

Nakusp – Kaslo Trail Project

Status Report and Proposed 2006-2007 Plans - December 2006, Draft 4

Compiled by Phil Whitfield, Project Steering Committee

Notes:

- The intent of this Status Report is to provide a framework for moving the Nakusp-Kaslo Trail vision forward by providing a snapshot of the current status and condition of trail sections under consideration in the vision, together with proposals for actions needed to bring each section toward the goal of a recreational trail system linking Nakusp, New Denver, Sandon and Kaslo.
- Refined by other inputs, and updated as required, the Status Report may serve as a basis for informing members of the community, levels of government and other interested parties about the project.
- In the descriptions of trail conditions, highlighting indicates how useable a particular section is estimated to be at present:
 - **Green** – section is fully useable and requires only routine maintenance;
 - **Yellow** – section is passable for at least some types of use but requires work to meet desired standards;
 - **Red** – section is virtually unusable or requires resolution of major issues before it can be considered open for general public use.
- All information provided in this draft is based on the author's personal knowledge and observations. Corrections and other perspectives are welcomed, particularly for the Kaslo and Nakusp ends of the system, with which the author is less familiar.
- Possible actions, responsibilities and target dates are merely suggestions at this point and are open to change as other input is received and specific volunteers step forward (we hope!).

Kaslo to Bear Lake Section (Kaslo River Trailway)

Status

- *Most of the route is a legally designated Recreation Trail under administration of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts (MTSA), Recreation Sites & Trails Branch (Recreation Officer Dan Reibin, Castlegar). The designation provides for **multiple use, including hiking, biking, horseback riding and use of motorized vehicles where trail conditions permit**. The Kaslo Rail-Trail Society has entered into a management agreement with MTSA authorizing trail clearing and maintenance for public use.*
- *The route includes sections of the old Kaslo-Slocan Wagon Road and a few relatively short sections of the original Kaslo and Slocan Railway grade which are not used as part of Highway 31A. Portions of the route are now active or inactive forest roads, and most of these are linked by trail sections, several of which are presently only suitable for foot traffic.*

- *Land status uncertainties exist at several points along the route, and these need clarification through Land Registry research. If any sections are found to be on private land, use agreements may be required (consider Rossland Trails model).*

Condition

- *(This major portion of the trail system could use a detailed trail log describing the nature and condition of the various sections of the trail and keyed to kilometre measurements. The following summary may be inaccurate and certainly does not do justice to the outstanding work that has gone into piecing this long trail together.)*
- Over a period of years, the Kaslo Rail-Trail Society has raised considerable funding and has completed a number of bridges and linking trail sections which currently provide an almost continuous off-highway trail from the upper outskirts of Kaslo to the Retallack Lodge.
- **Some gaps remain**, notably between Rossiter Creek and a river crossing point down Kaslo Creek from Lyle Creek. Another bridge across Kaslo Creek is required between Whitewater Creek and Retallack, but the route from Retallack to the Fish Lake weather station has been brushed out (?). A short section between Fish Lake and the east end of the old Wagon Road loop around Bear Lake has been eliminated by Highway 31A. Connections across these currently broken sections will effectively complete construction work to provide a continuous trail between Kaslo and the west end of Bear Lake which can link with both the K&S rail grade to Sandon and the Seaton Creek CPR grade to Three Forks.
- Some directional signage and km markings has been provided at points along the Kaslo to Bear Lake route, but improved directional signage, maps and information will be required to support general public use.

Possible 2006-07 Actions

Action	By Whom	Target Date
• Continue work on remaining gaps as resources permit	Kaslo Rail-Trail Society	Ongoing
• Research land status issues and work on any landowner agreements required	Phil Whitfield with MTSA & Rail-Trail members	April 2007
• Make any necessary arrangements with Highways or MOF regarding key access points (parking, etc.)	MTSA & Rail-Trail Society	April 2007
• Prepare a sign and information plan	Kaslo Rail-Trail Society	Done?
• Install km signs and other key signage	Kaslo Rail-Trail Society	Ongoing
• Produce pamphlet/map to support general public use and awareness	Kaslo Rail-Trail Society	
• Produce any new signs required	Kaslo Rail-Trail Society & MTSA	

