



**NOTICE OF
PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday
August 12, 2009
Regional District Board Room
175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC**

3:30 p.m.

A G E N D A

		<u>Pages</u>
3:30 p.m.	START OF MEETING	
1.	<u>APPROVAL OF AGENDA</u>	1 – 2
2.	<u>ADOPTION OF MINUTES</u>	
	M1 Minutes of Parks Committee Meeting of June 10, 2009	3 – 6
3.	<u>BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES</u>	
4.	<u>STAFF REPORTS</u>	
	R1 Staff Report from Dan Brown, Parks and Trails Technician, regarding Cobble Hill Mountain Recreation Area – Interpretive Forest Designation	7 – 12
	R2 Staff Report from Dan Brown, Parks and Trails Technician, regarding Cowichan Valley Trail – 2009 Summer Progress	13 – 15
	R3 Staff Report from Tanya Soroka, Parks Planning Technician, regarding template for Regional Parks Brochure	16 – 17
5.	<u>CORRESPONDENCE</u>	
	C1 Correspondence from Katie Blake of the Nature Conservancy regarding Chase Woods Property Purchase	18 – 19
6.	<u>INFORMATION</u>	
	IN1 July 8, 2009, <i>Cowichan News Leader Pictorial</i> article by Mike D'Amour, "Duncan connecting to Trans-Canada Trail"	20

000001

- IN2** July 16, 2009, *Times Colonist* article by Robert Barron (Canwest News Service), "TimberWest will require liability insurance for back-country access" 21
- IN3** August 1, 2009, *Cowichan News Leader Pictorial* article (Alberni Valley News), "Close to \$1 million dedicated to western half of a trail linking the Alberni and Cowichan Valleys" 22

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

8. **PUBLIC/PRESS QUESTIONS**

9. **CLOSED SESSION**

Motion that the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the *Community Charter* Part 4, Division 3, Section 90(1), Subsections as noted in accordance with each agenda item.

CSM1 Minutes of Closed Session Parks Committee meeting of June 10, 2009 23 – 24

CSR1 Staff report regarding Subsection (1)(e) 25 - 46

10. **NEXT MEETING**

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

NOTE: A copy of the full agenda package is available at the CVRD website www.cvrld.bc.ca

Director M. Dorey, Chair
Director L. Iannidinardo, Vice Chair
Director L. Duncan

Director G. Giles
Director K. Kuhn

Director D. Haywood
Director P. Kent

Minutes of the Parks Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, June 10, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. in the Regional District Board Room, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC

PRESENT

Director Mel Dorey, Chair
 Director Lori Iannidinardo, Vice-Chair
 Director Loren Duncan
 Director Gerry Giles
 Director Phil Kent
 Director Dave Haywood
 Director Klaus Kuhn

Also: Director Ian Morrison

CVRD STAFF

Ron Austen, General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture Department
 Brian Farquhar, Manager, Parks & Trails Division
 Warren Jones, Administrator
 Mary Anne McAdam, Recording Secretary

**APPROVAL OF
AGENDA**

It was Moved and Seconded
 That the agenda as amended, be accepted.

MOTION CARRIED

M1 & M2- MINUTES

It was Moved and Seconded
 That the Minutes of the Special Parks Committee Meeting of February 11 & 28, 2009, be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

**R1 – Ditidaht Runners
Trail – Nitinaht Valley
Section**

It was Moved and Seconded
 That the CVRD provide a letter supporting the Ditidaht First Nation proposal for construction of the section of Runners Trail through the Nitinaht Valley.

MOTION CARRIED

**R2 – Cowichan Valley
Trail Half Marathon
Event**

It was Moved and Seconded
 That the application from the Ceevacs RoadRunners to hold a half marathon event on the Cowichan Valley Trail between Renfrew Road and the Kinsol Trestle on Sunday, November 1, 2009, be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Proof of a minimum \$2 million liability insurance coverage be provided by the organizers which covers the event and also includes the CVRD as an additional insured;
2. A Course Marshall Plan is submitted prior to the event for CVRD review and approval;
3. Confirmation that there will be appropriate flag persons at all road crossings along sections of the Cowichan Valley Trail corridor used for the event.
4. Confirmation that there will be notices of the event posted along the trail in advance of, and during the day of the event advising other trail users of the race, with such notice wording and locations pre-approved by the Regional District.

5. Agreement by the organizers that the Renfrew Road to Kinsol Trestle may not be available for the November 1, 2009, event if rehabilitation work has commenced on the structure at that time, and that alternatively, the portion of the Cowichan Valley Trail from Renfrew Road south for approximately 4 kilometres would be available as an alternate route for the event.

