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March 26, 2011

Dear Members:

There's no more exciting time of the year to be a cyclist than now. It's true; we're not out enjoying 25-degree evening training rides and commuting in short sleeves, but the rides of July culminate in isolation; the anticipation for them builds cumulatively across a cold winter, reaching its pinnacle in early April as the trails start to dry, the roads desalinate, and trainers join snow shovels in basement corners all across the land—or something like that.

Like most of you, the BNS executive has been daydreaming at our day jobs, contemplating all things cycling, and all things BNS, both big and small.

If you've yet to check it out for yourself, Kyle has created an awesome new website and Facebook group (on which the 2011 race calendar is now live). Our plan is to allow for far more frequent updates by each sector, which the more modern framework the site employs will now allow. Kaarin's online registration project has been a glowing success; memberships are now available online via credit card! In the near future the website should be able to send out a PDF "temporary license" upon the entering of payment; your empathic BNS executive recognizes that licensing procrastination has long stood to thwart many of April's most motivated.

On the road racing side of things, we've published an informational document on the website detailing the structure of the series for this season. Drastic changes are few: we've moved to a "best of" calculation for the series points; left movement between categories to a rider's discretion; and reduced the length of the A category in hopes of enticing all A-caliber riders. Simon Roberts is in the midst of trying to attain a chip timing system for this season, possibly renting a system from a winter sport. Should that fail, we've discussed using multiple HD finish line cameras and analyzing the footage on-site; discussions on the feasibility of hiring a "timing tech," who would be responsible for this, are in the works. The overall goal is to take results and timing largely off the commissairing plate.

Preparations for off-road action have also commenced, with Jon setting us up with new number plates for this season. They're 7x7, a more manageable size than our last batch, and will be different colors corresponding to each category. Outdoor Gear Canada and Giro have also renewed their sponsorship of the plates. We're expanded the ability-based category system to recognize our faster women; there will now be two exclusively female categories: F-B, an introductory category with its own start similar to the "female" category of 2010; and F-A, which will recognize faster women starting and finishing with the B men. An informational document similar to what we published for Road should be out shortly.

Adam has been hard at work in his pursuit of bringing a BMX track to NS. Together with Simon Myatt, discussions have been started with the City of Halifax about the possibility of building a track in Musquodoboit. The concept has been broached with the City in the past, but now appears to be within the realm of reasonable feasibility. A competition-quality track would prove a boon not only to after-school fun, fitness, and community cohesion, but also to the development of a generation of highly skilled riders—many of the best in all disciplines cut their teeth racing BMX.

Simon Myatt has also been hard at work in Athlete Development, funding multiple training camps for the 2013 and 2017 Canada Games teams, and preparing the AD sector's Summer budget. The Canada Games team is always looking for more volunteers to help out with the running of their training camps and trips. Few volunteer positions in cycling are more rewarding than those which allow you to be part of a young rider's success; contact either Simon below, or Coach Andrew Parsons at [arparsons\(at\)nstu.ca](mailto:arparsons(at)nstu.ca) for more info. The CG team's Communications Coordinator, Darren Belliveau, has prepared a short update of their activities, which is attached below.

In the Touring and Trails sector, Jeff has already gotten down to work. He's converted the classic "Nova Scotia by Bicycle" book, long a source of revenue for his sector, into a digital format conducive to updating. The insertion of interactive Google maps and a wealth of new information have given life to discussions about the future of this book including a digital download and/or smartphone application.

On the Education side of things, Doug has arranged for a Can-Bike instructors workshop to be held in the early Summer, the exact date to be determined. He's attending the national Can-Bike meeting in Toronto this last weekend of March. To facilitate Can-Bike courses, we've contributed funds to purchase one of two LCD projectors. Between Can-Bike and the amendments to the MVA, 2011 promises to be a revelatory (well, we can dream!) year for two-wheeled education and consciousness.

In that regard, Lawrence has continued his discussions with Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal about the rollout of the MVA amendments, and the associated educational campaign that will accompany them. He's arranged for a Dalhousie Journalism student to intern for this project, as the educational campaign will be most effective with a full time liaison between the Province and its cycling advocacy groups. Expect communication from Lawrence on this in the coming month. Mobilizing BNS clubs and riders to participate in public events and rides when the Government proclaims the amendments in force (late May or June) is part of our plan.

