

COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE
NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

RESPONSIBLE TRAIL MANAGEMENT IN GATINEAU PARK

Public consultation
April 27, 2017



Agenda

- 6:30 pm** Welcome
- 6:35 pm** Context, project objectives and consultation process
- 6:45 pm** Results of scientific studies
- 7:00 pm** Presentation of the renewed trail network
- 7:15 pm** Community participation in the development of the network
- 7:30 pm** Next steps
- 7:35 pm** Questions
- 8:00 pm** Open house
- 8:30 pm** End of consultation

Background

Park trail network

- Evolution of recreational practices
- Trails created by frequent users who seek experiences that the trail network does not offer

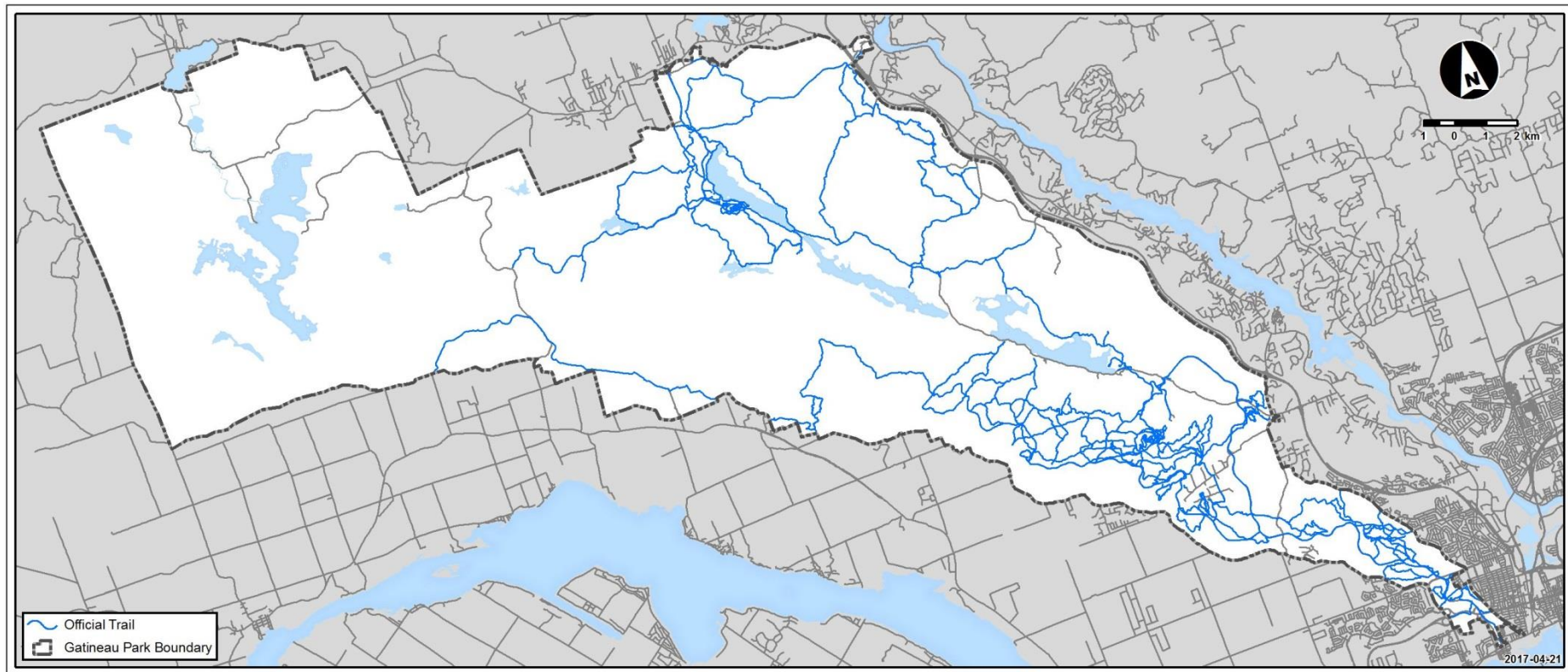
Challenges

- Network of unofficial trails > official network
- The trails cause habitat fragmentation which threatens species at risk and the Park's ecological health
- Existing footprint not on maps: health and safety risk