And that the Regional District has no objection to the use of "Kinsol" in the naming of the event.

MOTION CARRIED

**R3 – Nature
Conservancy of
Canada Update**

It was Moved and Seconded:

That the Nature Conservancy of Canada be invited to make a presentation to the Parks Committee to provide an update on initiatives, activities and programs the Conservancy is engaged in within the Cowichan Region, and furthermore that members of the CVRD Environment Commission be invited to attend this meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

**R4 – Grant
Applications –
Cowichan Valley Trail
Initiative**

Report from Tanya Soroka, Parks Planning Technician, providing an update on Grant applications submitted by CVRD staff in 2009 for funding to complete northern sections of the Cowichan Valley Trail.

Received for information purposes.

**R5 – Cowichan Valley
Trail Initiative
Program**

Report from Ryan Dias, Parks Operations Superintendent, providing information on the Cowichan Valley Trail Initiative Program.

Received for information purposes.

**R6 – Island Coastal
Economic Trust Grant**

Distributed at meeting. See NB2

**IN1 – CVNS – Parks
Tax Cut**

Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society letter regarding Parks Tax Cut.

Received for information purposes.

IN2 – Residents Fund

Cowichan News Leader and Pictorial article "Residents Demand CVRD Tax them Full Amount."

Received for information purposes.

**IN3- Parks Fund Cut
Lacks Vision – article**

Canada.com article, "Parks Fund Cut Lacks Vision"

Received for information purposes.

**IN4 – Rowdies on
Thetis - article**

Times Colonist article, "Crackdown on Rowdies has quiet start at Thetis"

Received for information purposes.

5. Agreement by the organizers that the Renfrew Road to Kinsol Trestle may not be available for the November 1, 2009, event if rehabilitation work has commenced on the structure at that time, and that alternatively, the portion of the Cowichan Valley Trail from Renfrew Road south for approximately 4 kilometres would be available as an alternate route for the event.

And that the Regional District has no objection to the use of "Kinsol" in the naming of the event.

MOTION CARRIED

**R3 – Nature
Conservancy of
Canada Update**

That the Nature Conservancy of Canada be invited to make a presentation to the Parks Committee to provide an update on initiatives, activities and programs the Conservancy is engaged in within the Cowichan Region, and furthermore that members of the CVRD Environment Commission be invited to attend this meeting.

**R4 – Grant
Applications –
Cowichan Valley Trail
Initiative**

Report from Tanya Soroka, Parks Planning Technician, providing an update on Grant applications submitted by CVRD staff in 2009 for funding to complete northern sections of the Cowichan Valley Trail.

Received for information purposes.

**R5 – Cowichan Valley
Trail Initiative
Program**

Report from Ryan Dias, Parks Operations Superintendent, providing information on the Cowichan Valley Trail Initiative Program.

Received for information purposes.

**R6 – Island Coastal
Economic Trust Grant**

Distributed at meeting. See NB2

**IN1 – CVNS – Parks
Tax Cut**

Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society letter regarding Parks Tax Cut.

Received for information purposes.

IN2 – Residents Fund

Cowichan News Leader and Pictorial article "Residents Demand CVRD Tax them Full Amount."

Received for information purposes.

**IN3- Parks Fund Cut
Lacks Vision – article**

Canada.com article, "Parks Fund Cut Lacks Vision"

Received for information purposes.

**IN4 – Rowdies on
Thetis - article**

Times Colonist article, "Crackdown on Rowdies has quiet start at Thetis"

Received for information purposes.

NEW BUSINESS

**NB1 – Ditidaht
Runners Trail**

Brian Farquhar, Manager, Parks and Trails Division, informed the Committee of a Letter of Support issued by the Parks and Trails Division to meet a June 5th grant application deadline by the Ditidaht First Nation for construction of a portion of the Runners Trail through the Nitinaht Valley.

Received for information purposes.

**NB2 – Island Coastal
Economic Trust Grant
Approval – CVTI**

It was Moved and Seconded

That the funding contribution commitment of \$743,691 from the Regional Parks budget over the four-year period (2009-2012) towards the Cowichan Valley Trail Initiative as matching funds to the grant funding commitment from Island Coast Economic Trust be reaffirmed.

MOTION CARRIED

**NB3 – Cobble Hill
Mountain Trail
Update**

Dan Brown, Parks and Trails Technician, provided an update on trail work that has taken place this year within the Cobble Hill Mountain Recreation Area and informed the Parks Committee of planned trail work for the remainder of 2009.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions from the public.

