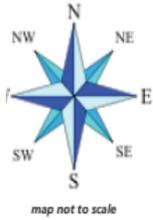




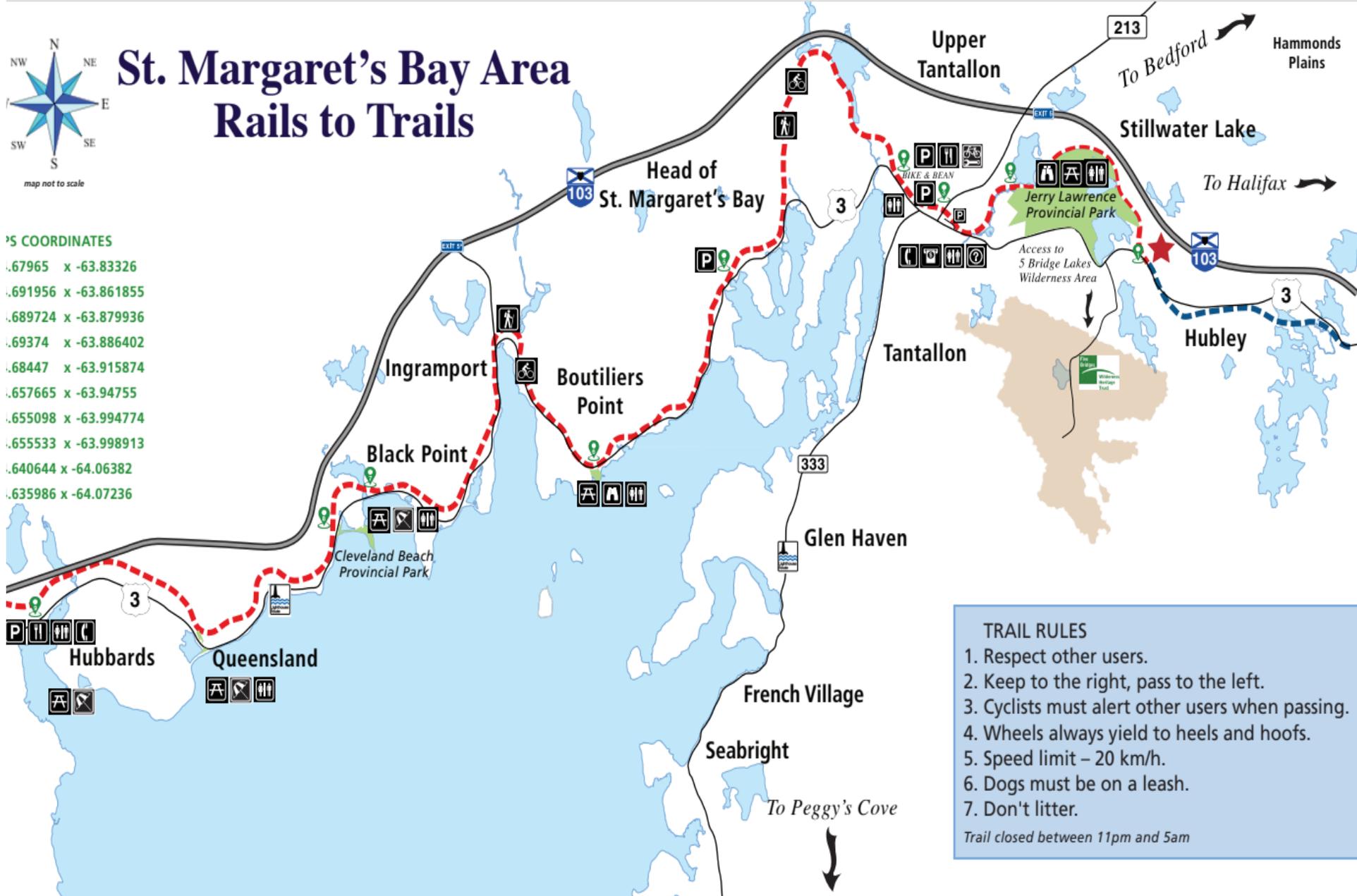
The longest true Multi Use Trail in HRM



St. Margaret's Bay Area Rails to Trails

GPS COORDINATES

46.67965 x -63.83326
 46.691956 x -63.861855
 46.689724 x -63.879936
 46.69374 x -63.886402
 46.68447 x -63.915874
 46.657665 x -63.94755
 46.655098 x -63.994774
 46.655533 x -63.998913
 46.640644 x -64.06382
 46.635986 x -64.07236

