

# Denman Island Trails Committee - Cross Island Trail

## Quarterly maintenance review, May-July, 2015.

Starting this May, the Trails Committee started a rotation system of one committee member conducting weekly inspection walks of the completed trail with the intent to assess the condition of the trail and to pick up litter.

Our first inspections found much debris left over from the trail construction that needed to be removed as well as a long section of split cedar fencing that had been badly damaged. A work party removed 3-truck loads of wooden debris and re-built the split cedar fence. While more can be done in this area, especially with the fence, this will be left for another day.

Generally our first 2-months of maintenance consisted of picking up litter, cutting back vegetation and pulling weeds from the gravel path bed. An observation was made that in many areas aggressive cutting back of vegetation was necessary and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month our mechanical hedge trimmer was utilized to cut back overhanging vegetation and rake it clear of the trail.

Much of the trail needs some heavy cutting back of vegetation and rather than our monthly maintenance person walk the whole length of the trail it has been decided that by concentrating on smaller areas of the trail at one time it is hoped to keep the vegetation cut back and under control as well as rake certain areas of the trail clear of debris. It will still be the Committee's requirement that the complete length of the trail be walked at least twice a month.

Over time we hope to learn the most effective ways to keep the trail in good condition however there are problems that cause us concern:

- A section of trail before climbing the "big hill" has become very overgrown with weeds. We believe this has resulted from lack of use and the lack of agricultural cloth layer under the gravel surface. Many aggressive weeds have rooted into the ground under the gravel and are well anchored.
- The start of the trail at the top of the "big hill" has steep sides on the west side of the trail, this continually shed rock and debris across the trail. We are not sure how to remedy this situation other than cut the bank back to a less steep configuration, something we feel is beyond our capabilities.

- Our committee has learned of a near accident at an intersection of the trail and a private driveway. The incident occurred when a person wearing earbuds and with their concentration elsewhere almost collided with a large backhoe being driven out from a driveway. The operator of the machine was able to avert an accident. It has now been suggested by Karin of the CVRD that a caution sign be erected at this location to warn trail users of an intersecting driveway. It is questionable if a warning sign would have helped in this situation however the idea has merit. That said, our committee discussed this situation and noted that a similar trail on Hornby Island has a caution sign at every private driveway intersection which seems logical. While there is not an excess of driveways intersecting the trail, we as a Committee do not want to be tasked with erecting these signs if the CVRD decides to act on this suggestion. We do however suggest that metal posts with signs be used if this suggestion is to be enacted.
- The CVRD has built a safe off road trail to the base of the “big hill” where a sign indicates the end of the trail and to ***proceed at your own risk***. Trail users are then expected to proceed up the “big hill” one of the most dangerous sections of road on Denman Island to once again reach the safety of the second section of trail at the top of the hill. We as a Committee feel the CVRD need to prioritise the completion of this section of trail not only for the safety of trail users but also the optics of leaving such a section of trail undeveloped.

We trust the CVRD find this report useful and we will be pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding the Cross Island Trail.

Sincerely,

Allan Danks.

Chair, DIRA Trails Committee