K&S Grade, Sandon to Bear Lake

Status

- *The route is a legally designated Recreation Trail under administration of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, Recreation Sites & Trails Branch (Recreation Officer Dan Reibin, Castlegar). “The objective is to manage the K&S Railroad recreation trail for a forested recreation experience. The Trail will be maintained and adjacent vegetation conserved. Opportunities for **hiking, mountain biking and viewing are available, no motorized use permitted.**”*
- *The MOF contracted for a detailed assessment of the K&S Trail between Three Forks and Bear Lake in September 1997 (Smith & Diks), and this document provides a good listing of work required to bring the section up to at least a good hiking standard.*
- *MTSA was about to enter into a maintenance/management agreement with the Slocan Valley Cycling Club in the Spring of 2006 when the club dissolved. However, in October 2006, a trail crew funded by Springer Creek Forest Products was able to bring the trail section between the McGuigan Creek road and Payne Bluff up to a good hiking trail standard and to brush out some of the section between McGuigan Creek and Highway 31A at Bear Lake.*
- *At the time the trail route was stasured for Recreation Trail designation, there appeared to be some question as to whether the trail section across Lots 847, 850 and 858 remained a Crown r/w or is now privately owned. Research at the Kamloops Land Titles Office in October confirmed that the r/w is Crown, as the K&S r/w (1895) is shown crossing these lots, which were all Crown Granted Mineral Claims issued in 1897. The K&S rights of way passed to the CPR by 1917(<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/privlaw/214797/3724.html>), and these CPR rights of way were acquired by the Province in the 1990s.*

Condition

- **The grade from Sandon is passable to vehicle traffic for 2.3 km to a small parking area near the Altoona Mine site.** The first portion of this section provides summer and winter motorized access to the Payne Mine road, which ultimately connects with other road networks.
- **From the parking area to Payne Siding (? km),** the grade is in good condition for foot, bicycle or horse travel except for ? sections where trestles are missing and connecting trail sections fall below standards for these uses.
- **From the east end of Payne Siding, a 1.7 km trail switchbacks down from the grade to Highway 31A at Three Forks,** following the approximate route of the old pack trail which linked the Payne Siding with Three Forks. Though its condition is generally good and use is relatively high, the trail is relatively narrow and steeper sections have become moderately eroded.
- **The 400 m section from Payne Siding to Payne Bluff** is in good condition but requires some brushing and windfall cutting. Cautionary signs and/or fencing may be appropriate at the start of the bluff for general public safety (Dan Reibin, MTSA, October 2006).
- **Across Payne Bluff,** the grade is broken by a 10 m gap at the former trestle #22. It resumes for 70 m and then disappears for 54 m, the span of the original trestle #21. These gaps are presently passable on foot, though there is some exposure and agility involved. As noted in a September 1997 assessment for the MOF, a combination of rock infilling and bridging of sections up to 10 m would be required to achieve a basic trail standard. The overall stability of the rock across the bluffs is questionable, though

heavy moss suggests that little active spalling has occurred in most places since the line was abandoned following the 1910 fire.