BNS has also been turning its executive eye both inward to our ontological foundation, and outward to the current state of cycling generally in NS—the burgeoning of the wider advocacy community in recent years has left many questioning the relevance of BNS' involvement in that area and contemplating what structural changes to the greater advocacy community would most facilitate its pursuit of the greater good: improved civil and institutional infrastructure, public awareness, and ultimately an increase in community health and vibrancy achieved through the adoption of cycling as practical and enjoyable active transportation.

BNS is currently recognized by the Provincial Government as the governing body for cycling in the Province; as advocacy is part of our mandate, the Province largely limits its cycling advocacy funding to BNS. However, it should surprise no one that the Nova Scotia Bikeways Coalition (and the Halifax Cycling Coalition, for that matter), as an organization solely focused on advocacy, has been far more active in that area than have we. Currently, the NSBC is set up as an organization affiliated with us so it can apply for Provincial funding under the umbrella of BNS.

As you might imagine, the current system is slowed by inherent bureaucratic friction and an inefficient division of labour amid some duplication of efforts on the part of our advocacy oriented sectors and other organizations. It appears to the Board that there are two frameworks far better suited to pursue the ultimate goals of advocacy than what we're currently working under:

1. Put it all under one roof, restructuring BNS to more effectively accommodate the two foci of competition and advocacy, with each sector largely independent from the other, complete with a separate paid staff for each. This could be accomplished via a merger with NSBC, as proposed by Lawrence and NSBC's Peter Williams, the details of which are attached below. This framework would see us seek global funding from the Recreation stream of the Dept. of Health and Wellness, as is current procedure.

2. The second option would see BNS refine its focus to that solely of competition athlete development and become a Provincial competitive sport organization, seeking funding from H&W's sport funding stream. This would clear the way for a new Provincial organization, effectively a "Velo Nova Scotia," which would likely consolidate with NSBC and perhaps other like-minded groups to present a unified voice for cycling advocacy, seeking funding from the recreation stream as we do currently. This has been the route taken by many formerly unified cycling associations in Canada.

We've also been in discussions with the Nova Scotia Mountain Bike Trails Association, a nascent organization dedicated to the creation and preservation of mountain bike trails around the province. They have been impressively successful, effectively turning a large and motivated membership toward a goal only cursorily (at least, as of late) recognized by our mountain bike sector—that of land access and trail development. We've discussed integrating them with BNS, effectively refining the focus of the mountain bike sector to that of competition, and creating a new mountain bike trails sector to which the NSMTBTA would be transplanted and funded.

Any changes to the structure of BNS will require many amendments to our by-laws, a process that would be undertaken over the summer, sent to members in August, and voted on at the annual general meeting. Your opinion of the direction you'd like the organization to take would be most appreciated—please share your thoughts with me, and I'll be sure to distribute them to the Board.

Yours very truly,

Jamie Lamb

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Canada Games Development Update

By Darren Belliveau, Communications Coordinator

Coach Andrew Parsons held a Canada Games development general interest meeting at Dalhousie in December 2010. He outlined that there would be two groups of athletes, one group eligible for the 2013 games and another group eligible for the 2017 games. Athletes will be competing in road events and in mountain events.

Coaches Andrew Parsons and Andrew Feenstra held a two-day camp in Scotsburn, Pictou County, for the 2013 eligible athletes, and a one-day camp for the 2017 eligible athletes, with the help of myself. There were 19 athletes registered for this camp, where they worked on team building, developing their own training plans, cross training, and periodized training. The weekend was fantastic with lots of snowshoeing, yoga, and a couple really intense trainer rides, and an evening at Stoneham Chalets with the beautiful Pictou County panoramic view.

In early March athletes were treated to a 1-day camp held at the new Canada Games Center in Halifax area. There were 17 athletes registered, the initial plan was to skate the oval, but the weather didn't permit. Athletes were treated to a fantastic sports nutrition session hosted by Anne Marie Armstrong. Athletes also reviewed their training plans, were briefed on upcoming training events, and then went on to another grueling spin session.

Upcoming Canada Games Training Events include:

- April Road Riding Camp —Saturday April 16, 2011 10:00am -3:00pm, Wolfville
- Falmouth Road Riding Camp—Saturday May 14, 2011, Falmouth
- Spring MTB Riding Camp—Saturday May 21, 2011, Truro
- MTB Project —July 15-17, St. Felicien, Quebec (tentative)

Prior registration for all Canada Games Training Camps is mandatory, contact Darrin Belliveau via email dbelliveau@eastlink.ca to register.

