

Mountain Bikers of the Central Okanagan

**Considerations and Recommendations for the Gillard
Section 57 Planning Process**

Prepared by the MTBco Gillard Committee:

Andrew MacIntosh, Cam Lainchbury, Mark Elliott, Jay Darbyshire

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Table of Contents

3 - Introduction Statement

4 - Background Information and Considerations

4 - History of Trail Network

5 - Uniqueness of Trail Network

6 - Regional Considerations

8 - Existing Trail Network Considerations

8 - Safety Considerations

10 - Needs, Goals and Recommendations

10 - Overview

10 - Network Infrastructure

14 - Safety Infrastructure

15 - Safety Planning

15 - Multi-Use and Partnership Initiatives

16 - Trail Maintenance and Development

18 - Concluding Statement

Introduction Statement

The following document highlights the background information and considerations that the board of directors of Mountain Bikers of the Central Okanagan (MTBco) have deemed to be relevant to the planning process for the development of the Gillard Trail Network (Gillard). From the provided background information and considerations, the Gillard Committee of MTBco has developed a preliminary list of the needs, goals and recommendations that should be considered during the planning process. The presented initiatives are not an exhaustive list, but are those that have been deemed important to the successful development of the network. These needs, goals and recommendations are presented here in a draft form that highlights the pertinent points without delving into implementation specifics for each recommendation. The committee and subsequently the board understand that a long-term trail network development plan will need to be created. This document has been created as a small step towards the long term goal of turning Gillard into a world class mountain bike trail network. The needs, goals and recommendations of the board have been presented without an attached timeline as many of the initiatives will depend on outside support or are implementable in a staged manner. However, they will need to be considered during the entirety of the planning stage and throughout the initial re-development of the network to ensure their potential roll-out in the future.

Background Information and Considerations

History of Trail Network

Early History

The area below Little White mountain, known locally as the south slopes, has been a popular local recreation area for many years. The Gillard Trail Network (Gillard) is located at the western end of this area. The earliest known mountain biking in the vicinity of Gillard FSR was in the 80's. Local youth were known to ride the logging roads on early mountain bikes and before too long they began to re-open old hiking and mining trails. With the popularity of mountain biking increasing through the 90's more trails were developed and more riders appeared. Before the development of the Kettle Valley neighborhood, this lower area was also home to a cross-country trail system that was utilized for weekly races by local riders.

In the late 90's the more technical trails like "Dr. No", "Kerplop" and "Casino Royale" were developed, these trails utilized the rocky terrain and unique topography of the area to add technicality to the network. Wooded structures (technical trail features) were sometimes added to these trails to allow ease of navigation between the natural rock features that riders were after. In the later 90's "north shore style" trail building, that is trails where the technical trail features were the point not the means to the end, became popular throughout the mountain bike world. During this time, trails like "Superbowl" and "Lickhersore" were developed, containing numerous wooden bridges and other constructed trail features of a technical nature.

In the early 2000's Gillard started to become popular regionally, provincially and internationally. Visiting riders were greeted with a unique riding area that had older style trails with natural technical appeal as well as newer trails consisting mainly of constructed technical trail features. During this time, numerous films used Gillard as a filming location. The New World Disorder series, the Collective series and the Drop in TV Series all filmed segments or episodes in the Gillard network. These films brought additional national and international attention, increasing the networks appeal as a mountain bike tourism destination and elevating a few locals to the ranks of sponsored professionals.

The Fire and First Rebuild

Just as Gillard was achieving the height of it's popularity and development, the 2003 Okanagan fire severely damaged the network. The majority of the technical trail features were lost and the landscape was changed drastically. A majority of the original builders moved on and left stewardship of the network to the riding community. A new generation of builders stepped forward and in a short time the popular old trails were reopened and many of the structures were rebuilt.

During this time period a few new trails were also developed, examples being “Wobbly Pops” and “Rubherdown”. These trails added to the diversity of the network and a number were of an easier difficulty than previously developed trails. These trails opened the network to mountain bikers of a wider skill range. This new generation of builders also began to expand the network geographically, moving further up the hillside. Additionally, a trail mimicking the jump lines of Whistler that were now becoming popular, was constructed. This trail was unfortunately logged a few weeks after being completed but later rebuilt to become the trail “Yo Mamma.”

