



Chilliwack Outdoor Club Trail Maintenance 2025 Report by Jim Alkins

Preamble (based on 2019 Report by Leon Lebrun TrailsBC):

The Trans Canada Trail Foundation vision is to have a connected trail for its users across the country from ocean to ocean to ocean. In support of this vision, Trails BC has worked at maintaining the Trans Canada Trail Sections noted below since they were established between 1996 and 1999. Included are those trails that overlap a number of government jurisdictions and private corporate lands. Over those three years hired contractors along with volunteers helped to establish these trail sections. With the Ministry of Forest assistance, this work was done under Section 102 of the Forest Practices Code of British Columbia (now sections 57 and soon to be 56).

TrailsBC volunteers have maintained these trails for more than 25 years and plan to continue for the foreseeable future. With that in mind we hope that RSTBC will continue to formally authorize our efforts with the understanding that these trails are presently established for the Government of BC. We count on RSTBC to migrate the Section 102 trails to Section 56 for its formal establishment. We are hopeful, that as authorized volunteers to maintain the trail that we will be officially covered by the BC Government liability policy. Either way we (TrailsBC) carry our own insurance for this purpose with regards to any work we do on these trails.

Our crews are made up primarily of volunteers from Trails BC and Chilliwack Outdoor Club. Our expenses mainly involve transportation and equipment. At times we supply materials or share in their supply. Contracts can occur for specific construction projects and usually involve grants from the TCT and other partners.

The following report describes what has been done during 2025 to keep the trails viable and open for the Trans Canada Trail users and others, that is, walkers, cyclists, and equestrians. Motorized recreation is not in our mandate and all of the trails below were permitted for non-motorized users only. We have maintained and continue to maintain these trails with these users in mind. Some trail routing sections use regular roads and service roads that are shared with all users. We do not do maintenance on active roads or service roads that link these trails to form a continuous trail across the region.

2025 COC Report

2025 was the busiest year on record for COC members working with Trails BC members on Trans Canada Trail maintenance through the Chilliwack River Valley, Paleface Pass to Silver Skagit Road and various accessible section of the KVR through the Coquihalla Canyon. Our crew also assisted with the construction of a bridge on the Fat Dog Trail in Manning Park.

The mountainous terrain and high rainfall in our beautiful area make ongoing trail maintenance some of the most demanding in the country. It is surprising how quickly trails we love and enjoy would be impassable without the volunteers doing the trail maintenance.

The Trans Mountain Pipeline construction activities in the Coquihalla and beyond the summit plus the Mine Creek wildfire prevented access to large sections of the TCT. Therefore, a major focus of the COC this year was clearing the 14km Paleface Pass section and completing drainage repairs to the Tolmie section. In addition, Emil Anderson Group donation of repurposed timbers and TCT Foundation funding for gravel fill and loader rental were instrumental in the COC's ability to raise flooded sections of the TCT east of Thurston Campground.

The COC also completed the annual clearing of Vedder Mountain Ridge trail, Pierce Lake Trail, Slesse Mountain Trail. The COC welcomed members 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. We also engage GW Graham Secondary School students in the construction of two cedar bridges as part of their construction program. 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 2025:

- **Total Volunteer Hours* - 3,067**
- **35 individuals from COC and 9 individuals from Trails BC participated on at least one day; several COC members participated on over 50 days.**
- **74 work days**
- **384 worker days**

* Includes time at site, travel time from meet-up point, 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 (5.7km one-way)**
- ❖ **The Slesse Memorial Trail from the parking area to the propeller cairn – (about 7 km one-way)**
- ❖ **Trans Canada Trail in support of TrailsBC –**
 - **Chilliwack River Valley – Deer Creek Bridge to Chilliwack Lake (36km)**
 - **Paleface Pass (14km)**
 - **Through the Coquihalla Canyon where accessible**
 - **Sowaqua, Jessica to Carolin Mine Road and Shylock sections, (about 16km)**
 - **Mine Creek wild fire prevented access to section of trail above the Coquihalla summit.**

2025 Trail Maintenance Activities

Annual Maintenance of the TCT

Each year from March to June the cycle is repeated and includes multiple passes over the various sections of the TCT based on access, snow elevation, trail conditions and weather. In general, the work includes removal of winter blowdowns, clearing of debris in the drainage paths, trimming of encroaching alder and willow brush, and trimming of soft vegetation. Crews complete the work one or two days a week depending on the number of volunteers. In addition, a number of projects are added to address significant localized requirements. The following are photos of a number of the projects and the typical maintenance activities.

