Table 1

Management Tools	Trail's Relative Risk for COVID-19 Transmission		
	Higher	**Moderate**	**Lower**
Indirect Management Tools			
Visitor Education Program	✓	✓	✓
Signage	✓	✓	✓
Dispersing & Distributing Use through Marketing	✓	✓	~
Adjusting Physical Designs	✓	~	~
Direct Management Tools			
Conversion to a One-Way Trail	~	~	~
Limiting the Number of Visitors	~	~	~
Limiting Parking Density	~	~	~
Length of Visit Limits	✓	✓	~
Group Size Limits & Event Cancellations	✓	✓	✓
Prohibiting Specific Activities	~	✓	~
Altering or Prohibiting Equipment Rentals	✓	✓	✓
Compliance Assurance & Enforcement	✓	~	~
Trail Closures	~	✓	~

Indirect Management Tools...

Modify visitor behaviours by influencing their decisions while allowing visitors the freedom to choose.

Direct Management Tools...

Regulate visitor behaviours and limit visitor choice.

Legend

✓	~	~
Should be Strongly Considered	**May be Considered**	**Typically Not Considered**

2.2.1 Indirect Management Tools

The following sections describe a number of indirect management tools that trail operators should consider.

Visitor Education

- Educating visitors about how they can use the trail and amenities safely and responsibly is one of the most critical management tools for limiting the spread of COVID-19. All trail operators should implement an education program that promotes safe and responsible use of the trail. Trail operators should work to deliver the education through a multi-channel education approach including, but not limited to:
  - » Trailhead and on-trail signage (see below for specific **signage guidelines**)
  - » Website & online trip planning information
  - » Social media channels and influencers
  - » Integrating COVID-19 messaging into mobile device apps
  - » Trail stewards

  Educational messages should be purposefully designed to reach visitors at each phase in their trail experience (e.g. trip planning, arrival at the trail, along the trail and at key decision-making points on the trail).

- The message to visitors should be consistent across the trail network and should integrate the key message provided in **Appendix A.3**.

- To further engrain safe and responsible behaviours, trail operators should also consider enabling and encouraging visitors to share pictures and stories about good experiences and examples of appropriate behaviours on their social media channels and websites.

Signage

- Culturally appropriate and accessible signage should be installed at:
  - » All trailheads to educate on expected behaviours and inform of any rules or rule changes,
  - » Open amenities to remind visitors to manage their own risk and apply hygiene practices and physical distancing,
  - » Amenities that are closed,
  - » Common gathering locations (e.g. viewpoints, attractions, interpretive areas) and where queues are formed to remind of physical distancing, limiting time spent in the gathering area and hygiene practices, and
  - » High-touch areas to remind about hygiene practices.

  Though the visual design and brand may differ, visitor messaging should be consistent with the key messages provided in **Appendix A.3**. See **Appendix A.6** for examples of signage that can be applied.

- Where trails are converted from a two-way direction of travel to one-way, directional signage should be installed at:
  - » All trailheads,
  - » All trail intersections, and
  - » Regular intervals along the trail between intersections.

- Trail operators should be careful not to over sign as this will detract from the effectiveness of the signage and detract from the visitor experience.

Dispersing & Distributing Use through Marketing

- Marketing and communications can influence visitor decisions about the trails or trail sections they choose to travel and when they choose to travel. Trail operators should use their communications and marketing channels to promote trails or trail sections that
  - » can accommodate physical distancing better
  - » tend to receive less visitation and
  - » the times the trails tend to be less busy.

  Dispersing visitors through intentional marketing can help to alleviate the potential for crowding. Trail operators should engage local Destination Marketing Organizations, clubs and others to promote the same messaging.

