



**Subject:** Snowmobile Use on Trans-Canada Trail Between Broadway and East Town Limit

**Report Number:** 19-59

Author: Rick Cox

Meeting Type: Council Meeting

Meeting Date: Monday, December 9, 2019

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT Report RCP 19-59 is received for information;**

**AND THAT the Town of Tillsonburg supports the County of Oxford extending their Agreement with the Southern Sno-Riders Snowmobile Club to include the portion of the Trans-Canada Trail between Zenda Line and Broadway for use as an official OFSC snowmobile trail as a pilot for December 2019-March 2020;**

**AND THAT the Town requires a 20km/hr speed limit on the portion of the Trans-Canada Trail within the limits of the Town of Tillsonburg be posted by the Snowmobile Club as part of their signage plan;**

**AND THAT snowmobile trailer parking is limited to the Tillson Ave trail parking lot;**

**AND THAT this support is limited to the 2019-2020 season, pending a review before supporting this use for additional seasons.**

**Background:**

At their meeting on November 25, 2019, Council heard a request from the local Southern Sno-Riders Snowmobile Club to allow them to use the section of the Trans-Canada Trail (TCT) along the former CASO rail corridor between the Eastern limit of the Town and Broadway as part of their approved route. The Club has an Agreement with the County of Oxford for use of other portions of the rail corridor and is seeking to add to that network in order to give licensed OFSC trail riders access to food and fuel in Tillsonburg.

The relevant section of the TCT in Tillsonburg is owned by the County of Oxford and maintained by the Town under a 50/50 cost-sharing arrangement. Like all trails managed by Tillsonburg, the corridor is neither monitored nor maintained between November 1 and April 30.

Snowmobiles are the only motorized use permitted on multi-use TCT segments, but that use is subject to having local agreements in place. Permission for snowmobile use is neither universal to all segments of the Trail nor mandated by the national TCT organization.

**Discussion:**

Council directed staff to report back on this matter. Staff reviewed the request with County personnel to confirm process and review any conditions or concerns. County staff have the delegated authority to extend the existing Agreement with the Southern Sno-Riders to include the additional section of the TCT but have advised they will not do so if the Town of Tillsonburg is not supportive of the extension.

The Agreement between the Town and the County regarding the management and operation of the TCT speaks to having snowmobile use on portions of the trail but confirms that the Town has no maintenance or inspection obligations related to snowmobile use. As an official OFSC trail, only licensed members of the OFSC would be permitted to snowmobile on the trail. Non-member use of OFSC trails is monitored by both OPP and the volunteer marshals.

The Southern Sno-Riders provided their standard signage plan as required by the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs as information. County and Town staff are recommending that the portion of the trail within Town limits have a lower posted speed limit than trails outside of Town, and have advised the Club of the requirement to post a maximum 20km/hr speed limit within Tillsonburg.

Other trail users (walkers, cross-country skiers, etc.) will still be able to use the corridor, and there is the potential for interaction between those users and snowmobilers. The lower speed limit is intended to reduce the danger to all users and to reduce the noise made by snowmobiles.

Once the snowmobile trail has been groomed and is deemed officially open for use by the Club, the access gates at Broadway and Tillson Avenue will be left open to allow snowmobiles to pass through. Until then, the grooming equipment operator will open the gate to allow the groomer through and then close/lock the gate afterwards.

The Tillson Avenue trail access parking area is large enough to accommodate several snowmobile trailers. There is also trailer parking available at the Zenda Line crossing. The private parking lots at the Broadway end of the trail would not normally be available for snowmobile trailer parking, and the Sno-Riders have indicated their marketing materials will show parking at the Zenda Line location.

**Consultation:**

The Oxford OPP detachment was contacted for comment. Comments received in time for inclusion with the Agenda are attached.

**Financial Impact/Funding Source:**

There is no direct financial impact arising from this report. The snowmobile club is responsible for installing and maintaining all signage, and accountable to the County to repair any damage to the trail corridor that is caused by their equipment and licensed snowmobile users.

**Community Strategic Plan (CSP) Linkage:**

1. Excellence in Local Government
  - ☒ Demonstrate strong leadership in Town initiatives
  - ☒ Streamline communication and effectively collaborate within local government
  - ☒ Demonstrate accountability
2. Economic Sustainability
  - ☒ Support new and existing businesses and provide a variety of employment opportunities
  - ☐ Provide diverse retail services in the downtown core
  - ☐ Provide appropriate education and training opportunities in line with Tillsonburg's economy
3. Demographic Balance
  - ☒ Make Tillsonburg an attractive place to live for youth and young professionals
  - ☒ Provide opportunities for families to thrive
  - ☒ Support the aging population and an active senior citizenship
4. Culture and Community
  - ☒ Promote Tillsonburg as a unique and welcoming community
  - ☒ Provide a variety of leisure and cultural opportunities to suit all interests
  - ☒ Improve mobility and promote environmentally sustainable living

**Attachments**

Appendix A - OPP Correspondence

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	RCP 19-59 - Snowmobile Use on Trans-Canada Trail Between Broadway and East Town Limit.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Dec 2, 2019

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Dave Rushton - Nov 29, 2019 - 4:37 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DR', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Ron Shaw - Nov 29, 2019 - 5:13 PM**

**Donna Wilson - Dec 2, 2019 - 9:18 AM**