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- Bruce Anderson, Manager of Development Services, Town of Ladysmith
- Susan Cormie, Senior Planner, Regional District of Nanaimo
- Norma Czerny, Cedar Heritage Centre
- Richard Harding, Manager Parks Planning & Development, City of Nanaimo
- Kerri House, Senior GIS Technician, Regional District of Nanaimo
- Jim Hutt, Wheatsheaf Hotel
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- Joe Materi
- Kerri-Lynne Wilson

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the input of those members of the community who attended either the Open House held on July 13th, or on August 10th held at the Cedar Heritage Centre.
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INTRODUCTION

This study responds to the vision of a community linked together with trails and paths, as outlined in the Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan (OCP Bylaw No. 1240, 2001). This study clearly identifies where the trail opportunities lie, and what actions are required to develop them.

The study was undertaken from June through October 2002. Two Open Houses, meetings with a local Community Trail Study Project Committee, and with regional and city planners, combined with extensive review of map information, served to identify the extent of the resources and to define priorities.

These resources include developed and undeveloped rights of way and relatively small amounts of Crown Land within the community.

In the OCP, the community articulates a vision that reflects the understanding that without links other than roads, individuals in the community will increasingly be forced to ride, walk and cycle along roads which do not welcome their presence. Travel to local parks and lakes will only be possible along roads, often by circuitous routes, and the rural nature of the community will be more viewed than experienced.

The study recommends locations for new trails, so as to focus regional and community planning efforts. The community of Electoral Area ‘A’ has developed a long-term vision, aware that unless steps are taken now, opportunities for trails will be lost.

Determined and sustained effort over a considerable period of time is needed to develop trail links. In preparing this report, it was frequently mentioned that a 25-50 year time frame will be required to realize the vision of a community connected by a combination of trails, pathways and tracks.

This study, which includes a series of detailed maps accompanied by descriptions of the opportunities and recommendations for their development, is designed as a tool; to be used as planning is undertaken in Electoral Area ‘A’.
INITIATIVE

The initiative for this study comes from the Area A Official Community Plan (OCP Bylaw No. 1240, 2001). Trails, parkland and improved mobility are mentioned several times in this document. Following are excerpts from the OCP that apply to this trails study.

SECTION 1: CONTAINING URBAN SPRAWL & CREATING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Objectives

Promote the creation of a complete nodal community within the Cedar Village Centre emphasizing a mix of residential types; commercial uses, public uses, parkland and public open spaces. A similar statement is issued for the Cassidy Village Centre.

SECTION 4: IMPROVING MOBILITY

Objectives

Encourage the Ministry of Transportation to provide safe roads and intersections for the traveling public.

1. Encourage the provision of safe bicycling and pedestrian routes, connections, and crossings throughout the plan Area and specifically within the vicinity of all schools.

5. Protect the E&N railway line as a continuous linear transportation corridor by designating the lands as a transportation corridor.

Policies

2. The Ministry of Transportation, as the approving authority, and the RDN, will implement road standards within Urban Containment Boundaries on major roads, and in proximity to schools that:
   a. are consistent with the character of development;
   b. provide pedestrian and cycling routes;
   c. provide for the integration of these routes with existing and future trails;
   d. incorporate pull-out lanes for transit buses; and
   e. provide for traffic calming specifically near schools and in areas such as Woobank Road.

3. The RDN will investigate the possibility of providing alternate pedestrian and cycling routes between neighbourhoods and school sites.

6. The E&N Railway corridor lands shall be designated Transportation Corridor with a minimum parcel size of 2 ha. (adopted as a By-law on August 13, 2002).
Section 6 of the OCP has the most direct objectives and policies that apply to this study. This study is the first step in the Parks and Trails Master Plan that is mentioned several times in Section 6.

SECTION 6 IMPROVING SERVICE EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCE USE
PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

Objectives

1. Develop a park land strategy for the Plan Area
2. Integrate and expand regional and local parklands and trail ways with the existing provincial park system.
3. Provide improved parks and recreation opportunities by increasing the amount of parkland for a variety of activities, including non-seasonal activities for youth.
4. Encourage improved access to all waterfront areas, including rivers, lakes, and oceanfront.
5. Develop a Plan Area-wide trail system, linking the Trans Canada Trail with the provincial parks, community parks, the Nanaimo River, other trails, and the waterfront.
6. Establish a liaison with the public, non-profit organizations, and private organizations to encourage opportunities for accessibility to desirable lands.
7. Develop criteria to guide the obtaining of parkland and trails in the Plan to be used until the adoption of a Parks and Trails Master Plan.

Policies

4. The RDN will prepare a Parks and Trails Master Plan, which, at a minimum, will identify the amount, type, and potential location of historical, current, and future park lands and trails desired by the community as well as the methods of obtaining park lands and trails.

7. The RDN will continue to develop the trail system along the former Morden Colliery right-of-way to connect Morden Colliery Historic Provincial Park to the Nanaimo River. The dedication of parkland will be required at time of subdivision for those properties, which provide trail connections to the Morden Colliery Historic Provincial Park.

8. Motorized vehicles, other than motorized handicapped vehicles, will be discouraged from using trails and lakes outside designated areas. During the design and construction of parks and trails, accessibility features to sites will be considered.

10. The RDN will support and encourage obtaining properties along the Nanaimo River.
11. The RDN will support the potential of obtaining parkland through organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, The Nanaimo Area Land Trust or others, or by donation.

