

Trails: An Emerging Recreational Asset

Background Information



The trail network on the North Shore is a valued recreational asset. Significant work has taken place since 2003 to study the issues and create a plan. Together, the North Shore Mountain Bike Association, the District of North Vancouver and other regional partners are in a position to provide a world class trail network that is desired by North Vancouver residents.

Prepared October 31, 2011 by:



TRAILS FOR ALL
TRAILS FOREVER



North Shore Mountain Bike Association – Fall Report 2011

History

The North Shore Mountain Bike Association was founded in 1997 to advocate and protect the existing trail network which was under threat of closure. The association has grown over the last 14 years and now has a supporting membership of 1900. The association has evolved and now embraces partnership and positive, collaborative management with each of the Land Managers on the North Shore. We currently work with the District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, LSCR (Metro Vancouver), West Vancouver and BC Parks.

Vision Statement

The NSMBA is a voice for the Mountain Biking community of the North Shore. We develop and sustain a network of trails that provide opportunity for challenge and progression, while fostering mountain bike culture and a community that embraces it as a positive force.

Mission Statement

"Trails for all, Trails forever"

Partnerships

Partnerships are the only way the NSMBA can achieve our vision and mission. In addition to working with the land managers, we have actively engaged the support of over 20 local businesses. We liaise with other trail user groups in the community, and participate in regional and national trail discussions through the International Mountain Bike Association.

Economic Value of Trails to the North Shore Community

The 2006 Mountain Bike Tourism Association (MBTA) study concluded the following.

Total visitor spending on the North Shore attributable to mountain biking was just over \$2 million over the study period June 10 to September 10, supporting an estimated \$444,858 in new economic activity (GDP).

Social Value of Trails to the North Shore Community

In a recent survey of District of North Vancouver Residents, over 40 % of Respondents placed the highest importance upon trails in the community.

The Trail Adoption Plan

In 2011, the North Shore Mountain Bike Association (NSMBA) proudly announced the launch of the Trail Adoption Plan. In the initial phase, seven trails are being adopted in co-operation with NSMBA Trail Maintainers and the landowners Metro Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver.

The Trail Adoption Plan pairs a Trail Adopter, who mobilizes volunteers, and runs trail maintenance days with a Trail Maintainer, who provides design guidance, trail maintenance expertise, and leads the efforts of the Adopter on all trail days. Collectively, the Adopter and Maintainer work with the NSMBA to develop a vision of a trail based on environmental sustainability. All work will be performed to the standards of the landowners.

There has been overwhelming response from the community to be a part of the plan. So far this year, over 42 trail days and 4300 hours of volunteer labour have been completed. The following community members participated in the launch phase of the Trail Adoption Plan:

Trail	Trail Adopter	Trail Maintainer	Landowner
Boogieman	Steed Cycles (North Vancouver)	Sean Gerke	District of North Vancouver
Circuit 8	Rocky Mountain Bicycles (Delta)	Matt Preston	Metro Vancouver
Corkscrew	Bank of Montreal (North Vancouver, Lonsdale & Esplanade Branch)	Mark Wood	Metro Vancouver
Dale's Trail	NSMB.com (North Vancouver) and SRAM Corp. (Chicago, IL)	Todd Fiander and Jeremy Willows	Metro Vancouver
TNT	Mountain Equipment Co-Op (Vancouver)	Chris Barker and Tyler Wilkes	Metro Vancouver
Bottletop & Ridge Runner	Different Bikes (North Vancouver) and NSRide Mountain Bike Club (North Vancouver)	Daniel Lui and Darryl Marlatt	Metro Vancouver
Team Pangor	Ryder's Eyewear (North Vancouver) and Muddbunnies Riding Club (North Vancouver)	Sven Luebke	District of North Vancouver

**NORTH SHORE MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION
ISSUE #1: LONG TERM FUNDING FOR TRAIL MAINTENANCE**

Date: 2011-10-31

I. ISSUE:

The trail network on the North Shore is a valued recreational asset, and long term, stable funding to maintain this asset is required.

II. BACKGROUND:

Historically, community organizations such as the NSMBA have maintained significant portions of North Vancouver's trail network through volunteer effort, and without direct financial support from local government.

To address ongoing concerns regarding trails and the use of the mountainside, DNV Council initiated the Alpine Recreation Strategic Study (ARSS) in 2003 and approved it in October 2005.

In late 2006, the Fromme Mountain Sustainable Trail Use and Classification Plan was initiated. The intention was to formalize within an eco-based framework, an assessment of the existing trails, and work within an adaptive management framework to establish a trail network map, develop Best Management Practices to address environmental concerns, and develop Trail Guidelines to provide direction on trail construction for staff and volunteers.

