## Cowichan Trail Stewarciship Society



North Gowichan is situated on the traditional teritories of the Quw'utsun Nation, which inoludes the Cowichan Tribes, the Halate sirs wation, the yackson first Nation, the Penelakut Iribe, the Stz uminus first Nation, is cubban-asatx First Nation and the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

This statement is not cefinitive and continues to evolve as we leain. We are committed to understanding the true history of the moligenous Peoples of this land:

## Hurcha u- Thank you

## HERE ARE SOME OF OUR 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS WE ARE MOST PROUD OF.

## Mt Prevost

Over the past two years, the CTSS has upgraded trails to meet, or exceed, the Prevost community's expectations; The trail network has been properly planned, designed and constructed, taking into consideration the impact of erosion, alignment, drainage and maintenance. With the addition of signage and improvements to parking and the shuttle road, Prevost is ready to welcome the riding community and visitors to its pro-line trails and jump features.

## Bumblebee Connector

A Bumblebee connector was constructed between AGT and Bumblebee to allow riders to session Bumblebee. and accommodate the increased trail use. This was accomplished with a couple of hours of work from a team of 40 volunteers.

## Bumblebee re-route and maintenance

Bumblebee trail on Mt. Izouhalem was re-routed and restructured to its original intent of being a blue, flow, descent trail. The addition of some major berms, table tops and a skinny made Bumblebee a must ride. Traffic on the trail has expanded and helped level the parking load between Kaspa and Nevilane parking lots.

## Mt Richards position statement

The mountain was scheduled for trail development in 2023 based on a plan that cyclists felt was not in the best interests of the community. The position paper was created after consultations with mountain bikers, hikers, equestrians and Crofton community Ieaders. It has resulted in the original development plan getting deferred by the Municipality to allow for further review and consultation

Adaptive trail development of existing trails Bridges and trails on Maple Mountain were widened to accommodate adaptive riders. A trail loop is signed for adaptive riders.

## a MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDEIT

With the growth and success of Cowichan Trails, there has never been a more exciting time to be a part of the organization. Together with our partners, the CTSS aims to make Cowichan a premier mountain biking and hiking destination, for residents and tourists alike. Our efforts to promote and expand our trail networks have been scaled up to take on the challenge and meet the demands of trail users. We have undertaken a number of projects to build organizational capacity and support the trail networks and our members.

## Ways in which we built organizational capacity:

- Developed a volunteer trail crew policy which created a framework for volunteers to contribute to the trail networks.
- Purchased a work truck fully funded by donations.
- Obtained charity designation status with Canada Revenue Agency so that we can issue tax deductible charitable donation receipts to donors.


## Ways in which we supported the trail networks and our members:

- Issued a position paper on Mt Richards. The mountain Was scheduled for trail development in 2023 based on a plan that cyclists felt was not in the best interests of the community. The position paper has resulted in the original development plan getting deferred by the Municipality to allow for further review and consultation
- Contracted VIU to conduct a trail user survey, providing us with an evidence-based impact report on the social and economic benefits of trails in Cowichan.

- Engaged Mark Wood of Trail Holistics to run a trail certification course so a dozen volunteers could learn the basics of trail construction.
- Upped our social media game resulting in over 1,700 Instagram and 3,000 Facebook followers.
- Coordinated with the CVRD to build a section of the Sahtlam Greenway trail.
- Held a Double D Chainless race that was both competitive and fun for all involved.



## SIMGIOUNIUG MT. PREYOST (SWUUQUS)

Swuq' us is legendary as arguably the only year-round downhill mountain biking training network in Ganada. Worto Bup athletes such as stevie Smith and Mark wallace honed theirsills on its chailenging trails.

The historical achhoc trail development on the mountain by its community of downhill bike users resulted in a very effective use of the terrain to create an incredible downhill trail network.


The trail network has been properly planned, designed and constructed, taking into consideration the impact of erosion, alignment, drainage and maintenance. With the addition of signage and improvements to parking and the shuttle road, Prevost is ready to welcome the riding community and visitors to its pro-line trails and jump features.

The Municipality of North Cowichan recognized that it had a unique asset in that Prevost is an internationally renowned downhill mountain biking destination. The Municipality contracted the CTSS to sanction the network and ensure that trails are up to standards. Over the past two years, the CTSS has upgraded trails to meet, or exceed their expectations.


## WHAT IT TAKES TO KEEP THE SOCIETY OPERATING

A large and engaged membership has tremendous impacts. Membership numbers support the CTSS's position when we advocate for trails. In addition, the revenue from membership provides the organization with cash flow that we use at our discretion to get our annual work plan accomplished.

With the acquisition of a charitable tax number in 2023 donations have become a new source of funding for investment in trails. We are excited that our supporters can now get a tax credit for their contributions to the society.