13. The RDN will not support encroachment permits, issued by the Ministry of Transportation, to private individuals to occupy road ends adjacent to the ocean or a watercourse.
METHODOLOGY

STUDY PHASES

June - Phase One

- Initial meetings with RDN.
- Assembly of background information, including existing published trail guides as well as digital data from RDN.
- Display of Trails Study at the Morden Colliery Trail new interpretative sign unveiling ceremony – June 8th.
- Study information handout available at the Cedar Heritage Centre.
- Contact adjoining communities/groups regarding existing/potential trails; Trans Canada Trail, CVRD, Town of Ladysmith.
- Formation of and meetings with the Community Trail Study Project Committee.
- Trail Committee provided with maps on which to locate existing and potential trails. This information was to form the bulk of the study results.
- Local Newspaper advertisement of trail study and upcoming Open House, solicitation of input.

July - Phase Two - Information Gathering

- Field work: trail mapping, identification and assessment of existing and potential trail corridors.
- Meeting with City of Nanaimo Parks Planning & Development Manager – July 11.
- Open House – July 13, 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Cedar Heritage Centre. Maps and orthophotos available for the public to locate potential and existing trail routes and favourite road walks.
- Meeting with RDN staff – July 22 in Nanaimo.
- Office work, identification of key areas, Crown Land identification, determination of ownership and status of utility corridors.

August – Phase Three - Strategy Development

- Local Newspaper advertisement of trail study and upcoming Open House #2, solicitation of input. Analysis of all information gathered through background research, field work, and public consultation.
- Open House #2 – August 10, 2002 1 pm to 5 pm at the Cedar Heritage Centre. Display of maps with known and potential trail locations on public land. This was an opportunity for the public to add information and to comment on what has been prepared. It also raised awareness and profile of trails in the community and shaped the trail strategy.
- Preparation of digital data and draft study conclusions and recommendations.
September to October – Phase Four – Final Report

- Preparation of Conclusions Section of the Final Report. Delivered to the RDN September 6, 2002 for review, then revised and sent to the Project Committee.
- Meeting with the Project Committee September 21, 2002 to review the Conclusions Section.
- Incorporation of comments into final study report, maps, digital files and related products.
- Presentation of final study to RDN and Project Committee.
- Delivery of finished materials and return of digital data loaned from RDN.

**PROJECT COMMITTEE**

A committee was formed at the beginning of the project to provide input and review the reports. The committee consisted of five members: four from the Area ‘A’ Parks, Recreation and Greenspace Committee and one general community representative. The members were: Lynette Aldcroft, Judy Burgess, Frank Garnish, Joe Materi and Kerri-Lynne Wilson.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

**Open House #1 Advertising**
- Notice on the Wheatsheaf Billboard
- Page size colour notices at mailboxes, stores, bulletin boards (approx. 30)
- Half page advertisement in the July/August edition of Take 5! Also an article about the study in the same news magazine.
- Coming Events Notice on Island Horses website

**Open House #2 Advertising**
- Page size notices at stores and bulletin boards (approx. 5)
- Double column advertisement in the Coming Events column of the Nanaimo News Bulletin on Thursday August 8 and 11.
- Large sign erected on the pagoda outside the Cedar Heritage Centre.
CRITERIA FOR PRIORITIZING RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study are presented as a series of recommendations which are prioritized high, moderate or low. The rationale for the prioritizing is outlined as follows:

High Priority
High priority recommendations are large scale, visionary ideals that will take a long time to reach fruition but which will provide important links and a backbone of trail connections across Area “A”. They represent the objectives and policies of the Official Community Plan.

Many of these recommendations will entail a rezoning process or will require negotiations between different levels of government or with private landowners.

The high priority areas are the major corridors in Area ‘A’ that would create important trail links such as roads, powerlines, railway grades and the Morden Colliery Trail.

Some of the areas discussed are on private land and are currently unavailable for recreation use.

Many of these recommendations are expensive and in some cases would require the purchase of large areas of land from willing landowners.

Moderate Priority
Important recreation and trail areas that are less threatened than some of the high priority areas, and all are on public land. Recreation is ongoing in most of these areas, but could be improved. Many of these recommendations will take less time to develop than the high priority recommendations and results will be seen rapidly.

Low Priority
These are areas that are not threatened in any way. Recreation is ongoing in all of them.

The Trans Canada Trail, which usually is a high priority item in many areas, passes well to the west of Area A and it is difficult to find a viable link to this trail, so it is classed as a low priority.

The Nanaimo Estuary is enmeshed in an ongoing planning process which will determine the type and amount of recreational use suitable to the area.
SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The results of the study are contained in the digital files and maps provided with the written report. The digital files of trail locations include descriptive information about the trail where available.

INFORMATION SOURCES

The bulk of the trail information came from the members of the Project Committee. They were provided with maps and orthophotos of Area “A” on which to locate existing and potential trails. These maps were returned to RRL and incorporated into the digital data.

The City of Nanaimo provided digital information regarding existing and potential trails in their jurisdiction. They also discussed City owned property within the Regional District and were very receptive to links and cooperative projects.

The Regional District of Nanaimo provided most of the original digital information such as cadastral, base map data, SEI data, OCP data, Parks and location of the TCT. Their staff later searched for land title information relating to utility corridors and some specified land parcels to confirm if they were privately owned. The RDN also provided a digital file of Crown Land parcels within Area “A.”

PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

The amount of public input received for this study was low. Attendance at both Open Houses was low in spite of advertising using a variety of media.

Open House #1 Results
- Attended by all members of the Project Committee.
- Poor attendance by the public, 10 people attended.
- Two phone calls after the Open House. One person wished to voice their concerns about trails (existing or potential) being shown on private land. This person was not willing to give their name or provide a written submission. The other person had seen a notice on his mailbox and wanted to know a little more about the study and the Open Houses. This person was not willing to contribute because he did want his trails “organized.”

Open House #2 Results
- Attended by few members of the Project Committee
- Low public attendance, 15 people attended.
- One anonymous letter was delivered to the Open House
CONCLUSIONS

This study will provide the RDN with the locations of desired trails and connections. This information can be used during development processes to request a trail or parkland from the developer.

The strongest conclusion from the study is the lack of public land in Area A. Secondary is the lack of private forestland that in many areas on southern Vancouver Island fills the role of public land. The Weyerhaeuser owned forested lands within the City of Nanaimo around the Pope and Talbot owned Harmac pulp mill are the only piece of private forestland nearby.

The largest piece of public land in Area A is Hemer Provincial Park which already has a network of developed trails.

On the other hand, Area A has a network of developed and undeveloped roadways. These existing and potential roadways form a network of public access routes that link all parts of the study area. In addition to providing links between public facilities and private homes, many of these roadways are scenic because of the rural nature of the area.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are general and suggest places that need trails and give direction to the priority for development. These recommendations will assist the RDN and the Area ‘A” Parks Advisory Committee in planning and will focus their efforts.

The study recommendations make no attempt to designate the type of trail or footing or to suggest a trail route. Further work may conclude that some of these recommendations are not feasible or desirable.

Some recommendations focus on connections to existing collections of trails and on the development of trails on smaller pieces of public land in Area A or adjoining Area A. Many of these lands already have informal trails and are receiving regular use.

Another set of recommendations focuses on the developed and undeveloped roads that run throughout the area. At present most of these roadways are designed for vehicle transportation, but this study encourages changes in design and construction as new roads are built or old roads improved to encourage safe and enjoyable pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian use. It also promotes the use of undeveloped road allowances as trails and water access.
Recommendations – High Priority

Areas are listed alphabetically and not in order of importance.

Linear Utility Corridors - General

- There are existing linear utility corridors which run through or are adjacent to Area A. Many of these tend to be by way of easements or rights-of-way registered on title for that specific purpose only, e.g. hydro power transmission lines.
- Other utility corridors include the E&N Railway line, the Harmac pipeline, mining railgrades no longer in use, and BC Hydro power transmission lines.
- Most of the old railgrades have been sold and most of the BC Hydro lines cross private land.
- It would require negotiation with numerous landowners to purchase or negotiate a right-of-way for public access along these corridors. The Regional District is not in a position to impose public access over private lands, even if utility corridors already cross that land.
- The RDN has rezoned the E&N railway as a transportation corridor in order to protect it as an uninterrupted corridor which cannot be sold off in small pieces and broken up.
- Two specific corridors (E&N Railway Line and the Harmac Pipeline) are discussed in detail below.

Action 1: RDN to contact all owners of linear utility corridors within Electoral Area A and convey community interest in developing recreation opportunities in instances where the owners are amenable.

Linear Utility Corridors - Specific

E&N Railway Line

- Linear, railway transportation route through the west side of Area A.
- Potential for trail beside the railway if it is active or along it if rail service is discontinued.
- In November 2001 owners Rail America announced that it was suspending rail service on Vancouver Island.
- To date (October 2002), trains are still running.
- Electoral Areas and Municipalities are amending/have amended their OCPs and land use regulations to ensure the rail line is protected as a transportation corridor and is not sold off in pieces if rail service is discontinued.
- City of Nanaimo has built a trail beside part of the rail line.
- Area A has rezoned the railway lands as a transportation corridor (Bylaw No. 500.283, adopted August 13, 2002).

Action 1: The RDN to approach owners of E&N railway line (currently Rail America) about a trail beside the railway.
Figure 1: Stavich Trail, Ohio
An example of a paved trail along a railway.
Source: Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse.

**Harmac Pipeline**
- The pipeline runs adjacent to many private residences and during the preparation of this Study, one individual expressed concern about risk of vandalism.

**Action 1:** While at present the pipeline owners state the pipeline is not available for recreation use, in the future there may arise opportunities where corporate and community objectives may be realized to the mutual benefit of both parties.
**Morden Colliery Trail**

- Continued public requests for access from Hemer Provincial Park to Boat Harbour.
- Potential for a trail connecting the MCT with the end of Rugg Road. The wetland in the middle of that property is within an SEI and may not be suitable for any agriculture or development.
- Refer to South Wellington.
- Unwanted motorized use.

**Action 1:** Refer to MCT Management Plan (1998) for specific recommendations.

**Action 2:** Fund raising for the bridge across the Nanaimo River.

**Action 3:** Inventory motorized access points to the MCT and take steps to block these accesses.

**Action 4:** RDN to pursue non-motorized public access over the portion of the railgrade that connects to Boat Harbour over private land if there is interest from the land owner (Refer to Hemer Provincial Park section).