- **From the Payne Bluffs to the McGuigan Creek road**, over a distance of about 1800 m, there are five gullies, ranging in breadth from ~23 m to ~110 m, which were originally bridged by trestles. In October 2006, a Springer Creek Forest Products crew grubbed out new trail sections about a half-metre wide to contour across between the railway grade sections on each side of these gullies. Brushing and windfall clearing was also carried out, bringing this portion to a good hiking standard which is also passable by experienced mountain bikers. From the final gully for a further 1150 m or so to the McGuigan Creek road, the trail condition is generally good, one footbridge has been replaced and the earlier footbridge over the creek remains sound. In the absence of the original trestle or a wide contour necessary to maintain the grade level, the drop to the creek crossing and climb out detract from bicycle use but do not preclude it. Some widening and possibly also relocation in several places would expand the use potential of this section.
- **From the McGuigan Creek road to Highway 31A at Bear Lake**, the first 1100 m of the grade has moderately scattered brush, small rockfalls and slumps but offers some excellent views over the valley. Over the next 1450 m, the brush and overgrowth becomes heavier and there are gullies with missing trestles that require linking sections of trail in the 100 m range. Rock bluffs will probably prevent these links from contouring evenly between the railway grades.
 - The final 800 m before Highway 31A crosses a small landslide, the tailings pile for the Zincton concentrator and the concentrator site itself. Trail must be constructed at an even contour across the landslide and tailings pile in this section to complete the linkage to Highway 31a, but the land status issue must obviously be resolved before such work can occur. The final 80 m or so from the concentrator site to the highway is slightly wet but would require little effort to bring up to a trail standard.
- *The point at which the K&S grade reaches Highway 31A is almost directly opposite the western end of the Wagon Road around Bear Lake which is the terminus of the Kaslo River Railway Recreation Trail. Because it marks the junction of these two distinct sections as well as the Seaton Creek CPR grade, this location probably should have off-highway parking and trailhead facilities such as signs and a toilet.*

Possible 2006-07 Actions

Action	By Whom	Target Date
• Prepare a sign and information plan	Phil Whitfield	April 2007
• Produce a draft pamphlet/map to support general public use and awareness	Phil Whitfield	April 2007
• Complete preliminary trail layout work on linking sections across gullies and tailings piles along the grade between McGuigan Creek and Highway 31A at Bear Lake.	Volunteers	June 2007
• Complete any planning and layout work necessary for upgrading trail sections across gullies along the grade between Sandon and Payne Siding.	Volunteers	June 2007
• Carry out trail improvements to bring the Sandon to Payne Bluff and Payne Bluff to	Volunteers or crew with project funding	

Highway 31A sections of the K&S grade to standards suitable for hiking and mountain biking, and horse use where practical.		
• Improve public safety in the Payne Bluff area (signs, fence, etc.)	Volunteers with MTSA support	
• Make any necessary arrangements with MTSA, Highways or MOF regarding key access points (parking, etc.)	Phil Whitfield & Dan Reibin	
• Install km signs and key direction signs	Volunteers	
• Produce and install other key signage, e.g., Bear Lake trailhead map & information, point of interest signs and any other new signs required.	Volunteers with MTSA support	
• Seek RDCK Board approval and direction 1) to enter into a management/maintenance agreement with MTSA under which the K&S grade from Sandon to Bear Lake and the linking pack trail to Three Forks, once they are in an acceptable condition for general public use, would be managed by an RDCK Regional Parks Commission, and 2) to consolidate management of these non-motorized trails and the Galena Trail under a single Regional Parks Commission.	Steering Committee/ Galena Trail Commission/ Phil Whitfield	2008?

Seaton Creek CPR Grade

Status

- *The route is a legally designated Recreation Trail under administration of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, Recreation Sites & Trails Branch (Recreation Officer Dan Reibin, Castlegar). No specific objectives have been defined for this section, but the Nakusp-Kaslo Trail Committee has agreed that it should be managed for **multiple uses, including motorized use, wherever practical**, similar to the Kaslo River Trailway.*
- *The statusing completed in 2000 for designation of the Seaton Creek CPR grade as a Recreation Trail indicated that the entire grade for 10 m either side of the centre line was in Crown ownership from Bear Lake to Three Forks. However, the first 500 m of the grade from Bear Lake down Seaton Creek is occupied by Highway 31A. The precise location of the highway on the rail r/w linear lot, L. 12618, is not presently known, but there may be sufficient width within this Crown-owned lot to permit a trail to be built parallel to the highway.*

Condition

- **The first 500 m of the former CPR grade from the junction of the Kaslo Wagon Road and Highway 31A down Seaton Creek to a prominent rock cut** is occupied by the highway. Highway shoulder width on the uphill side is very narrow and varies on the downhill side from very narrow to vehicle pullout width. The hillside above the highway slopes steeply and becomes a rock bluff dropping sharply to the original grade level at the lower end of

this section. The lower side of the highway in this section slopes steeply down to the Seaton Creek wetlands but has a shoulder up to several metres in width in some places. However, fitting a trail alongside the road would require MOT approval as it would involve two crossings of the highway, shoulder widening and barriers.

