

ROSEBERY TO SUMMIT LAKE TRAIL MANAGEMENT PLAN

JANUARY 2020



Acknowledgements

This Management Plan has been prepared on behalf of members of the Rosebery to Summit Lake Trail Network Planning Group:

- Arrow Lakes ATV Club
- North Slokan Trail Society
- Rosebery-Summit Lake Rail Trail Steering Committee
- Slokan Lake ATV Club

In addition to all of their volunteer effort, this Planning Group has received financial support from RDCK Area H, Columbia Basin Trust, ATVBC, Rec Sites and Rails BC, and the Hills Recreation Society.

Prepared by John Cathro RPF
Cathro Consulting Ltd
Box 1193
Kaslo, BC
V0G 1M0



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document outlines strategic directions for the realization of long-term goals for an authorized, sustainable and environmentally sound trail network.

This proposed trail network is an outcome of a collaborative planning process between local trail users, conducted between September 2015 and December 2019. This *Rosebery to Summit Lake Trail Management Plan* has been developed by the Rosebery to Summit Lake Planning Group on behalf of residents and visitors including the hikers, bikers, riders, runners, ATVers, dog walkers, trail user groups, and others that use and enjoy the trails in the upper Slocan Valley including the Bonanza Creek area.

The planning group was organized by Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) as a follow-up to a 2015 Rail Trail management proposal broadly supported in a household poll of residents but found lacking by some stakeholders. RSTBC initiated a planning process and provided funding for a series of meetings, field trips, consultations, assessments and reports that led to support for the current management plan. Participating trail-user groups included:

- Arrow Lakes ATV Club
- North Slocan Trail Society
- Rosebery-Summit Lake Rail Trail Steering Committee
- Slocan Lake ATV Club

This plan recognizes the many benefits of forest recreation and trail use, from improvements in health and increased general enjoyment to enhanced economic opportunities in tourism, training and other local businesses.



Figure 1. Motorized/Non-motorized trail encounter

This plan also recognizes that trail use can increase risks to sensitive ecological and cultural values. Recreational users can negatively impact species habitat and contaminate domestic water systems. Motorized vehicles and cigarettes can cause fires. Noise can diminish privacy and drive wildlife away.

The trail network is within sensitive low elevation ecosystems that include habitat for Western Toads and Grizzly Bear, fish, many migratory and native birds, and many other plant and animal species. These sensitive values are taken seriously and trails are managed to reduce these risks. This is done partly through signage, described in section 8. Detailed trail information including trail uses and managing trail user groups is summarized in section 10. Trail maintenance, planning and construction are summarized in section 11. A detailed trail map is included in section 12.1.

In addition to the participating trail user groups, completion of this management plan has been supported by a number of local organizations, companies and agencies, including:

- Slocan Lake Stewardship Society;
- Summit Lake Ski Hill
- BC Timber Sales;
- Regional District of Central Kootenay;
- Ministry of Forests, Lands, Resource Operations and Rural Development, Habitat Branch,
- Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure;
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police; and
- Agricultural Land Commission.

Finally, this plan reflects feedback received through consultation with numerous individuals. Summary of referral feedback is provided in section 12.



Figure 2. Use of trail in winter

2. BACKGROUND

In 1889, surveyor George Dawson documented a First Nations foot trail running from Nakusp to Summit Lake and along Bonanza Creek to Slocan Lake. During the 1890s, along much the same route, the CPR built the Nakusp & Slocan Railway to connect the booming silver mines around Sandon to the transport system on the Arrow Lakes.

A century later, the now-abandoned rail route provides residents, recreational groups and visitors with opportunities to appreciate the scenery, history and pristine nature of the area. The north and south ends of this rail trail are already designated and well used public trails (i.e. Galena and Nakusp-Summit Lake). The Rosebery to Summit Lake section is well used but as yet has not been officially designated as a public trail. Running north from the Galena Trail in Rosebery, it follows the shorelines of Slocan Lake, Bonanza Creek and Summit Lake and continues to the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) Area H/K Boundary, linking up with the Nakusp trail.

Community interest in securing the corridor for public recreational-use and protection of its natural features has grown since its acquisition by the province in 1990. At one point it was considered for designation as a provincial park. In 2000, the RDCK commissioned a study to look at the trails linking Nakusp, New Denver and Kaslo. After much discussion and considerable interest, consensus was not reached on the management of the Rosebery to Summit Lake section.



Figure 3. Planning in the field

To summarize efforts to bring the rail trail under authorization:

- The Rosebery to Summit Lake Rail Trail has been undesignated and multi use since the rail line was pulled up in the 1980s.
- Between 2000 and 2010, the RDCK initiated two rounds of public consultation. It applied for, and then withdrew, an application for jurisdiction over the rail trail.
- In 2015 local trail users released the Rosebery-Summit Lake Rail Trail Management Plan Proposal. Extensive consultation and an RDCK-funded survey of residents indicated strong support for the largely non-motorized trail plan.
- Motorized Users strongly objected to this trail plan.
- In September 2015 Rec Sites and Trails convened trail user groups to develop a plan through a moderated process.
- In November 2016 draft plan was agreed to by the planning group and submitted for referral and review under Section 57, of the Forest and Range Practices Act.
- Responses from government ministries, the RDCK, First Nations, stakeholder groups, and several members of the public were reviewed by RSTBC, and response summaries were reviewed by the planning group.
- In December 2017, RSTBC approved a plan for a mostly non-motorized rail trail and a motorized bypass framework, separating the two uses as recommended in the FLNRORD Recreation Manual. Establishment of a day-use recreation site at the former Girl Guide camp was also approved.
- In 2018 and 2019, biodiversity impact and terrain stability assessments were conducted and reviewed, various ministries, local authorities and other stakeholders were consulted and, based upon conclusions and recommendations, the current proposal was finalized.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Development of this plan has been guided by a set of guiding principles.