**Action 5:** RDN to consider approaching the owners of adjacent properties about a connection from the end of Rugg Road to the MCT.
**Roads - General**

- Many roads are too narrow to safely and comfortably accommodate foot traffic, self-propelled wheeled traffic, motorized wheelchairs, and equestrians along with vehicle traffic.
- Subdivisions are often close to shopping centres, schools, and recreation facilities but access to these features is by road.
- Area A has a policy of improving mobility (Section 4, OCP) for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
- An Area A OCP objective is to “encourage the provision of safe bicycling and pedestrian routes, connections, and crossings throughout the Plan Area and specifically within the vicinity of all schools.”
- If roads were safer and more pleasant for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians, there may be more use of them for recreation, exercise and as non-vehicle commuter routes.
- Some potential road or trail connections cross private land.
- Some undeveloped roads could be developed as multi-use trails to connect to other roads or trails.

**Action 1:** When new roads are built or old roads improved, RDN to approach MOT or developer for provision of facilities (wide shoulders, pathways, road crossings, etc.) for foot traffic, small-wheeled traffic and equestrians as needed.

**Action 2:** RDN and Area A Parks Advisory Committee to develop a prioritized list of undeveloped road allowances which would be suitable for trails. Develop those in subdivisions which provide shortcuts to facilities and bus stops first.

**Action 3:** RDN to approach private land owners whose property would be suitable for a trail connection to determine if they would be willing to sell or lease part of their property.

![Figure 2: Path between Kirkstone Way and Hemer Road. This is a good example of a practical shortcut where a road allowance has been developed into a trail.](image-url)


Roads - Specific

Yellow Point & Cedar Roads

- Both these roads are narrow with little or no shoulder and have regular use by road cyclists, walkers, runners and equestrians which is creating a safety hazard for both drivers and non-drivers.
- Both roads are scenic routes used by tourists who are unfamiliar with the roads and who may be driving large RVs.
- Yellow Point Road especially is winding and undulating with patches of light and shadow. These factors combine to create poor visibility which can contribute to traffic accidents.
- In some places the Yellow Point Road allowance is narrower than the standard road allowance which may make widening difficult without purchase of land.
- Both roads need a paved shoulder or wider lanes or a separate path to move non-vehicular users away from vehicle traffic. This will make the roads both safer and more pleasant.
- Along the parts of the road regularly used by horses, a paved path is not suitable. A shod horse can slip on pavement, so a softer trail surface is preferred.

**Action 1:** The RDN to approach the Ministry of Transportation to request safety improvements along this roadway such as a separate path or wider shoulder to accommodate non-motorized use.

![Figure 3: A cyclist along Cedar Road just south of the Wheatsheaf Pub. Although the gravel shoulder is wide in this location, the paved shoulder and vehicle lane are not. It is difficult for traffic to safely pass this cyclist when there is oncoming traffic.](image)
York Lake

- Undeveloped road allowance to York Lake along York Lake Lane. Nearby, the undeveloped Ryeland Road allowance closer to the shopping centre connects to Nairne Road. Other than roads all land is private.
- Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (Wetland ecosystem) area around the lake and wetland. It may be difficult to build or develop within this area.
- It is probable that there will be further applications for commercial development around the Cedar Village Shopping Centre.
- A recent development application (2002, failed) in this area included a staging area for the Morden Colliery Trail (MCT).
- York Lake is located along a direct travel route between destinations such as subdivisions, schools and the shopping centre. Trails through this area would provide shortcuts and get foot traffic off the busy Cedar Road.
- There is potential for a trail along the Ryeland Road undeveloped road allowance to connect with Nairne Road. This trail is less desirable because it is not so attractive as a shortcut.

Action 1: RDN to request non-motorized public access of developer at time of development application. Ideally to include staging area for the MCT and trails around the wetland and York Lake.

Action 2: RDN to negotiate with willing landowners who have property around the lake so as to obtain a public access trail through the wetland and around the lake.

Action 3: Approach Ducks Unlimited regarding preservation and enhancement of the lake and wetland and funding if agreements can be made with landowners.

Alternate Action: If any of the above actions are unsuccessful RDN to construct a walking/nature trail along York Lake Lane and/or a multi-use trail along Ryeland Road to connect with Nairne Road. These trails will not satisfy the need for providing an alternative to Cedar Road for foot traffic, but will provide walking trails close to some of the built up areas.

Figure 4: York Lake viewed from the Morden Colliery Trail.
RECOMMENDATIONS — MODERATE PRIORITY

Areas are listed alphabetically and not in order of importance.

Cedar-by-the-sea
- The Cedar-by-the-Sea area is popular with retirees.
- There is a need for smooth, low gradient trails in Cedar-by-the-Sea that provide easy walking, beach views or beach access that is easy to negotiate.
- At low tide some of the beaches can be used to make loop walks.
- Barnes Road is popular for walking, but has no cleared shoulder. It provides access to the water and to the Cable Bay Trail, (a City of Nanaimo owned trail).

Action 1: See Water Access.
Action 2: The RDN to approach the Ministry of Transportation to request improvements along Barnes Road to accommodate non-motorized use.