You can follow the Canada Games training at the BNS website, or check out the BNS facebook site.



Reinvigoration and expanding capacity of BNS as Nova Scotia's inclusive, broadly-based provincial cycling organization.

Summary: This document proposes steps for integration of Bicycle Nova Scotia (BNS) with two other provincial-level cycling organizations, the NS Bikeways Coalition (NSBC) and Nova Scotia Mountain Bike Trails Association (NSMTBTA). The aims for integration are 1) a broadly-based BNS, with much more capacity than at present, that is better able to represent and effect positive change for all cyclists in Nova Scotia; 2) the respective goals of the NSMTBTA and NSBC continue to be pursued with vigor, but with added resources and clout of a larger organization. The proposed steps are 1) NSBC forms a significantly reframed Transportation and Advocacy Sector; 2) NSMTBTA becomes a newly created sector in BNS, focusing on offroad advocacy; 3) BNS' membership categories are expanded to address needs of the integration; 4) The public face of BNS (web, communications) is changed to reflect it's renewed commitment and capacity to a broad mandate; 5) An 'Advocacy Coordinator' paid position is created and filled in BNS.

Most of the structural steps toward integration, detailed below, seem relatively straightforward. However, major challenges are likely to be 1) providing necessary autonomy to the integrated NSMTBTA and NSBC groups; 2) dealing with perceptions (rational or not) from those outside BNS (who might be members of the other two groups), that BNS is systemically ineffective and/or devoted only to competition.

Descriptions of NSBC and NSMTBTA are on the final pages.

Introduction and Motivation:

Bicycle Nova Scotia (BNS) is the provincial cycling organization in Nova Scotia. The stated mandate of the organization includes (summarizing the Bylaws and most recent strategy documents):

- road and mountain bike racing,
- road advocacy,
- touring and recreational cycling,
- trail advocacy, and
- coaching programmes to develop national-caliber young athletes.

In recent years, BNS has succeeded in maintaining competitive cycling and athlete development and continues to do valuable work within its advocacy and recreation mandates. However, the landscape of cycling advocacy has changed as new provincial-level organizations have emerged. The Nova Scotia Bikeways Coalition (NSBC), which is partly affiliated with BNS, oversees a new bikeways strategy, coordinates with municipalities province-wide, and lobbies provincial departments. The Nova Scotia Mountain Bike Trails Association (NSMTBTA) advocates for sustainable mountain bike trail systems. Several strong regional groups also have appeared. For more information on NSBC and NSMTBTA, see the attached descriptions.

The presence of these new groups is overwhelmingly positive because it represents growing interest and action directed towards improving cycling in the province, and it is occurring at a time when Nova Scotia's provincial government, and in particular the Departments of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR), Health and Wellness, and Natural Resources are increasingly supportive of cycling. However, drawbacks of the multiple groups include redundancy in mandates between organizations, and a lessened effectiveness for all organizations when dealing with government agencies who usually expect to collaborate with one, not several different, provincial cycling groups. The presence of multiple groups with overlapping mandates also seems likely to lead to competition, particularly in the case of funding proposals, rather than collaboration. This doesn't seem helpful to the interests of cyclists in Nova Scotia.

An alternative to integration is to more narrowly define each organization's mandate to avoid duplication. Integration is preferable because it increases our 'voice' by virtue of greater numbers, and because building a pro-cycling culture in Nova Scotia involves promoting all aspects of cycling – this is best done by combining strengths rather than emphasizing divisions. Finally, there are many individual cyclists who already have membership or interest in two or all three of the organizations.

Proposed Steps:

0. Revised Mission Statement, reflecting commitment to goals currently pursued by all three organizations.

BNS is the provincial organization of cyclists in Nova Scotia. We are commuters, racers, mountain bikers, recreational riders and elite athletes, who work together to develop an inclusive culture of cycling in Nova Scotia. Towards this, we develop young athletes, collaborate with government and other organizations to make cycling safe and accessible province-wide, develop sustainable recreational trails, and serve as the governing body for all bicycle racing and trials in the province.

We are proudly affiliated with the Canadian Cycling Association [and any other major organizations we feel necessary to specify]

1. Integration with NSBC

The NSBC is fully integrated with BNS, with NSBC goals and projects retained and pursued by a sector of BNS (currently Transportation and Advocacy, proposed to be renamed Road Advocacy and Bikeways). The current leadership of the NSBC would serve on Road Advocacy and Bikeways, pending new elections. The goals of the NSBC (<http://www.nsbikeways.ca/goals.html>) are pursued, as are the ongoing functions of VP Transportation and Advocacy.