The Windstorm and a New Generation of Builders

In 2007 there was a major wind-storm event that knocked down a large majority of the standing dead timber left from the 2003 fire. There was a nearly 50% loss of constructed trail features, hundreds of trees were down across the entire network and exposed root balls tore up significant portions of many trail beds. The riding community again banded together and trails were reopened and many structures rebuilt. At this time a new group of builders appeared who undertook the task of both modifying trail-beds and rebuilding structures to a higher construction standard. New trails were also added, with a goal to bring more diversity to the network and attract a wider cross-section of the riding community to the area.

Throughout the numerous destructive events and rebuilds, Gillard has remained a popular local place to ride with unique terrain, amazing trails and stunning viewpoints. Everyone from amateurs to local professionals enjoy the technically demanding terrain and unique topography.

Uniqueness of Trail Network

The terrain and landscape of Gillard has been the main driver behind the location, distribution and style of trails that have been built throughout the network. Trails like “Dr.No” and “Casino Royale” with their vast amount of rock features and technical descents follow the ridge lines and canyon edges. Others, like “St.Ripper” and “Cats Ass” follow the natural undulations of the forest floor with built dirt features. The ease of access created by Gillard FSR traversing through the middle of the network has led to Gillard becoming primarily a “shuttle” area, that is the majority of riders drive up in vehicles to then descend the trails. There were originally a number of climbing trails located within Gillard. But, they became lost or forgotten as heavier and longer travel bikes made “shuttle” style riding more popular and concurrently more advanced trails developed.

The development history and terrain have led to building of numerous technical trail features within Gillard that may be considered to be expert unlimited. There are also a large number of medium and small technical trail features on many of the trails. Where possible, builders have made an effort to construct technical trail features in a manner that lets riders progress at their own comfort level and pace. Recently, builders have begun replacing many of the older deteriorated technical trail features with new

features of a higher standard that include ride-arounds and alternate easier features. They have also begun reworking trails to diversify the network and make it more appealing to a broader segment of the riding community.

The uniqueness of Gillard will always dictate the style of trails and the features that can be built there. Going forward it will be important to keep the original flavor of Gillard intact. Despite the numerous cycles of destruction and rebuilding that have occurred, Gillard has remained a popular trail network regionally. Retaining its inherent characteristics will be crucial to ensuring that what has kept people coming back, remains.

Regional Considerations

There are numerous local and regional implications that need to be considered in the development of Gillard. MTBco has made great strides in opening communication and developing partnerships with other local non-profit organizations as well as local government. The initiatives being undertaken by outside stakeholders will need to be considered during the development of the Gillard trail network. Some of these external initiatives are highlight below.

Central Okanagan Trail Alliance

The Central Okanagan Trail Alliance (COTA) is a relatively new local organization made up of board members from various non-profit and volunteer trail advocacy and user groups. It is intended to be a regional umbrella organization to support the activities of its various member organizations. COTA is also undertaking partnerships with various levels of government to support trail development and maintenance as well as promote recreational trail use to both locals and non-residents. There are two projects currently under consideration by COTA that need to be considered in the development of Gillard.

In regards to trail network design and layout the main COTA project that will affect Gillard is the interconnecting of the various provincial parks in the region through the re-establishment and re-development of the Highland Trail and High Rim Trail (which traverses above the network). Gillard is also close in vicinity to both Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Park which have been identified by COTA as parks to be included in the interconnectivity project. In order to accomplish this portion of the project, COTA has proposed to develop a trail in the lower portion of the Gillard area as a means to link the lower portion of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park with Okanagan Mountain Park. For these reasons, it will be important to include discussions about Gillard in the overall development plan for COTA's interconnectivity project as well as ensure that the Gillard planning process takes COTA's plans into consideration.

Another COTA project that will be important to consider during the development of Gillard will be the initiative to create a regional multi-use trail signage standard. COTA wishes to develop a regional signage program that will allow all user-groups to

understand where they are within the various Okanagan trail networks as well as the difficulty level and suitability of the trail they are on for their preferred recreational activity.

