



Keppoch Mountain Trails Facility

“I know it may seem
small and
insignificant, but it’s
not about what it is,
it’s about what it can
become”

-The Once-ler
Dr. Seuss’ The Lorax



Caption: “Dr. Seuss’ The Lorax” 2012
Photo: Eden Project Website
Designed by: TheLifetimeAdventurer.tumblr.com

Update for Funders, Founders, and Supporters

“The Keppoch Offering”

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Keppoch Reborn

- As of Dec 31, 2014, Keppoch has completed its base lodge with only finishing touches remaining to complete the kitchen. Weekly visitors reach beyond an estimated 200 hikers, mountain bikers, and family gatherings mostly on the weekends with some visitations throughout the weekdays. The lodge is open periodically during the week for events and for Sunday mountain bike shuttle service. Similar to going to church for the avid Downhill Biker! Positive Action for Keppoch (PAK) is renting the lodge for private functions, educational workshops, and other groups doing fundraising events for worthy causes in the region.
- Our 15 km multi-use trail network has something for all skill levels. Users include cross country mountain bikers, hikers, trail runners, and geocachers. There are 6 downhill/freeride specific mountain bike trails serviced by a Summit Shuttle service on Sundays from June to September. This is the main attraction that draws the gravity minded mountain bikers to Keppoch. Great positive feedback let's us know our trail network is on the right track and begging for expansion to allow for more users and longer more sought after adventures. The closest facility offering this type shuttle serviced mountain bike trails to the public is 6hrs away in Campbellton, New Brunswick
- Brand new to our base area is a professionally designed and built pump track which is the anchor for our Kinsman Bike Skills Park. We plan to expand the park in 2015 and complete by end of 2016. It attracts a large number of kids and bike enthusiasts covering a wide range of age and skill levels. Skills parks are designed to teach newcomers to the sport and let experienced participants hone their skills before tackling the larger network of trails.
- Winter brings out the snowshoers, snowboarders, alpine tourers, sledding parties, as well as our annual Winter Fun day. This event attracts anywhere from 250 - 800 visitors depending on the weather. These are mainly locals residing within a 100km radius of the facility. Snowshoeing has become a very popular sport at the Keppoch throughout the winter. The addition of the crackling fireplace and indoor plumbing has tripled our visitors in the 2015 winter months over previous years. With the benefit of Government media campaigns touting the benefits of outdoor activity we are seeing new visitors seeking out our facility.
- Keppoch Continues to Host Provincially Sanctioned Mountain Bike events for both Downhill and Cross Country disciplines. Downhill events attract 30-40 competitors from across the Maritime Provinces, Cross Country events attract over 100



participants! Our race course in 2014 was one of the best, described by Bike Nova Scotia President, Jamie Lamb. We have been asked to prepare for and host a national Canada Cup Event in 2016 or 2017.

- In Canvassing our visitors we find they come from all over the Maritime Provinces. Halifax area leads the way in out of town regular visitors outside the 100km radius but Moncton and Charlottetown also have their fair share. We are starting to see people from our target tourism area of the New England States and Eastern Ontario visiting Keppoch when in the Maritime Provinces on vacation. Comments from our visitors are very positive. They compare Keppoch to other areas they have visited and we love to hear our facility and trail network provides a quality experience for them and we can expect return visits. When developing our trail network we focus on quality trails built to international standards that provides an exceptional experience for the user.
- In 2014, PAK purchased 50 acres of land adjoining our 250 acre site. Four building lots have been created and are in the process of being sold to finance the purchase. The only issue we ran into was not having enough lots to sell. They were all spoken for plus a waiting list before the subdivision was completed. An easement to St. Joseph's Road is included and a land use agreement with the land owner that owns the property to the West River across that road is being discussed. Look for future Trail Network expansion to connect to the West River.

The Keppoch Drawing Board

- To Host National Events there are a few items we need to build. An 800-1000m elimination course that can accommodate 4 participants racing head to head. This consists of wide passing areas, narrow funnels, drops, rock gardens, tight turns, and more, to create an exciting spectator event for the public. A proper starting and feed zone area to accommodate a 250 participant event. A 5km classic XC course that would appeal to high caliber (International) racers.
- To attract the "out of town" visitors to our facility our goal is to create a 50km+ trail network of varying trail type to accommodate a full spectrum of users. The trails will be purpose built for mountain bikers but other users such as hikers and trail runners will be welcome and appreciate the confidence inspiring designs. We plan to build three "Destination" trail loops into our network that will connect Weavers Lake and Keppoch Gulch to the West, Beaver Mountain Park to the North, and the West River



to the East. The three destinations will have different themes associated with the type and level of difficulty of the trail loop. The idea is to design and build the network of trails to meet the “Epic” trail status of the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA). In 2010 IMBA held a 3 day trail workshop to train us in trail design and building techniques. We confidently say this training has been our call to action!