CLOSED SESSION

It was Moved and Seconded

That the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the Community Charter Part 4, Division 3, Section 90(1), Subsections as noted in accordance with each agenda item.

MOTION CARRIED

The Committee moved into Closed Session at 4:20 p.m.

RISE

The Committee rose without report.

NEXT MEETING:

To be held Wednesday, August 12, 2009, at 3:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

It was Moved and Seconded

That the meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm.

Chair

Recording Secretary

000006



STAFF REPORT

PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 12, 2009

DATE: August 12, 2009 **FILE NO:**

FROM: Dan Brown, Parks Trails Technician, Parks, Recreation and Culture Department

SUBJECT: Cobble Hill Mountain Recreation Area – Interpretive Forest Designation

Recommendation:

That this report be received for information purposes.

Purpose:

To inform the Parks Committee of the Cobble Hill Mountain Recreation Area agreement pertaining to land recently designated as Interpretive Forest by the Ministry of Forests.

Financial Implications:

N/A

Background:

In July 2001 the Cowichan Valley Regional District entered into a 30 year agreement with the Province to maintain and manage the trails for hiking, equestrian and mountain bike use on provincial forest lands on and around Cobble Hill Mountain. The provisions of long-term agreement included the Regional District preparing a Recreation Area Management Plan to determine the long term direction for recreation usage and development of the site. This plan was subsequently completed, covering approximately 406 hectares (1,003 acres) of provincial forest lands around Cobble Hill Mountain, and adopted by the Regional District Board in the spring of 2003.

However, at the time of the plan's adoption, the Ministry of Forests clarified that the 30 year agreement only applied to Forest Recreation Reserve #0202, which covered 114 hectares (275 acres) of the overall area identified in the management plan and that the remaining provincial forest lands would require re-designation by the Ministry to Interpretive Forest in order for the Ministry to include these lands within the 30 year agreement (see attachment). The reason for the Interpretive Forest re-designation requirement was to ensure that the established woodlot licensees on these lands could continue to operate their woodlots within the lands while also permitting the recreation management on the lands by the CVRD. Due to a number of staff changes at the Ministry, the Province's process to officially designate the remaining 292 hectares (728 acres) Interpretive Forest has taken several years (see attachment). At this time the

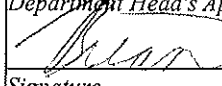
has expanded authority under the 2001 agreement for the recreation management on the entire 406 hectares (1,003) acres as approved by the Regional Board in the adopted 2003 Cobble Hill Mountain Recreation Area Management Plan (see attached map).

As a first step towards implementing elements of the 2003 Recreation Area Management Plan in the expanded Interpretive Forest, CVRD Parks and Trails staff will be meeting in early fall with staff from the Ministry of Forests, the Ministry of Sport, Tourism and the Arts and the two woodlot licensees that operate within this Interpretive Forest to review the plan's intended recreation access and development for this area and how these objectives can be harmonized with the current plans of the woodlot licensees. This is a key component of the 2003 Recreation Area Management Plan, which recognizes the active role of the provincial woodlot program within a good portion of the overall recreation area, and the need to co-ordinate/manage public recreation on these lands with woodlot operations.

Submitted by,



Dan Brown
Parks Trails Technician
Parks, Recreation and Culture Department

Department Head's Approval

Signature


DB/mca
Attachment

000008



The Best Place on Earth



File :16660-20/0202 Cobble Hill

Date July 29th 2009

Brian Farquhar
Parks and Trails Manager
Cowichan Valley Regional District
175 Ingram Street
Duncan, BC V9L 1N8

Dear Brian:

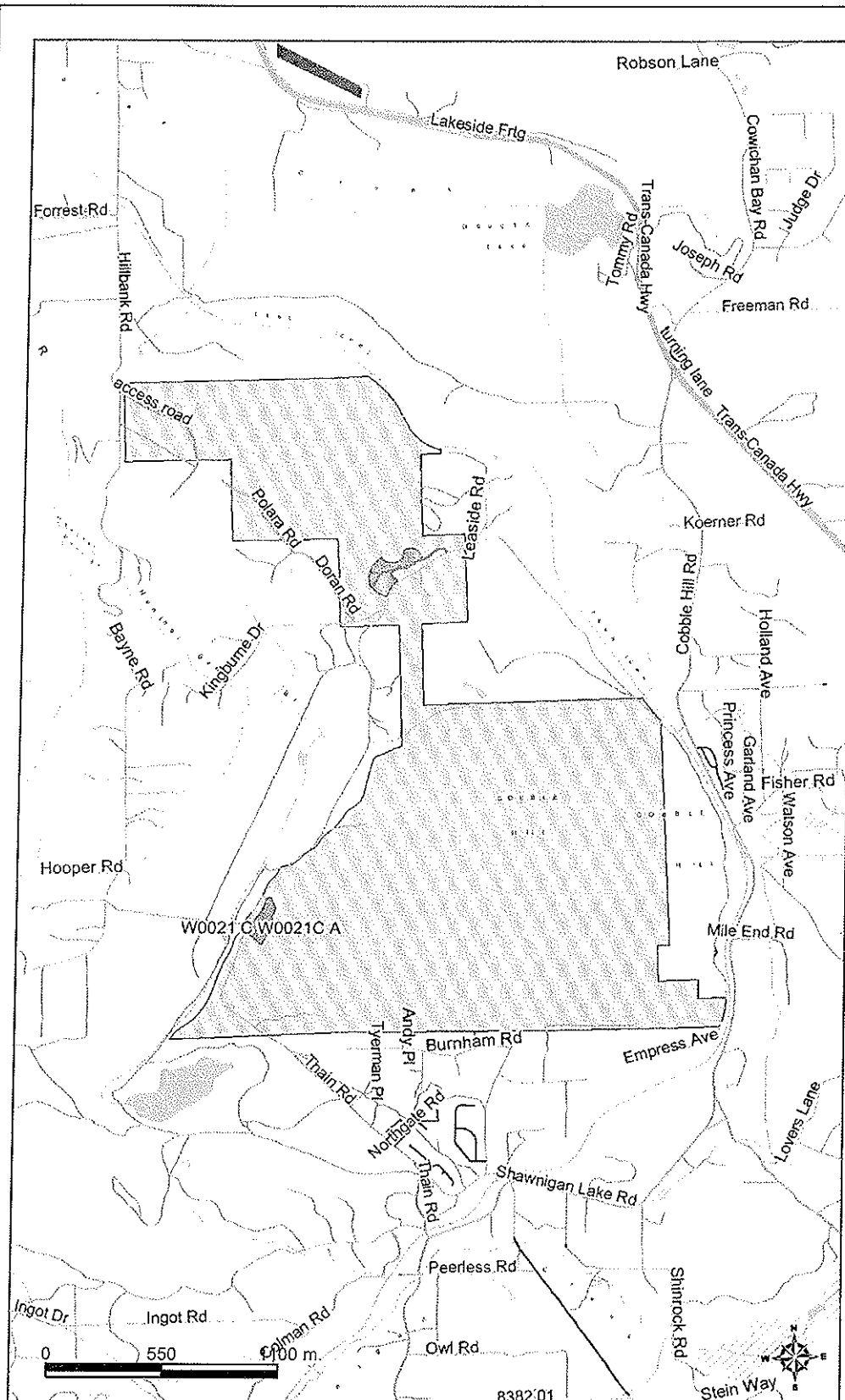
I am pleased to be able to advise you that the Cobble Hill recreation site has been converted to an Interpretive Forest and expanded as shown on the attached map. The management agreement between the Cowichan Valley Regional District and Recreation Sites and Trails BC covers the new expansion as well as the original site.

Please be aware that there are two woodlot licenses within the new boundary any new developments must be agreed to by the appropriate license holder.

I would like to arrange a meeting with yourselves and the woodlot licensees in September or October to ensure that planning for the Interpretive Forest and the woodlot licenses is coordinated. I will contact you further to arrange details.

Yours truly

Frank Ullmann
Recreation Officer



Legend

- Major Cities
- Transportation - Airfield (EBM)
 - Air Facility
 - Airport
 - Airstrip
 - Abandoned Airfield
 - Helipad
- Transportation - Points (TRIM)
 - Helipad
- Pending Tenure Roads
- Active Tenure Roads
 - Forest Service Road
 - Road Permit
 - SUP Road
- Retired Tenure Roads
- Active Recreation Polygon
 - Recreation Site Polygon
 - Recreation Reserve
- Pending Cut Blocks
- Active Cut Blocks
- Retired Cut Blocks
- CWB Wetlands
- CWB Manmade Waterbodies
- CWB Rivers
- CWB Lakes
- CWB Stream Networks

Scale: 1: 30,000

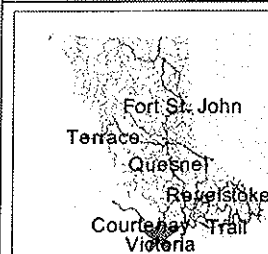
Copyright/Disclaimer

The material contained in this web site is owned by the Government of British Columbia and protected by copyright law. It may not be reproduced or redistributed without the prior written permission of the Province of British Columbia. To request permission to reproduce all or part of the material on this web site please complete the Copyright Permission Request Form which can be accessed through the Copyright Information Page.

