

Hey, NCC, give us back Chicken's Run, Pipe Dream, Ridge...

Petition calls to ditch boring numbers and return to original Gatineau Park trail names

By Trevor Greenway

Remember the good old days, when Gatineau Park trails carried monikers like Chicken's Run, Pleasant Valley and Merry-Go-Round?

The trails have since been replaced with a numbering system, but if Charles Hodgson of Guidegatineau.ca has his way, the names could be restored. But

it might take time.

"All of these trails used to have names," said Hodgson, who is circulating a petition to pressure the National Capital Commission into reverting from the current number system back to the names designation as a way to honour the Ottawa Ski Club and its 100 years of success.

"Wouldn't it be nice to have them back? Every name has a story," Hodgson says.

Trail No. 2, which used to be called McCloskey Trail, sure has a story to it, with the McCloskey family being among the first to settle in Gatineau Park. The other trails have similar narratives attached to them, said Hodgson.

"There is so much history here," he said. "All (the trails) have some sort of story to them."

The NCC changed the trail names to a numbering system in the 1970s to prevent visitors from getting lost on the trail network, said Hodgson, as "these

foreigners wouldn't remember Frank's Trail."

"One concern was that all of these people coming from other places would get lost. So they made loops, so they can't get lost," he explained.

Thus far, 189 people have signed the petition and Hodgson also has the support of a dozen area ski clubs, but there will be no movement on the name change until at least summer 2011, according to NCC Spokesperson Jean Wolff.

"The request was received and the suggestion is that it will be looked at in conjunction with the cultural heritage plan, which is scheduled to be completed next summer," said Wolff.

To sign the petition, visit www.guidegatineau.ca and click on "Sign the Petition" at the top of the page.

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Original trail names

- 1 - Ridge
- 2 - McCloskey
- 3 - Huron (was Burma)
- 4 - Fortune Lane
- 6 - Skyline
- 8 - Highland
- 9 - Western
- 11 - Merry-Go-Round
- 12 - Alexander
- 14 - Chicken Run
- 17 - Frank's
- 18 - formerly Huron
- 19 - Canyon
- 20 - Pipe Dream
- 21 - Pipe Dream & Huron
- 22 - Upper Sparks
- 28 - Ramparts (Burma)
- 30 - Ridge/Booth
- 31 - Booth Hill
- 32 - Lake Trail
- 33 - Bradley
- 34 - Pleasant Valley
- 40 - McDonald

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