

2016 Porter Creek/Range Point/Whistle Bend/Takhini Trail Planning Process - Feedback

Over the summer and fall of 2015 a trail survey was delivered by the Yukon Conservation Society (YCS) in partnership with the Friends of McIntyre Creek (FOMC) and the Porter Creek Community Association (PCCA) in order to learn more about the recreational use of McIntyre Creek Park and the region of land known as Middle McIntyre Creek between the Alaska Highway and Mountainview Drive. The survey was delivered on location with the assistance of the Yukon Government Department of Environment Yukon Youth Conservation Corps. The survey was also available online and was advertised by the Yukon Conservation Society. The survey was answered by a total of 105 respondents.

To help inform the Porter Creek/Whistle Bend/Takhini/Range Point trail planning process, YCS, FOMC and PCCA are submitting a compilation of responses to the questions in the McIntyre Creek Trail Survey that are relevant to this trail planning process. These responses are below.

How do you think the trails / park could be improved to enhance your experience?

Please note that this was an open-ended question - the themes used to structure this section were developed after the survey was closed.

ORV impacts and management measures

Just keep moving back the boulders that are supposed to hinder quads and trucks and I'll be happy.

less trails used for motorized vehicles so they are narrower and more plants and birds are visible.

There needs to be better signage and physical barriers (natural looking - i.e. boulders) that prevent motorized vehicles from accessing designated non-motorized trails. Further enforcement is required to discourage motorized vehicles on those designated non-motorized trails.

The trails along the creek, especially near the beaver pond may need to be hardened and perhaps moved away from the eroding banks. Some of the main trails, especially between McIntyre Creek and the College, need work and structures in place to contain the erosion caused by ATVs. Restricting access to ATVs in some areas would be beneficial along with education about the sensitivity of some areas to erosion and trail damage.

Less off road vehicle use.

Id prefer not to see damage from off road vehicles.

Keep motorized vehicles to s minimum

have stricter regulation of motor vehicles such as ATVs and snow machines

More effective prohibition of dirt bikes, quads and trucks in the park and on the trails.

remove or limit ATV and off road motorcylce use.

If the road access was blocked with a gate at the college rd for cars and trucks that like to push the limit and destroy the trails and the experience.

Please keep vehicles and ATV out of area. The destruction and widening of trails is startling. Single walking trails have turned into vehicle width trails over the 18 years I have been walking there daily. It is disheartening.

Limit ATV usage!

No motorized off road vehicles/snowmobiles!

Prevent off road vehicles to use the trails for safety reasons.

Restrict motorized traffic only to the one through road. Motorized traffic move rocks or simply go around barricades. Signage and more effective barricades needed.

Limit dirt bike use. Better signage.

Stop damage to the trails caused by ATV use. They are getting wider and there are many new trails. Remediate the harm that has been done.

Kept as single-track walking trails. More blockages and more officer presence to enforce bylaw to keep ATVs ONLY on the large through-roads.

I would like to see them closed to motorized traffic

Stop the illegal ATV use

Less ATVs and motorbikes. Natural barriers.

Better/improved signage. More protection of so-called non-motorized trails to ensure they maintain that status in both summer and winter. Otherwise single track trails will become wider.

More signage with respect to motor vehicles using the areas and perhaps monitoring on occasion. Can be very dangerous at times.

Less ORV

Clearer areas for motorized vehicles (or banning them)

Improved signage/mapping on trails between AH and MV. Improved deterrence mechanisms for offroad vehicles. Paved area between pumphouse and pine.

Paved Paths

It would be nice to have a paved trail right to Yukon College/the Arts Centre as opposed to having to walk on the road for part of the way. Otherwise I have been happy with the recent changes in the park and the existing trails.

Remove the paving, nothing about it is natural!

Other Infrastructure

Would love a little bench to sit on at the little pond just below the bridge, where we take our dogs to play in the water.

Speed bumps on the road into the pumphouse

Erosion control on some of the slopes.

Garbage cans. Outhouse

Random garbage cans throughout

Removal of deadfall, firesmarting.

User Groups

Retain balance between uses - do not exclude one use for the benefit of the others.
Encourage new users.

Habitat and Wildlife

I feel the typical wildlife in that area ie)beavers, moose, coyotes, eagles etc should be allowed to live in their habitat without being disturbed by bylaw officers, conservation officers, etc.