Figure 5: The beach south of the Nelson Road Boat Launch
Cinnabar Ridge

- There are approximately 84 ha of public land at the end of Plecas Road connecting through to Dean Road in Nanaimo and Highway 1. The piece is not continuous; it is dissected by the E&N railway line which is private land, but is now designated as a Transportation Corridor under the Area A OCP.
- Several different agencies hold jurisdiction over the public land: Crown Land in Area A, City of Nanaimo property in Area C and undeveloped Regional District Community Park at the end of Plecas Road (Area C).
- This large piece of public land would be a significant asset to the RDN parkland base.
- Cinnabar Ridge is a landscape feature.
- There are informal trails throughout this property and into the private land on the north side.
- Contains an old mine entrance.
- Contains a wetland Sensitive Ecosystem which runs in a narrow band west of the E&N railway.
- To access highway would require negotiating a crossing of the E&N line.

Action 1: RDN to approach the City of Nanaimo about trail development in this area.
Action 2: RDN to approach Crown Lands about lease on Crown Land portion.
Action 3: RDN, City of Nanaimo, Parks Advisory Committees (Areas A and C) to develop Trail Plan to guide development (to include: public consultation, survey of existing trails, biophysical and cultural features inventory, survey of lots to determine boundaries, consultation with residents near trailheads, etc.).
**Cable Bay / Joan Point (Dodds Narrows)**

- The City of Nanaimo manages the Cable Bay Trail and would like to secure land for a trail linking Cable Bay to Joan Point which the City now owns.

- The signage to the Cable Bay Trail is poor.

- Further public trail development of the Cable Bay and Joan Point area is the responsibility of the City of Nanaimo, but all the access roads are in Area A.

**Action 1:** RDN to work with City of Nanaimo staff on directional signage to existing and future trail heads to Cable Bay and Joan Point through Area A.

**Arboretum**

- In 2005 the RDN Environmental Services Department acquired 52 acres of industrial land in the City of Nanaimo (near Duke Point) bordered by Maughan Road and Phoenix Way. This large parcel includes the approximate 12 acres referred to as the Arboretum, an area of specimen trees from around the world. The purchase agreement includes eventual dedication of the Arboretum portion for parkland.

**Action 1:** RDN Recreation and Parks Department to meet with Environmental Services Department, and City of Nanaimo Parks staff to discuss management of the Arboretum lands for Park purposes.

**Action 2:** RDN Recreation and Parks Department to work with Area A Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, City of Nanaimo Parks staff, and RDN Environmental Services Department on development of trails and interpretive signage within the Arboretum.
Hemer Provincial Park

- Ample supply of trails.
- As of October 2002 the long term management of park is uncertain; it may remain Provincial or may be offered to the RDN.
- The parking area at the end of Hemer Road is small (10-12 cars). There is an alternative access along the MCT with a parking area.
- REM 1 (PL. 9785), REM OF EAST 20 CHNS and REM SEC 12, RGE. 2 are private lots adjacent to the park with existing trails through them. These trails are shown on a map on display at the park entrance.
- No public land access to park on east side of Holden Lake or to the point in the middle of the lake.
- At present people use the road on private land at the south end, east side of the lake to access the lake and as a boat launch.
- Bean Road provides access close to the lake on the east side, but there is no boat launch.
- There is a rough boat launch on the south end of the lake which can be reached from Boat Harbour/Tiesu Road. It is located outside of the park gate on private land.
- If additional public access were developed on the east side of the lake it would provide an alternative to the private land that is used now to access the lake.

Action 1: RDN to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to Hemer Park along Hemer Road to encourage non-vehicular access to the park. This will reduce pressure on the parking area and fit in with the vision of Cedar as a place for pedestrians.

Action 2: When/if private lots on the west side of Hemer Park are developed, RDN Planning Department to request that the developer provide non-motorized trail access to Hemer. If the lots are not developed (some are within the Land Reserve), RDN to pursue an agreement with the owner for public access from the end of Gould Road into Hemer Park.

Action 3: RDN to consider developing a public boat launch at the end of Bean Road off Holden Corso as public water access to Holden Lake (walk-in access only at first, then later car top boat launch).

Action 4: RDN to consider approaching landowner regarding the purchase of all of or part of the one of the land parcels on the east side of Holden Lake for use as a Regional District Park. If Hemer Park becomes a Regional Park, this land could be added to the larger park.
Regional Landfill
- The Regional landfill is in the City of Nanaimo and is operated by the RDN. It is located adjacent to Area A.
- Fielding Road is closed to vehicle traffic, is used for walking and biking, and is close to the south end of the Parkway Trail.
- The GNWD waterline crosses Fielding Road and ends at the Nanaimo River where the Duke Point Highway crosses the river (in Area A).
- The landfill could provide outdoor recreation amenities such as playing fields and trails on the older, reclaimed portion of the landfill.

Action 1: The RDN to work with the Regional Landfill and the City of Nanaimo on the development of a trail network and bicycle commuter route using Fielding Road, the GNWD waterline and the landfill.

Figure 6: Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley, California. The site of a former landfill that has been reclaimed. The park has a multi-purpose turf area, a picnic area, hiking trails, a wheelchair trail, an off-leash dog area and a wildlife sanctuary.
(source: www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/parks)
**South Wellington**

- In South Wellington are the remains of PCCM railgrade that are on Crown Land or road allowances (built and not built) – Thatcher and Kimball Roads.
- There is a 500 m stretch of the railgrade from the N railway line east through Crown Land, then east along Kimball Road, then briefly north along S. Wellington Road, then east into Crown Land. At the end of Crown land piece there may be a viewing opportunity over the highway.
- Potential for neighbourhood loop trail (1.5 km) with historic theme (PCCM railgrade, Fiddick’s Junction, miners houses) using above piece and undeveloped road allowances up to McGowan Avenue.
- The loop would pass by Crown Land lots (no development) in which there may be potential for links and smaller loops.

