

Chilliwack Outdoor Club Trail Maintenance 2022 Report

by Jim Alkins

Again this year, trail maintenance was fun and often dirty work but very rewarding for the participants of all capabilities. The climate and terrain in our beautiful area make ongoing trail maintenance some of the most demanding in the country; — and without it many of the trails we love and enjoy would be impassable in a very short time. The “atmospheric river” of November 2021 which caused major flooding followed by a summer drought and high-risk fire season plus the typical wind storms significantly increased the work required to make trails serviceable. Once again, the COC stepped up with many hands making light work on several trails we were able to access. The COC welcomed anyone who had a few hours when the call was made to come out and enjoy doing some feel good trail work in a safe environment with a healthy dose of laughter, camaraderie and friendship. After every trail maintenance day, the crew had a sense of accomplishment which was very gratifying. As is often stated - a day working on the trails renews the spirit and health of the participants.

Here's what was accomplished in 2022:

- **Total Volunteer Hours* - 1375**
- **34 individuals from COC participated**
- **28 total work days**
- **159 worker days**

* Includes time at site, travel time, preparation time, equipment maintenance time.

The COC focused on the maintenance and upgrading of the:

- ❖ **Vedder Mountain Ridge Trail (4.5km one-way)**
- ❖ **Pierce Lake Trail (2.5km of the lower section)**
- ❖ **Trans Canada Trail (TCT) –**
 - **Liumchen to Chilliwack Lake (36km)**
 - **Paleface Pass (2.2km) which was accessible**
 - **Through the Coquihalla Canyon where accessible**
 - **Sowaqua to Britton Creek including Jessica, Shylock & Portia Sections about 14km**
- ❖ **The Slesse Memorial Trail access road, parking area and the trail to the propeller cairn – (about 7 km one-way)**

Trail Maintenance Activities

Chainsaw Training Course: Nine members of the club participated in the one-day chainsaw familiarization course with Steve Telosky and funded by RST. The course was very informative and beneficial even for the experienced chainsaw users.



Vedder Mountain Ridge Trail: The focus was on removal of dead fall and danger trees, grubbing sections to improve safe access and clearing the viewpoints.





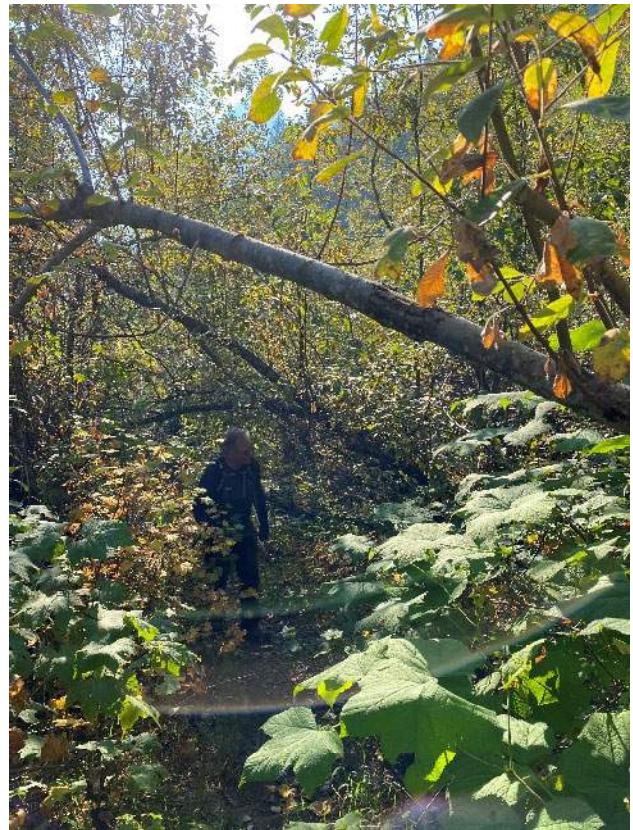
It was learned that a planned timber operation in 2023 will require construction of a new access trail from Vedder Mountain Forest Service Road. RST, COC and FVMBA identified a new alignment for shared use by mountain bikers travelling up hill only and hikers travelling both ways. Construction of additional parking was also proposed. Construction will be carried out by members from both clubs once the proposed alignment is approved in 2023.

Pierce Lake Trail: The focus was the annual clearing of the sightlines (clearing brush) around the Pierce Lake Trail parking area on Chilliwack Lake Road, and cleaning of the pit toilet. Deadfall was also cleared from the lower portion of the trail.

Mount Slesse Memorial Trail: There were sections of the road washed out during the November 2021 heavy rainfall so access was delayed until repairs could be completed.



Once the road was repaired and forest fire smoke cleared, the club undertook the task of cutting back the alder and willow brush encroaching on the FSR leading to the temporary trailhead as well as clearing parking spaces. The COC crews also completed clearing alder and willow brush from the trail head to the monument and beyond to the alpine area. A sign was added near the trailhead to direct hikers at the T-junction.





The Trans Canada Trail: Club members worked with volunteers from Trails BC on the TCT to update signage, remove deadfall and repair sections of the trail washed out by the major flooding from Liument Creek to Chilliwack Lake. Three 20 foot bridges were constructed to improve stream crossings in the Thurston Meadows and on the Tolmie Sections. Also several sections of steps were constructed to provide safe access across two clay sides on the Tolmie Section.

Deadfall and drainage improvements were completed on the Paleface Pass section of the trail. Due to the closure of the Silver Skagit Road because of numerous road washouts, clearing of the full route from the Paleface Pass to the Hicks Creek section of the TCT was not possible. The Club also worked with Trails BC members to clear deadfall and repair erosion on the Jessica, Shylock and Portia sections of the TCT where access was possible. Road washouts, pipeline construction and road construction activities limited access in most areas through the Coquihalla from Britton Creek to Brodie Station at Larsons Hill. The following photos depict some of the trail work.