The plan was completed in late 2007 and approved by District council in the summer of 2008. The study is intended to be implemented over 5+ years.

With District funding matched by a Recreation Infrastructure Canada grant, a trail crew was assembled in March 2010 to implement the short term priorities of the study. The combined RInC Grant and DNV budget was \$855000. www.dnv.org/frommetrails

Over two seasons, the Fromme Mountain Trail Crew completed an array of projects within the Fromme Mountain trail network. Upgrades have been made to trail drainage, resurfacing, and naturalization; while other efforts have been made to reduce human impact on the Fromme ecosystem. The crew also decommissioned a number of unauthorized, unsustainable trails and braids, corralling and trail structure and bridge/boardwalk construction. An informational and technical signage system for Fromme Mountain trails was installed.

The Federal grant is now completed, and a long term funding solution is needed.

III. DISCUSSION:

The trails upgraded by the DNV Trail Crew require ongoing maintenance due to increased numbers of users. If left unmanaged, the condition of old, poorly designed trails will further deteriorate. Some trails users may be tempted to build rogue trails which may pose a risk to others and the environment. Different funding models exist to deliver trail maintenance.

Delivery of trail maintenance through District staff provides the District with the most flexibility in terms of hiring and direction of the work to be completed.

Delivery of trail maintenance through partnership with a local trail association is a successful model used around North America. Municipalities support some core staff costs of the association, and the association develops annual maintenance and enhancement plans to be reviewed and approved by the municipality. The association generally has better access to private donations, matching grants, and volunteers than the municipality.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS/SUMMARY:

The mountain bike community would like to see the DNV continue its commitment to funding, upgrading and maintaining this world famous recreational facility. When compared to other recreational facilities, trails provided excellent value. They have the least capital investment and maintenance costs per number of users, as well as having the broadest demographic of users. Trails require planning, funding and maintenance as with any other recreational facility.



Young trail users on Fromme Mountain

**NORTH SHORE MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION
ISSUE #2: PARKING AND TRAIL ACCESS ON FROMME**

Date: 2011-10-31

I. ISSUE:

Establish parking facilities on Fromme to enhance safety of youth, improve trail access and reduce resident conflicts.

II. BACKGROUND:

The recent trail upgrades on Fromme have increased its popularity among mountain bikers and hikers. During the summer of 2011 there were five mountain bike summer camps operating on Fromme, and the new Bobsled Trail averaged over 1000 users per week. The Drop Off Zone at the top of Mountain Hwy often becomes congested in the summer with parents dropping off their children and commercial vehicles to and from Grouse Mountain.