Trail Signage and Planning

Public road signs advertising hiking area

Signage, trail markers, trail maps

There are an (over)abundance of trails out there, meaning that it is easy to get lost and nearly always possible to cut from one area to another. I propose effort taken to highlight the "real" trails, e.g. by putting signs up, and to close some of the smaller trails to allow for re-vegetation, e.g. by laying logs across, etc.

I like the trails. I didn't know that they were included on trail maps - if those are up to date and accurate they would enhance my experience as I would be more comfortable taking different routes than my routine.

i am happy with the trails. I can't think what I'd do to improve them.

Directional signage on some of the main trails would encourage more use and bring more people up to the area. A skiable link between Middle McIntyre Creek area and Mt Mac ski trails would also enhance use.

Trail marking, trail maps, consolidating the random trails so less area is disturbed.

there is little logic to the existing trail network in terms of trail design or layout. The trails have been developed over the years largely thru use by various user groups without a broader vision or design considerations e.g. Contouring up/down inclines. Would be very nice to see some of the trail design expertise being used to build the Mtn bike trails at mt Mac and riverdale utilized to improve the Mc Creek network.

1) I would appreciate having more signage and/or a printable map. The trails near Whistle Bend and along Range Road are unmarked. There are a few signs on the trails near Yukon College, but you have to know where to look. 2) I am concerned that there appears to be no conservation plan for the trails along the cliffs near Whistle Bend. These trails offer beautiful views of the river, but they will not sustain heavy use as the population grows.

I don't know that they need to be improved, but they absolutely need to be maintained/not encroached upon. If improvements are an option, a few sections could be leveled (as in, it's tough on the ankles running on ground that slopes left to right), and a few sections are pretty root-heavy for biking, but it's wilderness after all, and I certainly don't mind.

with a bunch of small and a few large maps at trail junctions like in Riverdale, and then once better established with names a nice trail map like the one for Riverdale.

Trails are difficult to follow. Name trails, mark with signs giving directions. Improve trail on west side of creek to Mountainview Drive. Could use a bridge over creek near the KK. Lower McIntyre needs trails.

I would love to have a map of the trails - it is really not clear where the trails lead. I tend to just go try the off shots and see where they might go.

Trail maps posted at some major intersections to indicate length of hike/possible routes.

Middle McIntyre creek desperately need way marking. Too easy to get lost. Needs a couple of creek crossings to make loop walks. More people using area would make it feel safer.

Trail signs and Markers could help.

Signage

signage may be nice

Maybe some signs on the trails.

Development

don't development them any further (as in no added residential or industrial use.

Ensure that the status of the remains as is, non-developed.

Don't build any houses

No Change Needed

I think they're pretty fantastic right now.

It's absolutely necessary to a healthy life.

Keep it as natural and undevelopped as possible

Perfect as they are

I REALLY like it the way it is right now

Leave them as they are!

Garbage

We should do litter pick up near Stinky Lake as it is a popular place for hooligans that disrespect the area near the dock.

By adding a couple of bearproof garbage can especially one close to a fishing area where a sign is located. It is always messy there.

Signs for people to pick up and properly dispose of dog feces. A few gargage cans along the main/paved trail.

My experience could be enhanced if people would stop littering around the area. Critters against litter!

Dogs

Many dog owners could be more diligent about picking up after their dogs, especially on or near trails.

I have lived in Takhini North for six years. I use the trails a lot. I always find it an absolute tragedy how many people walk their dogs and NONE of them clean up after them. It's especially disgusting in the winter time when the white snow-covered pathways are strewn with dog feces. I used to walk to work at Yukon College and arrive feeling totally disgusted and angry every day. In the spring, the hill that the kids use for tobogganing is also lined with dog poo. It's very very very sad. If any signage/conversations, etc can centre around this issue, it would be greatly appreciated. It is not a wilderness area and unfortunately, if not everyone is in the habit of cleaning up after pets, no one will do it... the tragedy of the commons. It's very disgusting. I've even puked on a walk while pregnant it's disgusted me so much!

Multiple Themes

Eliminate access by all motorised vehicles through bylaws, enforcement and effective perimeter barricades. "Rewild" many of the wider trails. Re-route overhead power lines (the newest ones are directly over the lower beaver pond (the one nearest the pumphouse) which is prime bird habitat).