- **From below the rock cut to a small gravel quarry 400 m down Highway 31A**, the CPR grade parallels the highway on the uphill side, passing through slide vegetation and swinging very close to the highway before entering the uphill end of the quarry. Most of this section is heavily overgrown. One portion is very poorly drained and the grade is uneven in several places.
- **From the gravel quarry to Three Forks**, a total of about 5.5 km, the CPR grade condition varies from trail to 2wd road. All sections are easily navigable by foot, mountain bike or horse and most are passable by ATV. Some trail sections require further brushing and rock clearing and drainage is required in several places, particularly over one 20 m section. A linking trail at a reasonable slope is required to connect the rail grade to the highway at Three Forks.

Possible 2006-07 Actions

Action	By Whom	Target Date
• Consult MOT and Land Title Office to ascertain feasibility of constructing a trail parallel to Highway 31A to close the 500 m gap between the top of the Seaton Creek CPR grade and the old Kaslo Wagon Road at Bear Lake.	Phil Whitfield	April 2007
• Prepare a sign and information plan.	Phil Whitfield	April 2007
• Make any necessary arrangements with MTSA, Highways or MOF regarding key access points (parking, etc.)	Phil Whitfield	April 2007
• Produce a draft pamphlet/map to support general public use and awareness	Phil Whitfield (MTSA support?)	April 2007
• Complete layout on trail section to connect the bottom of the grade to the highway at Three Forks.	Volunteers	May 2007
• Subject to feasibility and any necessary approvals, complete layout on trail section to connect the top of the Seaton Creek CPR grade and the old Kaslo Wagon Road at Bear Lake.	Volunteers	May 2007
• Hold a public information meeting in New Denver to present proposals for review and support.	Steering Committee	May 2007
• Complete any necessary brushing and drainage improvements on the grade between the gravel quarry and Three Forks.	Volunteers	Summer 2007
• Construct the Three Forks trail link.	Volunteers or crew with project funding	Summer 2007
• Complete brushing, drainage and grade surface improvements on the 400 m section from the gravel quarry to the rock bluff	Volunteers	Summer 2007

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If feasible, construct the linking trail section between the rock bluff and the old Kaslo Wagon Road at Bear Lake 	Volunteers or crew with project funding	Summer 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install km signs and key direction signs 	Volunteers (MTSA support?)	Fall 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce and install other key signage, e.g., Bear Lake and Three Forks trailhead maps & information, point of interest signs and any other new signs required. 	Volunteers with MTSA support	Fall 2007

Three Forks to Rosebery – the Galena Trail

Status

- Crown land corridor, acquired from CPR and managed by a park commission of the Regional District of Central Kootenay under Licence of Occupation from the Integrated Land Management Bureau (formerly BC Lands, Land & Water BC, etc.).
- The Regional District has designated the trail for non-motorized use. The Nakusp-Kaslo Trail Steering Committee recognizes that **an alternative route for motorized recreationists is needed between Three Forks and Rosebery** if this user group is ultimately to have a continuous trail between Nakusp and Kaslo.

Condition

- The entire route from Three Forks to Rosebery** is well maintained and well marked with directional and interpretive signs. It receives significant local and tourist use, primarily by hikers and bikers.

Rosebery to Highway 6 Crossing at Summit Lake

Status

- Crown land corridor, acquired from CPR by the Province and managed by the Integrated Land Management Bureau (formerly BC Lands, Land & Water BC, etc.) out of Cranbrook. Maintenance of the uninterrupted corridor is a key management objective, and as with other public lands, the property is open to responsible public recreational use.
- Surveyed portions of the former Nakusp-Slocan line are linear lots, which in some cases divide other district lots. The section from 7.30 km to 11.85 km is bordered by private land and the possible implications of general public use are an issue for some landowners and community members in Hills **and in Rosebery**.
- An ecological impact assessment of this section of the corridor was recommended by Smith Heinz Report of 2001. The recommendation has been supported by the RDCK Board and the Hills Recreation Society and is endorsed by the Nakusp-Kaslo Trail Steering Committee as valuable to planning for this section.
- Consistent with commitments made at a May 14, 2005 public meeting in New Denver, the Committee is working on the principle that sections of the Nakusp-Sandon-Kaslo trail system presently designated non-motorized will remain so, but that all other sections will

be planned to include motorized use where practical. Recognizing the possible social and ecological concerns around widespread recreational use of the Rosebery to Summit Lake section, particularly by motorized vehicles, the Committee is also considering other route options on this section and no assumptions about types of use on the rail grade are being made at this time.