2. Integration with NSMTBTA

The NSMTBTA becomes a new sector in BNS, proposed to be called “Mountain Bike Trails” or “Off-Road Advocacy”. The NSMTBTA's current board structure would be retained in the new committee, and bylaws crafted to ensure necessary degree of autonomy. The current “Mountain Bike” Committee would be renamed “Mountain Bike Competition”.

4. Redefine and expand the categories of membership in BNS.

BNS' current membership categories are General Member (renamed to Recreational Member), Racing License (unchanged), and Affiliated Club (unchanged). The new category system is more inclusive and includes individual and group members who are neither racers nor in need of BNS insurance for club rides, but wish to support BNS vision.

- 1 *Supporting Member (\$15):* Individuals who wish to support BNS mission to improve cycling in Nova Scotia. Discounts are included, insurance is not. Fees are primarily used for education, road and mountain advocacy.
- 2 *Recreational Member (\$25):* Individuals who ride with recreational clubs. Provides discounts and insurance on club rides. This is the current General Membership. Fees are used to pay for insurance, and to all BNS functions.
- 3 *Racing Licence (variable, and an add-on to General Membership):* Allows member to race in one or more of road, mountain, cross, bmx sanctioned events, plus insurance during these events. Unchanged from current Racing License.
- 4 *Affiliated Club (\$110):* For recreational clubs (Bicycles Plus, Sealevel, Cyclesmith, etc) and provides club insurance, race-organization support, etc.. Unchanged from current Affiliated Club.
- 5 *Supporting Organization (\$50 and up ??)* Organizations who support cycling in Nova Scotia and have joined the BNS mission. Examples might include Heart and Stroke Foundation, EAC, etc.. – groups which are currently Member Organizations for the NSBC.
- 6 *Supporting Business (???)* Businesses who wish to show support for cycling in Nova Scotia and BNS' general mission.

3. Web presence that reflects a broader, expanded BNS. Provide necessary autonomy to updating, adding content, to each division.

The BNS website and any other communications need to reinforce that BNS *really is* the provincial voice on roadway and mtb advocacy issues, and that all the mandates of BNS are equals, actively pursued by the reinvigorated organization.

It is proposed that the website be restructured (by board communication with Kyle) using the following four divisions, and using images and text on the main page that better reflect BNS' inclusive mission. Current content from NSBC and NSMTBTA would be merged under the appropriate divisions listed above.

Athlete Development

Mission: Coaching and support for young Nova Scotian athletes.

(contains athlete development coordinator, coaches, Canada Games athletes)

Competition

Mission: Road, Mountain, Cyclocross, and BMX racing, and Trials.

(contains Road racing committee, MTB racing committee, BMX Committee, Events coordinator)

Mountain Bike Trails

Mission: Providing sustainable single-track trails for bicycles.

(contains MTB trails committee, ie. NSMTBTA)

Roads, Bikeways, Education

Mission: Making Nova Scotia accessible and safe for all cyclists.

(contains Road Advocacy and Bikeways, Touring and Trails, Education committees)

5. Create and fill an Advocacy Coordinator position in BNS.

BNS needs an additional paid staff (in addition to Tamara) to expand its capacity and to provide continuity to multiyear projects. The NSBC has supported its work, including paid staff, through external funding. At least similar level of staffing is needed to carry on the work of the NSBC within BNS, and continuity of a permanent rather than soft-money position is important. We will apply to NS Department of Health and Wellness for support for a part- or full-time Advocacy Coordinator. This position might also support mountain bike advocacy (or a 2nd position might be needed). IMBA Canada, as part of their regional development plan (already rolling out west and central Canada), is aiming towards a paid position for a regional coordinator for Nova Scotia, or possibly all of the maritimes. We would contact IMBA to discuss integrating this position into an BNS Advocacy Coordinator.

A major advantage of this is that more of Tamara's time, already over-committed, could be devoted to Competition and Athlete Development.

Nova Scotia Bikeways Coalition (NSBC)

Origin and Achievements

As part of its advocacy work, BNS, through a grant from Health Promotion and Protection in 2007 commissioned a report from East Wind Cycle Consultants to assess the feasibility of a provincial cycling network, not unlike the Route Verte in Quebec. The report, both Phase I and Phase II are available at www.eastwindcycle.com. The Phase II process involved > 20 community presentations and consultations to gauge the level of interest of Nova Scotians and those interested in cycling in particular, as well as strategic meetings with government departments and elected officials. This report resulted in a number of recommendations and set a path forward for fully engaging the provincial government on embarking on a legacy project to link all municipalities in Nova Scotia by bicycle routes.