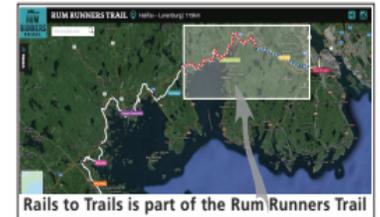


www.stmargaretsbaytrails.com

TRAIL MAP LEGEND

★ YOU ARE HERE

- St. Margaret's Bay Trail – 32 km
- Beechville/Lakeside/Timberlea Trail
- Five Bridge Lakes Hiking Trail
- Aspotogan Trail



Rails to Trails is part of the Rum Runners Trail

TRAIL RULES

1. Respect other users.
2. Keep to the right, pass to the left.
3. Cyclists must alert other users when passing.
4. Wheels always yield to heels and hoofs.
5. Speed limit – 20 km/h.
6. Dogs must be on a leash.
7. Don't litter.

Trail closed between 11pm and 5am

- Parking
- Tourist Information
- Restrooms
- Food
- Bank Machine
- Rest Area
- Beach
- Panorama
- Telephone
- Bike Repair
- Blue Route Cycling Trail

Trail History of St Margaret's Bay Area Rails to Trails Association (SMBARTA)

- The 33Km Trail was like many an abandoned CN Rail Corridor and had been bought by the Province.
- The Trail Group formed in 2003, a Registered Member of both Joint Stocks NS and NS Trails
- The Trail follows the Community Development Model, which means built by the Community, maintained by the Community and in Consultation with Community
 - SMBARTA was issued a Letter of Authority(LOA) in 2004, from The Dept of Natural Resources and Renewables
- Construction started in Phases for a Multi Use Trail
- The approved users of the Trail were determined through Community Consultation.
- SMBARTA is part of the Provincial Blue Route, Rum Runners, Destination Trail and recognized by HRM in the AT Priorities Plan.

Current make up

- There is a Board of Directors and a set of by laws
- The Board meets four times per Year or more if required, if major event , email votes are used.
- The Board is a Volunteer Group, and we have no staff; this is not always clear as some believe it is maintained by HRM, just as Chain of Lakes Trail, owned and maintained by HRM;
- We have Volunteers that do maintenance and funding applications
- We have just this year purchased a Side mower towed behind a UTV by Volunteers for side of trail vegetation management.

Our Partner Agencies

- DNRR , we have a forestry technician assigned to us , he is responsible for spring and fall inspections and assists with extra LOA's and other issues that arise throughout the year.
- We communicate with DNRR with maintenance, trail upgrades and Easement issues.
- DNRR Conservation Officers are responsible for enforcement, if it's a 911 call RCMP from the Tantalton Detachment Responds
- Communities Cultures Tourism and Heritage are also a partner and have staff to assist with Trail Construction and Signage Guidelines as well as Funding applications.
- EHS and three fire departments also have access to the Trail for emergency needs. Our local Fire Station also has a Side-by-Side UTV to use if required.

Funders

- CCTH pays as of 2023 a rate per km, that rate is \$400.00 per km for operation and maintenance costs
- Off Highway Vehicle Fund, pay maintenance funds of \$150.00 per km
- HRM- Does not pay a per km rate, they pay a maintenance rate as per council approval, we have asked for this to change as the funding is not fair in relation to km of trail. This years award was \$13,000.00 plus \$2000.00 for administrative.
- ATVANS- They can provide a small grant up to \$7500 for extra projects , emergency work etc. not already funded through IHVIF.
- HRM also offers a recap fund as well as Emergency Fund
- All Funds except CCTH are paid at 50%, so we must match the other
- Bay Treasure Chest , we are a partner of this fundraiser, and it allows us to Buy items needed for maintenance, helps offset grants and all monies go to the Trail , they help build picnic shelters, parking areas etc.