Use of these trails is meant to:

- Demonstrate best practices for stewardship and maintenance;
- Respect different trail uses and support diversity of uses;
- Help educate trail users about history, best practices and other values;
- Respect private land ownership and other rights holders;
- Strengthen trail user groups commitment to work together; and
- Foster cooperation among trail users, governments and neighbours



Figure 4. Flora found along the trail network

4. KEY OBJECTIVES OF TRAIL NETWORK

The purpose of this proposed trail network is to provide a range of recreational opportunities on the historic Rosebery to Summit Lake Rail Trail and the proposed Bonanza ATV Trail and to secure the former Girl Guide camp property for public use.

The key objectives of this trail network are to:

- Recognize ecosystems and habitat for sensitive species, including Grizzly bears and Western toads, and manage the entire trail network to minimize the negative impacts of all human uses.
- Ensure that the existing mix of trail uses is accommodated. The existing rail trail will be designated for non-motorized use, and an ATV bypass route allowing connections between existing FSR networks will be established.
- Potentially extend the existing Rosebery to Three Forks Regional Trail (the Galena Trail) to include the section along Slocan Lake from Rosebery to Girl Guide Camp. Discussions are underway to see if this can be managed by the RDCK, through the Rosebery Parkland and Trails Commission, with a non-motorized designation.
- Potentially secure the former Girl Guide Camp on the north end of Slocan Lake for public use. Discussions are underway to see if a day-use Recreation Site can be established under RSTBC with a potential management agreement with the RDCK.
- Identify and protect First Nations cultural heritage and traditional use sites and other cultural and historic features.
- Provide safe and high quality trail experiences for all user groups



5. TRAIL ETIQUETTE & SAFETY

Basic trail etiquette and knowledge will minimize safety hazards and potential conflict between trail users:

- Respect other trail users and trail designations;
- Cyclists and ATV operators must ride / drive responsibly and be prepared to encounter other trail users, especially when vision is limited;
- Trails are in wildlife habitat Bears and moose can be especially dangerous if they suspect their young are threatened or if they are surprised. Trail users should be informed, aware, and make their presence known when necessary.

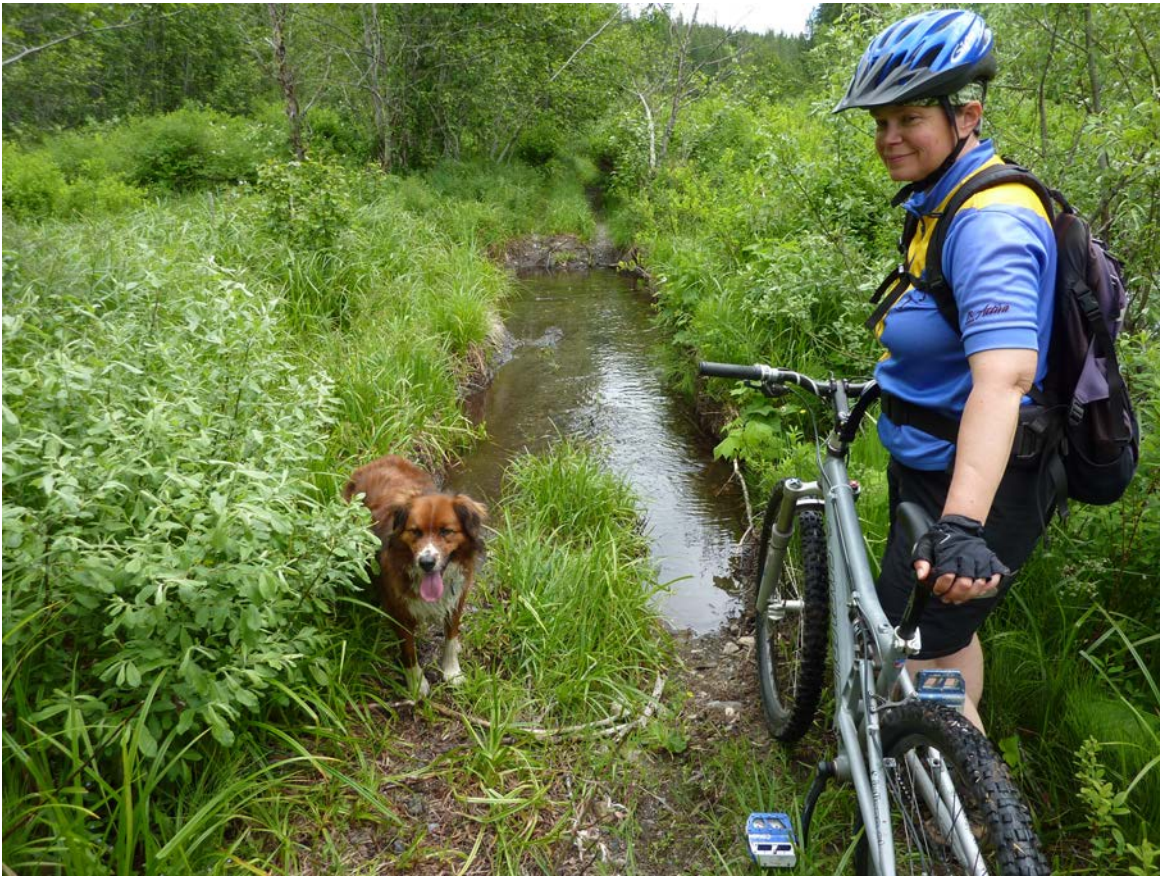


Figure 5. Flooded trail

6. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED PRESSURES ON TRAILS

The following issues have been raised through the referral process and subsequent assessments. This section describes how these issues will be addressed through designation, seasonal closures, and signage and maintenance.