Toward Common Ground

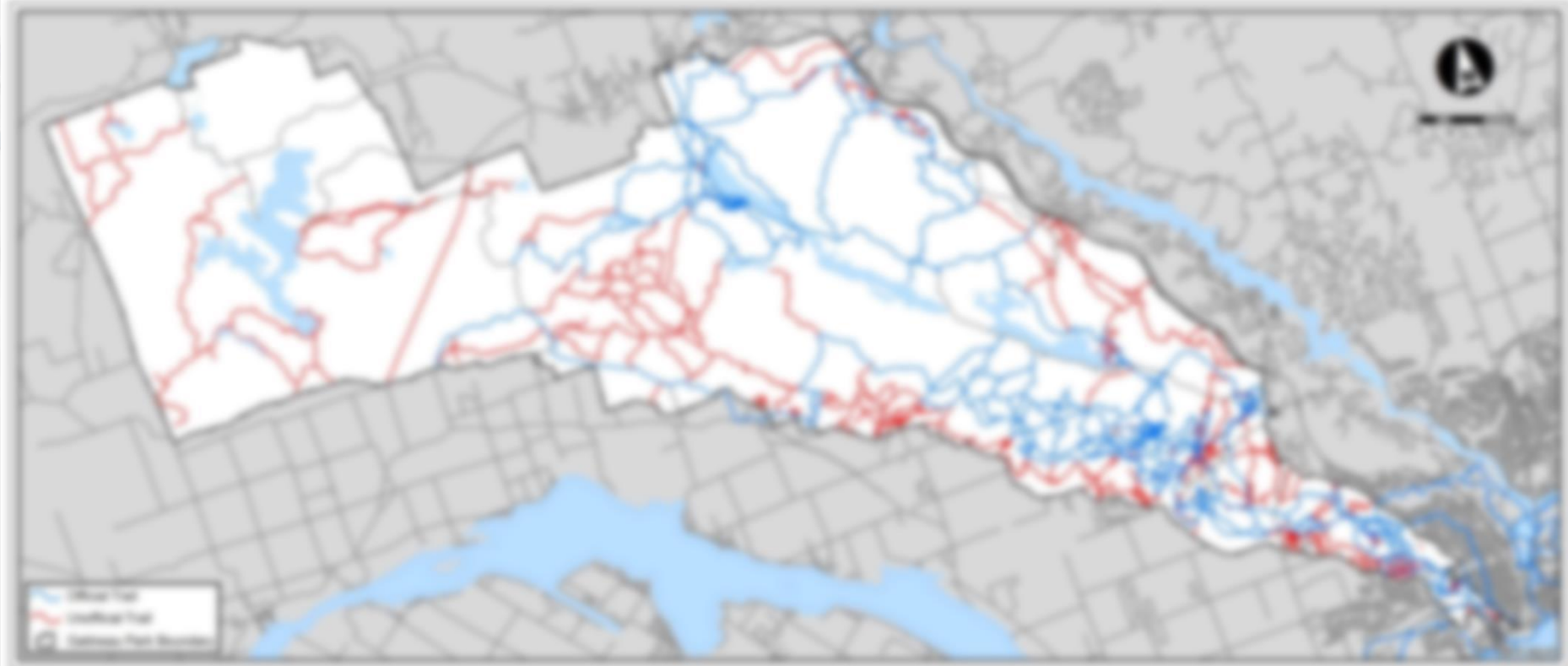
- The NCC has initiated a series of consultations with numerous user groups to involve them in finding a sustainable solution
- Results to be integrated in the revision of the Gatineau Park Master Plan

