

UPDATE ON THE SHORT-TERM ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE MOUNTAIN BIKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE REPORT

November 2021

Short-term Actions

- **Focus on improved relationships between the CRD, mountain biking community and various stakeholders.**

Status: CRD staff have ongoing coordination and field work with the South Island Mountain Bike Society (SIMBS) representatives on trail maintenance and improvements in the designated mountain biking area at Mount Work Regional Park (as per Licence Agreement). Through the management planning process for Mount Work Regional Park, staff have had meetings and site visits with SIMBS directors, and provided an update at the SIMBS annual general meeting. The mountain biking community was included as a key interest group, along with other user groups, in the initial engagement process for the park management planning. Staff have been in communication with the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council and did a walk through the mountain biking area in Mount Work Regional Park in April of 2021 to look at a number of trail re-alignments, rehabilitation projects, trail improvements and updated standards, as part of the collaborative work with SIMBS to create more sustainable trails while giving consideration to park values and other visitors.

- **Build on the success of the Mountain Biking Advisory Committee (MBAC) relationship by continuing to better understand the needs of the mountain biking community.**

Status: The CRD met with SIMBS to conduct a yearly trail planning exercise and to discuss improvements for the mountain biking area in Mount Work Regional Park. Staff continue to work in the field with SIMBS, identifying project work included in the annual work plan and assessing new trail work undertaken. Staff have started more frequent communications with the Sooke Bike Club regarding the mountain biking trails in Sea to Sea Regional Park.

- **Develop a communication campaign for summer 2021 to bring awareness to the new guidelines, trail etiquette and mountain biking opportunities in the regional parks system.**

Status: This campaign took place over the course of June, July and August 2021 and included a social media campaign with weekly posts and print advertising in the following papers: Times Colonist, Goldstream News Gazette, Victoria News, Oak Bay News, Sooke News Mirror, Peninsula News Review, Saanich News.

- **Create a new mountain biking steward volunteer position.**

Status: A mountain biking steward volunteer position was created to ride regularly in a designated park and report on trail conditions, facilities, observed issues, as well as foster positive relationships with recreational groups and regional park and trail visitors through positive role modelling and provide information about mountain biking etiquette and opportunities.

- **Explore an additional licence agreement at Mount Manuel Quimper within Sea to Sea Regional Park.**

Status: An agreement for trail maintenance of mountain bike rated trails has been developed. The licence agreement has been shared with conservation covenant holders, in accordance with the covenant conditions, and staff have received a letter of consent to proceed with the licence agreement of existing mountain bike rated trails. Sooke Bike Club has reviewed the agreement. The agreement is now undergoing the signing process.

- **Continue to improve the mountain biking trails within the mountain bike area of Mount Work Regional Park, such as upgrades to the technical training area, an overall mountain biking area plan, working with South Island Mountain Bike Society (SIMBS) on trail improvements and improved wayfinding signage.**

Status: As part of the annual work plan with SIMBS, a number of trail improvements and realignments were identified. Key trail improvements completed to date include: upgrades to double black and blue flow trails, including Organ Donor and Sofa King; improvements and re-alignments to climbing/two way trails, including Painless, Heads Up and Southridge Flow; deactivation of a number of trails that were redundant after re-alignments, including Lazy Line and Walk Up; and formalizing a number of previously unsanctioned trails in the mountain biking area, including Diaphragm and Ruff'n Roll. SIMBS and CRD staff are currently working on an overall mountain biking area plan within the existing mountain biking area. The trail plan for the designated mountain biking area is being included in the draft park management plan. Technical training area upgrades are planned to begin this fall/winter to improve the banked wood structures, with further improvements to the area being considered in the draft park management plan. A planning and design workshop will be conducted this fall with members of the mountain bike community to inform an improved offer in the technical training area. A sign package is being installed in the mountain biking area of Mount Work Regional Park to improve wayfinding.

- **Develop mountain biking specific sign standards.**

Status: New sign standards have been created for mountain biking technical trail features, ratings and wayfinding. The sign package being installed in the mountain biking area of Mount Work Regional Park includes technical trail features and ratings along with wayfinding.

- **Organize a training session for key CRD staff with a certified International Mountain Biking Association trail builder to improve capacity and to provide quality mountain biking trails within our existing authorized trail network.**

Status: Two training sessions were held for CRD Regional Parks staff on March 9-10 and March 11-12 with Trail Holistics. Future training is planned in collaboration with mountain biking trail maintenance volunteers.

- **Work with local agencies for improved connectivity and consistency of the trail networks.**

Status: Staff have been working closely with adjacent land managers, such as BC Parks, the Hartland Landfill and the Department of National Defence, through the management planning process and on an ongoing basis to coordinate trail development and standards. The CRD's priority is coordination with BC Parks on the proposed establishment of a formal trail linkage at Patridge Hills, which connects to Mount Work Regional Park trails near Durrance Lake.

- **Create a new sign standard for closing off ecologically sensitive areas for trail rehabilitation.**

Status: A new sign standard has been created and is already being utilized in the mountain biking area of Mount Work Regional Park.

- **Develop an impact assessment process to identify planned land altering work to ensure regional park values are protected.**

Status: An impact assessment process has been drafted and is currently being field tested by staff. This impact assessment process will be utilized when creating any new mountain biking trails.

- **Review mountain biking opportunities in Thetis Lake Regional Park that fit within the existing management plan.**

Status: The existing management plan for Thetis Lake Regional Park identifies as an action to determine locations where a limited number of single track or otherwise challenging cycling-friendly trails could be designated. Staff assessed the trails in Thetis Lake Regional Park and have verified the condition, rider experience and ecological impact of the current sanctioned and unsanctioned trail network. Staff have finalized a plan to improve and formalize over 10 km of cross country trails that fit with management plan direction.