Multi-Use Corridor

The City of Kelowna has developed a comprehensive linear parks plan that includes the the goal of integrating various recreational trail networks in the region with the city's parks trails and pathways system. The linear parks network has existent and planned pathways that will come into close contact with many mountain bike trail networks in the region. The closest city pathways to Gillard will be within Bellevue Creek Linear Park. MTBco has a close working relationship with the City of Kelowna and has had low-level discussions regarding the potential of connecting the existent and proposed trails within Bellevue Creek Linear Park to Gillard.

Bordering Trail Networks

There are three adjacent trail networks that will need to be considered in the development of Gillard. In order to avoid interface issues and mitigate trail user conflicts it is important to acknowledge and plan for co-development of trails that border or end/begin within close vicinity of other trail networks. The three adjacent trail networks are Crawford (Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park), The Boulderfields Climbing Area and the Johns Family Nature Conservancy. Also, As mentioned in the discussion of COTA's interconnectivity project, the High Rim trail traverses the slopes above Gillard. In the future there may be opportunity to connect the network with the High Rim trail providing users a downhill singletrack exit point from the Highland/High Rim traverse before it heads into Okanagan Mountain Park. As the Gillard network is brought up to an acceptable standard and efforts are made to increase it's appeal to a larger segment of the mountain bike community, a need to find acceptable routes that connect it to Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park may develop. The potential development of Crawford/Gillard connecting trails will need to be acknowledged during the re-development of the network. These trails could also serve as a portion of COTA's proposed connection between the lower trails in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park and those within Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park.

Kettle Valley Railway

In developing Gillard there will be a need to take into consideration the interaction the network has with the Kettle Valley Railway Trail (KVR). This is a very popular section of the Trans Canada Trail, attracting many tourists and locals. Individuals utilize this trail for both hiking and recreational cycling and Gillard FSR provides a good access point to the trail. KVR users will need to be taken into consideration in both the development of the trail network as well as trail network infrastructure. Users of Gillard will be interacting with KVR users and an additional burden will be put on any developed infrastructure, such as parking lots or washroom facilities, by KVR users.

Existing Trail Network Considerations

As discussed, the Gillard network has historically been a shuttle focused riding area, with Gillard FSR being the vehicle access point for the network. Prior to the 2003 fire, there was one remaining climbing trail (Named “Goldfinger”) which allowed riders to climb their way up to the area where the Kettle Valley development now sits from lower down the slope. Once reaching this point riders were able to make their way up to the KVR via a series of old logging and skid roads. While popular at the time, this trail was never reopened after the fire and now crosses private land (The Kelowna Mtn and Kettle Valley developments). As highlighted, the development of Gillard has been very much terrain driven, with naturally occurring rock features being popular amongst riders and builders. These features are more prominent and frequent in the western portion of the network. With these points in mind, attempting to design a climb with the traditional “stacked loop” approach would potentially give novice riders access to some of the most technical trails on the mountain. This is discussed further in the recommendations section of this document.

Safety Considerations

Unsafe Discharge of Firearms

A major safety concern within the Gillard area is the multiple rogue shooting ranges that are located throughout the network. A few of these ranges are situated at trail heads, trail exits and others are located along sections of trail, aligned perpendicular to the trail-bed. A majority of these shooting ranges are also within close proximity of Gillard FSR or the various decommissioned skid roads in the area. In addition to the rogue firing ranges, there has also been a significant number of incidents involving unsafe hunting practices in the area. Over the years the club has received numerous complaints regarding hunters shooting across both the trails and the roadways. We have also had reports of many hunters interacting negatively with cyclists and other recreational users in the area when the issues of safety and appropriate hunting distances from recreational trails were brought up in conversation.

Motorized Users

As a near urban forested road, Gillard FSR attracts a growing number of motorized users from various user groups. This includes recreational motor bikers, hunters, sight seers, UTV and 4x4 enthusiasts. As is the case with many forested roads around the province, much of the traffic on Gillard FSR behaves as if the rules of the road do not apply. With very little to no policing of motorized users currently being undertaken, many individuals drive recklessly and at excessive speeds. Many other unsafe vehicle practices can also be observed in the area such as underage driving, driving while under the influence of alcohol, driving through sensitive ecological areas, etc.