1. ensure snow dump does not block trail that extends westerly to AK hwy. 2. little more interpretative info. 3. few interpretive walks each season focusing on various aspects of the area

I think protecting what is there without further development of roads, buildings, etc. and reducing motorized traffic would improve the experience. If the beavers come back that would improve the area.

Ensure dogs are keep on a lease. Having assurance that the trails will be left and not taken over by development.

Fewer ATVs! A few more garbage bins for dog waste.

I love the trails. I think that everyone should clean up after their dog, but that is a user issue, not a trail issue.

interpretive maps & signage informing users of ecological value and drawing attention to specific features ("here's a highbush cranberry patch...this plant has been harvested for use as an anti-inflammatory..can help with menstrual cramps and back ache", "check out this creek which flows out of Fish Lake...it's home to...", "water levels rise and fall with the seasons and with activity at Icy Waters. Please help maintain the integrity of banks and keep the water clear by walking/biking/driving well back from the water...").

Concerned about smaller trails being used by motorized vehicles. Concerned about garbage, specifically broken glass and dumped electronics (possibly hazardous?)

I think the improvements to the park have increased the number of visitors and local residents to the area and the Y2C2 group have done a great job with the video. Further

improvements should be carefully planned in order to ensure the "wildlife" aspects of the park are maintained.

The more restrictions to motorized vehicles (ATVs, dirt bikes, snowmobiles), the better. Even well-meaning users cause damage. Less well-meaning users cause excessive damage through carelessness and wanton destruction of trails and trees, as well as unacceptable levels of noise in many instances. Other than these issues, the less intervention and development, the better. In other words, the area should be left to follow its natural course, to the extent possible.

Aggressively restrict motorized vehicles on the non-motorized trails. More interpretive signs educating users of the area's importance (wildlife, our connection to nature, clean water to Yukon River...).

Probably less dump trucks from Mountain View, and I am not crazy about the ATVs (but I know we have to share the space), but other than that I just love them. I would love it also if they were designated off-leash.

- Reduce the dog poo load. It is truly disgusting. Dog owners use this area as a bathroom. I would like to see better signage, informative messaging, and more poo bags and garbage cans at access points. The message needs to be clear to all: allowing your dog to poo on the trails, or in the woods, is not OK. If I went and dropped a turd out there, would people be upset? I personally don't see the difference - poo is poo. I don't want to see it, smell it, or have my three little kids discovering it or stepping in it as they explore nature. I recognize that the vast majority of daily visitors in the area are walking their dogs, but we other users shouldn't be neglected nor subjected to their desires to "externalize" their waste management problems. - Collaborate with Yukon College on a trails plan and vegetation conservation/restoration. They have a huge chunk of this area in their endowment lands. - It would be great to have some official, well-built, and fun mountain bike trails that connect Takhini and Porter Creek with the trail system at Mount MacIntyre.

The use of off road vehicles should be greatly curtailed and prohibited in some areas. There should be no residential or commercial development in this area. I walk in the middle McIntyre Creek area daily with my dog. It is a beautiful and pristine nature area that my family greatly enjoys. We walk in this area often and I would like to see it preserved.

No motorized use. Sorry, but that's what would improve the experience. Boulders at all trail heads. A gate at the head of the road with a parking area, garbage cans, trail/use information so people can park and walk but not drive in. Unlimited access has always meant partying, littering, broken bottles, etc. Some trail restoration, erosion management and maintenance of the main around-the-pond loop trail. The pedestrian-only bridge below the college is excellent, breaking the loop that used to invite dirt bikes and ATVs. The erosion fence at the motorized bridge by the pump house has fallen down and needs repair. Agreement with the City to not destroy vegetation that is trying to grow back, which they currently do every time the grade the road. And last but not least, NO road through Middle McIntyre for either Porter Creek D or the College. I feel a road through Middle McIntyre to

the highway from the College makes as much sense as twinning the Alaska Highway. Which is to say ... none. Insanity.