- As an addition to the above noted Epic Trail Network our Gravity Bike Park requires upgrades and additions to realize the full mountain bike potential of the site. We are the only shuttle serviced downhill Mountain Bike venue in Nova Scotia and PEI with New Brunswick currently having the only other shuttle serviced Gravity Bike Park in the Maritime Provinces.
- To add value to the visitor experience and provide the facility with an income to support itself we intend to offer rental equipment for varying activities, on-site equipment repairs, instruction & guide services, and canteen services. This is being considered in an overall operational budget piece but was important to include here to project a full vision of Keppoch in full swing.
- For the outdoor adventure kids we plan to construct a climbing structure for spring, summer, and fall use. Corocord (<http://www.corocord.com/en/>) is an example of a company that sells these. A small one exists at the new playground in Port Hawkesbury and kids are naturally drawn to it.
- A 1km paved assessable trail suitable for all age levels and also for individuals with disabilities. This is a top priority as it allows persons with disabilities tour the base area and feel included in the outdoor community that can traditionally be difficult for them to access. The paved section will also double as an interpretive trail. There are many stories of the Gaels that settled these hills as well as Acadians, Dutch, and others who have immigrated to Northern Nova Scotia.
- For the Winter we are planning to build a Nordic Centre (5km of stacked loops), Tubing Park, and a winter summit shuttle for the Alpine Skiers/Boarders who crave the more rustic downhill experience. A fully serviced Alpine Ski Hill is not being considered for Keppoch. Being a compliment to the other lift served Alpine Ski Areas in the Maritime Provinces is an important aspect to what we feel Keppoch offers as a founding member of the sport in Nova Scotia.



- Additional features we would like to include are a campground, a pavilion at the base, warming huts at Keppoch Summit, Weavers Lake, Keppoch Gulch, Beaver Mountain Park Backcountry, and at the West River Area.

How will Keppoch Sustain & Maintain Itself?

- We have been using Kingdom Trails Association located in Northern Vermont as a model for our vision. They sustain a large trail network through trail pass sales, merchandise sales, fundraising, and volunteer work. We have just launched our “Band Together” annual campaign. This is a campaign where supporters buy wristbands to wear when using Keppoch to show they value the facility. There will be a recommended minimum donation for visitors using the trails. The lodge will continue to be rented out for private functions, education courses and workshops. Fundraising events will be held to raise funds and to also showcase the various activities available at Keppoch. Corporate Sponsorships, Private Donations, In-Kind Contributions all play an important part. As the Keppoch attracts more visitors to the region the local business community will be more apt to offer financial support to ensure its continued success if it is having a positive impact on their revenues.
- Municipal and Provincial Governments will have a financial stake in the success as well. Monetary support for capital work in the development stages will pay future dividends via taxes collected on goods and services in the community, property taxes connected with increased growth to the region, and the always present income tax we all love to pay. Keppoch Mountain is aligned with the Recent “One Nova Scotia” report and has the ability to anchor jobs and people to the Region. Goal #14 of the report is to increase tourism revenues in the province to \$4 billion and we can play our part in reaching that goal. Cumulative economic effects from community driven projects can help Rural Nova Scotia thrive and has been a key factor in our decisions surrounding the role Keppoch will play. Creating an exceptional region to visit, operate a business, raise a family, or retire, is a high priority to the PAK Society as well as returning dividends to our supporters and funders. This is key to the overall well being of a community both physically and economically.
- Finally, but most importantly, will be the businesses operating at the facility. Rentals, repairs, instruction, camps, canteen, summit shuttle, Keppoch merchandise, as well as a solid marketing strategy will be integral to the overall success. Future endeavours such as a tubing park, campground, and climbing structure will all contribute to overall revenue of the facility. The opportunity for private enterprise to join us, thrive, and contribute to Keppoch’s fiscal health is a real possibility. Imagine



a Not-For-Profit providing direct opportunities for rural small business. A model straight from the ideals of the founders of the Coady Institute.