Illegal Campsites and Illegal Dumping

Gillard's close proximity to town makes it a convenient location for a trail network, amongst other appropriate recreational pursuits. Unfortunately it's near-urban location also makes it an appealing place for inappropriate use of forested lands. Over the years numerous "bush" campsites have been developed and many of these are unfortunately frequented by irresponsible users. Some of these sites have led to the accumulation of large amounts of garbage, including bullet casings, broken glass and nails. Some of these sites have also been frequented as locations for "bush parties" which have a scaring effect upon the area including damage to flora, cutting of live trees and the leaving of refuse. In addition to the refuse created by neglectful illegal campers and bush parties, various other locations in the network have been regularly used by members of the public as sites for the illegal dumping of household and construction refuse.

Needs, Goals and Recommendations

Overview

The following sections are a listing of the physical trail network features and supporting infrastructure that the Gillard committee of MTBco feel will be most important to ensuring the successful development of the network. These recommendations are based upon the presented background information as well as past discussions with the riding community and builders. This is not however, an exhaustive list of what will be needed to complete the build-out of the network and during the planning and development process other infrastructure needs may also arise.

Network Infrastructure

Parking Lots

As noted the club feels that the eventual build-out of the network will require parking lots to be located within the vicinity of the 3km, 5km and 7km road markings on Gillard FSR as well as at the junction of Gillard FSR with the KVR and at the top of the trail named “Wang Bang”.

The most significant parking lot will be required at 3km, this location should be capable of holding 50+ vehicles, similar in scope to the Stewart Rd. East parking lot at Myra Belleveue Provincial Park. This need is based upon the assumption that a green multi-use trail and a network traverse trail would begin here (discussed under the *Climbs* section) this location would also need to support multiple user groups and could potentially see significant traffic year-round.

At the 5km marker there is the need for 5+ parking spots that would be utilized for both shuttling and maintenance purposes. However, the club would like to see a staged development of this area leading to the eventual construction of a recreation site at this location. This is discussed further under the section titled “Recreation Site Development”.

A parking lot at the 7km point on Gillard FSR would act as a mid-network parking area and would most likely be placed between the old Gillard FSR alignment and the new by-pass route. There is enough space at this location to construct a 5+ vehicle parking area. This parking lots addresses the fact that during most years the snow line tends to sit just above the elevation of the 7km mark for 2-3 weeks. Many early season riders park along this section of road in order to shuttle early opening trails. It would also offer a shorter shuttle option for the fall when riders are wanting to squeeze a ride or two in after work as sunlight allows. During the summer months this parking lot is likely to be used less.

The KVR parking lot at 7km will be the most used upper parking area and is where most network users wishing to “shuttle” the network will park to begin their descent. It would also serve to provide an access point for recreational cyclists wishing use the KVR trail to access Myra Canyon from the western end. This would provide recreational cyclists with a longer route than is normally available to them (most users of the KVR access Myra Canyon from either June Springs Rd. or Myra FSR). Due to its multi-use nature and being the major access point for shuttling the network, this parking area would need to be capable of holding 25+ vehicles. A parking area of similar spec to the one located within Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park, at the junction of June Springs Rd and the KVR, would be adequate.

The uppermost parking lot needed to complete the network would have to be developed be at the top of “ Wang Bang”. This location would need to be capable of holding 10+ vehicles and provides access to the upper reaches of the network. Burning off the large slash pile currently located at this trailhead and grading the area would create significant enough space for the required parking spots and would mitigate potential forest fire danger.

Climbs

As touched on earlier, the board of directors has identified the need for three distinct climbs to be built in order to ensure the successful development of Gillard. These climbs will serve to attract and provide access to the greatest number of local users as well as prepare the network as a promotable tourism product. Technical climbs within a more “gravity” oriented trail network are becoming increasingly popular as technology allows modern bikes to be light and pedal-able while at the same time being capable of riding technical terrain. These three climbs would be a green multi-use climb accessing the eastern portion of the network, a blue climb close in proximity to Gillard FSR heading up the centre of the network and finally a physically demanding black climb containing natural and constructed technical trail features.

The Green multi-use climb could be linear in nature, traveling almost directly south along the eastern edge of the network, starting from the 3km parking lot. This would allow it to be built utilizing portions of some previously existing trail bed as well as decommissioned skid roads. The addition of a short connection trail traveling north-east of the parking area could meet up with the city’s Bellevue Creek Linear Park project connecting it all the way to the KVR. The ultimate destination of this trail could potentially be the remnants of the historical Chinese work camp located in the area. This would open up the potential for development of an interpretive area, honoring the contribution of Chinese immigrant railway workers to the development of the Okanagan.