**Action 1**: The RDN and Area A Parks and Advisory Committee to consider community trail or linear park development in South Wellington.

**Action 2**: If this development is feasible and desirable, develop trail/park plan to guide development.
Waterfront Access

General

OCP Objective in Section 6 is to “Encourage improved access to all waterfront areas, including rivers, lakes and oceanfront.” The policies in the same section are: “The RDN will support and encourage obtaining properties along the Nanaimo River” and “the RDN will not support encroachment permits, issued by the Ministry of Transportation, to private individuals to occupy road ends adjacent to the ocean or a watercourse.”

Ocean

- 27 public access to the ocean, all but one (Roberts Memorial Provincial Park) are along road allowances. Two are developed public access – Roberts Memorial and the boat launch on Nelson Road. Five others have informal trails.
- Some are suitable for trails, others are too steep and have potential as viewpoints

Action 1: Area A Parks Advisory Committee to decide on which beach accesses are most suitable for development as trails and as viewpoints. Factors could include: gradient, ease of construction, demand, neighbourhood support, quality of waterfront, potential for beach walk to another beach access.

Lakes

- Quennell Lake has 8 public access points all of which are along road allowances. There are boat launches at the ends of Lakeview and Ritten Roads and one at a commercial resort (Zuiderzee). The remaining accesses are undeveloped.
- To reduce and control motorized use on the lake, the access could be a trail. This would limit use to small boats that can be carried.
- There is an undeveloped road off MacGuire Road that could provide access to Quennell Lake. There is potential for a loop trail from this undeveloped road through the south end of Wildwood onto Roper Road should the owners of Wildwood be amenable.
- Holden Lake has 3 public access points along the east side. Along the west side most of the lake is a park so that entire shoreline is accessible on foot.

Action 1: Area A Parks and Advisory Committee to prioritize which Quennell Lake water accesses are most suitable for development as trails, swimming areas, viewpoints, and boat launches.

Action 2: See Hemer Provincial Park for Holden Lake water access.

River

- OCP policy in Section 6 is “The RDN will support and encourage obtaining properties along the Nanaimo River.”
- 7 public access points.
- Larger access areas in the Nanaimo River Regional Park, MOT lands between the park and the Trans Canada Highway, along Raines Road and in the estuary.
- There is a favoured swimming and picnicking area with a boat launch and excellent river access along the river close to the junction of Cedar Road and the
Duke Point Highway. This site has historic values because it used to house the Red Lion Brewery (1886-1892), and the Second North Cedar School/Boarding House/Store/Stovely Post Office. More recently it has been occupied by the San Salvador Camp/Nanaimo River Resort. The property was expropriated by the BC Transportation Financing Authority (MTFA) for the building of the Duke Point Highway. Public access is now prohibited. There has been a sustained effort to secure this historic site as a community park. The land is now a candidate for use in the settlement of First Nations land claims. The property is one of the best riverfront parcels along the river and would be highly desirable as part of the RDN Regional and Community Parks program.

**Action 1:** RDN to consider purchase of riverfront parcels to incorporate as riverfront parkland as opportunities arise.
**Action 2:** RDN to discuss trail access such as easements, with willing private landowners.
**Action 3:** RDN to negotiate with MTFA for public access to the San Salvador Camp/Nanaimo River Resort property.
**Action 4:** RDN and local tourism organizations to promote Raines Road as a scenic drive/walk/cycle and nature trail. This can be the start of the land-based trail. Scenic route signs available from MOT.
**Action 5:** Refer to Nanaimo River Water Trail Actions.
Yellow Point Park

- Located in neighbouring CVRD (Lots 112 and 113).
- A large piece of public land with potential for more trails and links.
- Under review for road alignment by Ministry of Transportation (MOT).
- If roadwork goes ahead, opportunity for RDN to have input on road realignments and potential trails.
- Opportunity for CVRD and RDN to partner on a park project.
- A trail along Paravel Place (undeveloped) off Whiting Way in Area A would provide access to north end of Lot 113.
- Existing parking lot at Robert’s Memorial Provincial Park could be used because it is a short walk to Paravel Place.
- Public access to Priest Lake (within CVRD just south of Area A boundary).

**Action 1:** RDN to approach CVRD about possibility of joint development of Yellow Point Park.

**Action 2:** CVRD and RDN to approach MOT about proposed plans for road realignments in this area. Timeline, routes, etc.

**Action 3:** Dependent upon MOT plans, both Regional Districts to develop park development plan for Yellow Point Park. To incorporate MOT road work, trails near or to Priest Lake, trails in northeast portion of Lot 113, parking area in Area A.
RECOMMENDATIONS – LOW PRIORITY

Areas are listed alphabetically and not in order of importance.

Nanaimo River Estuary

- The Nanaimo River Estuary is a piece of public land at the mouth of the Nanaimo River. It is located with the City of Nanaimo boundaries adjacent to Area A.
- A Steering Committee has been formed to develop a Nanaimo Estuary Management Plan. The members are: Snuneymuxw First Nation, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, Land and Water B.C., Environment Canada, Environment Protection and Canadian Wildlife Service, Nanaimo Port Authority and the Regional District of Nanaimo.
- The management plan will address recreation as one of its topics.
- The estuary provides opportunities for walking, dog walking, picnicking, kayaking, hunting, target shooting, field trials/dog training, recreational fishing, crabbing, bird-watching, nature walks and wildlife photography.
- The plan will determine which activities are acceptable and will produce guidelines and codes of conduct.