Grants- a little bit of insight

- All funders of SMBRTA require grant applications, some require many hours of work and are all different dates to apply, as well as different year end reports and management of the Grant
- This is done at present by three board members and is a learning process, if you have an interest in doing, we are always looking for help!!
- Grants are the hardest part for the group, its painstaking as it has many moving parts, having a great and invested Treasurer is a must, and as well as Trail Manager and Vice Chair.
- Bay Treasure Chest- as a partner we have to supply up to 8 Counters every 4th Wed of each month, as well as two board members and a Supervisor

SMBART Users

- Users as per DNRR Ministerial letter:
 - Walkers and Hikers
 - ATV, they must be registered and insured
 - Bicycles and E Bikes with Pedal assist
 - Horses
 - Snowmobile (not often due to lack of snow)
 - Everyone can use the Trail except those not authorized per Ministerial Restriction Letter.
- Users not permitted who have or are present at times on SMBRTA
 - Dirt Bikes/Blue Plated Street and Trail Bikes
 - Electric Dirt Bikes E Scooters as well as Bikes without pedals that don't meet the definition under the Motor Vehicle Act

Annual Maintenance

- Grading and rolling
- Signage repairs/Replacement
- Easements- we have over 100 Private driveway crossings as well as public roads crossings, these require more work due to slopes and water management and Vegetation Management.
- Vegetation Management, the entire corridor is in stages of cutting, we have defined set backs and height requirements as per DNRR
- Bridge maintenance, we have 13 , some are small, and others are large.
- Culvert maintenance to ensure flow and no blockage.

Bridge Replacements

- The last review completed by NS TIR bridge assessment, and we are replacing Puddle Bridge
- SMBRTA have met contractors many times and quotes are nearing completion with a 2024 date to be done.
- This is the first bridge to be replaced other than bridges over public roads (responsibility of the province or HRM)
- This project is going to be ongoing all over NS and HRM Trailways and funding will be the largest issue due to costs of replacing said structures. The costs are not so much the actual bridge to be placed, but the removal of old , confirming abutments are still useable as well as site prep required, equipment access etc.

What has worked

- Our first meeting was with Enforcement , this has now led to a great relationship. Once one understands their constraints, the more you welcome them when they can spend time, and they are out here a lot
- We then proceeded to have sometimes weekly calls with the landowner , to discuss issues and what was needed to maintain.
- ATVANS former Trail Co Ordinator was a great help especially to the new Trail Manager with knowledge as well as best practices. Boards change yearly and you need a certain skill set to run said trail.
- Met and still in communication with local RCMP Detachment Cpl when required.
- Monthly inspections are a must, and if issues are identified , they are repaired
- We receive messages through messenger as well as Email, issues are dealt with immediately before the issues create bigger problems.
- Clear explanation of the actual rules of the trail, informing easement holders of their agreements etc.

Constraints

- Funding will always be a constraint, the only user group that pays twice are the ATV population, which early in the development of trail were instrumental in helping with construction. In NS all ATV's registered must pay a mandatory \$40.00 towards trail development and upkeep. Trails that allow ATVs are eligible then to apply for grants through the Off Highway Vehicle Infrastructure Fund.
- Climate change, has totally changed our way of doing business, we are now focused on adequate storm flow, drainage, ditching, clearing of trees etc. as to have infrastructure in place for sustainability. While this has led to some issues with residents along the trail not knowing the easement widths etc., its to be done for safety and access.
- The Province and HRM have in some ways totally different policies regarding Public Highway Crossings. This has also been a benefit.

Complaints received in Order

- Dogs off leash and not removing waste
- Garbage not being taken home ; we remind the **Pack it and out** model
- Cyclists speeding as well as not ringing a bell or letting users know they are coming. Cyclists also going three wide etc.
- Cyclists not stopping or obeying at posted signage ex STOP as well as speed which is posted @20km/h
- ATV speeding and excessive noise
- We notice this as a seasonal aspect, but the top two are year long issues.
- Concerns over Vegetation Management.

In Closing

- Volunteers are becoming harder and harder to find, this is with every organization and nonprofit sectors. It becomes hard to do succession planning when its hard to attract volunteers. The sense of the “community” has changed due to population growth.
- Public Use has increased, that’s led to busier parking areas, and finding better safe locations for people to access and egress.
- We are welcoming to all users, and we also are fully accessible to any and all trail users; people using SMBRTA have learned to acknowledge and accept the diversity of users on our community trail.
- ATV damage has not been a large cost, if any damage or behavior is noticed, its dealt with, our group has learned that surface maintenance is a best practice whether it was Motorized or not. We also don’t put one group against the other, as its shared use; While its not perfect, its not a major issue to our group.

Thank You for your time

- Questions or Comments?

If one wishes to learn more or volunteer with
SMBRTA please contact us

Stmargaretsbaytrail.com