The Blue climb should be laid out in close proximity to Gillard FSR, favoring the easter side of the roadway providing the best access to the intermediate trails. The goal would be to get the riders to the top of the network efficiently while providing a technical challenge with some meandering turns. Optimally, it would exit at the KVR parking lot and have an offshoot towards the junction of the KVR and Gillard FSR, that would

facilitate a future expansion to the top of “Wang Bang” and the uppermost proposed parking area.

The Black climb will need to contain several technical trail features and meander a substantial amount in order to add physical difficulty and to suit the needs of experienced riders. It's most likely exit point would be a location somewhere along the skid road that drops off the KVR at the top of “Yo Mamma”. This trail will need to be designed in a manner so as to attract more performance oriented cyclists. Gillard sees some use from this demographic currently but their means of entering the network is by coming along the KVR after climbing up through Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. If they were able to access a technical and demanding climb within Gillard itself this would help to increase the appeal of the network to a larger demographic.

DH Race Course

The Gillard committee has identified room for one more trail off the KVR paralleling “Kerplop” and feels that this would be an excellent location to develop a DH race course built to Cycling BC/UCI standards. This race course would have to cross some trails lower down with an appropriate over/under structure then parallel the main road offering potential viewing points for spectators and would need finish at the 5km parking area. We have had a former Canada Cup/World Cup level racer walk the potential line and it has been confirmed that this area would accommodate a 3-4 min, World Cup quality course. The development of a Cycling BC/UCI compliant downhill race course would both provide infrastructure for local racers and would allow Kelowna to host provincial level races (and potentially national/international races in the future). This trail would also serve to promote downhill oriented mountain biking as a performance activity, not simply a sport for the “adrenaline junkies” amongst us.

Flow Trails

Flow trails, those with a hand built trail-bed designed to create natural feeling undulations, are becoming exceedingly popular amongst the mountain bike community. These trails can be constructed in a manner that provides technical challenges to a wide range of rider through the inclusion of a variety of dirt and rock features. We feel that constructing a series of flow trails, one of each difficulty level (Green, Blue, Black), would serve to enhance the network and increase its general appeal. Currently the network is fairly two dimensional, favoring old school technical style trails and/or constructed technical trail features. There are plenty of existing trails that could be converted into flow trails or new trails could be constructed. An additional benefit of flow trails is that they typically don't fatigue a rider as quickly, allowing visiting riders unfamiliar with the network the opportunity to explore more of the network within a day. Although flow trails have high construction costs, when built properly they handle extreme weather conditions much better than a typical technical trail-bed and are therefore easier to maintain and manage over time.

Traverse Trail

As stated, COTA's proposed BC Park interconnectivity project will pass within close proximity and through Gillard. Additionally, there may be future rider demand for single-track connections between Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park and Gillard. These two initiatives provide argument for a multi-use, dual direction traverse trail to be planned as part of the Gillard development process. This trail would also aid in trail building access and emergency response in cases of severely injured riders. Depending on design and route considerations there would be opportunity for this trail to be multi-use. This would make a significant portion of the Gillard network open to user groups other than cycling. We feel it is important to acknowledge and support other user groups enjoyment of the area.

The most likely course for such a trail would be to start near the lowest parking lot and cross the network from the east, heading upslope and west towards "Casino Royale". It would need to then switchback and head east up to the 8km mark on Gillard FSR where it would cross and join in to the proposed multi-use climb. Making this traverse trail multi-directional would allow for entrance and exit points mid-mountain on some trails, creating multiple shorter loop options that don't currently exist. This dual direction trail could also potentially go further upslope to cross Gillard Creek, linking in to the parking lot of the Boulder Fields climbing area. This would require a partnership with the recently formed Boulder group and would serve to connect the two recreational areas. This would also allow hikers to come up the multi-use climb and then traverse over to the Boulder Fields where there are some unique hiking opportunities in addition to the rock climbing.