CAUTION: Maps obtained using this site are not designed to assist in navigation. These maps may be generalized and may not reflect current conditions. Uncharted hazards may exist. DO NOT USE THESE MAPS FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES.

Datum/Projection: NAD83, Albers Equal Area Conic
Created using Mapview 6.0.0 on: 29/07/09

Key Map of British Columbia



Provincial Redesignation 2009

Cobble Hill Mountain Interpretive Forest

1,003 Acres

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Meters

Entire Area Covered
by CHMRA Agreement

Water Tower
Historic Pump Site

000011

Cobble Hill Mountain Interpretive Forest



000012



STAFF REPORT

PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 12, 2009

DATE: August 12, 2009 **FILE NO:**

FROM: Dan Brown, Parks Trails Technician, Parks, Recreation and Culture Department

SUBJECT: Cowichan Valley Trail: 2009 Summer Progress

Recommendation:

That this report be received for information purposes.

Financial Implications:

N/A

Background:

The Cowichan Valley Trail Initiative is a 120 km multi-use trail route linking communities throughout the Cowichan Valley Regional District, including planned extensions to the Galloping Goose Trail in the Capital Regional District and the Trans Canada Trail in the Regional District of Nanaimo. The Trail Route encompasses both "Rail to Trail" along former railway rights-of-way and "Rail with Trail" for sections of the trail within the Island Corridor Foundation's active E&N Corridor.

In October of 2008, the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) formally announced funding of \$1,743,891 for the Cowichan Valley Trail initiative of which \$1 million is earmarked for the Kinsol Trestle Rehabilitation and the remaining \$743,891 is targeted towards completion of the Cowichan Valley Trail. The trail initiative looks to complete 8 trail components over a 4 year period (2009-2012), including links from:

- Ladysmith to the Regional District of Nanaimo,
- A "Rail with Trail" between Chemainus and Ladysmith,
- A new trail from Duncan to Chemainus/Crofton,
- Upgrades to the Rail to Trail section from Lake Cowichan to North Cowichan, and
- Rehabilitation of the historic Kinsol Trestle.

In addition to the ICET funding the CVRD Board previously approved \$400,000 in federal gas tax funding for the project and matching \$400,000 from the Regional Parks Budget to complete all eight segments. In summary, the funding for the overall project, which will take place between 2009 and 2012, is as follows: (as per Board approval of grant funds)

Funding Source	2009	2010	2011	2012	Funding Total
New Gas Tax Deal	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000		\$400,000
ICET	\$200,000	\$181,297	\$181,297	\$181,297	\$743,891
Regional Parks	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$171,845	\$171,845	\$743,691
Other Funding			\$200,182	\$143,874	\$344,055
Annual Budget Total	\$600,000	\$481,297	\$653,324	\$497,016	\$2,231,637

The work program for 2009 includes performing upgrades to three of the eight segments identified in the 5 year financial plan.

A. Rail to Trail Section - Lake Cowichan to Duncan

B. Bings Creek Bridge

C. Rail with Trail Section – Chemainus Area

The following is an update on what has been completed in 2009 thus far on each of these project areas:

A. Rail to Trail Section - Lake Cowichan to Duncan – 26km

In the spring of 2009 a detailed assessment was performed by FJM Management on the section of trail between Greendale Road in Lake Cowichan and Sherman Road in Duncan. This assessment included documenting the condition of the trail surface and corridor, condition and location of all culverts, location of all access points (road and trail), and a comprehensive list of recommendations, quantities, and cost estimates for works such as ditching, grading, surfacing, culvert repair/replacement, access armoring, and other works related to the trail.

Following the completion of this assessment the 2009 work program began. Work completed to date includes the following:

- Brushing of the rail to trail corridor to 5 metre width to allow trail surfacing and grading
- Hazard tree removal
- Grading of the trail surface where required to address uneven surface conditions
- Blocking of all accesses using temporary gates (lock blocks with cable in reflective conduit strung across the trail access)

Telus, managers of the Teleglobe fiber optic line that runs underneath this entire section of the E&N Spur Line, have partnered with CVRD Parks to contribute to trail improvements taking place. This includes cost sharing of the corridor brushing, repair and replacement of all culverts in need of work, and bank stabilization at the Bings Creek Bridge site.