Resurface a flooded section of Thurston Section of the TCT:

In February 120 tons of crushed gravel were placed on a section which had been flood to depths exceeding a metre. Logs and repurposed planks from Emil Anderson were placed as curbs to retain the fill material and a culvert was installed to allow cross drainage. Two walk-behind Kubota loaders were used to transport the material and geofabric was placed below the fill. The work was completed over 8 days at the end of February with various COC members operating the loaders, grading the fill and placement of the curbs. The TCT foundation provided \$5,700 for the project. The enhanced section of trail performed very well in the recent atmospheric river event.

The gravel was dumped at Thurston Campground so the loaders had to travel 400m to the work site. The existing bridge between the campground and the work site was temporarily reinforced to avoid damage from the numerous loader trips.



Initial truck and transfer delivered 3” crushed rock for the initial fill and ¾” road base for the surfacing.



Existing deadfall in the area and fence post were used to support the plank curbs.



The happy crew took time for lunch and periodic breaks as the work day were about 8 hours.



Geofabric was placed below the fill and was very effective at preventing the mud from mixing with the gravel when the loaders drove over the fill material.

Cooper Rentals delivered the loaders and provided operator training and picked them up at the end of the project. They gave us a reduced rental charge which allowed us to stay within our budget.



Crew grade the gravel uniformly in lifts of about 3”.

The loaders carried about 1,000lbs of gravel. It took about 15 to 20 minutes for a round trip depending on the operator skill. It took 8 days to haul the 120 tons of gravel. They were fun to operate and very effective for the narrow windy trail.



The loaders compacted the gravel as they delivered the next lift of gravel.



The ¾” road base material was added as the top lift to provide a firm smooth surface



Pierce Lake Trailhead Parking Lot Clearing, COC members used power trimmers to clear the soft vegetation around the parking area to increase visibility of the parked vehicles to minimize vandalism. Trimming was completed on two occasions because of the rapid growth of the soft vegetation.



A culvert was installed in one of the fill areas to allow cross drainage if required during high water events in the future.

Construction and enhancements to Bridges in the Chilliwack River Valley

The repurposed timbers from Emil Anderson Group were used to construct bridges and ramps where access was available for delivery of the planks.

Ramps and curbs were added to eliminate steps to several bridges

4'X12" timbers used for stringers and decking



Cedar was used for curbs.



Happy crew following a successful project.

A new bridge was constructed with ramps south west of Thurston Campground. The 4'x12' stringers with decking can be shifted as required following construction.



A new cedar bridge was constructed near Allison Pool using nearby downed cedar trees for stringers, bench seats and decking.





Two cedar bridges were also constructed on the Tolmie section with GWG Construction Class and COC members using cedar stringers, bench seats, decking and curbs.



Second bridge over dry gulch



Efforts were taken in various areas to reduce the slipping hazard in wet or icy conditions by adding metal treads, constructing cedar steps and adding curbs and railing as shown below.

Steps were added to the Tolmie clay slope to reduce the slip hazard.



Metal threads were added to VMRT boardwalks



Railings were added to the VMRT bridge to prevent slipping



There was a focused effort this year to widen and improve the drainage on the Tolmie section of the TCT. Portions of the trail run along the old railway bed. Drainage ditches were cleaned; deadfall was used to create curbs to hold the trail surface in place and culverts were reinstalled or added in numerous locations.