Adjust Physical Designs, Circulation & Layouts to Accommodate Physical Distancing

- The current physical design of some trail amenities and areas along trails may create situations where gathering and close contact becomes unavoidable. The physical design of visitor buildings, pay parking kiosks, trailheads, staging areas, viewpoints, amenities, and places along the trail where visitors commonly gather or queue should be reviewed, and, where feasible, steps should be taken to temporarily adjust the designs to enable physical distancing. Some examples include:
  - » Altering confinement points at the entry / exits of amenities where visitors gather for prolonged periods.
  - » Altering the transition zones between the parking lot and trailheads to be more permeable by removing barriers that confine visitors.
  - » Using visual prompts on the ground and pylons to clearly communicate queuing formats at pay parking machines, amenities, viewpoints etc.
  - » Reducing the density of parking lots by closing some stalls.
  - » Removing high-touch amenities that are not critical to the trail experience or visitor needs.
  - » Installing hand sanitizer stations.

2.2.2 Direct Management Tools

The following sections describe a number of direct management tools that trail operators should consider.

Amenity Closures

- As a last resort, trail operators can implement closures of all or specific trail amenities and infrastructure (viewpoints, toilets, benches, picnic tables, campsites, etc.). However, before closing amenities, trail operators should consider how such closures will impact visitor experience or universal accessibility, and whether the closure will result in other undesirable impacts (e.g. improper human waste disposal). Amenity closures are most appropriate where physical distancing cannot be reasonably maintained at the amenity and / or where there is likely to be a high frequency of visitors touching the surfaces of amenities that cannot be cleaned and disinfected. If amenities and attractions are to be closed, ensure visitors are made aware of the closures before they arrive at the trail, as well as at the trailhead. See **Section 3.0** for guidance on the cleaning and disinfecting of trail amenities.

Converting to a One-Way Trail

- Conversion to a one-way trail is most appropriate on looped trails where a) visitors start and end at the same location, b) there are good sight lines and c) where most visitors travel the trail at similar speeds. However, one-way trails can increase safety risks especially on trails that mix motorized and non-motorized modes. Visitors travelling one-way trails are less likely to anticipate oncoming visitors, rates of speed are known to increase, and visitors often change their positioning on the trail. To mitigate that risk, clear etiquette rules should be implemented. For examples, bikes need to signal their presence to pedestrians with a mandatory bell, speed limits need to be reduced, and passing rules need to be defined[vi].
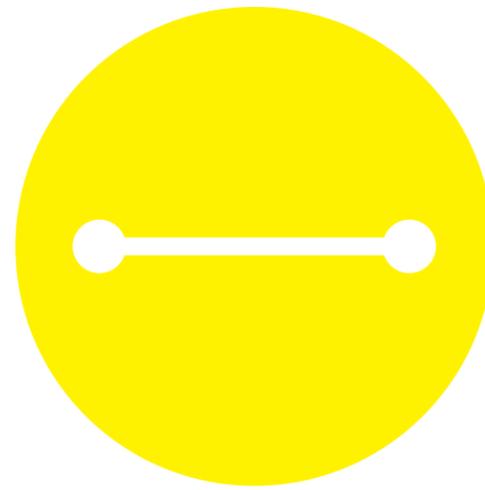
Limiting the Number of Visitors

- Limiting the number of visitors permitted on the trail at any given time (known as carrying capacity) is an effective tool to ensure visitors are able to maintain a 2m physical distance. In practice, determining the appropriate number of permitted visitors is challenging and ensuring that only that number of visitors are on the trail at a given time is difficult and can be expensive to implement and monitor. Limiting the number of visitors is most appropriate where a) there is one, or few, trailheads or entry points onto the trail, b) there is a high potential of significant visitation (e.g. destination trail), c) not limiting use would make it impractical for visitors to maintain a 2m physical distance and d) the trail operator has the staffing and funding to ensure the limits are applied.

- If there are indoor or partially enclosed facilities associated with the trail (e.g. day use shelters, visitor centres, booths, etc.) trail operators should reduce the number of visitors permitted inside the facility at a given time. Staff can monitor and manage the number of visitors entering the facility, and they can adjust the designs to limit capacity (e.g. closing every second toilet and sink stall) in order to enable physical distancing. Trail operators should review provincial and territorial guidelines for occupancy loads to determine an appropriate occupancy.