Significant work has also been performed at the Sherman Road and Greendale Road Trailheads:

Sherman Road

- Trail surfacing gravel has been placed and compacted from Sherman Road to Agira Road (225 m) to create a level trail surface for walkers, cyclists and equestrians.
- A gate has been installed and rock has been placed at Agira Road to prevent unauthorized vehicle access.
- A large kiosk/sign, split-rail fencing, and rock armoring has been installed at Sherman Road.

Greendale Road

- Trail surfacing gravel has been placed and compacted from Rockland Road to Pine Street (1000m) to create a level trail surface for walkers, cyclists and equestrians.
- A large kiosk/sign, split-rail fencing, and rock armoring has been placed at Greendale Road.
- Signs have been installed along Pine Street directing users south along the trail.

Work will continue into the fall and will include ditching and trail surfacing as required, signage installation at each road crossing, and the current temporary gates will be replaced with removable bollards and rock armoring. Additional work on this section of trail is planned with dedicated funding in 2010.

B. Bings Creek Bridge

A draft bridge design has been created by Herold Engineering for the crossing at Bings Creek. This design is currently under review and will be finalized in the coming weeks. Installation of the bridge in 000014

2009 is pending fisheries approval and the ability to construct and install the bridge prior to the fisheries work window deadline of September 15th. If the bridge is not constructed in 2009 work will carry over to 2010.

Bank stabilization work is required on the south side of the creek over the fiber optic line. This work is being organized and funded completely by Telus.

Other work that will be performed in the area includes trail surfacing to Holiday Lane and construction of approach trails on the north and south sides of the crossing.

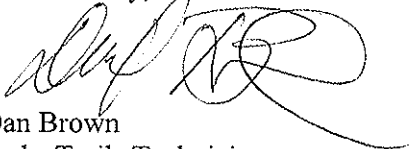
C. Rail with Trail Section – Chemainus Area – 1.3km

2009 work on the Rail with Trail in Chemainus will include construction of a 3 metre wide trail from River Road south to Chemainus Road at Crozier Road. The trail will be constructed to the "Vancouver Island Rail Corridor Rail with Trail Design Guidelines," which was finalized and approved in June 2009 by the Island Corridor Foundation. The Chemainus Rotary Club is an active partner in the project with additional funds raised by the club allowing more work to proceed than was planned for 2009. The District of North Cowichan has also been contributing to the design and layout of the trail.

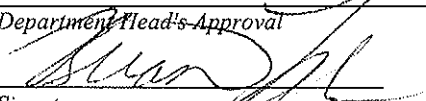
The trail alignment follows the west side of the tracks from River Road to the MacMillan Bloedel Haul Road. At the Haul Road, the trail crosses the tracks and follows the east side to Henry Road. At Henry Road, users will cross using the designated cross walk, then cross the tracks to the west side. The trail will follow the west of the tracks south to Chemainus Road. This final stretch will border Mt. Brenton Golf Course, with whom the CVRD has been involved since the planning of this section of trail first began.

Pending Southern Rail's final approval of the trail layout next to the active E&N tracks, a Request for Proposals will be issued for the proposed works. Work will commence once the RFP is awarded. The target for the successful contractor to complete the work is October 2009.

Submitted by,



Dan Brown
Parks Trails Technician
Parks, Recreation and Culture Department

Department Head's Approval  Signature
--

DB/mca



STAFF REPORT

PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 12, 2009

DATE: August 12, 2009 **FILE NO:**

FROM: Tanya Soroka, Parks Planning Technician, Parks, Recreation and Culture Dept.

SUBJECT: Regional Park Site Brochure Template

Recommendation:

That the Parks Committee approve the template layout for preparation of Regional Park and Regional Recreation Area brochures.

Purpose:

That the Parks Committee review the Regional Parks brochure template created by the Parks Planning summer student as the standard for creation of all Regional Park Site Brochures.

Financial Implications:

N/A

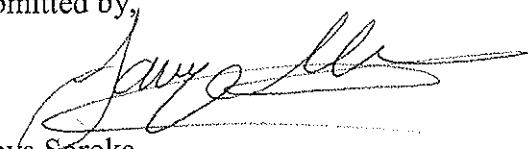
Background:

The Parks and Trails Division continues to receive numerous requests from the public for park brochures of the regional park sites (i.e. Spectacle Lake, Sandy Pool) and the Cobble Hill Mountain Regional Recreation Area, in particular pertaining to activities available at these sites and information on trails. With the hiring a Parks Planning student for the summer of 2009, funded in part under the Regional Parks Program, a key task was to produce a brochure template that could be used for all Regional Park and Regional Recreation Area sites.