The Keppoch Offering - Economics of Adventure Tourism

- The establishment of a four-season outdoor recreation area is an exciting development for northeast Nova Scotia. We have not seen this scale of outdoor facility purposely constructed since the days of new Provincial/National Parks or downhill skiing developments. Increased demand for such facilities will increase tourism from the Atlantic Provinces, Quebec, Eastern Ontario, and the New England States and assist in attracting people to live and work in the region. With the recent federal funding announcement from Minister Peter MacKay of \$85 million in support of upgrades to Cape Breton National Parks we know they feel the same way about the tourism sector or they wouldn't make such a substantial investment in these times of fiscal restraint or dare I say, "Austerity".
- Based on studies completed by Research Resolutions & Consulting for the Canadian Tourism Commission they have estimated that Atlantic Canada has a total potential adventure tourism market of 905,889 people. They break down as follows:
 - HIKERS - 478,970 (178,640 Canadians, 300,330 Americans)
 - MOUNTAIN BIKERS - 238,760 (135,720 Canadians, 103,040 Americans)
 - X-COUNTRY SKIERS & SNOWSHOERS - 188,159 (79,529 Canadians, 108,630 Americans)
- In an economic impact study conducted in Jackson Hole, Wyoming in 2010 they found the average outdoor enthusiast spent an average of \$126/day and spent an average of 3 days. Assuming Keppoch Mountain Trails Facility is constructed to become a premier facility, we predict Keppoch has the potential to easily attract 2.5% of these traveling outdoor adventurers or more. It is stated in the Parks Canada mountain bike profile report that 25% of the bikers travel to seek new trail experiences. The number of travel bikers within a long days drive = 202,125/year. Our prediction of 2.5% of travel bikers within a long days drive = 5000 visitors per year. Our model park, Kingdom Trails, in Northern Vermont attracts 32,000 visitors per year to their trail facility!! The pessimists ask "Why do you think you can attract 2.5% of these travellers to visit your epic trail network?" We are already seeing the early adopters visiting from the extents of our market area such as Boston, New York, Ontario and beyond. They find us on our Facebook Page, Twitter, and the Nova Scotia Doers and Dreamers Guide. They tend to already be on vacation here but have told us our trails are 2nd to none. Will they tell others? Mountain biking areas'



popularity grows through word of mouth and favourable reviews from those who have experienced them first hand. We have witnessed this via our Facebook page over the last 2 years as more and more visitors explore Keppoch from the Maritime population centres. We have also had requests and visits from travel bloggers, magazine writers, and have been asked to register with trailforks.com that boasts a global reach.

- Mountain bike season is approximately from June 1st to Oct 31 with a short shoulder season on either end. This equals 5 months or approximately 250 visitors/week if we assume we meet our total seasonal goal of 5,000. If 5,000 mountain bikers came for a 2 night average stay/year we would see a potential economic spinoff to the region of \$1,260,000 /year from mountain biking alone. When we combine in potential hikers, trail runners, snowshoers, and other outdoor adventurers we could easily double this number when considering a high quality, year round facility attracting an average of 250 travelling visitors/week. Especially when hiking alone doubles the participants. As a facility we are currently seeing a regular visitation rate in the 200-300 persons per week range. They tend to be locals mixed with day trippers. With this number anticipating to rise our current lodge will be at bustling on weekends. We know we could comfortably handle 300 visitors per day without issue due to the wide expanse of the trail network and varied activities so the above number of users fits comfortably in our current vision.
- We are now gauging support from residents, local business community, Municipal Government, Provincial Government, and ACOA to put together a final plan to construct the Keppoch Mountain Trails Facility over the next 5 years. We have structured our preliminary plans and budget to be modular in nature so we can choose what will fit best when considering stakeholders and funders ability to support the development and how their funds will provide the biggest impact.

Positive Action for Keppoch Society hopes you have enjoyed this update and leave you with this passage from the definition of Community Economic Development:

“Community economic development encourages using local resources in a way that enhances **economic** opportunities while improving **social** conditions in a **sustainable** way”

If you have any questions, comments, or would like to become involved with the Keppoch Development on one of our committees please contact us via email at thekeppoch@gmail.com.