6.1 BONANZA CORRIDOR AND WETLANDS

Bonanza Creek corridor is an important fish-spawning stream and major cross-valley corridor for Grizzly bears, wolverine and other species. It also provides year-round and seasonal habitat for many other large mammals including black bear, moose, elk, deer, marten, wolf, cougar, otter and beaver. Patches of Sitka willow and Red-osier dogwood provide forage for over-wintering moose that also calve in the riparian areas in the spring.

The Bonanza ecosystem supports numerous migrating and nesting birds; about half the species found in the area nest in the Bonanza corridor and adjoining marshes at Summit and Slocan lakes. This is particularly valuable bird habitat because of regional loss of wetlands from damming under the Columbia River Treaty.

Establishment of the motorized bypass, seasonal trail closures, and signage with trail rules should prove beneficial. Terrain and Biodiversity Assessments are attached in Appendix 12.3 and 12.4.



Figure 6. Wetland habitat

6.2 TOAD HABITAT

Summit Lake and area hosts a significant breeding population of western toads. The western toad is internationally listed as Near Threatened by the World Conservation Union, federally listed as Special Concern by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada and Yellow-listed by the B.C. Conservation Data Centre. Substantial numbers of adult and juvenile toads (toadlets) are killed by vehicle traffic every year on Highway 6 as they migrate to and from the lake. This has been mitigated by the construction of curbing structures directing toads to a dedicated culvert under the highway.

There are three main migrations as adults move to and from the lake for breeding and toadlets leave the lake for upland habitat. Migration is intermittent, taking place primarily during warm, wet nights for adult toads and following rain events for toadlets.

Toad / human conflicts are to be avoided and will be managed by closures defined by FLNRO biologists as follows:



Figure 7. Western Toad

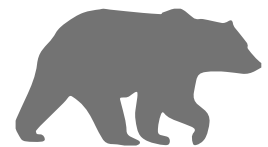
- Adult toads are nocturnal and may use the trail/ road bed to forage or thermos-regulate from April to October. A Dusk to Dawn closure for vehicles and bicycles is recommended.
- Between March and May, adult toads move down from upland terrestrial habitats to deposit eggs. Between April and June, adult move back into upland habitats once spawning has been completed. Late April to mid-June trail closure for Grizzly bears should also benefit toads.
- Toadlets may concentrate on the trail or roadbed after emergence from the lake. Daytime closure of the trail to all except foot traffic is likely to occur for a period of 2-3 weeks sometime from Mid July to late August. Because the timing varies annually local information should be used to determine timing.
- Trail signage will ensure that trail users understand trail sensitivities and best practices.

6.3 GRIZZLY BEARS

Grizzly Bears forage in the Bonanza Creek area in the spring. Bear / human conflicts are to be avoided and will be managed by closures defined by FLNRO Biologists.

To minimize disturbances to grizzly bears during spring foraging and also because of the high risk of bear encounters, spring recreational use of much of the Bonanza Creek corridor should be limited as follows:

- The rail trail and motorized bypass in most of the Bonanza corridor will be closed to all use, motorized and non-motorized, from late April to mid June. This will be enforced by gate closures and signage.
- Trail signage will ensure that trail users understand trail sensitivities and best practices.



6.4 TRAIL DAMAGE AND EROSION

Bike tires, ATV tires and other human uses can cause trail damage and erosion. Trail users will be responsible for avoiding damage, identifying damage when it occurs and ensuring that trail managers are made aware of damage. Trail signage will ensure that trail users understand trail sensitivities and best practices. Trails have been located and designated specifically to avoid erosion and trail damage.



Figure 8. Trail maintenance required

6.5 FIRE HAZARD

Some of the managed trail network is located within the wildland urban interface – where the residences are adjacent to the forest. This interface area is particularly sensitive to fire that either starts on private land and spreads to the forest or forest fires threatening private homes and public buildings and utilities. The potential risk of fires initiating on the trail and threatening adjacent homes is very serious. Trail signage will ensure that trail users understand the risks of fires. In addition, trails may be closed in the event of risk ratings of extreme fire danger by the appropriate government agency.

6.6 AGRICULTURAL AND PRIVATE LAND

Portions of managed trail network are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve as well as adjacent to private land. These areas are particularly sensitive with regards to:

- Invasive Species that can be introduced via clothing, pets, tires, etc;
- Security and trespass including livestock gates, harassment of livestock, privacy, vandalism and biosecurity; and
- Erosion and drainage issues including contamination, dust, and altered drainage patterns.

RSTBC along with the agreement holders will work towards addressing concerns expressed by the ALC (as expressed above) and will increase that diligence as capacity grows through grant funding and RSTBC commitments.

RSTBC along with the agreement holders have every intention to work with property owners within the ALR to accommodate their legal and authorized rights to agriculture and use of Crown Land.