The layout and design for the brochure template involved investigating what other local government parks agencies have produced by way of park brochures and assessing key information that should be provided in a regional park site brochure, including history of the park, activities and opportunities, trail map information and appropriate park visitor expectations and conduct. The enclosed regional park brochure template incorporates space for this information that would be customized for each regional park site, as well as portraying a CVRD Regional Parks recognition theme to the brochures through the use of standardized layout, colours and use of the Cowichan Valley Regional District logo. Direction from the Parks Committee on the enclosed template at this time allow the remainder of the brochures to be

completed by the Parks Planning summer student prior to completion of the work term at the of August.

Submitted by,


Tanya Soroka
Parks Planning Technician
Parks, Recreation and Culture Department

TS/mca

Enclosure

Department Head's Approval

Signature



Mr. Mel Dorey
 Chair, Regional Parks Committee
 Cowichan Valley Regional District
 175 Ingram Street
 Duncan, British Columbia
 V9L 1N8

June 18, 2009

Re: Chase Woods Property Purchase

Dear Mr. Dorey,

I am writing today to alert the CVRD Regional Parks Committee of an opportunity to provide support the Nature Conservancy of Canada to acquire a 100-acre (40-hectare) property on Mt. Tzouhalem, which we call Chase Woods.

The Chase Woods property rises from the valley bottom to the 400 metre summit of Mt. Tzouhalem. The white cross, visible from many points in the Cowichan Valley is located on the Chase Woods property, making this a truly iconic place. A series of trails located on lands owned by the Municipality of North Cowichan connects with trails on Chase Woods that lead to the cross. While recreational use of the property will be subject to NCC's management planning, NCC anticipates keeping these popular hiking trails to the cross open and available to the public.

The conservation values of Chase Woods are considerable. The property contains representative examples of all of the moisture gradients associated with the Coastal Douglas fir ecosystem – from riparian areas to dry Garry oak bluffs rich with wildflowers, and including old growth Douglas fir stands. The property contains several rare species and seven different globally imperilled plant community types. First Nations cultural values on this property are also present.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has a conditional purchase and sale agreement with the current owner of the property: 98-year-old David Chase. NCC's total project budget to complete the purchase, and cover its associated costs and short- and long-term stewardship needs, is \$1.7 million. So far, pending two strong pledges materializing, NCC has raised over 90% of the project budget, and is striving to secure the last \$145,000. NCC must find this funding by July 24th in order to remove the purchaser's condition precedent for project funding.

The community of the Cowichan Valley has been extremely generous toward this funding campaign, so far contributing almost \$20,000 in amounts ranging from \$25 to \$5,000 at a time. Several local business owners have donated their time and business

profits to help with the effort. While this support has been wonderful, we do need to find the last lead gift to allow us to complete this purchase. If we do not receive pledges for the funding by July 24th, we will be forced to seek an extension of the purchase contract, something which the vendor and his family are reluctant to grant given the age of the vendor. To ensure that we can realize this limited opportunity, we need to secure the remainder of the project funding this July.

This letter is submitted to the CVRD Regional Parks Committee in hopes that the Parks Committee may be able to provide some funding support to the Chase Woods project to ensure that this ecological treasure is conserved in perpetuity as a vital piece of the Cowichan Valley's natural and cultural heritage.

Respectfully submitted,

Nature Conservancy of Canada

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katie Blake".

Katie Blake

BC Coordinator of Conservation Projects

Duncan connecting to Trans-Canada Trail

Mike D'Amour

News Leader Pictorial

Workers are busy clearing bush and grooming ground in their attempt to complete a portion of the Trans-Canada Trail that will link North Cowichan to Cowichan Lake.

"Right now we're busy undertaking the works this year and next year to link the town of Lake Cowichan with Duncan/North Cowichan using the existing railway grade that is actually owned by the Island Corridor Foundation," said Brian Farquhar, parks manager for the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

"It's part of the old spur line that used to run up to the town (of Lake

Cowichan) to the Honeymoon Bay area and Mesachie Lake."

The work is concentrating on 26-kilometres of trail at a cost of about \$340,000 in grant money from Island Coastal Economic Trust, regional parks funding, federal gas tax funding and from Cowichan Tribes.