1 - Elimination of motorized access; 2 - Full protection from development ('Porter Creek D' and/or college expansion); 3 - Re-wilding of some (many?) trails and quad roads (because in some places there are too many trails/roads); 4 - protection of the area from cut lines and overhead lines (electrical utility); 5 - Change colour/appearance of pump-house to a more camouflaged look); 6 - Add a trail or two from the area between the pedestrian bridge (not the quad bridge) along the creek to near Mountainview Drive; 7 - Re-establish the beaver(s) to the lower beaver pond at least!

Fix some of the erosion problems along banks. Directional signage at intersections

revegetate impacted areas - better management of ORVs - signage at trailheads

More signage, Garbage bins, Benches/sitting areas. Interpretive stuff

Eliminate ATV/motor bikes. Clean up old vehicles. Garbages.

No development. Garbage cans.

Garbage cans

Leave as is. No 40ft corridor! Restrictions on path width (stop erosion of trails)

Leave as is. NO DEVELOPMENT! No paved path. Garbage bins but have to be picked up frequently.

More single track/biking trails. More signage and maps for new single tracks. Official city mountain bike skill park

Please provide any further comments and/or stories from your experiences in McIntyre Creek Park.

General Appreciation of the Area

It is health to the soul during all seasons. Gives life to our wilderness city theme motto. Love to see the grouse mating, birds in all seasons, coyotes, game trails, Countless stories, great berry picking too.

McIntyre Park provides easy access to nature and recreational opportunities which can be enjoyed by all Whitehorse residents and visitors. it has been really pleasant to see how many more people use the area for quite enjoyment and recreation compared to 15 years ago. The park has been a success and the area could also benefit from some restorative work to increase its natural values and decrease the impact of transportation and utility corridors that degrade its attributes.

My children and I absolutely love our shared "backyard"- a title they've always used. It's a place of peace, tranquility, activity and beauty. Just this summer, my kids and I spend 3 hours watching for the arrival of the Chinook Salmon, and upon seeing the fish, the kids demonstrated an excitement which parallels only to holidays and festivals. I look forward to McIntyre Creek remaining for the generations to come.

Great little nature paradise next to home. Would not want to miss it for relaxation

This is one of our local treasures and well worth protecting from degradation by off-road vehicles and other 'hard' uses. It's a haven for college students, skiers, hikers, etc and a unique environment right in our back yards. Very worth drawing public attention and encouraging gentle use of.

Love skiing in the winter.

My husband and I used to walk through the area regularly, especially when the eagles were nesting. My memories are of how green and vibrant the area was, and the need for high rubber boots. The trails are welcome additions, but please keep them as few as possible, and maintain the pristine environment. Thank you.

I love the area!

This is an important green space for Whitehorse residents and wildlife.

Fun to use, very quiet and diverse

NOTE that I live in Mary Lake but the survey didn't like my answer so I had to click another location. I come to town and visit friends while hiking/running in the Mc Creek Area.

Love this little gem in the centre of town. It would be an irreversible loss if it was developed. It should have park status restricting any further development. I hope the beavers that have come back are able to stay and are not trapped and killed again. Their presence makes a big difference to the overall health of the pond area. Nice to see the water levels back up where they should be. I love to witness the changing seasons walking and running the trails all year long. My comfort "food" for the soul.

It's a wonderful little gem a stone throw from my house. My kids and I go on adventure walks all the time, we see wildlife, berries, fish.... we love it and need to protect it.

When on paternity leave I would walk my son to sleep in the park daily. Now we go on adventures together where he has a chance to learn about local flora and fauna right near our home. The park enables many different activities for local residents of all ages that do not require driving anywhere.

Thanks for your efforts to protect the area. We are lucky as residents to have such a nice place in our backyard.

Thank you YCS and Friends of McIntyre for all you've done to keep this area protected - it is an amazing place so easy to access for so many people and kids. It would be really great to see motorized use on only designated motorized trails to minimize the soil erosion and wildlife habitat disturbance that so often occurs. It has been great to see the City making more of an effort which has made a difference already but there is a ways to go I believe.

This area is literally 5 minutes from my back door in Takhini North so it is my go-to area for walking/hiking. I am so grateful to have nature so closely at hand and believe it is a contributing factor in my lowering my stress and increasing my physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. I hope this area can remain untouched for future generations.

Great area that makes living in Whitehorse outstanding. We are in McIntyre Creek Park daily.

It's a beautiful area to take my grandkids for adventures and exploration.