7. TRAIL MAINTENANCE & MONITORING

Success of this plan is contingent on the consistent, intentional, and supported management of the trail network based on the following:

- Rosebery to Summit Lake Trail Network management organizations will take the lead on trail maintenance;
- Signage will encourage best practices, including seasonal closures, no littering, no damage to infrastructure and private property and reporting damage to trail managers;
- Trail damage from littering, bike tires, motorized use or other causes may result in trail closures in order to fix the problem; and
- Trail users will self-monitor. Trail, private property and infrastructure damage should be reported to the appropriate trail manager who will inform the ministry Compliance and Enforcement Branch as necessary.



Figure 9. "Trail Crew Working"

8. TRAIL SIGNAGE

Trail signs are an essential element of this managed trail network. Signs ensure that users have the information that they need to make decisions and to understand suggested trail uses and rules.

Trail Head Signs and Kiosks

Signs will be installed at trailheads and staging areas and include the following information:

- Trail names
- Locations of trail heads, junctions and other network entrances;
- Trail difficulty rating and length;
- Trail uses for each section;
- Trail rules and etiquette;
- Seasonal trail closures, as defined by FLNRORD biologists
- Environmental considerations and sensitivities; and
- Trail Manager member organization and RSTBC contact information.

In partnership with Recreation Sites and Trails Branch, trailhead signs will be constructed and installed as this Management Plan is implemented.

Trail interpretive signs and directional signs will be installed as required.

9. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

9.1 CONSULTATION TO DATE

As described in Section 2 – Background, much public consultation, input, study, and review has taken place for almost 20 years. The Planning Group has built upon this foundation and added to it. Further community consultation will guide implementation and subsequent trail maintenance and construction. Key milestones in the planning process to date are:

Figure 10. Group Planning Efforts to date

Date	Activity	Comment
September 28, 2015	Process Initiation Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet at Hills Fire Hall • Agree to proceed with a trail planning process
November 25, 2016	Submit Section 57 Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Group sign off on Section 57 application including trail map • Application submitted to Recreation Sites and Trails BC for referral
April 2017	Review referral feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses received from government ministries, the RDCK, First Nations, stakeholder groups, and hundreds of members of the public • Summary of responses reviewed by planning group
December 2017	Management Plan approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSTBC approves a mostly non-motorized rail trail and a motorized bypass trail, separating the two as recommended in the FLNRORD Recreation Manual (Sec 10.3.5). Day-use recreation site at the former Girl Guide camp is also approved. Plan is announced to public

Date	Activity	Comment
June 2018 to July 2019	Biodiversity and Terrain Stability Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local qualified professionals conduct biodiversity and terrain stability assessments of the proposed trail network. Important refinements follow and lead to current proposal
March 2019	Planning Group Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with key land managers, conservation organizations and adjacent landowners to share the draft Trail Management Plan and seek input on outstanding issues
January 2020	Trail Authorization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation Sites and Trails grants authorization for the Trail Network Public release of trail management plan

9.2 CONSULTATION RESULTS

The following table is a summary of written feedback received through referral process in April 2017:

Figure 11. Summary of Referral Results

Topic	Number of Responses
Number of Respondents	46
Concerned about wildlife in general	10
Concerned about water	2
Concerned about toads and their habitat	35
Concerned about archeological and cultural values	7

A detailed summary of referral responses is attached in Section 12.2.

10. TRAIL DESIGNATION AND USE

The Rosebery to Summit Lake Rail Trail is a historic rail trail that runs from Rosebery Parkland and the Galena trail, along the east side of Slocan Lake, Bonanza Creek and Summit Lake to the northern boundary of RDCK Electoral Areas H and K, just north of Summit Lake.

The section of trail from Rosebery north to the Girl Guide Camp just south of Hills is proposed to become an extension of the existing Rosebery to Three Forks Regional Trail. This section would then be managed by the RDCK, through the Rosebery Parkland and Trails Commission, and will have a non-motorized designation.

