



Trans Canada Trail

Signage Guidelines

Mission: We will promote and assist in the development and use of the Trans Canada Trail by supporting success at the local level in the creation of this national network.

1. Introduction

Trans Canada Trail (TCT) aims to adhere to the high standards for trail wayfinding practices. This comprehensive resource document is intended to facilitate the process of signing The Great Trail (TGT) from coast to coast to coast. This ambitious task will require the cooperation of thousands of partners and volunteers.

Ensuring that Great Trail users can easily navigate the entire route is critical to the continued development of the Trail. Partners who follow TCT guidelines and recommendations will help to establish a consistent signage system that will be easy to follow.

In addition to wayfinding recommendations, TCT encourages its partners to consider signage that will help to manage trail users' expectations and to identify hazards. This document will help partners in considering signage that identifies any known risks along a particular route, as well as the activities that are permitted.

This is a working document and will be regularly updated to reflect the best practices and new ideas. Many of the ideas listed come from the countless partners and volunteers who continue to support this national effort.

2. Sign Location/Wayfinding Guidelines

TCT's sign location/wayfinding recommendations are simple and straightforward, and will ensure consistency along the entire Great Trail network. The recommendations are as follows:

- **Signs with The Great Trail logo should be installed facing both directions of travel at every decision point.**
 - Decision points include: trail intersections, road crossings, bridge crossings, rail crossings, and significant changes in direction.
 - A minimum of two signs should be posted at every decision point, one for each direction of travel; however, in some cases, partners may want to consider installing four signs at every decision point (i.e. one sign before and one sign after a decision point in each direction of travel, as a reassurance for users).
- **Signs with The Great Trail logo should be installed facing each direction of travel at intervals of at most 1 km.**
 - Trail partners are encouraged to post signs with The Great Trail logo alongside, below or above any kilometre markers that already exist along the route. If there are none, partners may want to place TGT signs in lieu of kilometre markers.

- **TGT directional arrows should be installed below TGT signs to note direction of The Great Trail route.**
-There is no need to install directional arrows points when The Great Trail route proceeds in the same direction.
- **Where possible, sidewalk and urban shared road routes should be signed in the same manner.**
-TCT now offers stencils so partners can paint The Great Trail logo and arrow on sidewalks as an alternative to standard wayfinding signs.
-Specific signage recommendations for rural road routes are noted below.

3. Exceptions to the Rules

Due to the varied nature of TGT routes across Canada there are exceptions to the previously noted signage recommendations:

3.1 Road Routes

TCT is continuing to explore options for signing road routes in unincorporated communities and along roads managed by provincial or territorial authorities. In provinces and territories where authorities have agreed to allow the installation of TGT signage, the following recommendations apply:

- **Signage with directional arrows should be installed wherever The Great Trail route leaves one road for another.** Reassurance signs should be posted a short distance (approximately 100 metres) after a road route leaves one road for another.
- **Signage should be installed facing both directions of travel.**
- **All TGT signs along road routes should be at least 12"x12".**

TCT's Signage Manager is available to consult with provincial or territorial government authorities to aid with custom road signage designs.

3.2 Water routes

- **Signage with The Great Trail logo should be installed facing the direction or directions of travel at all public access points and campsites.**
- **Signage with The Great Trail logo should be installed at public access points facing the direction of travel for those approaching the water.**

3.3 Traverse routes

In some locations along The Great Trail route regular signage installations are either impractical or impossible. Nunavut's 138-km route presents such a scenario. In lieu of the previously noted signage location/wayfinding guidelines, TCT recommends designing traverse route signage systems. In these instances, TCT can provide support in designing custom signage.

As an example, Nunavut's traverse route, Itijjagial Trail, which travels from Kimmarut to Iqaluit, will not have signage posted every kilometre. Instead, the route has custom signage installed on seven shelters along its route. Each sign has The Great Trail logo along with a small route map noting the GPS coordinates of each shelter.

Variations of this type of traverse route signage system can be adapted to work for any type of trail. Partners interested in this type of signage system are encouraged to work with TCT staff to develop a signage system suitable for their particular route.

4. Installation of Signs

Once signage locations have been determined, it is recommended that the specific placement of signs be considered.

- Signs should be installed within 2 to 4 feet from the edge of the Trail
- Signs should be installed at a distance of 4.5 to 5 feet from the ground. These distances should be measured from the bottom of the sign. In regions where snow fall could potentially bury signs during the winter months it is advised that signs be mounted higher than 5 feet.
- TCT funded signs will come with pre-drilled holes that should fit any standard sign post.
- TCT encourages the use of stainless steel or galvanized fasteners when mounting signs, as they will not rust and stain the signs over time.
- If mounting signs on trees, TCT recommends leaving a 1/2 to 1-inch space between the sign and the tree so that the tree doesn't grow over the sign. Do not use screws. Nails securing signs on trees should be backed out every three to five years to avoid damage to the signs and trees. 3 or 4-inch nails are sufficient for securing signs to trees. Do not use copper nails as they will cause severe damage to trees.

