



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Trail groups ask for help

Funding and people among top requests from trail groups

It's been a challenging year for people who manage hiking trails. Many regions of NS saw unprecedented trail damage caused by Hurricane Fiona. And increased trail traffic - a hangover from the pandemic - has led to more wear and tear.

Janet Barlow, Hike Nova Scotia executive director, says trail managers are asking for help. Hike NS conducted a survey of trail managers in February followed by interviews with a subset of them. They included mostly volunteer community trail groups but also municipalities and others. They identified more funding, more volunteers and more access to staff or contractors as top issues.

"Many don't have the capacity to hire and supervise staff themselves," says Barlow. "So even accessing wage subsidy programs to hire summer staff for example is logistically out of reach."

This is where Hike NS's Youth Trail Corps comes in. Plans are in play for crews of youth to be deployed across the province to help trail managers with trail building and maintenance. If the group can get funding in place, Barlow hopes the first trail crews will hit the ground next year.

Another top need trail groups identified was training on trail repair and maintenance. So, Hike NS stepped up with a series of trail maintenance workshops happening this spring and fall.

"We're talking about volunteers who don't have the time or money for in-depth training," she says. "We thought one-day workshops offered in areas hardest hit by the hurricane was a good solution."

Hike NS urges trail users to help by donating to or volunteering with their local trail group.

For more information, please contact the following (not for publication):

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Hike Nova Scotia (Hike NS) encourages and promotes a growing walking and hiking culture throughout the province, striving to be the voice for those who hike, walk and snowshoe as well as those who build and maintain hiking trails.