McIntyre Creek Park has saved many a human soul. It should remain as it is to save and rescue many more. It is blessed sanity in human lives gone mad.

- a real asset to the city especially as the population continues to grow

I have fallen in love with this place since the first day I went to work through it.

There is no better place to be during spring. This place is where it's at!

Daycare use has been amazing for exposing my kids to nature

Beautiful, quiet place to walk/meditate during the work day

Is a "Yukon Artist at Work" and does paintings of the area.

McIntyre Creek is WONDERFUL. When I came back to Whitehorse the first thing I was to come back to McIntyre Creek.

Asphalt is really great for walking.

Great place for off leash walking of dogs. Love the area!

Good fishing and awesome for walking dogs. Thanks lots.

It's a great area that needs to be preserved.

Great asset

Development

It is valuable green space in the middle of the city. It should be kept as such. Porter Creek D would essentially chop the orienteering map in half and limit the course setting options we have even for the areas that would not be developed.

Sure develop the city with reasonable densification but recognize the 'gems' that should be protected. Whitehorse has very few creeks and this area is clearly 'special' - protect Middle McIntyre Creek for the kids!

Please don't develop - we love the trails.

Fish, Plants and Wildlife

I used to sit and watch the beaver work in the pond they built. There used to be more birds singing as you walked through the area. I would like to encourage them to come back.

One day this summer, I left work early and met my dad and two of nephews at my house. We picked up my little neighbor and his dog on our way to the marsh. My dad wanted to show me the elk thistle and the monkey pod. We left Kemper and Loic at the waters edge building stuff and my dad, the baby and I went exploring. It was amazing to see two rare plants so easily. By the time we made our way back I had caught a frog to show the boys. They were ecstatic and full of questions. All in all, we were in that small concentrated area for close to two perfect hours. The dogs were happy. The kids were happy. The adults were happy.

The trails in McIntyre Creek have been my favourite hiking area since 1986 when I moved to Whitehorse. It was sad that the beavers were trapped out, as there has definitely been a reduction in life in the area - ducks no longer nest there, eagles have less to hunt so frequent sightings that use to be, are no more.

I hope the wildlife is left alone, not destroyed as was done with the Beavers and otter.

I love McIntyre! We have a resident moose living near Stinky lake. It's amazing to have a large ungulate in a subdivision green space. This should support the idea that it is an important conservation space that provides great wildlife habitat.

I feel very fortunate to be able to enjoy these trails and enjoy watching the wildlife. It seemed unnecessary to me that beavers which are a part of the environmental balance of ponds had to be killed. I hope this area becomes a protected area for all wildlife.

After 15+ years of walking these trails, I was fortunate to have my first encounter with bears this summer -- a sow black bear with three small cubs were "playing" on the trail about 30 yards ahead of me. I quietly turned and walked back from where I'd come, and, aside from a very short lunge in my direction, she did not pursue me. Two other wondrous sightings: four river otters gambolling in the creek, where it opens out to the wider pond; and a large, bright corona of northern lights above my head one year in late fall. As well, there have been numerous examples of breathtaking beauty over the years. The proliferation of lupins this spring is one such example, and could be enjoyed on every walk for three or four weeks. The roses, too, were amazingly abundant this year, and every fall brings an abundance of mushrooms of many varieties. While I often enjoy walking the trails with my husband, I am delighted that this area is safe enough for a woman to enjoy comfortably in solitude. This area is very special to me, all year 'round. It adds priceless value to my life, in terms of exercise, fresh air, and nourishment for the soul.

Spent my formative years there. My peaceful secret place is in there. Watched the beavers come and go and come again. Learned to bird there. Commuted to the college thru there. Trained for competitive sport there. Met a bear, and a moose there and thought it was a horse because I didn't have my glasses on.

It's amazing seeing eagles and beavers so close to home.

Impacts

Some high school joyriders were using the trail when someone moved the boulders over. Haven't seen signs of them in the past year, though. It's also good to see that the skids being used for fires are gone and lately even cans and bottles are fewer in number. I am pleased to see things are being well kept. Kudos to the Society.

I have been using this area intensively for over 20 years. I have noticed that the area is used more and more. The wear and tear of more traffic - both by foot, bike and motorized vehicle traffic is more obvious every year.

