

# north shore news

## Where danger lurks on the Shore

### Pedal Pushers

North Shore News

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A summer 2013 survey of cyclists on the North Shore asked respondents to identify the most dangerous roads and bike routes they encounter.

More than 500 cyclists took part in the study and the results are not surprising to us Pedal Pushers. Funded by the West Vancouver

Foundation and conducted by the Norwest Cycle Club, the survey was a perceptual study, asking cyclists to identify where they felt most endangered.

Here are some of the top results, presented with crash data from ICBC.

#### *Most Dangerous Intersection*

The five-way extravaganza at Bewicke/Marine Drive/Third/West Keith was noted as the top most dangerous intersection across the whole North Shore, narrowly edging out the Main Street at Ironworkers Memorial Second Narrows Crossing area.

ICBC crash map information shows the fiveway intersection had the second highest number of collisions involving cyclists between 2008 and 2012. However, when you take into consideration nearby crashes at Marine and Fell, and Bewicke and Second, the total far surpasses any other location. The ICBC crash map shows only two crashes at Capilano and Marine Drive and does not provide information from West Vancouver. According to the crash map, the only other equally dangerous intersection is at Main Street and Mountain Highway.

#### *Most Dangerous Road*

Cyclists overwhelmingly identified Marine Drive as the most dangerous road for cycling on the North Shore. Of the 508 respondents, 267 said they thought Marine Drive was the most dangerous. Because the road extends across all three municipalities and is a key east-west route, many cyclists on the North Shore would have tried to ride it - at least once.

The survey asked cyclists to identify factors that contribute to the sense of danger. On Marine Drive it is vehicle speed, traffic volume and no marked bike lanes. While there are bike lanes on portions of Marine Drive, they do not extend throughout the corridor on either side. The ICBC crash map shows that all along Marine Drive there have been crashes involving cyclists. No other single road can boast as many crashes as Marine Drive.

The District of North Vancouver's 2013 cycling safety study showed many collisions with cyclists on the Marine Drive sidewalk, indicating that people ride along the sidewalks to avoid the road.

#### *Most Dangerous Bike Lane*

I thought this was an interesting question. Presumably, if there's a bike lane, most cyclists would feel safe. However, there are bike lanes that make cyclists feel unsafe too.

The only actual bike lane on Marine Drive runs along the south side from Mackay Road at Capilano Mall, east to Fell. Cyclists gave the following reasons for feeling unsafe on this route: heavy traffic, vehicles moving too fast and a narrow roadway. Hmm, this is beginning to sound familiar.

We looked at the [crash map along this bike lane and it does not show any cyclist crashes between Mackay and Fell](#). Perhaps the bike lane markings do deter accidents. We travel this route often enough to know that a main hazard on the new bike lane is right-hand turning vehicles, which may cross the bike lane without looking for a cyclist. Our rule is to never get between a vehicle and an intersection - no matter what.

While there are many other interesting statistics in the report, the take home message for us Pedal Pushers is: Marine Drive feels dangerous to cyclists and for the most part is dangerous, according to ICBC records. Fifteenth Street is an alternate route just south of Marine Drive, although it ends at Tatlow in the west and Mackay in the east.

Published in October 2013, the study was conducted by Robert Wyckham, professor emeritus, Simon Fraser University, and Sarah Wongkee, SFU graduate student, and was funded by the West Vancouver Community Foundation, Ron and Barbara Howard Fund. You can view the results at [northshorepedalpushers.com](http://northshorepedalpushers.com).

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