One of the recommendations of the report was that a non-government organization needed to be the driver of the workplan, continue to build momentum and continue the relationships developed during the 3 year process of the report consultation and writing. The direction recommended, and discussed at the 2008 and 2009 Bicycle Summits was that a coalition be formed that could act as an umbrella organization to represent cyclists interested in active transportation at the provincial level. This was seen as a solution to the perceived lack of capacity at BNS as well as a will to be as inclusive as possible.

Nova Scotia Bikeways Coalition

The Nova Scotia Bikeways Coalition (NSBC) was formed in January 2010, with a specific mandate to advocate for a provincial bikeways strategy and to continue to bring together the work of regional cycling organizations, as well as work with health and environment organizations to further the agenda of a provincial bikeway. During its creation, it was decided that the NSBC remain a subcommittee of BNS for a period of one to two years to assess the possible evolution of BNS to absorb the work of the coalition or to create a separate provincial cycling organization. Peter Williams and Susanna Fuller were hired as part time contractors to continue the work of the Coalition, to fundraise and to continue to engage with other organizations and government agencies as well as carry out project related work towards fulfilling the mandate. Both Peter and Susanna were involved in the original Bikeways Report, and proposed the project to BNS.

In May of 2010, an informal working group was struck between the NSBC and NGOs to work strategically and collaboratively on pushing the agenda of active transportation. This has been a very effective collaboration, contributing to the province amending the Motor Vehicle Act, the proclamation of June as Active Transportation Month, and the allocation of funds for community events.

Nova Scotia Mountain Bike Trails Association (NSMTBTA)

The mission of the NSMTBTA is to provide sustainable single-track trail riding opportunities in Nova Scotia. Towards this, it aims to educate riders and land managers, actively promotes and develops trail systems, and communicates with government agencies, and other organizations, at all necessary levels.

Origin

The NSMTBTA formed in November 2009 by ground-swell of response to an organizing meeting called by Sue Earle and others. There was a recognition among mountain bikers that trail advocacy had not been actively pursued at the provincial level compared to other provinces and U.S. states, and as a result numerous existing trail systems had been lost by outright destruction and by loss of access to MTBs. Provincial and many municipal governments were perceived as uninformed at best, and unreceptive or hostile at worst, to the interests of mountain bikers, and that this was largely because mountain bikers had not effectively communicated their interests nor information on trail design or user-interaction studies. In response, the NSMTBTA was formed to provide coherent and professional representation of mountain bikers to government agencies, private land managers, and other trail user groups. It was decided a separate organization from BNS would be preferable because of perceptions that BNS lacked capacity, prioritized competition, and possessed a rigid structure that would limit action.

Achievements

For those regions where there is already strong regional voice for mountain bikers (e.g. Annapolis Valley and the AVMTBTA), NSMTBTA provides support to local organizations and lobbies at the provincial level if needed. In cases where there is little or no local MTB organization, NSMTBTA undertakes direct development and lobbying for trail projects.

The NSMTBTA board structure is as follows:

- President (Tom Kavanaugh)
- Vice President (Lawrence Plug)
- Secretary (Sue Earle)
- Treasurer (Darrel Cooling)
- Regional Representatives from Nova Scotian regions, modelled after HPP regions.

Activities and Achievements in 2010/2011

- Letters and meetings with DNR/Parks on Cape Split park plan, in support of AVMTBTA.
- Rewriting and editing bicycle sections in the Nova Scotia Trail Manual, the major information resource for community trail groups in Nova Scotia.
- Province-wide online survey on interests and demographics of NS mountain bikers.
- Skills and sustainable riding clinic during HRM Bikeweek, 2010.
- Meetings with DNR Parks staff to identify provincial lands suitable for new trail developments.
- Consultations with and presentations to regional trail and land management groups including Halifax Regional Trails Association (HRTA), McIntosh Run Watershed Association, Lunenburg, etc.
- Discussions with informal mtb trail builders, as preliminary steps to development of formal permanent trail systems.
- Holders of IMBA insurance; able to provide liability insurance to all formal trail systems meeting recognized standards (Whistler Trail Guidelines).
- Trail maintenance days across the province.