Official trail network



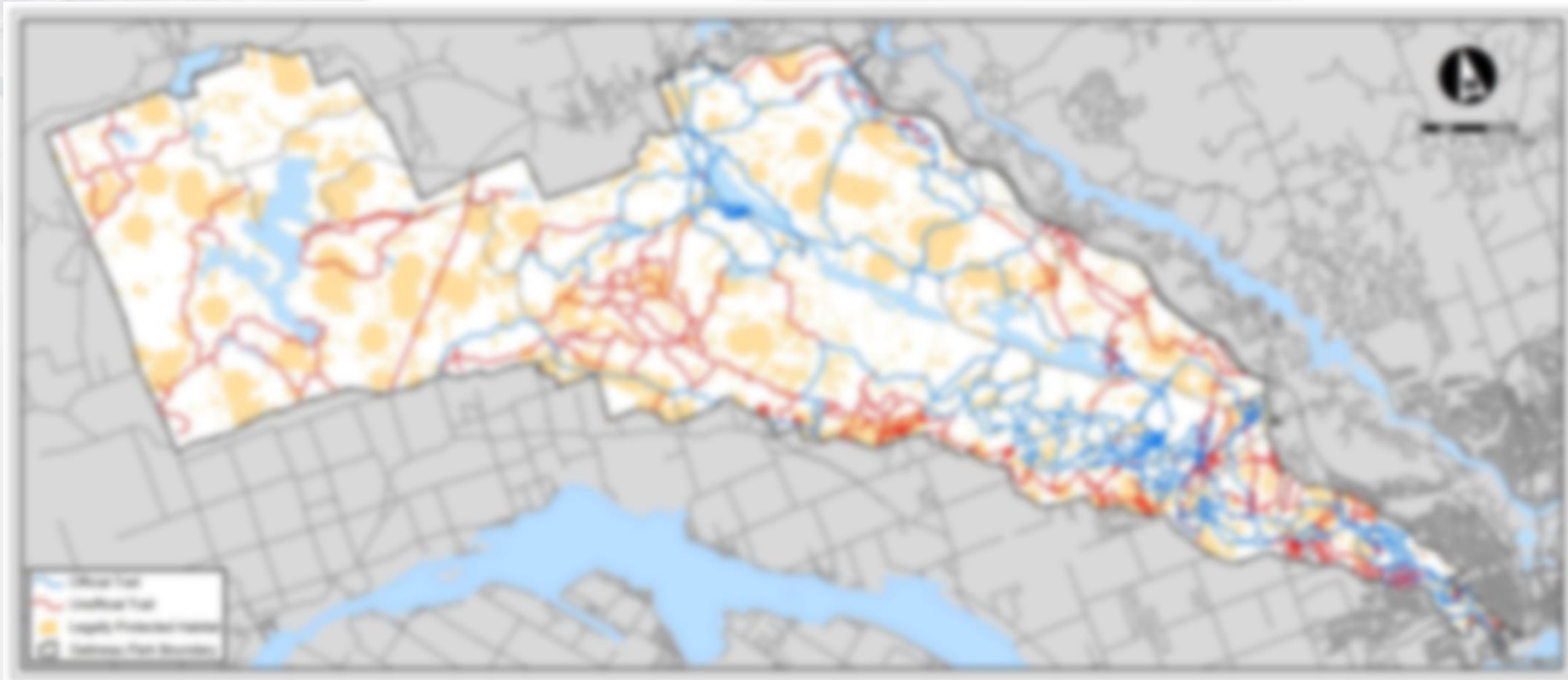
	Actual network
Official trails	200 km

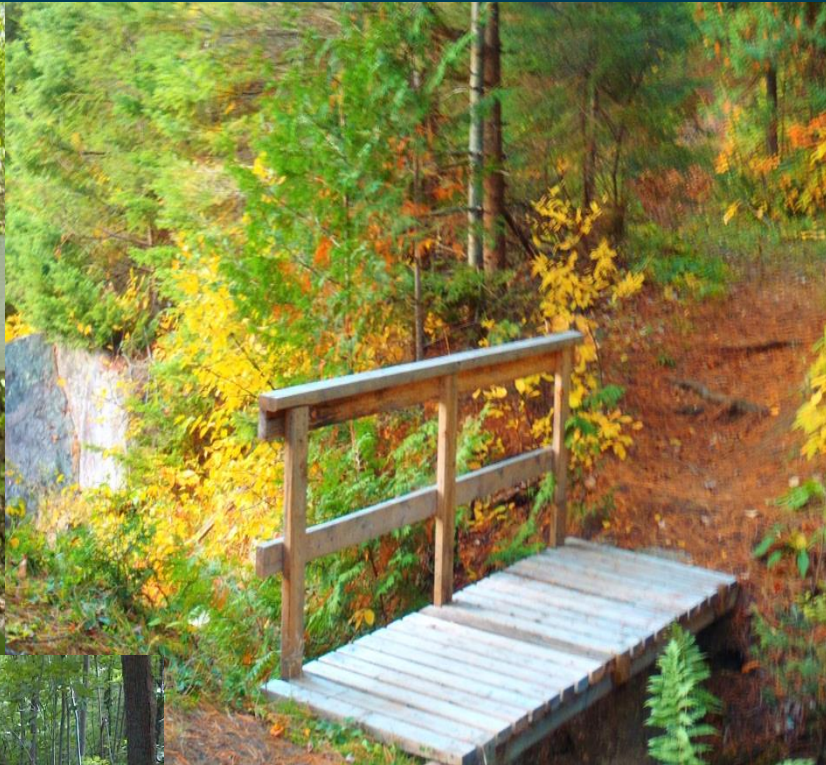
Official and unofficial trail network



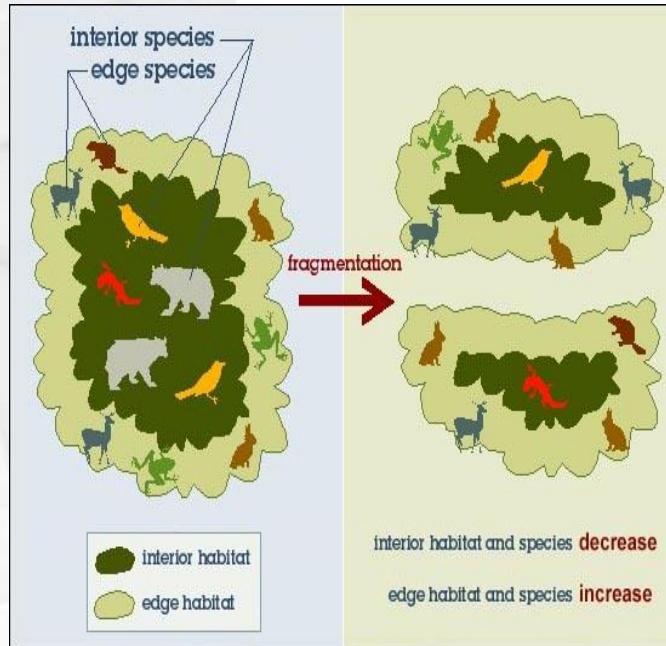
	Actual network
Official trails	200 km
Unofficial trails	330 km
Total footprint	530 km

Legally protected habitats





Habitat protection benefits



- Reduced fragmentation
- Creation of zones suitable for large mammals
- Improved habitat quality
- Reduction of invasive species



Habitat protection benefits



	Mean habitat area	Max. habitat area
La Pêche	5.14 km ²	38.60 km ²
Central	0.89 km ²	18.65 km ²
Gateway	0.11 km ²	3.00 km ²

Project objectives

- Meet the NCC's environmental obligations
 - Under legislation
 - Protect species at risk and fragile habitats
 - Fulfill the Park's conservation mandate
 - Reduce habitat fragmentation
- Enhance the recreational offer
 - Provide diversified and safe outdoor experiences
 - Meet user needs
 - Take new practices into account
- How?
 - By undertaking a series of consultations with user groups



Consultations

First round

- Trails used, experience sought and requests
- June 16, October 1 and October 9, 2014

Second round

- Situation update, trail management principles and possible types of collaboration
- April 16, 2015

Third round

- Work in groups by activity/theme: hiking, biking, residents and winter users: fall 2015 / winter 2016