"We started some initial clearing back in May and we're just now finalizing details in terms of the culverts and grading and everything else," said Farquhar.

Farquhar said the current work linking the trail from Sherman Road on the North Cowichan end to Greendale Road, just at the east end of the Town of Lake Cowichan is one of several elements the CVRD is working on during the next three years to complete the link from the town of Lake Cowichan up to

Nanaimo regional district's Trans-Canada Trail, north of Ladysmith.

"With the improvements we're doing now you'll be able to go from the old CNR rail line, which is our Cowichan Valley Trail, onto the old E&N spur to come back to Duncan-North Cowichan on the north side of the river," Farquhar said.

"And from just north of Duncan where the rail line comes back it will use existing portions of the active E&N rail right of way, which is 100-feet wide with the tracks right down the middle."

The overall objective is to have everything — including the Kinsol Trestle (a vital link in the Trans-Canada Trail) and the connection with Victoria's Galloping Goose Trail — substantially completed by 2012.

TimberWest will require liability insurance for back-country access

ROBERT BARRON
Canwest News Service

NANAIMO — Growing restrictions to back-country access will include liability insurance, says major landowner TimberWest.

The forest firm, which owns approximately 33,000 hectares of land around the Nanaimo Lakes, is increasingly restricting public access to the land this year. While the public has enjoyed easy access to the popular areas for many

years, growing concerns about suspicious fires, vandalism and timber harvesting has caused TimberWest to start severely limiting access to areas popular with hikers, campers, hunters and others.

Access into the area is now blocked with a locked gate, and those who request permission to access the area must have appropriate liability insurance.

A number of outdoor clubs, including the Nanaimo Fish and Game

Protective Association are growing increasingly concerned that they are losing access to the land.

TimberWest spokeswoman Sue Handel said TimberWest has always had a policy of controlling public access to its land, but they are being applied more stringently this year.

"Setting accessibility rules for our property is a moving target and we review them all the time," Handel said.

"We understand there

are some concerns being raised this year, but nothing has really changed in the way we manage our lands; it's just that it has come to light in the media. People can request permission to access the land and we'll deal with them on a case-by-case basis, but those we admit will have to have their own liability insurance."

Sharlene MacLellan, president of the fish and game club, said it is unfortunate that TimberWest is

having to take more measures to restrict access to its Nanaimo Lakes land this year, but acknowledged the company's concerns around safety and liability.

"It would seem it takes a few to spoil it for everyone," she said.

Club member George Denton agreed.

"With everything going on in that property this year, you can hardly blame TimberWest for taking these measures and I'd gate it up as well," he said.

But MacLellan and Denton said club members are concerned they won't have access to their traditional elk hunting grounds in the area when the season opens this fall.

"We're hoping TimberWest will be willing to make exceptions for our elk hunters," Denton said.

Handel said TimberWest intends to try to open up the area for hunters in the same manner it was open last year, but that decision will be made a later date.

Saturday, August 1, 2009

Cowichan News Leader Pictorial 11

Close to \$1 million dedicated to western half of a trail linking the Alberni and Cowichan valleys

The Island Coastal Economic Trust has opened its coffers to help develop the western half of Runners Trail, linking the Alberni and Cowichan valleys.

Port Alberni councilors listened as economic development manager Pat Deakin outlined the initiative in a report to council.

ICE-T awarded \$450,000 to project partners the City of Port Alberni, Tseshah First Nation and Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District.

The total cost of the project will be \$929,000. Half the cost is underwritten with the ICE-T funds, while the other half is made up of Job Opportunities money the city received last year.

The work will start this summer and is slated to be completed by 2011.

The project will be coordinated in a three-way effort. The city will provide a job safety supervisor. ACRD will contribute mapping services. And the Tseshah First Nation will manage the project.

The western half of the Runners Trail will run east from Headquarters Bay at the southern end of the Historic CNPR Alberni Inlet Trail to Francis Lake (approximately half-way to Cowichan Lake). ICE-T committed \$76,000 in 2008 to help start this project.

"The intent of the Runners Trail project is to help develop a major trail network in the Alberni Valley as one means of diversifying its economy," said Barry Janyk, chair of ICE-T.

"The objective is to reopen the historic route of the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway grade between Port Alberni and Lake Cowichan via Alberni Inlet."

Tseshah First Nation Chief Councillor Les Sam said that the "Runners Trail" name recollects the traditional routes used for news and travel from Ditidaht to Cowichan in one direction and Alberni in the other.

— Alberni Valley News