



## RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

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PETITION No.: **421-01774**

BY: **Ms. DAMOFF (OAKVILLE NORTH-BURLINGTON)**

DATE: **NOVEMBER 1, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE CATHERINE MCKENNA**

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Response by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

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SUBJECT

**Land use**

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**ORIGINAL TEXT**

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**REPLY**

In 1992, the Trans Canada Trail initiative was launched to bring together Canada's networks of community recreational trails to form a single trail that would stretch across Canada and connect the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic coasts. Now, 25 years later, this vision has been realized and Canada's Great Trail connects 15 000 communities and spans 24 000 kilometres. The Great Trail crosses land and water routes, traverses urban spaces and wilderness landscapes, and reaches each of Canada's provincial and territorial capital cities. It is used and enjoyed by thousands of Canadians every day of the year. It is the longest continuous recreational trail in the world.

The Great Trail is the product of collaborations among federal, provincial, and territorial governments as well as thousands of communities, trail organizations, donors and volunteers across Canada. A unique and valued aspect of this work is that communities determine the trail route and use. These collaborations have been guided by the Trans Canada Trail organization, a registered not-for-profit which continues to lead the ongoing improvement and enhancement of The Great Trail.

The Government of Canada has been one of a number of financial contributors to The Great Trail, investing over \$60 million since the initiative was launched in 1992. Additional funding and in-kind contributions from provinces, territories, municipalities, corporations, plus donations from individual Canadians, have surpassed \$165 million over the past 25 years.

Canada's diverse geography has been travelled for millennia using a variety of means of transport. It is no surprise then that Canada's Great Trail reflects the diversity of our country's landscapes and the variety of methods used to travel them. The 24 000 kilometre expanse of The Great Trail includes multi-use recreational trails, wilderness trails, as well as components of waterways and roadway systems. The diversity of Canada's geography and the diversity of the many thousands of users of The Great Trail requires a trail network that is flexible and that can accommodate multiple modes of transportation.

The government is committed to ongoing improvement of the Great Trail and, in Federal Budget 2017, the government allocated \$30 million in funding over five years for ongoing enhancements to The Great Trail and to capacity building for communities and organizations involved in this important initiative. These funds will contribute significantly to the improvement of The Great Trail and, while the federal government cannot legislate standards or requirements for a recreational trail system established largely on provincial and municipal lands, this funding will help to ensure that all Canadians can safely enjoy The Great Trail for years to come.