Fourth round

- User groups: March 8, 2017
- General public: April 27, 2017



Participating organizations

Over 80 organizations were invited to the discussions:

1. Municipalities: Chelsea, La Pêche, Gatineau and Pontiac
2. Outdoor recreational groups
 - Cyclists and mountain biking associations
 - Hikers and hiking associations
 - Climbers and climbing associations
 - Hang-gliding groups
 - Skiers and ski clubs
 - Pontiac Equestrian Association
 - Pontiac Snowmobile Drivers Association
 - Frequent Park visitors (sports and outdoor enthusiasts)
3. Residents' associations from areas adjacent to Gatineau Park
4. Local environmental groups (ACRE, CPAWS)



Requests from users

- Direct access to Park for neighbouring residents
- Access for municipalities of La Pêche, Pontiac, Chelsea (Chelsea trails) and the city of Gatineau
- New mountain biking practices (OMBA)
- Backcountry
- Fat bike trails
- Restore the equestrian trail and associated infrastructure
- More snowshoeing and winter hiking trails
- Additional rock climbing faces
- Hang-gliding site
- Cross-country ski trails for high-level competitions



Ecological analysis of trails

- Trail analysis according to
 - Legally protected species at risk
 - Wetlands
 - Waterways
 - Legally protected habitats (e.g. nesting sites)
 - Erosion:
 - soil loss
 - exposed bedrock
 - bare roots
 - trail widening
- Field and GIS analysis (geomatics information)