- A detailed assessment of the Rosebery to Summit Lake section was completed by Chris Fox in October 2000 (Smith Heinz Report Appendices, 2001).

Condition

- The 8.35 km section from Rosebery to the Bonanza Road is passable for foot, bicycle, horse and ATV use, and the northern portion is accessible by vehicle for approximately 2 km. Drainage improvements and brushing are required in a number of locations and rutting from vehicle use is a problem in places, but the route's location immediately above Slocan Lake offers many access points to the shore.
- From Bonanza Road to Highway 6, the grade varies in condition from 4wd road quality in a few short sections to brushy trail. The northern half is subject to unpredictable seasonal flooding as a result of beaver activity and poor drainage, but all of the route has been useable by hikers, bikers, horses, and ATVs. However, issues such as potential recreational use impacts on adjacent landowners, vegetation, wildlife and fish require resolution before any significant work is done to open or promote this section for general public use.

Possible 2006-07 Actions

Action	By Whom	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an ecological impact assessment of the Rosebery to Summit Lake section as key input to further planning. (Note that this may have to be a two-step process if the scheduled initial survey is not considered comprehensive enough to satisfy requirements.) 	Phil Whitfield has arranged for a <i>pro bono</i> field assessment by three Registered Professional Biologists, Dr John Woods, formerly with Parks Canada, and Rick Howie and Sandy Macdonald, formerly with BC Environment	June 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the 2000 trail assessment, identifying problem areas and any priority work that may be appropriate, depending on recommendations from the ecological impact assessment and public consultations. 	Phil Whitfield, Richard Allin & John DiPretto?	June 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and assess alternative routes, e.g., Summit Lake/MacDonald Creek/Shannon Creek or Wilson Lake, Wilson Creek 	Richard Allin, Jim Hughes, John DiPretto	June 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss recreational use of the corridor with adjacent landowners and/or hold a public meeting to obtain input (Note 2000 survey results in 2001 Smith Heinz report). 	Hills Recreation Society, Rosebery Parklands Society	July 2007

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide status, condition and shared use information signs at both ends of the Rosebery to Bonanza Road section, and “respect adjoining private property” signs where appropriate on this section. 	Volunteers, with authorization from ILMB	July 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan next steps for the Bonanza Road to Highway 6 section after considering findings of the ecological impact assessment, discussions with adjacent landowners and alternate route options. 	Steering Committee	September 2007

Highway 6 Crossing (Summit Lake) to Box Lake Hilltop

Status

- *Crown land corridor, acquired from CPR by the Province and managed by the Integrated Land Management Bureau (formerly BC Lands, Land & Water BC, etc.) out of Cranbrook. Maintenance of the uninterrupted corridor is a key management objective, and as with other public lands, the property is open to responsible public recreational use.*
- *Surveyed portions of the former Nakusp-Slocan line are linear lots (in this case Lots 5391 and 11116), which divide one privately owned district lot at the southeast end of Summit Lake and four more at the northwest end. The possible implications of general public use are an issue for some adjacent landowners and one such resident has erroneously posted the former railway grade between his holdings as private property.*
- *The portion of the grade along the northern shore of Summit Lake is included in a proposed expansion of Summit Lake Provincial Park.*

Condition

- **The grade section from Highway 6 through Lot 11759 along Bonanza Creek to the southeast end of Summit Lake** is seasonally flooded by beaver activity, but is passable to non-motorized users and to ATVs.
- **Along the northern shoreline of Summit Lake**, the grade is in generally good condition, although some brushing is desirable. Although this section is highly scenic, good lake access opportunities are limited.
- **From the northwest end of Summit Lake to the Highway 6 access point at the top of the Box Lake Hill**, the grade requires some brushing but is otherwise in good condition for non-motorized users, and in most places, also for ATVs. One adjacent landowner has trespassed on the Crown corridor by ditching and stringing a wire across the grade and posting signs reading “PRIVATE PROPERTY, NO TRESPASSING, HAZARDOUS BEYOND THIS POINT”.