In the eventuality that the Myra Bellevue Provincial Park to Okanagan Mountain Park portion of COTA's BC Park interconnectivity project is undertaken, this traverse trail could form a large portion of the proposed route. COTA would only need to connect the lower and upper points of the traverse trail to Myra-Bellevue and then develop a trail from Okanagan Mountain Park that would meet up with the most western point of the traverse trail.

Recreation Site Development

As identified under "Regional Considerations" the Gillard trail network will exist as single network within a larger, regional recreational trail system. Additionally, the potential development of multi-use trails within the network will further integrate Gillard with the regional recreational trail system. The directors of MTBco see this as an opportunity to develop infrastructure to support a wide variety of network users. At the various parking lot locations mentioned the club would like to see the eventual installation of ancillary facilities such as pit-toilets and day use infrastructure such as picnic tables and sanctioned fire-pits. By offering legal fire-pits, we would be deterring rogue fire-pit use by legitimizing the practice.

The 3km and KVR parking lots will also be locations conducive to the installation of interpretive signage and maps orienting the general public in regards to the recreational opportunities available in the area. These two parking lots will serve as focal points for the network and may see high use by individuals pursuing recreational opportunities in the area other than mountain biking.

Additionally, the parking lot at 5km has been identified by the Gillard committee as a potential location for the development of an overnight recreation site. For this reason the committee feels that the long-term development of overnight tent sites would be a way to potentially mitigate the damages of illegal camping, through offering a legal alternative. Having legitimate recreation site users in the area should serve as a deterrent to the current inappropriate overnight use occurring in the area. This would also allow visiting cyclist to stay within the network and promote other nature-based tourism opportunities.

Safety Infrastructure

Skid Roads

There are numerous logging and skid roads that run through the network that are in various states of disrepair or that have been previously decommissioned. Opening and clearing out these skid roads would allow access points for search and rescue and trail maintenance. Some of the main roads would need to be gated to keep out unwanted motorized traffic. These roads would need to then be mapped and search and rescue muster stations would need to be developed and signed appropriately.

Forest Service Road Crossings

A major potential safety concern in developing the Gillard network will be the interaction of mountain bikers and motorized traffic. Re-routing portions of trails to create fewer, centralized crossings of Gillard FSR will create a safer environment for both riders and motorists. An example of this would be Connecting “Squaw Hollow” with “Barely There” to cross Gillard FSR at the same junction point. Additionally, Installing squirrel catchers, fencing or baffles where trails do cross Gillard FSR would serve to help slow riders down before crossings. Posting signage to warn motorists and riders of all road crossings and opening up the brush around road crossings would also serve to bring more awareness of each other to both groups.

Unsafe Discharge of Firearms

MTBco has made efforts to clean up some of the illegal gun range areas but additional clean-up will be required to deter the users of these locations. However, additional enforcement patrols by conservation officers may need to be encouraged as renewed development of the network will increase recreational traffic there will be more chances for negative interactions between firearms enthusiasts and others. Currently there is no hunting or firearm enforcement signage in the area and partnerships may

need to be undertaken to ensure appropriate signage is put in place to discourage inappropriate and illegal firearms discharge. Discussions with the local fish and game clubs may also need to be undertaken to bring about a greater awareness of the recreation occurring in the area.

Illegal Dumping

The club would like to partner with FLNRO and the Regional District to install proper signage along Gillard FSR informing the public of the fines associated with illegal dumping. Effort will also need to be made to encourage the public to report individuals found to be illegally disposing of refuse so that fines can be levied when appropriate. MTBco has hosted multiple, very successful trail clean-up days in the area and a local off-road truck/jeep club has also done so. Continuing these clean-up days will hopefully serve to make the area more “pristine” increasing the guilt factor related to illegal dumping of refuse in the bush.

Safety Planning

With significant upgrades Gillard will most likely begin to see increased ridership and with this there are likely to be eventual incidents requiring medical response. MTBco would like to partner with local search and rescue and first response personnel to develop an emergency response plan outlining access points, muster areas, evacuation routes and the like. This plan would need to evolve over time as the re-development of the network moved forward and a scheduled yearly update would most likely need to occur.