Improved drainage



Tolmie widening



Shaping Of the trail through a gravel slide area on Tomie

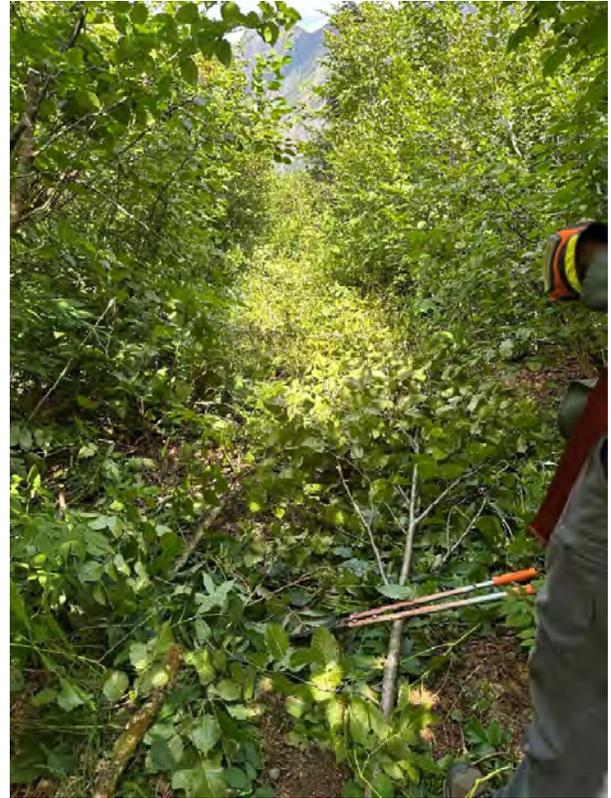


Pierce Lake Trail: The focus was the annual removal of numerous blowdowns from the trailhead to the lower lake.





Mount Slesse Memorial Trail: The COC members with assistance from the student summer crew, and Valley Outdoor Club members spent two days on the trail using power trimmers and loppers to clear soft vegetation and encroaching alders and willow brush. from the parking area to the propeller. In the sun-exposed sections the growth was very thick as shown in the following photo.



The Trans Canada Trail:

Club members working with volunteers from Trails BC completed the annual removal of deadfall trimming of alder brush and trimming soft vegetation from Chilliwack River Valley to Coquihalla Summit from March to June.

Logs used for Trail marking in the pipeline corridor near Sowaqua Bridge.



Jessica Trail condition after trimming



The 14km long Paleface Pass section former FSR was original clear but has become overgrown in most areas; some short sections show the original gravel surface of the former FSR

Happy TrailsBC and COC crew



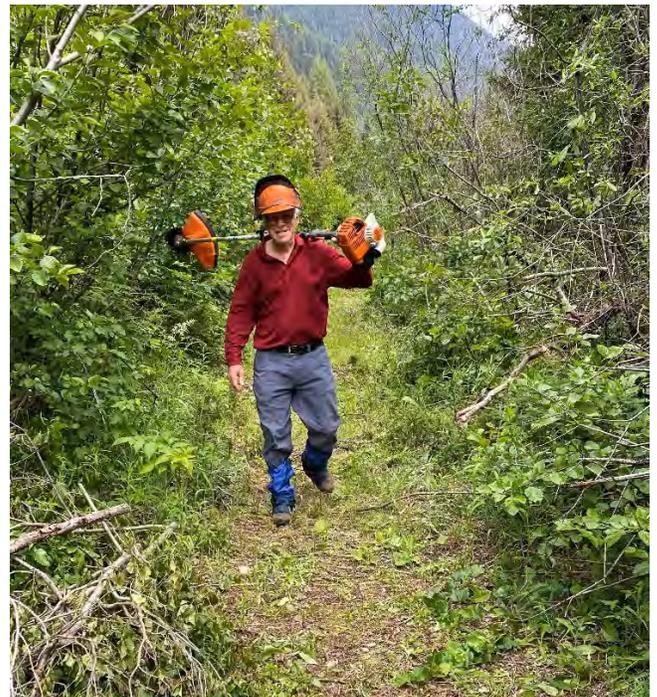
New hedge trimmer head used on Paleface
pace – FMCBC provided a grant for this
equipment



Thick alder undergrowth was cleared back;
the remaining canopy should become more
stable in a couple of years as the trees
grow in size.



The 7 kilometer hike to the mid point of the
trail, the bridge, makes for a long day of
work when clearing the Paleface Pass



Vedder Mountain Ridge Trail, Deadfall which consisted of small diameter trees, was removed. The trail is frequently used by various hikers who also remove the small blowdowns so the trail is well maintained.



into the end of the large log continue to breakdown due to insects. This deterioration if not addressed, will result in a bridge failure as the end of the bridge drops from the supporting abutment.



Future Considerations

Coquihalla Realignment, Through the Coquihalla from Britton Creek to Brodie Station at Larsons Hill. The re-alignment of about 17km of the TCT will be required due the major washouts of the KVR by the Coldwater River in 2021. Route assessments were imitated with the with support from the Trans Mountain Pipeline staff and the Stuwix Forestry Planner. Major trail work will be required to establish the TCT through the Coquihalla section to Brodie Station and further to Brookmere in 2026. The plan is to stay on the east side of the Coldwater River making use of the pipeline corridors and possibly new Stuwix FSR's.

Danger trees above TCT west of Chilliwack Lake Park Boundary which will need to be removed by a qualified faller.



Concern with Slesse Mountain Bridge - The major log bridge across the Slesse River was constructed about 9 years ago by an RST contractor. The bridge continues to function as designed however the steps which were cut