Possible 2006-07 Actions

Action	By Whom	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include this section in the ecological impact assessment of the Rosebery to Highway 6 section as a key input to further planning, 	Phil Whitfield has arranged for a <i>pro bono</i> field	June 2007

particularly in consideration of the Bonanza Creek marshlands and the Summit Lake riparian zone.	assessment by three Registered Professional Biologists, Dr John Woods, formerly with Parks Canada, and Rick Howie and Sandy Macdonald, formerly with BC Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a trail assessment, identifying any priority work that may be appropriate, depending on recommendations from the ecological impact assessment 	Phil Whitfield	June 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss recreational use of the corridor with adjacent landowners, request the neighbour in trespass to remove his obstacles and offer to post "respect adjoining private property" signs where appropriate on this section. 		June 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to findings of the ecological impact assessment and discussions with adjacent landowners, provide status, condition and shared use information signs at both ends of the section. 		July 2007

Box Lake Hilltop to Nakusp

Status

- Crown land corridor, acquired from CPR by the Province and managed by the Integrated Land Management Bureau (formerly BC Lands, Land & Water BC, etc.) out of Cranbrook. Maintenance of the uninterrupted corridor is a key management objective, and as with other public lands, the property is open to responsible public recreational use.*
- From Box Lake down to the Nakusp waterfront, the original rail grade is adjoined by private property and the lower section occupied by the Nakusp Bypass has been replaced with a multi-purpose trail. While the former r/w is assumed to be in provincial Crown title, investigation of the status and jurisdictional details is necessary (e.g., role and wishes of the municipal government).*

Condition

- From the top of the Box Lake Hill for 6.7 km to the Wilson Lake Road crossing**, the grade is essentially a gravel-surfaced road in excellent 2wd vehicle driving condition.
 - 0.0 km – access point from Highway 6 at top of Box Lake Hill
 - 1.8 km – logging road crossing
 - 2.3 km – 1 km logging road marker
 - 3.3 km – 2 km logging road marker
 - 4.2 km – uphill spur road going north

- 4.3 km – 3 km logging road marker
- 4.8 km – short (3 m) wooden trestle over small creek
- 5.5 km – short (3 m) wooden trestle over small creek
- 5.9 km – logging road crossing
- 6.5 km – uphill spur to gravel quarry
- 6.7 km – Wilson Lake Road crossing (at its junction with Highway 6)
- 8.9 km – rail grade crossing of Highway 6
- From the Wilson Lake Road crossing for 2.2 km to where the rail grade crosses Highway 6, it becomes more of an overgrown trail and is crossed by a number of private driveways.
- From the Highway 6 crossing to the southern end of the Nakusp Bypass, the trail is not accessible to motor vehicles but is in generally good condition for non-motorized users and ATVs (though constraints on motorized use may apply within the municipality).
- From the southern end of the Nakusp Bypass toward the Nakusp waterfront, much of the original grade has been replaced with a trail in generally good condition for non-motorized users.
- No signage or information is currently provided to identify the rail-trail in this section or to offer guidance to users.

Possible 2006-07 Actions

Action	By Whom	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with Village of Nakusp officials about their interests and vision for the trail system from the summit of Box Lake Hill through the town. 	Nakusp reps & Phil Whitfield	April 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a trail assessment, identifying any priority work that may be appropriate, 	Phil Whitfield & Nakusp reps	April 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a public meeting in Nakusp to discuss recreational use of the corridor with adjacent landowners and other interests. 	Steering Committee & Village	May 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to outcomes from the public meeting, develop a detailed plan for this section. 	Phil Whitfield & Nakusp reps on Steering Committee	June 2007