Corporate sponsors expand our reach and also engage the business community in our work. Lifestyle benefits attract employees to a community and we know that our trail networks are a draw. Some corporate sponsors have said that they only had to look at the number of tailgate pads and bike racks in their parking lot to realize that the CTSS is an organization worthy of their support.


Adequate trail maintenance would not be possible without volunteers. The volunteer trail crew provides an invaluable service to the trail networks. These skilled volunteers keep assigned trails in top shape under the direction of the CTSS Trail Director. Dig days are used for trail work that requires a large concerted effort in a short period of time. The work that can be accomplished by many hands working in coordination has to be seen to be believed.


Our mission to be transparent with the community has helped cultivate many excellent relationships. This can't be counted on to occur organically - We spend a lot of time considering feedback, reaching out and engaging with stakenolders and the media to get our message out to the public.

## Whar's Mext?

## Some high-profile projects that we have been working on will reach a conclusion in 2024.

Mt. Prevost will have a grand opening this year. It takes coordination to get the right dignitaries together and give proper recognition to those who came before us and those responsible for getting the network funded, up to standard and sanctioned.

The Double D machine work to make the most well-known trail in Cowichan more wear-proof has been fully funded thanks to the Gal Kaiser sponsored Burger and Beer event and the Matthuw Ronald-Jones donation matching program. We also will be receiving donated machine time from Cowichan Valley Excavating and Irevor Wince. The work will be done in phases to minimize the amount of trail closures, projected to begin in the fall of 2024.

When we prepared a Mt Richards position paper it revealed that everyone had an opinion on trail use but facts to support evidence-based decisions on mountain biking and trail use in Cowichan Were lacking. With funding from Tourism Cowichan, BTSS commissioned Vancouver Island University to undertake a trail user survey. The number of responses to the survey exceeded expectations so the results can be counted on to fairly represent the social and economic impacts of the trail networks in Cowichan. The results of this study will provide valuable support for future decisions on trails in Cowichan.


## MAHIGIIG THE TRIS STO

 Not all trails are built for all usess zech of the Tinee mountan trait netuerks that crss manages hàs its own umitute


 started.

## HATURAL SURFIG?

There is a high level of participation in unstructured recreation activities across the Gowichan Valley. According to a 2018 Regional Recreation Survey residentis prefer activities that can be done without the need to join a league/team/program. The natura| environment is a key factor in recreation interests and activities. The recreation activities with the highest levels of participation take place outtoors. Elery jurisuliction in the Cowichan Valley ranks natural surface trails as their top recreation priority.

## 

Bumblebee trail on Mt. Tzouhalem was re-routed and restructured to its original intent of being a blue flow descent trail. Traffic on the trail has expanded and helped evee the parking load between Kaspa and Nevilane parking lots. A Bumblebee connector was constructed between AGT and Bumblebee to allow riders to session Bumblebce and accommodate the increased trail use. Adaptive trail work was undertaken on Phloem, Solar Coaster and Story Trails on Maple Mountain; and the Firehall trails. The goal is to make more trails accessible to adaptive riders. Roy's Roll was rebuilt to replace rotten wood with fresh wood.

## YOUR IMPACT

Our maintenance contract with the Municipality of North Cowichan provides the funding to maintain the trail networks. The North Cowichan Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, Neil Pukesh, and the Manager of Parks and Forestry, Shaun Mason have provided invaluable support to the CTSS team. As the trail networks expand, CTSS is challenged by an ever increasing workload, largely funded by a municipal budget that is at the mercy of taxpayers' demands.

That is where our supporters come in. Contributions from purchasing memberships, donations to the society, corporate sponsorships and merchandise sales, allow us to continue our growth and success. We need you to invest in world-class trails. We need you to support outdoor recreation. And we need you to raise your voice to support the expansion and funding of trails throughout the Cowichan Valley.

Each of you can be a trail champion.
THANK YOU.

Volunteer Iours Gontributed (that we know oft
Board of Directors (Admin) 912
Volunteer Trail Builders 665
Dig Day Volunteers 1430
TOTAL

## GTBS Work ITurk Sponsois

Cam Drew - Thermoproof
Cathy \& Barry Waters
Chris Duncan Professional Gorp.
Graig Frederickson - Mount sicker Lumber
Jill \& Brant Stone - Pacific Stone
Bichard Martinson
Steven \& Meryle Hilberry
Tavish Annis

## TREASURER'S REPORT

## 2023 FINANCIALS



## The Leadership Team

Lorrie Mansey
Brendan Gauthier
Board of Directors
Rick Martinson
Kelly Dougan
Matt Grossnickle
Mike Evans
Dan Berard
Dan Cathro
Dan Johnson
Mark Wallace
Mckay Vezina
Michele Carr
Pete Stevenson
Ryan Jordan

Executive Director
Trail Director

President
Vice President
Vice President
Treasurer