Mountain Hwy Drop Off Zone

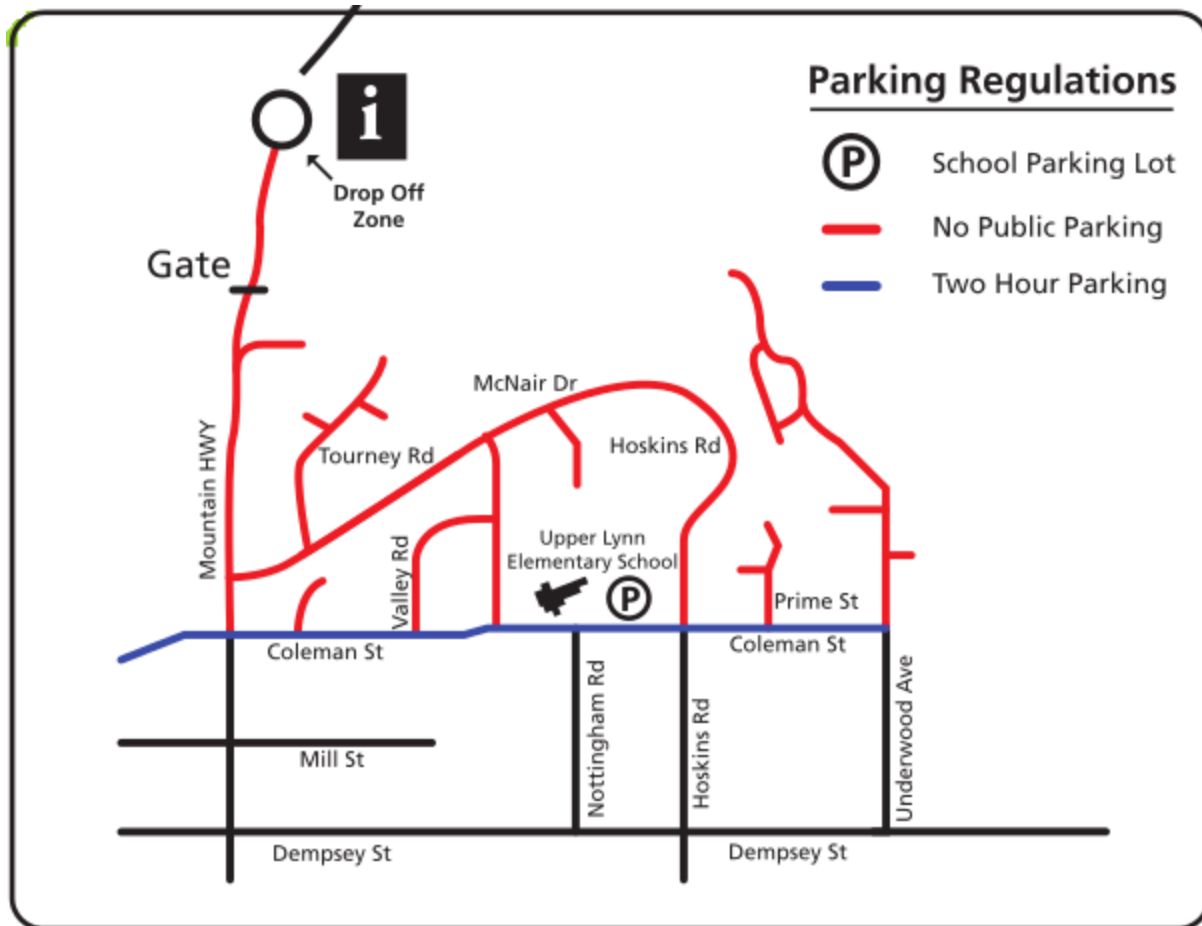


Children exiting Bobsled onto Mountain Hwy

Currently, due to the Resident Parking Only restrictions, all trail users must park on or below Coleman Avenue, over 1km from the Drop Off Zone. Without a proper parking and staging area, children aged six and up are seen riding/pushing their bikes up Mountain Hwy. Mountain Hwy has no sidewalks, and there are safety concerns for trail users and vehicles sharing the road.

III. DISCUSSION:

A climbing trail from Dempsey/Braemar would allow intermediate and advanced trail users to access the upper mountain trails, and more evenly distribute parking from the upper Mountain Hwy area. However the safety of children accessing beginner/intermediate trails above the Drop Off Zone would only be solved with a dedicated parking and staging area near the Mountain Hwy turn-around.



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS/SUMMARY:

Recommendation from the *Fromme Mountain Sustainable Trail Use and Classification Plan*:

“A dedicated staging and parking area is urgently required. Its location will greatly affect subsequent trail management and development. The obvious location (from the perspective of geography, trail users and vehicle management) is on a large, flat bench in the forest, north and the east pull-out on the north side of East Braemar Road. Following the construction of the staging area, the development of new trails to allow uphill access for cyclists will facilitate utilization of the trail network from this location. This will distribute trail use and mitigate vehicle and staging impacts within the adjacent neighbourhoods.”

**NORTH SHORE MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION
ISSUE #3: TRAILS FOR HIGH SCHOOL MOUNTAIN BIKE LEAGUE**

Date: 2011-10-31

I. ISSUE:

The North Shore High School Mountain Bike League (NSMBL) lacks appropriate trails and facilities to train and hold events.

II. BACKGROUND:

The North Shore High School Mountain Bike League is cross country mountain bike racing league. Over 150 secondary students from thirteen schools in North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Squamish, Whistler and the Sunshine Coast participate.

Five races are held in the spring of each year, two to three of which occur in North Vancouver. The HSMBL currently uses the trail networks in the Blair Range, Hyannis, and Richard Juryn Trail to train and host events. The only trail suitable to host events is the Richard Juryn Trail. Although it meets the minimum requirements it is less than ideal, especially when compared to other Districts and Municipalities.

In 2012, North Vancouver will host the NSMBL Championships. 200+ athletes will compete in several categories.

III. DISCUSSION:

Issues with the Hyannis and Blair Range trail networks need to be resolved to promote their ongoing use as locations for the HSMBL. Upgrades are needed to the trails at Hyannis to support increased ridership, and parking/staging is difficult in the neighbourhood. The Blair Range is CMHC property, and while the HSMBL has permission to race there, the NSMBA cannot receive permission to maintain the trail network. The Richard Juryn Trail is in good condition, but parking/staging locations are far away and traffic management on Lillooet Road is difficult.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS/SUMMARY:

In order to be competitive the NSMBL needs a properly designed and built training and racing course. This course must accommodate the varying age ranges and ability of students from Grade 8 to Grade 12. This could be completed through a series of enhancements to existing trails and formalization of a parking/staging area.

Minimum requirements:

- 2.5km
- loop
- Double track start/finish
- parking and staging area

- washrooms

Basic Stack Loop Trail Network