Legally Protected Habitats

Habitats	Buffer Zone (metres)
Wetlands, lakes and waterways	15 m
Blunt-lobed woodsia	150 m
<i>American butternut, black maple, rock elm</i>	5 m
American cancer-root (<i>Conopholis americana</i>)	150 m
Ram's head lady's-slipper	150 m
Pinedrops (<i>Pterospora andromedea</i>)	150 m
Rattlesnake plantain	150 m
<i>Woodland sunflower</i>	300 m
Fragrant sumac	300 m
Douglas's knotweed	150 m
Purple-stem cliff-brake	150 m
Louisiana waterthrush	100 m
Least bittern (breeding site)	500 m
<i>Peregrine falcon nesting site</i>	500 m
<i>Western chorus frog</i>	300 m
Sensitive species	150 m
Heronries	500 m

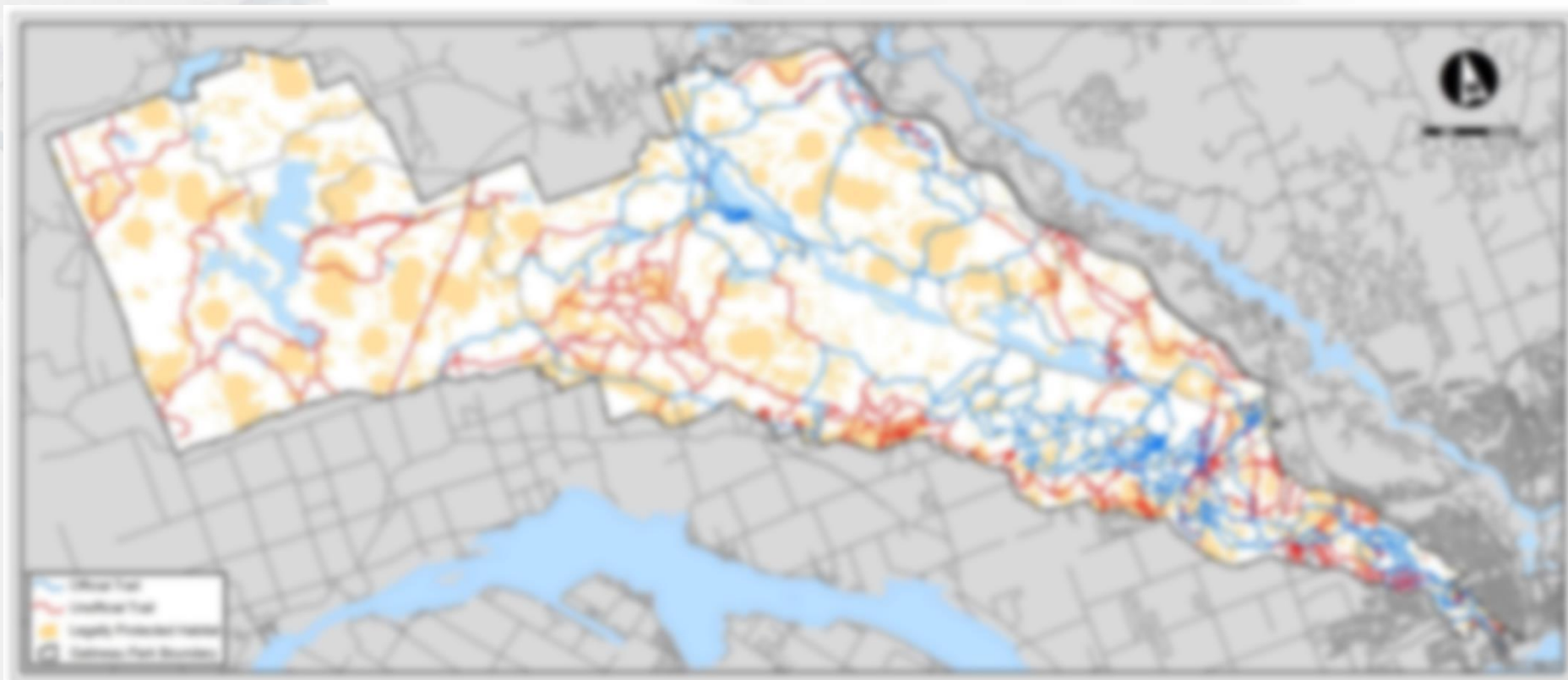


Peregrine Falcon

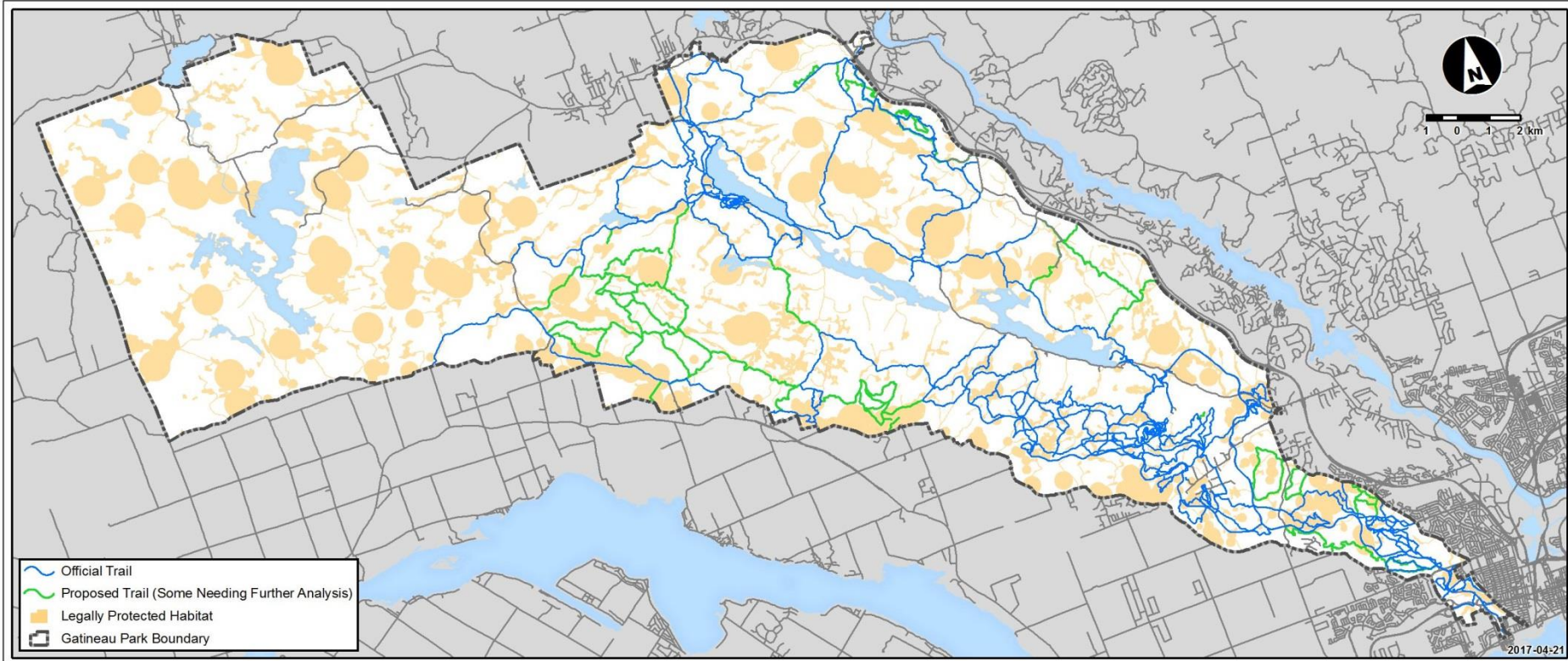