I enjoy and value this natural area so close to suburban development. But being so close, it is subject to abuse and neglect, along with wear and tear from continued high use. Some sort of management plan, zoning of use, and public communication/interpretation

campaign could be helpful to promote good management and public stewardship of this area.

Signs reminding pet owners to clean up after their pets! Provide compostable bags to contain the waste??

User Groups

Welcome new uses - such as geo-cachers, disc golf etc, build constituency for the future.

ORVs

Far too often - almost weekly - I run into ATVs, dirt bikes, ARGOs and even full-sized trucks driving on trails that are not intended for vehicles. The trails represent a very important green space within the city; we should not let it get degraded.

In my 12 years in Takhini North, I have witnessed a small and limited trail network morph into trails wide enough for motor vehicles and the network of trails increase at the expense of the health of the forest and particularly the understory. ORVs are the main culprit.

Trails

This is a gem area that is under-used. Adding signage and a link to Mt Mac ski trails could increase usage. The college could benefit from this - rather than being seen as the tower on top of the hill, people could access via the park and feel the area is more accessible. Simple promotion of main trails would do a lot. Small side trails, especially in the Porter Creek area, keep people from using the trails recreationally because they're too confusing.

While a beautiful area, the trail network is a miss mash of woodcutter roads, atv tracks, and often poorly laid out walking running trails. Many people in the immediate neighbourhoods travel by vehicle to Riverdale or Miles Canyon to access better trails. Modest trail design improvements would make this area more interesting for self-propelled activities. Use of motorized vehicles should be limited to specific designated trails.

I really enjoy the trails as they are as they create an amazing network that caters to a wide variety of users. It really helps foster and maintain a "community" feel in an ever-increasingly "city-feeling" town.

I love these trails and wouldn't want to see anything happen to them. So many folks in the community use these for so many human-powered purposes - they provide a huge boost to the quality of life for citizens of Whitehorse.

My children learned how to bike on those trails! They are a regular part of our family life.

I walk the trails in the park all year round. They start just minutes from my home, very convenient! It is hard to imagine my life without them. It is the place where I go to unwind and recharge.

it is AMAZING to have this in our 'backyard'. I wish it was easier to get to Yukon College from Takhini North via trails the whole way vs walking along the busy college access road (for part of the way). This feels unsafe and in the winter I don't feel safe.

worried about trail erosion in some places.

I ride them everyday on my way to work. Valuable asset to the city. Better communications marketing as an alternative to MV and AH may encourage greater use.

Using trail for 15 years. Reason for using trails is to reduce ghg emissions, exercise.

Passionate about environmental responsibility

Well used trail system that should not be developed further

It is great to have these trails nearby for daily walks with the dogs and kids! Hope they are protected from development.

I use the trails lots. I grew up using the trails.

Multiple Themes

Dog owners need to clean up after said animals, be kept on leash (unless of course it's become an off leash area?) and bylaw needs to educate animal owners in the area and the monitor/enforce. Nobody wants to walk in dog poop and who wants to be on the trail on a hot day when it stinks! Parking near trail access points needs to be cleaned up, people parking on bump outs, wrong directions, too close to crossings etc. ... Why are none of the curbs painted yellow on bump outs or no parking signs installed? Too often there are encounters with negative outcomes which can be avoided!

The paved trail is wonderful but rocks are on the pavement - creating a hazard for some small wheeled users. Keep motorized traffic off the paved pathways (including crossings).

My kids are being raised with regular access to this gem of an area winter, spring, summer and fall - it needs protection and re-wilding! Bring back the beavers - shut out the quads!

College could use some of the bleak industrial looking wastelands as a place to run an environmental rehabilitation course. College could be part of an environmental stewardship group instead of promoting the two new roads in its recent endowment lands process.

The new development in Takhini North as brought a lot of new people in the area. Lots of disrespectful people. The narrow trails in the woods are now awfully wide. The paved trail is absolutely ridiculous. Numerous aggressive dogs with owners who could not care less. I have never seen this before, this is massive negative changes. And also the disc golf people who just destroy any vegetation close to their ugly posts and plastic signs (I have pictures of nice pine trees on the ground). This should not be in the area. It's an eyesore we get to see on a daily basis.

I got lost in the college and ended up carrying my bike and wading through the water.