual Operating Plan*. Routine trail maintenance, as outlined in the RSTBC partnership agreement, should be considered in the development of the *Annual Operating Plan*. Annual inspections of existing trails and Technical Trail Features (TTFs) must be completed, including a description of trail/TTF condition and maintenance requirements. These inspections are submitted to RSTBC each year as a requirement of the partnership agreement and inform the maintenance requirements outlined in the SMBA's *Annual Operating Plan*. The Trail Management Subcommittee is responsible for ensuring the annual inspections occur each year.

Any trail maintenance that is conducted in the SMBA trail networks must follow the SMBA standards outlined below, including that conducted by the Adopt-A-Trail Program and the Trail Brigade. Trail maintenance standards for the SMBA are adapted from IMBA and Whistler trail standards and conform with standards outlined in the RSTBC partnership agreement. At the beginning of each season, these standards shall be reviewed by anybody participating in maintenance of the trails throughout the year. This review may include a field day with an experienced trail builder.

### SMBA Trail Maintenance Standards

1. **Signs**—all signs will be checked prior to the season of operation to ensure they are in place and visible and any additional signs required to meet the objectives of this Agreement should be installed. Conduct minor repairs and stain/paint trail signs as required.
2. **Deadfall**—on a priority basis cut out windfall/deadfall over the trail, cut deadfall to a minimum of 1 metre from trail edge. Where possible, place felled trees downhill, out of sight of trail, and with butt ends pointing away from the trail.
3. **Brushing**—on a priority basis remove all juvenile trees and woody brush to a minimum of 1 metre from trail edge, within 3 centimetres of ground level. Scatter the cut material out of sight of the trail.
4. **Erosion control**—Maintain culverts and knicks to avoid water damage. This may include clean-outing and repairing any existing water bars and ditches as necessary to drain water away from the trail and prevent erosion.
5. **Route marking**—mark obscure routes with flagging or delineating tags as required.
6. **Litter cleanup**—remove litter and garbage at the trailhead and along the trail.
7. **Limbing**—remove tree limbs to allow 2.5 metres of overhead clearance above the trail, with 1.0-1.5 metres total clearance width. Scatter cut limbs a minimum of 1.0 metre

from the trail edge, out of sight where possible. Ensure limbing cuts are clean, without scarring the main trunk of the tree.

8. **Technical Trail Features (TTFs)** – TTFs are to be evaluated regularly and kept in safe and working order (see Whistler Trail Standards)
9. **Fall Zones** – Keep fall zones around TTFs and berms free of debris and hazards
10. **Sightlines** – Where possible, maintain corridor sight lines.
11. **Hazards** - Repair or eliminate known trail hazards when possible. If the trail is unsafe, close trails until hazard has been repaired or eliminated.
12. **Trail tread maintenance**
  - Drain/harden mud holes and boggy areas.
  - Complete washout and/or slump repair.
  - Grub rocks, roots, stumps as necessary to allow grooming during operating season.
  - Undertake surface repair as required.

## Unsanctioned Trail Work

Recreational mountain bike trail construction, rehabilitation, or maintenance on Crown Land is not permitted unless authorized by the MFLNRORD District Recreation Officer. Any unsanctioned trail work is therefore illegal and puts the partnership agreement between the SMBA and RSTBC at-risk. As a result, any unsanctioned trail work shall be addressed immediately by the Executive. The Executive will report details of the unsanctioned work to Recreation, Sites, and Trails BC, which may result in the Province ordering the offenders to restore the trail to its original form and/or fines of up to \$10,000. The SMBA Executive is responsible for regularly reminding members of the public and the membership that unsanctioned work is unacceptable.