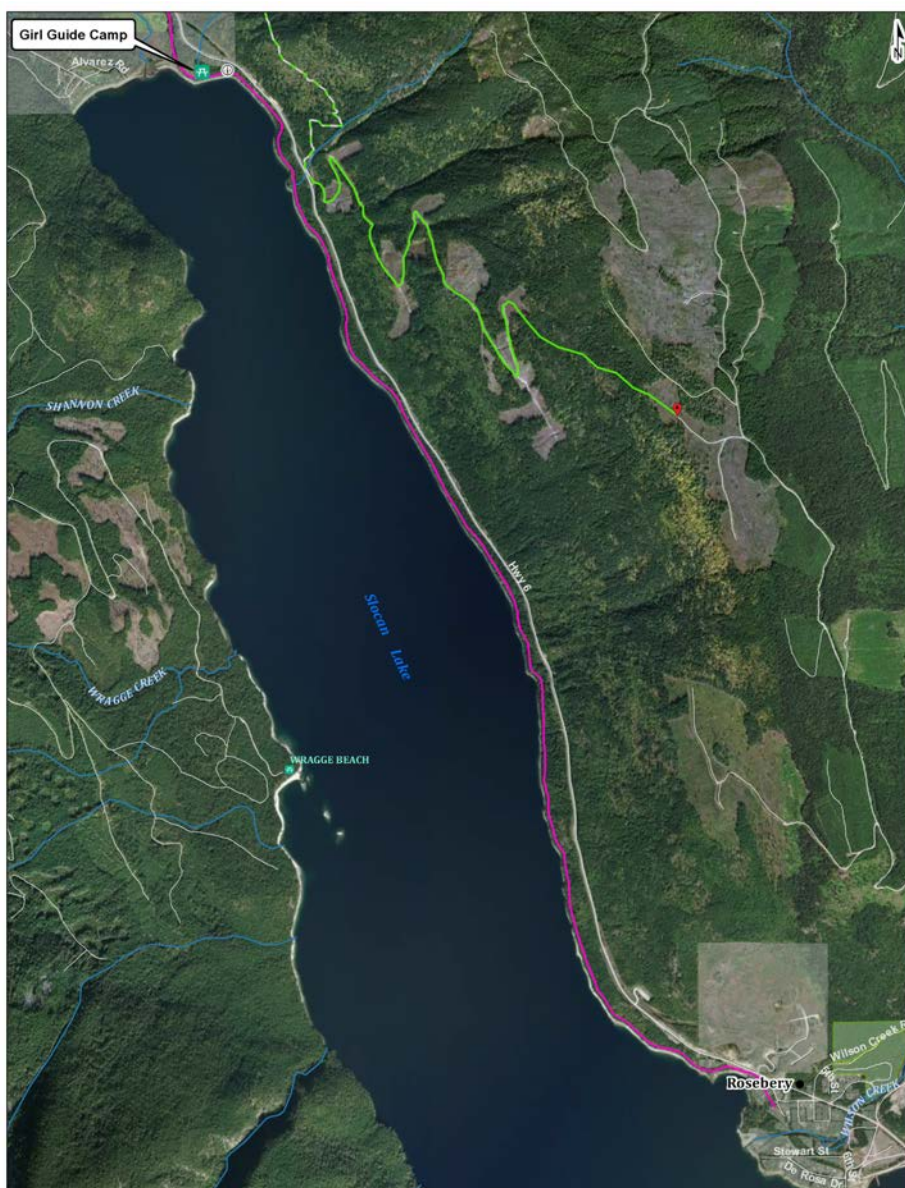


Figure 12. Rosebery north to Girl Guide Camp

The Girl Guide Camp will be designated as a day-use Recreation Site and may also be under a management agreement between RDCK and FLNRO. The longest section of the rail trail runs north from the Girl Guide Camp through the Bonanza Creek corridor and along the eastern shore of Summit Lake to Island View / Ruby Range Rd. It will have a non-motorized designation and be managed by a new society with board representation from existing user and interest groups and the public.

The short section of the rail trail from Island View Road to the boundary of RDCK Electoral Areas H and K will be multi-use including motorized, consistent with the Nakusp-Summit Lake Trail which is managed by the Nakusp and Area Community Trails Society. This will enable motorized access to the Bonanza ATV bypass trail from the north.