Action 1: RDN representative(s) on Steering Committee to promote the idea of the Nanaimo River Water Trail and land trail and for continued recreational use that is suitable to the estuary’s natural environment.

Nanaimo River Water Trail

- Most of the land alongside the Nanaimo River is private except for the Regional Park, the MCT trail crossing, road allowances, the east side of the river along Raines Road and the Nanaimo River estuary.
- The RDN has a covenant on a rock in the middle of the Nanaimo River near Gerrand Road. This is a popular swimming location.
- From the Nanaimo River Regional Park downstream to the estuary the river is easy to navigate and paddle.
- The water trail could be established quickly versus the land-based trail along the banks of the river because the RDN will have to purchase/lease land from willing landowners while the river surface is public.
- There are public access and egress to points along the river (Nanaimo River Park, MCT, Raines Road, Nanaimo River estuary).
- There is the risk of a water trail encouraging trespassing on private lands if paddlers go ashore along the river.
- The water trail can be used to promote acquisition of parkland and public access for the land based trail.

Action 1: RDN to promote a water trail (paddle craft, float craft) along the river itself linking the parks and public lands along the river. Promotion includes production of maps and signs at public access/egress points.
**Action 2:** Area A Parks Advisory Committee to approach recreational paddling groups that may be interested in the Nanaimo River Water Trail concept. To include Scouts, canoeists, river kayakers, etc. These groups may be able to assist in funding, promotion and signage and would be well informed about the river.

**Trans Canada Trail**
- The Trans Canada Trail (TCT) runs west of Area A.
- At this time there are limited options for a viable, practical public multi use route to connect Electoral Area A with the trail. Most of the connections are largely in Area C or City of Nanaimo.
- The best connection would have been the Wellington Colliery railgrade, but it has been sold and traverses private land.
- Options: Spruston Road, Nanaimo Lakes Road, Fielding Road & GNWD pipeline connection to Parkway Trail and Extension Road. All of these are road based.
- There is potential for a couple of road cycling alternate routes that would connect with the trail in Ladysmith; follow the Trans Canada Highway (TCH) to Cedar Road, then continue along either Cedar Road or Yellow Point Road to Duke Point. Another option is to follow Cedar or Yellow Point Roads to the Nanaimo Parkway Trail and Departure Bay. The Fielding Road/Regional Landfill trail could be incorporated into this route.

**Areas of Future Research**
(outside scope of this project, or lack of information)
- **Nanaimo airport**
  - Master Plan in progress at this time (October 2002)
  - Airport is willing to consider a trail between the airport and the golf course with the potential of a viewing and picnic area.

- **Timberlands/Cassidy**
  - Within the timeframe of this trails study, little information was found about trails in this area. It does border onto private forest lands within Area C in which there are many trails. Initial contact was made with mountain bikers who had completed GPS surveys of trails, but follow-up meetings could not be arranged.

- **Nanaimo Area Land Trust and The Land Conservancy projects**
  - The Van Kerkoerle Property and Wildwood have been recently acquired by the land trusts. Land trust owned lands are private unless donated by the trusts to the province or municipality. Limited information available on plans for these properties.
  - Van Kerkoerle Property
  - An 18 ha property located at 3145 Frost Road in Cassidy, just west of the Area A boundary.
  - Donated by the Van Kerkoerles to the Nanaimo Area Land Trust.
  - Situated between the one time Wellington Colliery railgrade (now pipeline) and the BC Hydro power transmission line.
Previous owners to remain on the property for the remainder of their lives.

Property to be used for environmental education and awareness activities, also has potential as a retreat.

May not be open for public access.

**Wildwood**

Located on the south end of Quennell Lake, this land is on both sides of the lake.

This property is to be kept as an eco-forestry demonstration and learning facility. The previous owners will continue living on the property.

“Once holding title, TLC will place a covenant on the land, protecting Wildwood in perpetuity as an ecoforestry site. Merve has requested that the Ecoforestry Institute manage Wildwood. The Ecoforestry Institute will manage Wildwood to broadly reflect sustainable human relationships with the environment, and more fully develop its potential as a learning site.” *(Ecoforestry Institute website)*

It may not be open for public access.
REFERENCES


www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/parks. Image of reclaimed landfill.

www.rdn.bc.ca/. Regional District of Nanaimo website.

www.trailsandgreenways.org/. Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse website. Images, useful information on trails with strong emphasis on rails to trails projects. US organization.


www.gp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/L/96250_00.htm. Online version of the BC Land Title Act.

www.nalt.bc.ca/. Nanaimo Area Land Trust. Information about the Arboretum, Wildwood and the Van Koerkerle property.


www.conservancy.bc.ca/. The Land Conservancy of BC. Information about Wildwood.

APPENDIX 1

Examples of requests for Public Input and advertising about the Study and Open Houses.