5. TCT-Funded Sign Options

5.1 Standard TGT Wayfinding Signs

Standard TGT signs are currently funded at 100%. These signs, manufactured by Fontasy Signs, are of a higher quality than was available in the past. Our recommended standard signs are guaranteed not to fade for at least 10 years and are graffiti-resistant, making them easy to clean if defaced.

Standard TGT signs come in three sizes: 6"x6", 12"x12" and 18" x 18". TCT also offers directional arrows in two sizes: 6"x6" and 12"x12". The 6"x6" arrow is intended for use with both the 12"x12" and 6"x6" signs.

5.2 Co-branded TGT Signs

Co-branded signs are partially funded by TCT and provide municipalities and local trails the opportunity to have a simplified wayfinding sign, which includes both a local logo and The Great Trail logo.



5.3 Custom TGT Signs

In addition to standard TGT signs, partners are also encouraged to consider developing custom signs, which will be fully or partially funded by TCT depending on the design request and intended use. Custom signs may include a third language or simply have the languages ordered differently. Custom signs may also be developed for sections where installing standard wayfinding signs may not be practical or possible. Custom signs are ideal for traverse routes or road routes.

6. Choosing the Appropriate Sign Size

When determining the required signage, the following should be considered:

- Who are the primary users? Are they hikers, runners, cyclists, snowmobilers?
 - If your route allows cycling, some 12"x12" signage should be ordered. Trail users travelling at higher rates of speed are less likely to notice small signs.
 - If the Trail section only permits foot traffic 6"x6" or 4"x4" signs may be more appropriate.
- Aesthetics—will a large sign detract from the surrounding environment?
 - 6"x6" and 4"x4" signs are best suited for forested or wilderness environments.
 - As 12"x12" signs may detract from the scenery, TCT recommends using this size at access points, trailheads and road or trail crossings.
- Competing signage—will a smaller sign be noticed among other signage?
 - This is especially important for urban environments, where a mix of 6"x6" and 12"x12" signs are most appropriate.
 - Partners may want to consider working with TCT to develop co-branded signs, in those areas where the Trail shares a route with a recognized route that already bears a name or logo.

7. How to Order TGT Signs

- Determine how many signs you need and in what sizes. Doing a walk-through of your Trail section to identify specific sign locations is the best way to ensure that the optimal number of signs is ordered.
- Use the following link to complete **(including GIS information for sign locations)** and submit a signage request form: <https://form.jotform.com/80153482000240>
- If co-branded or custom signs are required, please consult with TCT's Signage Manager, Heidi Tillmanns at htillmanns@tctrail.ca or by calling 1-800-465-3636 ext. 4353.
 - Custom and co-branded orders will require digital files in order to complete the design work. Please ensure all relevant art work has been submitted to the Signage Manager.

- Sign orders are typically processed and delivered in two to six weeks.

8. Other Conditions

- Apart from officially procured signage, any use of the Trans Canada Trail logo or The Great Trail logo required written permission from Trans Canada Trail
- Alteration of The Great Trail signage logo are not permitted

9. References and Best Practice Resources

Copies of the best practice guidelines and reports can be obtained by contacting the TCT Signage Manager:

Heidi Tillmanns

1-800-465-3636 ext. 4353

htillmanns@tctrail.ca

Parks Canada. Parks Canada Identity Program: Exterior Signage Standards and Guidelines Version 1. March, 2007. http://www.pc.gc.ca/en/docs/bib-lib/~media/docs/bib-lib/pdfs/Exterior_Signage.ashx

Great Allegheny Passage. Graphic Identity and Sign Guidelines Manual. August 31, 2008.

https://gaptrail.org/system/resources/W1siZiIsIjIwMTYvMDkvMTIvMjEvNTEvNTkvODYOL0dBUF9HdWlkZWxpbmVzQm9va19FMI8xXy5wZGYiXV0/GAP_GuidelinesBook_E2%5B1%5D.pdf

NB Trails, EXP Services. Review of Bicycle Signage Guidelines for New Brunswick. January 9, 2013

Sea To Sky Trail. Signage Program Report. February 2013

East Coast Greenway. On Road Designation Draft. May 19, 2012

Garnett McLaughlin. Nova Scotia Community Kiosk Pilot Project. 2012