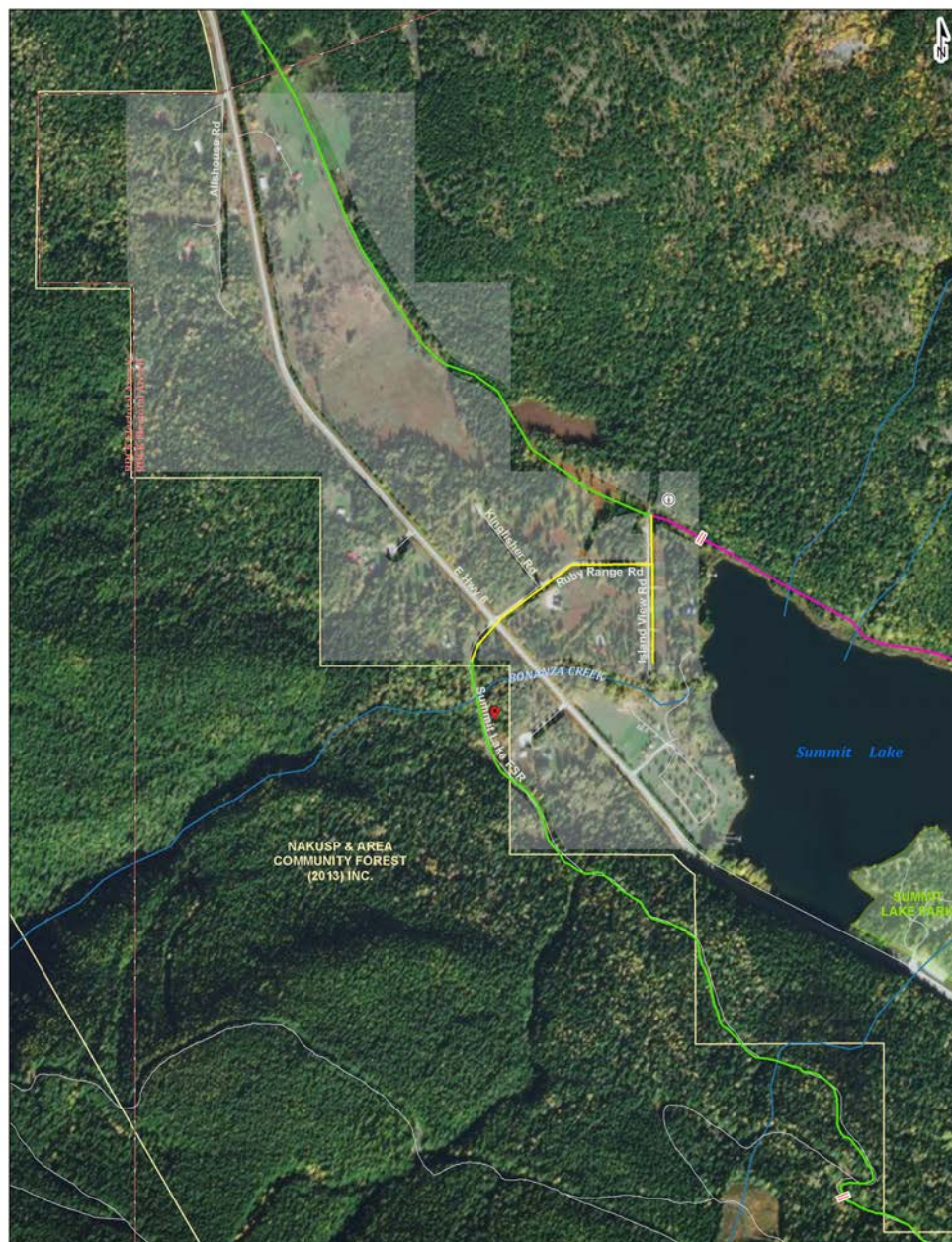


Figure 13. Island View Rd north

The motorized bypass trail – the Bonanza ATV Trail – links the existing Shannon/Bonanza Creek Forest Service Roads (FSRs) in Hills with the Summit FSR, Ruby Range Road, and Nakusp-Summit Lake Trail to the north. This by-pass route uses a combination of existing roads, existing Summit Lake Ski Area cross-country ski trails, proposed new FSR to be constructed in 2020, existing trails that need to be brushed out and a short section of new trail. The Slocan and Arrow Lakes ATV clubs will manage this trail. The Summit Lake Ski Hill and the Arrow Lakes and Slocan Lake ATV Clubs will manage the section of trail that utilizes the existing cross Country ski trails.

The bypass route also includes a section of trail that goes southeast of the community of Hills to Slide Road and Ranch Ridge Road using a combination of existing road, existing trails and new trails. The Slocan and Arrow Lakes ATV clubs will manage this section of trail.

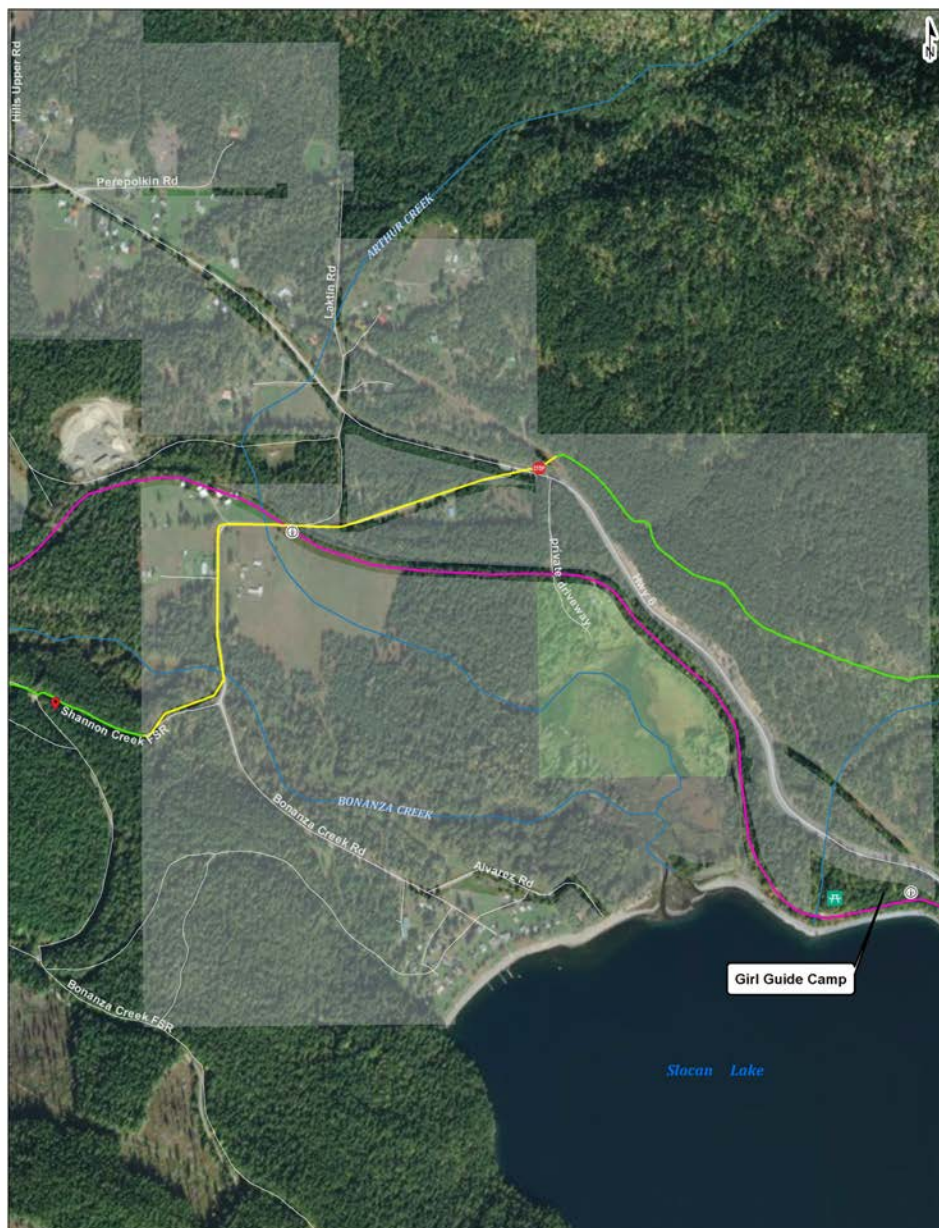


Figure 14. Bonanza Creek bypass route

10.1 EXISTING RAIL TRAIL

The existing rail trail has the following sections. Refer to the [trail segment map](#) for location of each of the following trail segments:

Figure 15. Existing Rail Trail Description (South to North)

Trail Section Number	Length (Kms)	Trail Section Name	Comment
1	7.7	Rosebery to Girl Guide Camp Existing Rail Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing rail trail, 5 m wide Potential to become extension of the Galena Trail managed under agreement with RDCK/RSTBC Non motorized use This trail has heritage value
2	0.3	Girl Guide Camp Existing Rail Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed day-use Recreation Site Potential management by RDCK under agreement with FLNRORD This trail and facility have heritage value Site Plan will be developed following trail designation
3	18	Girl Guide Camp to Island View Road Existing Rail Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing rail trail, 5 m wide Non motorized, all season use To be managed in accordance with guidelines for Western Toads and grizzly bears determined by FLNRORD biologists. This trail has heritage value
4	1.7	Island View Road to North Boundary of Area H Existing Rail Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing rail trail, 5 m wide To be managed consistent with existing Nakusp-Summit Lake Trail section To be managed in accordance with guidelines for Western Toads and grizzly bears determined by FLNRO biologists

10.2 ATV BYPASS TRAIL

The ATV Bypass trail has the following sections.

Figure 16. Existing ATV Bypass Trail Description (North to South)

Trail Section Number	Length (Kms)	Trail Section Name	Comment
5	5.7	Ruby Range Rd to Summit FSR to Summit Lake Ski Hill Cross Country Trails Bonanza ATV Bypass Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses Ruby Range Road and Island View Road, under individual ATV use permits from RCMP • Crosses Highway 6 • Multi use, motorized • To be managed in accordance with guidelines for Western Toads and grizzly bears determined by FLNRORD biologists
6	3.1	Summit Lake Ski Hill Cross Country Trails to Bonanza FSR Bonanza ATV Bypass Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crosses through Summit Lake Ski Hill • Multi use, motorized. Built to ATV standards • No winter motorized use • Includes existing cross country trails • Includes new construction above the ski hill and on to Bonanza FSR • To be managed as a multi use trail in accordance with guidelines for Western Toads and grizzly bears determined by FLNRORD biologists
7	2.2	Proposed New Bonanza FSR (BCTS) Bonanza ATV By-pass Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New FSR to be built by BCTS in 2020 • Multi use, motorized • To be managed in accordance with guidelines for Western Toads and grizzly bears determined by FLNRORD biologists

Trail Section Number	Length (Kms)	Trail Section Name	Comment
8	7.9	Bonanza /Shannon FSR Bonanza ATV By-pass Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing FSR Road Multi use, motorized To be managed in accordance with guidelines for Western Toads and grizzly bears determined by FLNRO biologists
9	1.5	Shannon Creek FSR to Hwy 6 and Pete's Road Bonanza ATV By-pass Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses Bonanza Road under individual ATV use permits from RCMP Multi use, motorized Crosses Highway 6
10	2.9	Pete's Road to Slide Road Bonanza ATV By-pass Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes built trail and new construction Multi use, motorized, built to ATV standards Important ungulate winter range, no winter use.
11	5	Slide Road to Ranch Ridge Bonanza ATV By-pass Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes built FSR and new construction Multi use, motorized, built to ATV standards Important ungulate winter range, no winter use

11. TRAIL PLANNING, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

Going forward this plan will take a phased approach to full implementation. As a result, the following phased approach is proposed:

2020 Activity	Schedule
Management Plan released	January
Gate installation	Spring
Kiosk installation	Summer
Trail maintenance	Spring/Summer/Fall
ATV trail construction ski hill to Bonanza FSR	Summer/Fall

2021 Activity	Schedule
Trail maintenance	Spring/Summer/Fall
Girl Guide Camp Site Plan developed	Summer
ATV trail construction Pete's Road to Slide Road	Summer/Fall
Monitoring of use with adaptive management as necessary	All year
Authorization of separate motorized and non-motorized trails	Fall