1. Photograph of Open House advertisement on the Wheatsheaf billboard.
2. Information handout provided at the Modern Colliery interpretative sign unveiling ceremony, the first Open House and also available from the Cedar Heritage Centre.
3. Page size poster advertising the first Open House. There were five other posters, one for hikers, one for road cycling, one for commuters, one for equestrians, and one for all users.
4. Page size poster advertising the second Open House.
5. Copy of notice in Take5! Advertising the first Open House.

Figure 7: Open House advertising.
1.0 Background

The Regional District of Nanaimo is preparing a Community Trails Study for Electoral Area ‘A’. Electoral Area ‘A’ is a largely rural area to the south of the City of Nanaimo, with a population of approximately 6,260 spread over 51.5 km². The recently enacted Official Community Plan (OCP) for Electoral Area ‘A’ includes objectives and policies pertaining to the development of an Electoral Area-wide trail system. The completion of a trail study will be an important first step in attaining the OCP objectives.

2.0 Project Objective

The key objective of the project is to provide an overview of existing and potential community trail links that could form a community trails network in Electoral Area ‘A’, and to recommend steps that could be undertaken to advance such a trail network.

3.0 Project Description

The Community Trails Study will include research into existing trails (formal and informal) and possible links and connections within and outside of the study area, preparation of a written report and accompanying maps, and presentations to the public and local Parks Advisory Committee.

The study will also identify potential links to trails in neighbouring jurisdictions, and will offer suggestions to make those links a reality.

At all times, the sensitivity of private lands will be ensured, and the Consultant will make no commitments on behalf of the Regional District pertaining to land acquisition for trail purposes.

RRL Recreation Resources Ltd. (RRL), a small, Cobble Hill based land use consulting firm, has been retained by the RDN to undertake the study. RRL will work with Regional District staff and appointed Trail Project Committee members in Electoral Area ‘A’ to undertake the study.

4.0 Scope of Work

RRL Recreation Resources Ltd. will address the following major issue areas and address the items listed for each issues:

Existing trails
An inventory of formal and informal trails used by the public will be assembled. There are limited formal trails within the study area, of which the Morden Colliery Trail is the most notable (for which a management plan was prepared in 1998).
**Neighbouring jurisdictions**
The study will inventory trails or potential connection points in the neighbouring jurisdictions of Electoral Area ‘C’, City of Nanaimo, Town of Ladysmith, and Cowichan Valley Regional District.

**Potential trail corridors**
RRL Recreation Resources Ltd will be working with the community to identify potential trail corridors, including roadside trails.

**Constraints**
The study will identify and describe constraints to a trail network where they occur, and could include such items as private land, river and highway crossings, roadside shoulder restrictions and Ministry of Transport design specifications, or sensitive environmental features.

**Community input**
In the course of this study additional consultation will take place to gather information, and to gauge support for a trail network concept.

Two open houses are planned, one in July and one in August. Look for notices in the local newspaper.
5.0  **Approach**

The approach to undertaking the project work:

1. Provides for input from the Community Trail Study Project Committee and allows for review of draft and final reports by the Committee.

2. Involves consultation with Regional District of Nanaimo staff, and staff of neighbouring jurisdictions where trail linkages are possible.

3. Provides for input from recognised trail user groups as a method of gathering information on existing trail locations.

4. Allows for public input on the community trail network concept and other information provided by the consultant through two public open house meetings, one in July and one in August. Jeremy Webb from RRL is also available to meet directly with members of the community.

6.0  **Project Schedule**

The first draft of the Community Trail Study Report will be completed in Late August, and the final Study Report will be completed in September 2002.
7.0 How Do I Get Involved?

If you have trail ideas or information that you would like to share, we would like to hear from you!

You can attend one of two open houses, one in July and one in August. Look for notices of times, dates and locations in the local newspaper! There will be detailed maps available and opportunities to record possible trail locations, links and connections with adjoining communities.

8.0 Who Do I Contact

For information on the study, or to share trail ideas, you can contact RRL Recreation Resources Ltd. The company is located in Cobble Hill. Jeremy Webb or Debbie James are working on the study and both can be reached Toll Free: 1-800-761-5737 and via Email: rrl-ltd@shaw.ca

You can also contact members of the Community Trail Study Project Committee:

- Lynette Aldcroft Ph: 250-722-2692 (residence)
- Judy Burgess Ph: 250-245-5177 (residence)
- Frank Garnish Ph: 250-722-2887 (residence)
- Kerri-Lynne Wilson Ph: 250-722-3443 (residence)

We are looking forward to hearing your ideas for trails!
Do you ride your mountain bike on trails in Electoral Area 'A' - Cedar, North Yellow Point, Cassidy?

Come to the July 13th 2002 Open House at the Cedar Heritage Centre

1644 MacMillan Road in Cedar Village
On Saturday, from 10:30 am to 2 pm

Be part of the Electoral Area A Trails Study
Tell us about your trails!

For more information call Jeremy or Debbie at 1-800-761-5737 or email rrl-ltd@shaw.ca
Attention Trail Users in
Cedar, Yellow Point & Cassidy

Hikers, Walkers, Cyclists, Mountain Bikers, Horse Riders
Come and offer your ideas for trails.
Come and learn about trails.
Don’t miss it!

Come to the August 10\textsuperscript{th}, 2002 Open House at the
Cedar Heritage Centre

1644 MacMillan Road in Cedar Village
On Saturday, from 1 pm to 5 pm

For more information call Jeremy or Debbie at
1-800-761-5737 or email rrl-ltd@shaw.ca

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