- **CRITICAL HABITAT:** Integral protection zone: 250 m on either side of nest along full height + 50 m band up and down cliff edge
- Human presence during nesting causes
 - **Stress and agitation**
 - Adults to stay away
 - Nest **abandonment**, **falls** or **premature flight** of young
 - Site **abandonment**, in cases of repeated disturbance
- Couples, loyal to nest site, will never return to disturbed nest site.



Legally protected habitats



Proposed trail network



	Actual network	Proposed network
Official trails	200 km	310 km
Unofficial trails	330 km	0 km
Total footprint	530 km	310 km

Recreational evaluation of the proposed network

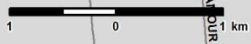
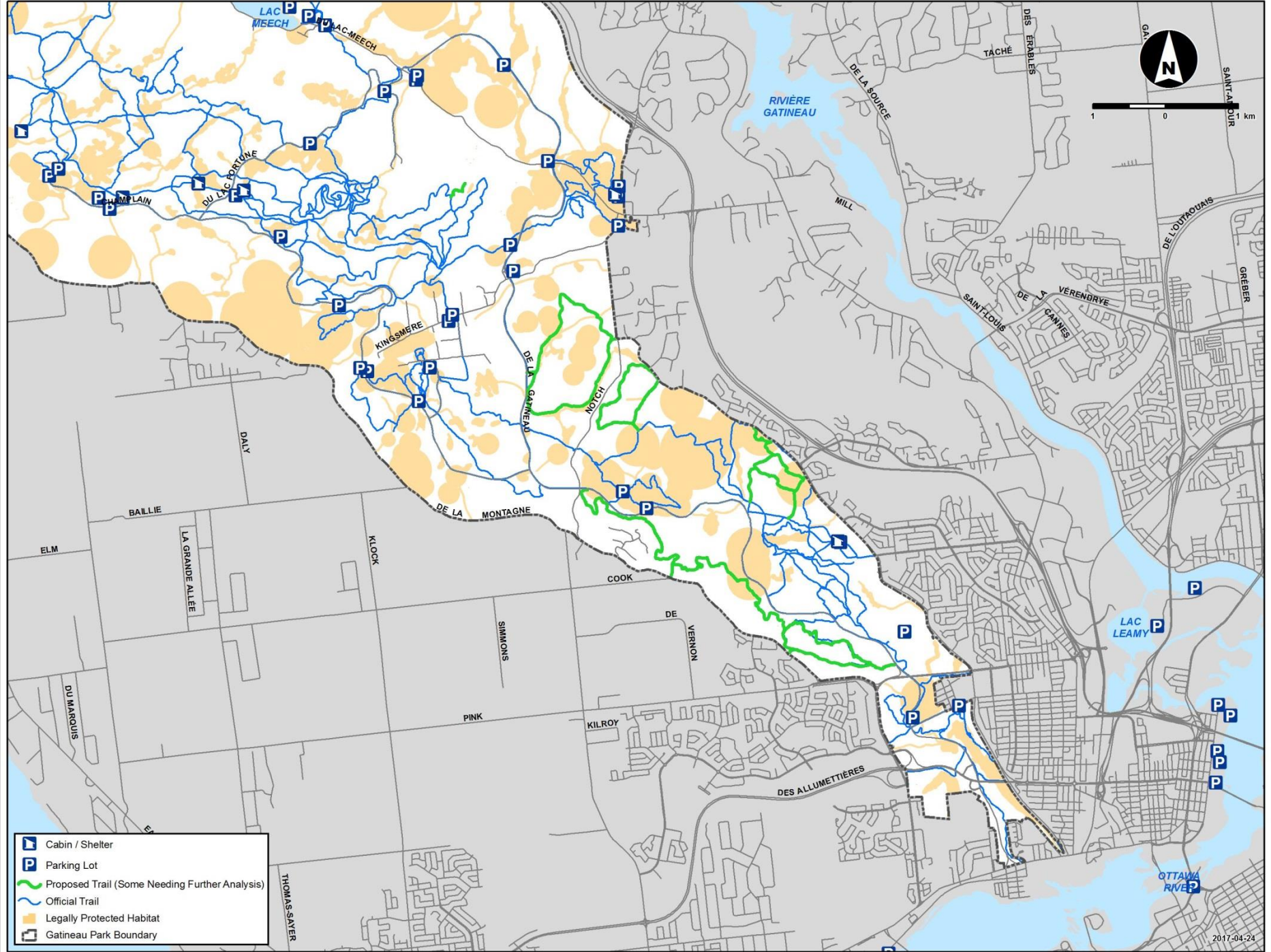
7 criteria were considered:







- Usership
- Aesthetic appeal
- Experiential appeal
- Sustainability and design
- Level of service required
- Accessibility
- Active transportation

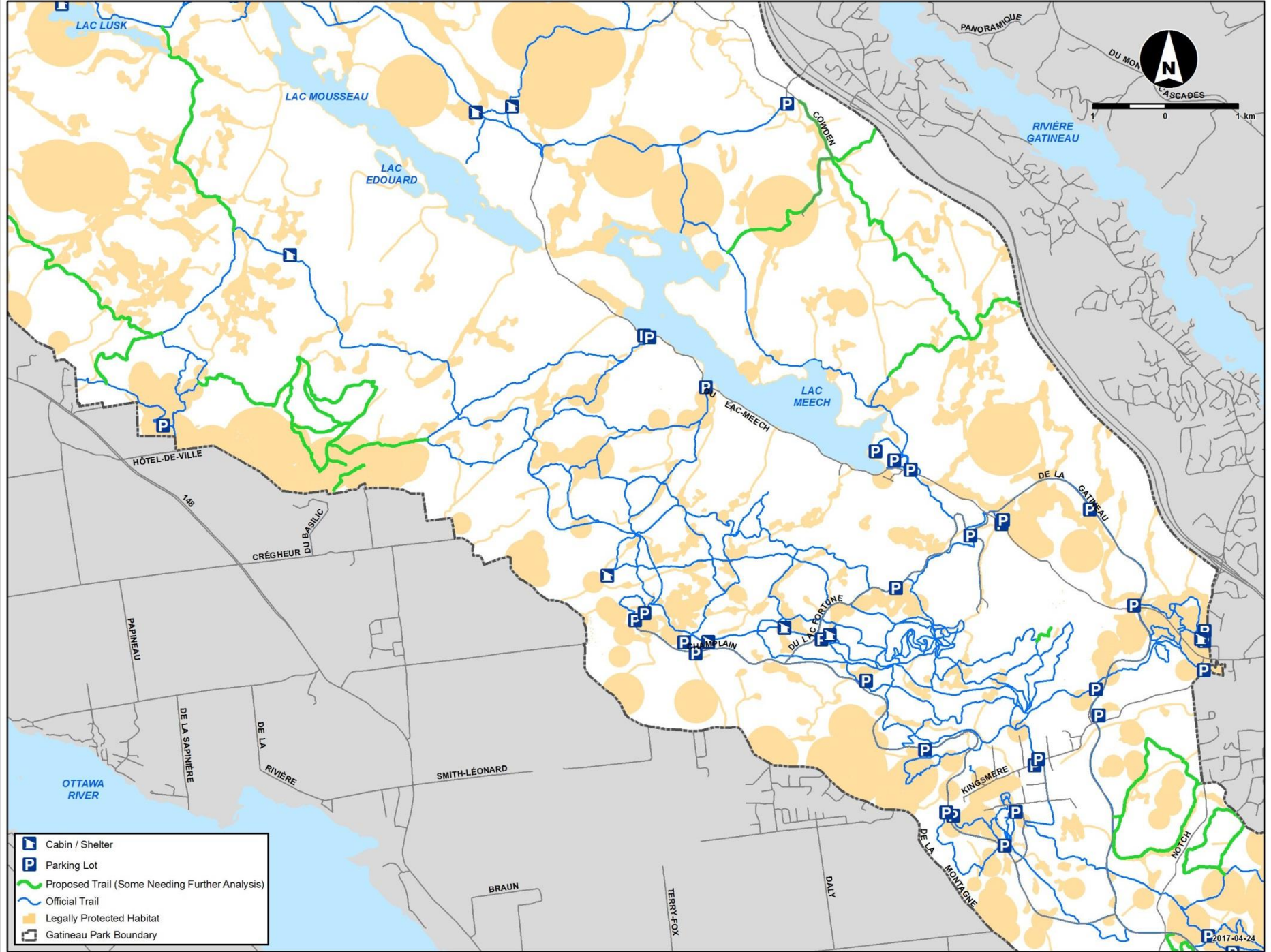








Proposal

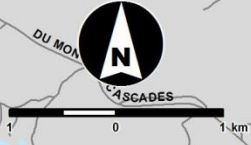
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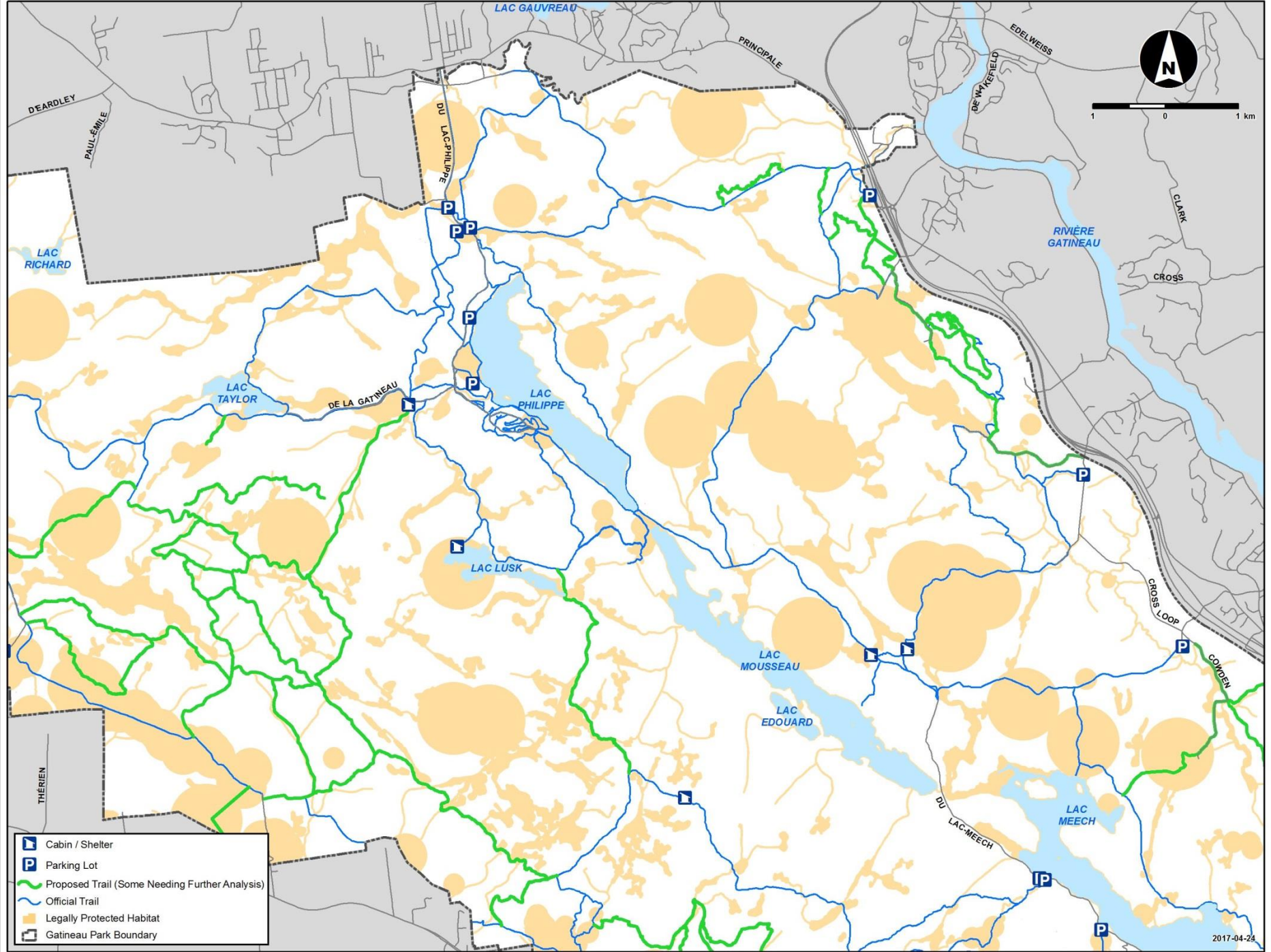






-  Cabin / Shelter
-  Parking Lot
-  Proposed Trail (Some Needing Further Analysis)
-  Official Trail
-  Legally Protected Habitat
-  Gattineau Park Boundary