A major washout on Chilliwack Lake Road near Slesse Creek and the fish hatchery closed the TCT for months.



Numerous large deadfalls being cleared on the Tamihi section.



The Tolmie section of the TCT running from Tamihi Campground to Allison Pool required a significant effort to deal with several mud slides, blown down clusters and erosion.

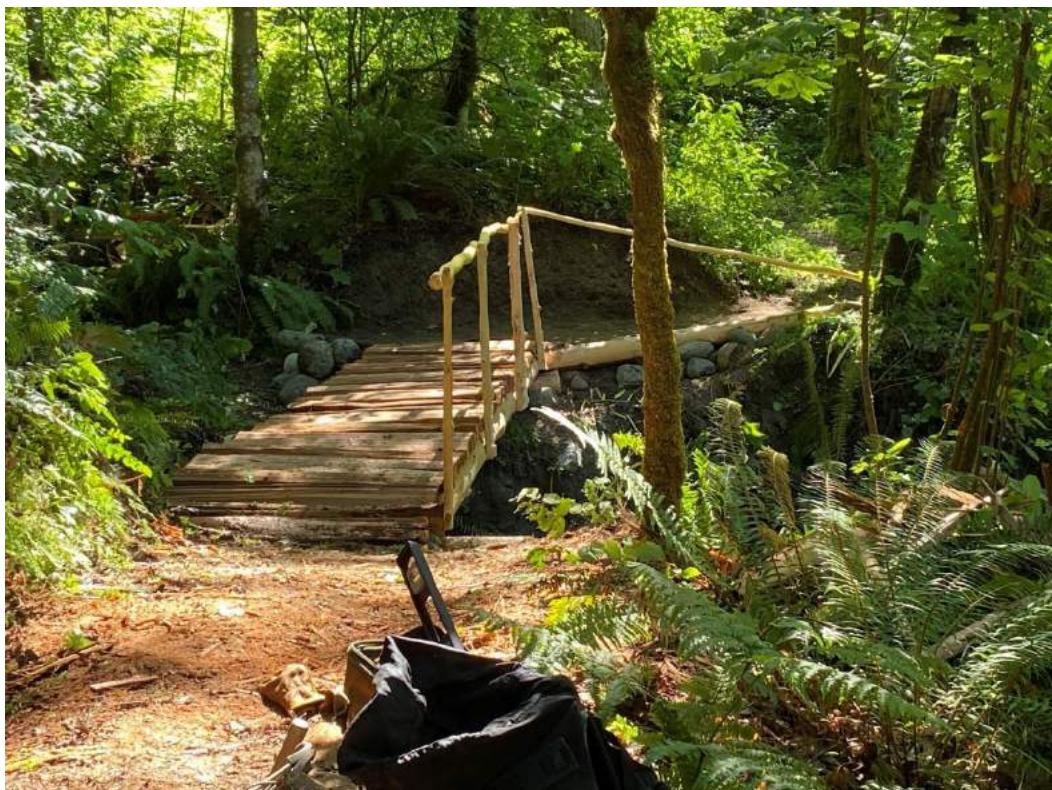
Cedar steps being constructed on the Tolmie section mud slide which caused workers to slip and fall while traversing the area.



A second set of steps was constructed at another muddy section of the trail using old cedar deadfall.



A new bridge was constructed at the mid point of the Tolmie section using a cedar tree for the stringers and decking cut from first growth stumps in the area.



A new bridge was constructed east of Thurston campground and a second one was constructed east of Borden creek. The fir trees used for the stringers were provided by Wayne Furnass.



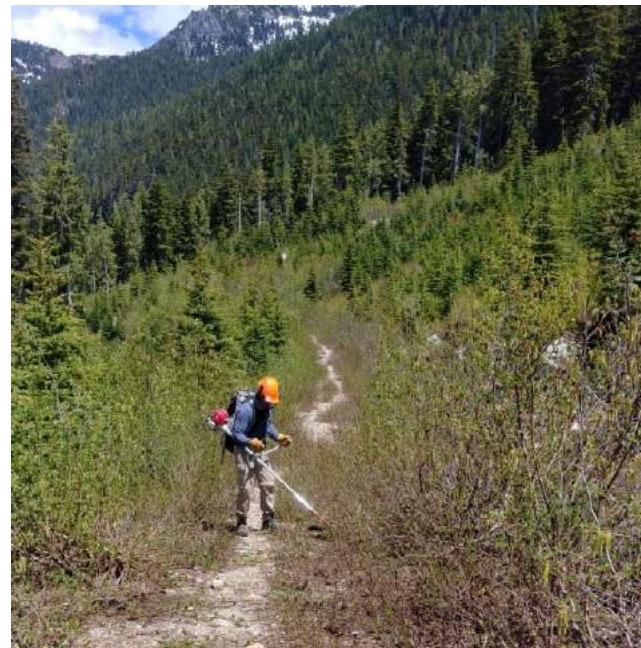
The third bridge shown below was constructed using firm tree stringers from Wayne Furnass and a bridge deck that was salvaged from a nearby dry stream bed where it appeared to have been deposited during the November floods.



Erosion of the trail near the fishermen's dike by Slesse Creek required reconstruction of a section of the trail; new TCT signage and reggrading was complete.



Paleface Pass old FSR drainage was improved near the trailhead. The pass was cleared of deadfall up to the snow covered summit and light alder brush was trimmed for about a kilometre past the summit.



There was a major slide on the Jessica Section of the old KVR rail corridor which required the construction of a by-pass route as shown below.

