

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Changing the way we explore the outdoors **- Popular Mapbook series goes high-tech**

Coquitlam, BC - What started as a living room enterprise has grown into a cross-country venture that both documents and celebrates the great outdoors. The widely-popular **Backroad Mapbook** series celebrated its 17th year of existence earlier this month by taking its products into the world of **GPS**.

"The No. 1 question we get asked is, can I get your maps on a GPS – the answer is now yes," explains company co-founder **Russell Mussio**.

Established by the brother tandem of Russell and Wesley Mussio in 1993, the Backroad Mapbook series visits virtually all corners of Ontario and beyond; covering off trail systems, lakes, bush roads, and recreational sites, among thousands of other points of interest.

"Fishermen, hikers, hunters, people who like canoeing, people who cruise backroads, people who are looking for natural hot springs or wildlife viewing – we appeal to all of them," Russell says.

"That is probably the one accidental success of our company, in that we reach out to such a broad market. There are good fishing guides, there are good hiking guides, there are good paddling guides, and yet we stand alone in appealing to all these users. There's no other company in Canada that is doing what we're doing."

Having established itself as Canada's bestselling outdoor recreation series over the last two decades, the company is now diving head first into the world of GPS technology. The in-depth information readers have come to rely on and trust in the Backroad Mapbook series is now available in a chip format that can be put directly into their **Garmin GPS** device.

"The response has been phenomenal," states company vice-president **Chris Taylor**. "Getting around has changed drastically since GPS devices first came out and now they are everywhere from your car to your boat to in your hand on the trail." Taylor adds, "People are looking for better ways to explore the outdoors and are used to the visual ease of tools like GPS street maps and Google Maps to get around in the city. Outdoor enthusiasts now have something comprehensive and easy to use for navigating the backcountry."

Entering the digital world, however, has not proven to be an overnight endeavour for the company.



ABOVE: Backroad Mapbook Founders
Russell and Wesley Mussio

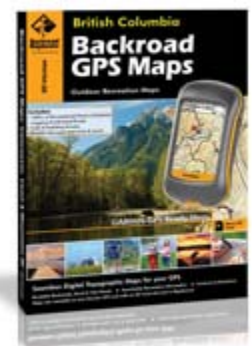
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BELOW: The British Columbia edition of
Backroad GPS Maps



"Getting our maps to a user friendly format has not been easy," Russell says.

"But, like anything, if you want to succeed in the world of Google Maps and I-phone apps then you need to create a product that is both easy to use and provides value added information no one else has. Thankfully, no one covers the backcountry like we do."

Interest in the outdoors, and in turn mapping, took root in the Mussio brothers from an early age. Growing up in Trail, British Columbia the brothers were taken on fishing and hunting trips by their father and this experience resounded in their post-secondary years – Russell has a degree in leisure and sports administration, while Wesley is a registered professional forester and lawyer.

Whether it was serendipitous luck or a bit of savvy business planning, it was while attending UBC that Russell wrote a thesis on the merits of starting up a publishing company that documented B.C.'s backcountry. That thesis, coupled with a few ill-prepared jaunts into the bush, fuelled the brothers' desire to follow through with their ideas.

"We'd be out and about with a map that only had one main logging road on it," Russell recalls. "We'd have a guidebook for hiking, a guidebook for paddling, a guidebook for fishing and scattered pages of outdated Topo Maps; it was almost comical. It was like we had to carry around a box full of stuff in the bush with us. We looked at one another and said, 'This is ridiculous.'"

From there, the brothers got their modest start in Russell's apartment, complete with a printing press, some rudimentary maps and not much else.

"That was the hard part – the beginning. There was a ton more field research at that time, especially when you don't have an established name. Back then we had to go out there and do a lot of that field work ourselves. It was a terrible job, but someone had to do it," Russell laughs.

As their efforts grew, so did their batch of contacts. The brothers began liaising with fishing and outdoor clubs, hiking enthusiasts and even the provincial government, amassing an array of contacts that could provide information – new road or trail systems, for example – from all corners of the country.

That type of collaboration has created a win-win for the Mussio brothers, as the company's most cherished contacts are also its primary market.

That universal appeal for taking off into the backcountry has seen the Backroad Mapbooks series expand to include books for **Ontario, Quebec, BC, Alberta**, the **Prairies**, as well as the **Maritimes** with over 1.5 million books in circulation.

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Mussio Ventures Ltd. is a privately held company with a head office in Coquitlam, BC and satellite offices in Lake Country, BC and Peterborough, ON. Mussio Ventures produces the Backroad Mapbook series as well as a Fishing Mapbook series, Topographic Maps, Bathymetric Lake Charts, Recreation Maps and GPS Maps. Mussio Ventures is pleased to have partnerships with the following ON organizations: Canoe Ontario, Duck's Unlimited, Hike Ontario, Ontario Parks, Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters, American Fisheries Society (Ontario), Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario Bruce Trail Association, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs and Ontario Federation of All Terrain Vehicles.

Key Features of the Backroad GPS Maps:

Visit www.gpsmaps.ca

Backroad Mapbooks are proud to release their new Garmin GPS compatible line of maps. Now users have access to industry leading road and recreation maps in the palm of their hands. No other source offers as up-to-date backroad, trail and recreation data for all of Canada. The Backroad GPS Maps also include detailed city and highway information which truly gets you from your backyard to the backcountry.

Listed below are some of the features that make our Backroad GPS Maps an indispensable resource for the outdoor enthusiast.

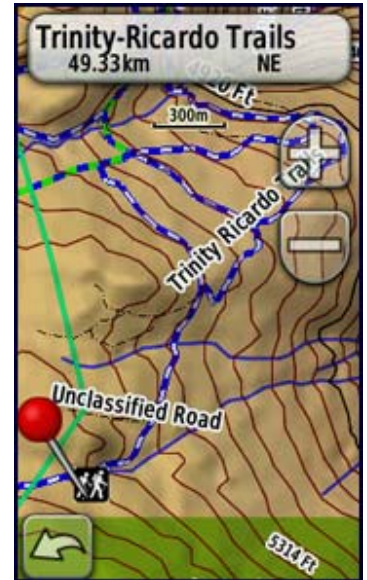
- Garmin GPS & MapSource compatible
- More backroads, logging and industry roads than any other GPS source in Canada
- Detailed trail systems, including defined ATV, snowmobile & multi-use trails
- 20,000 scale water features
- Geo-referenced backcountry Points of Interest & Recreation Features
- Point specific wilderness campsites, trail locations, backroad attractions & more
- Paddling routes
- Search for Backroad Mapbook recreation information using the Where to function
- Wildlife management boundaries for anglers and hunters
- City and highways information and points of interest
- Terrain contour and elevation information including: summits, peaks and geographic points
- And much, much more

Note: All of the standard Garmin GPS features like seamless topographic maps, the “Find” or “Where to” tools to locate nearby city, water or recreation features, 50,000 scale geographic points and city navigation are part of the Backroad GPS Maps package.

Contact Us:

For more information, to request a demo copy or arrange an interview.

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ABOVE: Screenshot of Backroad GPS Maps Routable Bush Roads & Trail Systems

BELOW: Screenshot of Backroad GPS Maps Geo-Referenced Recreation Features