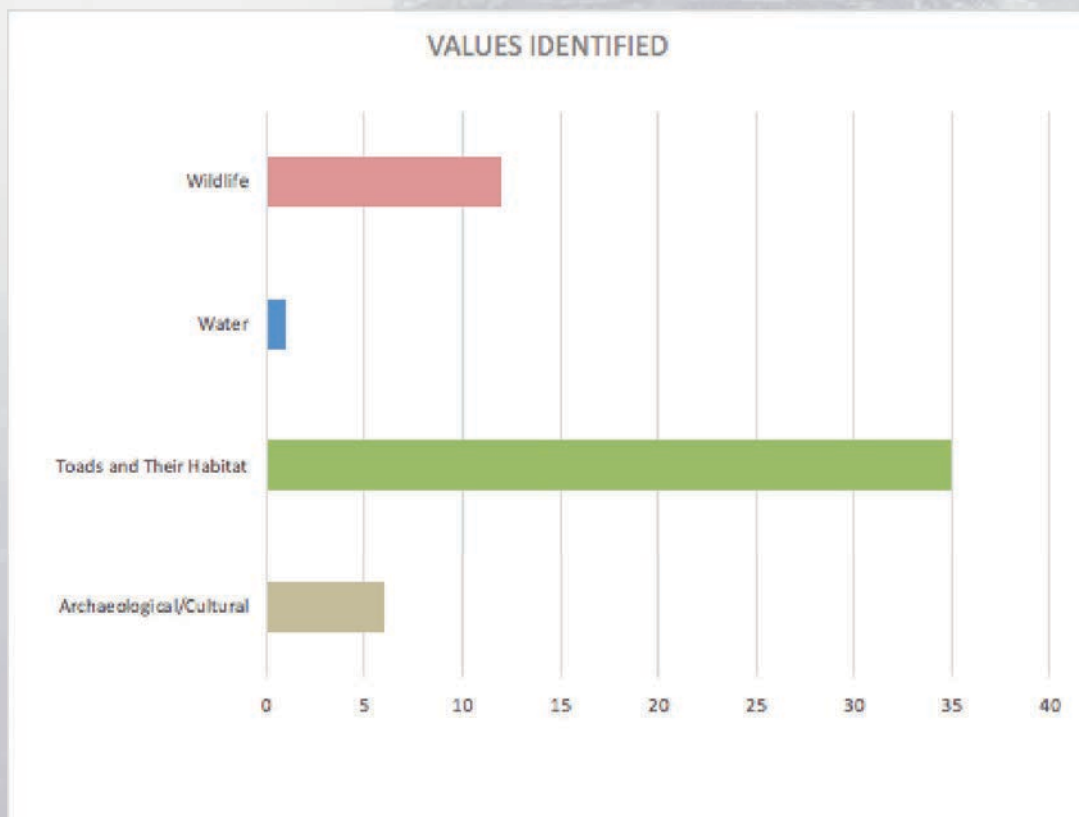
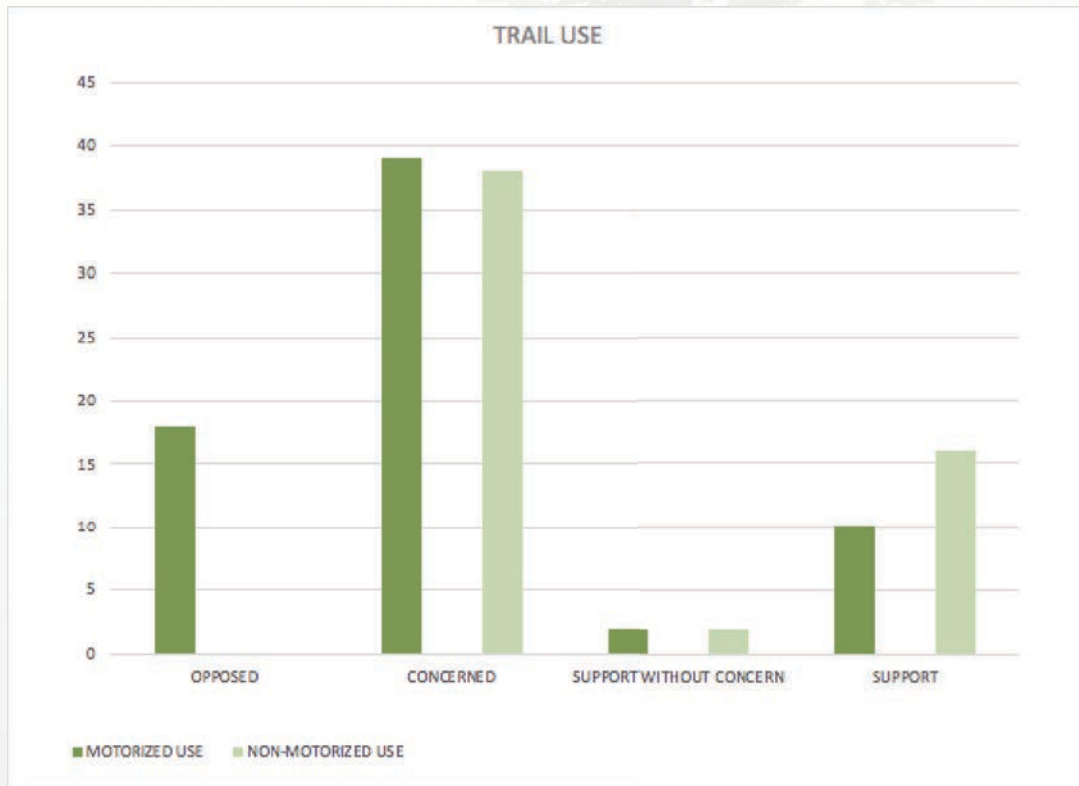
2022 Activity	Schedule
Trail maintenance	Spring/Summer/Fall
Girl Guide Camp construction begins	Summer

12. APPENDICES

12.1 TRAIL NETWORK MAP

[Link to Final Trail Network Map](#)

12.2 SUMMARY OF REFERRAL FEEDBACK



12.3 LINKS TO BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENTS

Ehlers, T and Durant, R. 2018. Rosebery to Summit Lake Rail Trail and Moto-Bypass Environmental Impact Assessment. Nelson, BC. October 10.

Ehlers, T and Durant, R. 2018. Addendum: Rosebery to Summit Lake Rail Trail and Moto-Bypass Environmental Impact Assessment. Nelson, BC. November 30

Ehlers, T and Durant, R. 2019. Rosebery to Summit Lake Rail Trail and Moto-Bypass Environmental Impact Assessment, Phase 3. Nelson, BC

12.4 LINKS TO TERRAIN STABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Deschênes, M and Miller, W. 2018. Geotechnical Site Review, Recreation Trail and Site Development, Hills, BC. Nelson, BC. August 10.

Deschênes, M and Miller, W. 2019. Geotechnical Site Review, Recreation Trails. Addendum to: Geotechnical Site Review, Recreation Trail and Site Development, Hills, BC. September 30.

Thiessen, L. 2018. Bonanza Creek ATV Bridge Field Review. Nelson, BC. October 17.