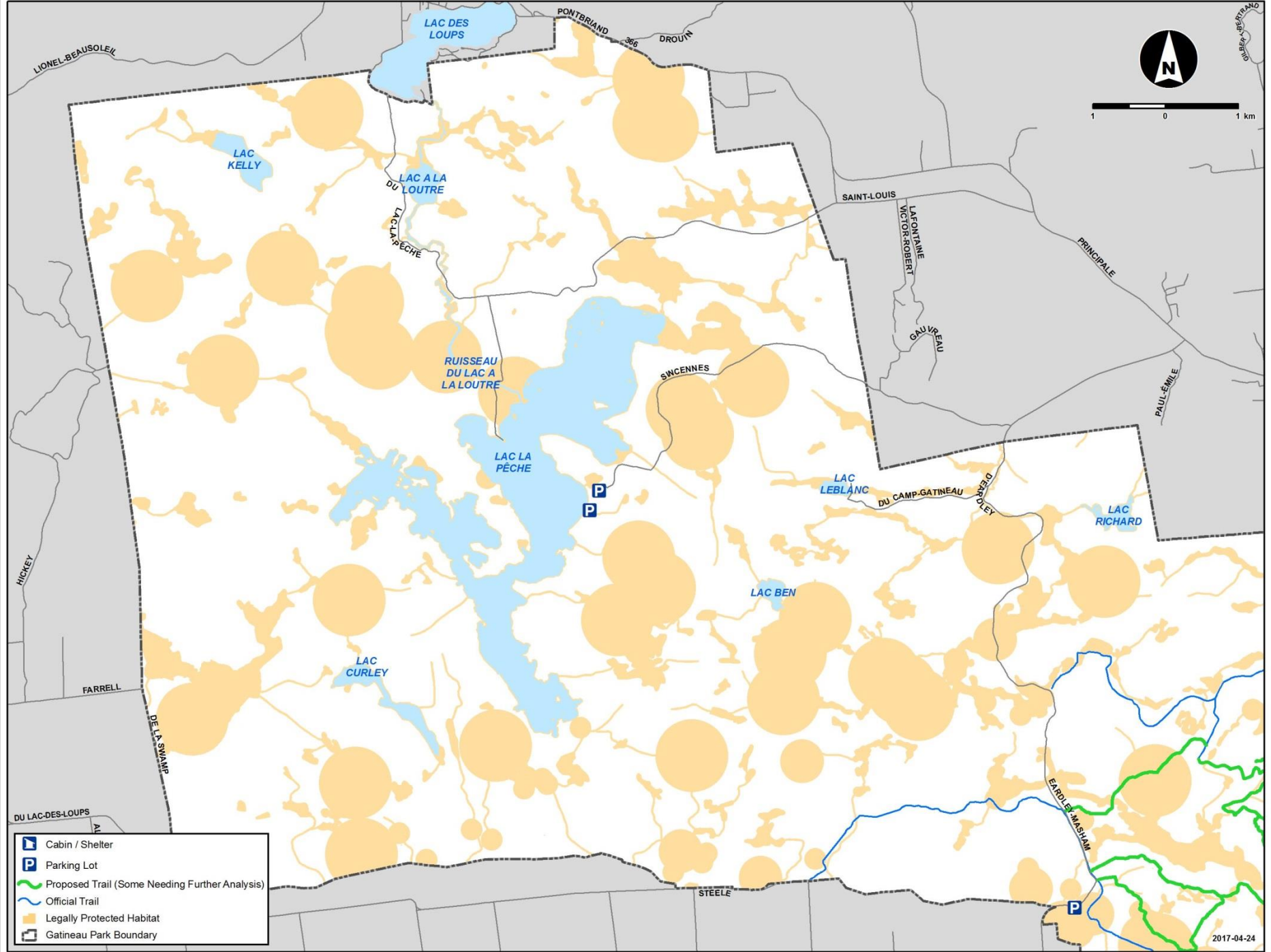





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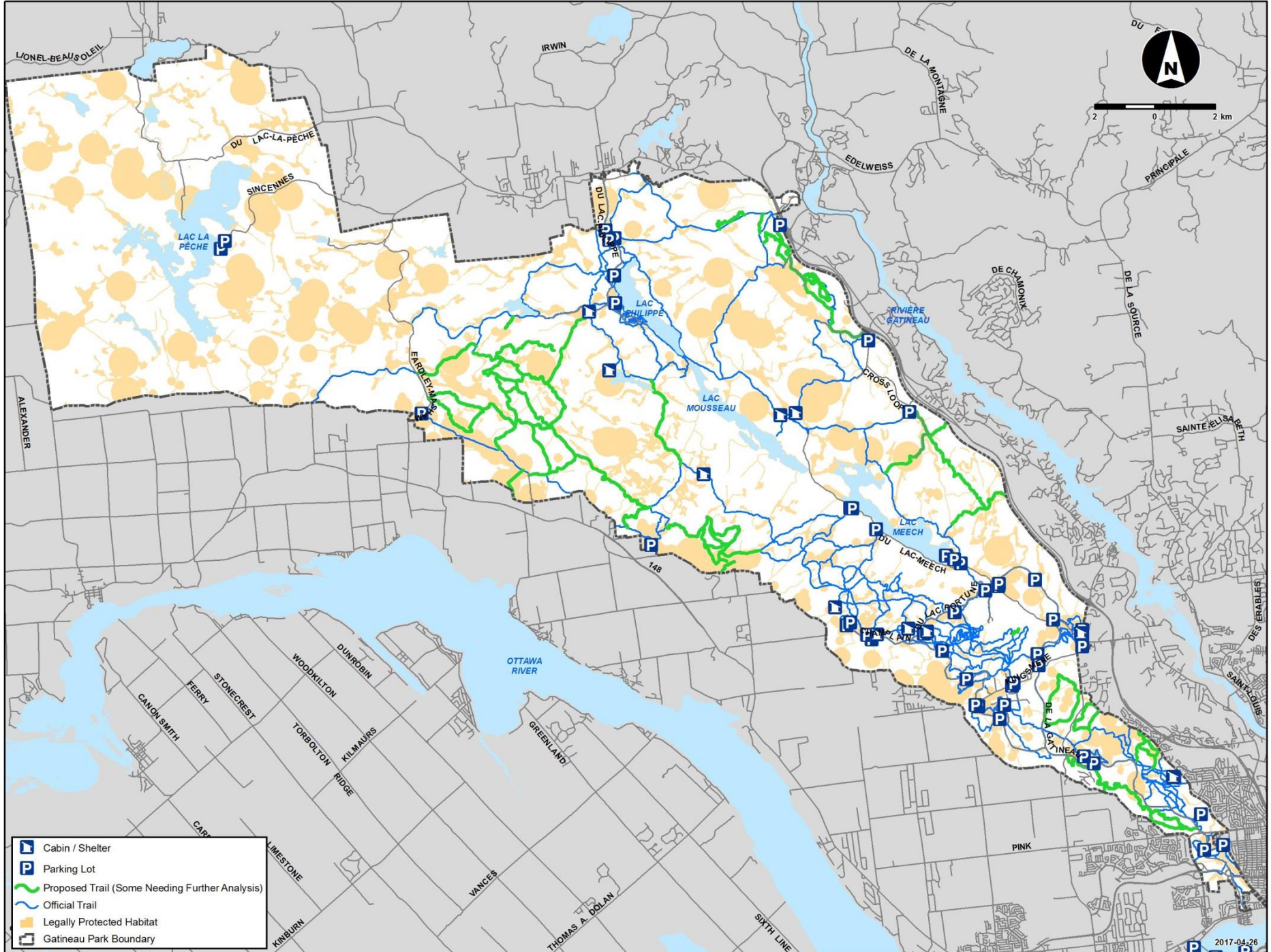
Next steps







- Implementation period: 3 to 5 years
- Work groups — Volunteer trail crew:
 - Implementation of mitigation measures
 - Raise users' awareness on the trails
- Progressive opening of the trails
- Progressive restoration of the trails
- Integration of results into the review of the Gataineau Park Master Plan



Questions?





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