In addition to an emergency response plan, the Gillard committee has identified the need for a hydrological management plan. Recently, it has been discovered that some of the low-lying wet areas in the network were historically altered and may be completely manufactured in nature, most likely for irrigation purposes. Efforts have been made to discover who may have developed these holding pond and dyke systems but the committee has not been able to find a currently existing irrigation district or local governmental department with knowledge of their existence. Further research will need to be undertaken and a consultant may need to be brought in to assess the dirt works that are currently affecting the natural flow of water through the area.

Multi-Use and Partnership Initiatives

Multi-Use Corridor and Traverse Trail

As previously mentioned, a green multi-use corridor and a multi-use traverse trail could be developed within the network. This would serve a dual purpose of allowing equitable access to the network to other user groups while at the same discouraging the non-mountain bike use of mountain bike specific trails. By offering multi-use trails within the network, negative user-group interactions will be reduced to a minimum and injuries

due to collision mitigated. This is important in a downhill oriented network like Gillard. As mentioned under previous sections the development of the traverse trail coincides with the goals of COTA's BC Park interconnectivity project. As these two trails would be open to other user groups there would be opportunity to partner with outside organizations to develop and maintain them. MTBco has a good working relationship with many other trail advocacy and recreation organizations and we would approach them to co-develop the multi-use trails within the network.

Lower (3km) and KVR Parking Lots

As presented in earlier discussion the lower parking lot at 3km and the KVR parking lot are both likely to be regularly utilized by many non-mountain bikers in order to access the multi-use components of the network as well as pursue other recreational opportunities in the area (such as the KVR trail). It would be our intention to partner with other user groups to develop these two locations. If it was located within the vicinity of the historical Chinese rail worker camp the KVR parking lot would especially provide a unique opportunity. It could be developed into a historical interpretive site, serving a greater purpose than simply being a parking lot for the Gillard trail system. The development of the KVR lot as a historical site provides many partnership opportunities that would need to be explored further when it came time to develop this portion of the network infrastructure. The lower 3km parking lot may also potentially hold value to the greater outdoor recreation community, not just mountain bikers. If the COTA interconnectivity project came to fruition and/or if the cities Bellevue Creek Liner Park could be extended to reach the Gillard network then this area would serve as a staging point for either of those two networks in addition to being the main lower access point for Gillard. For these reasons it will be important to ensure this parking area is designed appropriately to meet any future demands.

Recreation Site Development

The proposed 5km recreation site, while not as appealing to other user groups as the upper/lower parking lots and the multi-use trails, may provide some opportunity for partnerships with outside organizations that wish to see recreation facilities developed in the area. It would be a useful site for individuals traveling along the Trans Canada Trail as it is only a short distance from the KVR and the provision of adequate facilities would provide them with a better option than camping along the KVR itself. This area might also be attractive to other outdoor recreation user groups wishing to undertake overnight activities in the area.

Trail Maintenance and Development

The largest piece of the development puzzle for Gillard will no doubt be the ongoing maintenance, construction and re-habilitation of the network. To this end, MTBco has engaged in lengthy conversations with both the local trail building community and the riders with whom the Gillard network is popular. From these conversations it has become our understanding that the development of a trail adoption

program will be the best method with which to attract the largest number of committed volunteers. MTBco hosted trail days and outside contractors will be an important component to the initial development of the network but an appropriately developed and run trail adoption program will be the best long term solution to ensuring the network remains safe and sustainable. The creation of such a program will require the development of a training program, a document outlining network standards/best practices and an MTBco led inspection regime. It is our wish to partner with Rec Sites and Trails to develop these documents and processes. The club also wishes to draw from the experiences of other organizations such as the North Shore Mountain Bike Association to help design this program and to develop with the assistance of Rec sites and Trails, a Gillard specific trail standards document collated from the large amount of trail construction literature that is currently available.

Concluding Statement

The preceding list of needs, goals and recommendations contains only the “top priorities” that have been identified by the Gillard Committee of Board of Directors of MTBco. These are being presented without a time-line as many of the needs, goals and recommendations are implementable at any stage during the development of the network and many will also require outside support or funding. As the board sees it, the next step in the planning process will be to create a priority list from these and the outside consultants recommendations, in partnership with Recreation Sites and Trails staff. In conjunction with this step, it will be MTBco’s responsibility to engage the mountain bike community in conversation regarding the proposed recommendations (both from the consultants report and from this internal document). This will be undertaken in order to develop community buy-in and support for the recommendations.