Limiting Parking Density

- Temporarily reducing the physical capacity of trailhead parking lots (e.g. closing / blocking a portion of available parking stalls) can help visitors keep 2m apart in the parking lots and manage the overall number of visitors to a trail at a given period. However, temporarily reducing the capacity of trailhead parking lots may simply push visitors to park nearby and lead to conflicts with adjacent landowners and greater safety concerns. Limiting parking capacity is most appropriate where a) visitors are unlikely / unable to park nearby and create other conflicts and safety risks, b) there is a high potential of significant visitation (e.g. destination trail), c) not limiting use would make it impractical for visitors to maintain a 2m physical distance and d) the trail operator has the staffing and funding to ensure appropriate parking occurs. Where reducing parking density is a desired management action, trail operators should contact local road authorities, adjacent landowners or managers to explore opportunities for temporarily expanding space available for parking on nearby roadways or properties.

Length of Visit Limits

- Visitors should be encouraged to limit the length of their outing on trails in order to improve the sharing of the trail and the potential for more visitors to enjoy it. Length of visit limits are particularly important on trails where it is difficult to maintain a 2m separation and where there is a high volume of potential visitation always or at specific times (e.g. peak periods).

Group Size Limits & Event Cancellations

- If the trail operator does not have the capacity to ensure gatherings remain in compliance with provincial or territorial gather limits, formal organized and commercial trail events, races and other formalized gatherings should be cancelled and prohibited until the respective provincial or territorial health officer permits formalized and commercial events and gatherings.

- The size of trail groups (e.g. cycling groups) should be limited on trails to the gathering sizes permitted / promoted by the respective provincial or territorial health officer.

Prohibiting Specific Activities

- Trail operators can change the mix or permitted trail activities (e.g. restrict motorized vehicles, restrict mechanized or electric assist modes). However, at the time of preparing these guidelines, little conclusive evidence exists to suggest that one trail activity has a greater potential to spread COVID-19 than another. Measures by public health agencies suggest that trail operators should be more focused on maintaining the physical distance between visitors and limiting the potential for visitors to contact an infected surface, regardless of activity. As such, changing the mix of previously permitted activities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is not deemed a priority management tool except for instances where certain activities on a trail make it unmanageable or impossible to maintain a 2m separation between visitors.

- Consider whether timing allocations can be used to prohibit general use during a specific time period in order to accommodate participants from vulnerable groups (e.g. dedicated times for seniors to use the trail).

Altering or Prohibiting Equipment Rentals

- Operators who rent equipment to visitors are required to follow relevant provincial or territorial guidelines for disinfecting. If operators are unable to meet the requirements of their provincial or territorial guidelines, equipment rentals should be prohibited. If provincial or territorial guidelines specific to rental equipment do not exist, trail operators should ensure that all equipment is cleaned and disinfected between each rental.

Compliance Assurance & Enforcement

- Officer presence and enforcement (verbal and written warnings, violation tickets) should be used judiciously, where officer capacity is available, to backstop visitor education. Enforcement should not be the primary or initial tool to influence visitor behaviours. Education, officer presence and warnings are more effective at changing behaviours over the long-term. Violation tickets should be a last resort and only in flagrant or persistent non-compliance incidents. Trail operators should work with enforcement officers to develop a strategic approach to ensuring officer presence. Enforcement is most appropriate on trails with high potential of visitation.

Trail Closures

- As a last resort or if directed by a local authority or public health official, trail operators can implement a variety of closures such as a full closure for an extended period, closures during periods of peak demand, closures of trail sections in highest demand, or closures of secondary trails that lead to attractions and amenities. Closures should be carefully considered and, although typically a last resort, are most appropriate when directed by a local authority or provincial or territorial health officer, or when the application of other management tools have proven insufficient to reasonably control risks of spreading COVID-19, or where visitors continue to demonstrate an unwillingness to follow prevention practices. Closures of secondary trails that lead to amenities and attractions may be appropriate when a) physical distancing is not practical at those amenities or attractions, b) the amenities or attractions are not visible from the main trail, c) the trail leading to the amenity or attraction is not wide enough to accommodate physical distancing.