

Trial set for woman charged with booby-trapping North Vancouver bike trails

BY JOHN COLEBOURN, THE PROVINCE MAY 5, 2015

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Tineke Kraal is facing a rare charge of mischief that could endanger a life. — Facebook

North Vancouver hiker Tineke Kraal has set a trial date to fight allegations that she set booby traps on some of the North Shore's famed mountain bike trails.

Kraal, 64, did not appear in provincial court Tuesday to contest the rare criminal charge of mischief that could endanger a life, but her lawyer Martin Peters agreed to have a pre-trial conference in the judge's chambers on Sept 17. A trial has been scheduled for Dec. 14 to 22.

During a brief court appearance, Peters and Crown counsel Mark Myhre told Judge D.E. Moss that a solid block of court time is needed to cross-examine at least eight witnesses.

Myhre said while two charges were dropped, the one remaining charge is serious, and he noted he

plans to continue talks with Peters to stave off a lengthy criminal trial.

"We are still having discussions to see if we can resolve this without a trial," he told the court.

Peters said he intends to call Kraal as a witness.

Kraal was arrested at 5 a.m. on Jan. 4 at the Quarry Court trailhead. Among the conditions following her first court appearance that month was she was to stay away from hiking and biking trails on Mt. Fromme.

I don't recall them ever speaking to council on this issue. - cjk

Initially the Upper Lynn Valley resident was charged with setting or placing a trap with intent, mischief to obstruct the enjoyment of property and another count of mischief in endangering a life. Two charges were dropped and Kraal only has to defend the mischief in endangering a life charge.

Since they moved into the Upper Lynn neighbourhood in 1990, both Ronald and Tineke Kraal have attended many District of North Vancouver council meetings to voice their opposition to the growing numbers of mountain bikers on Mt. Fromme.

Because of the extensive media coverage surrounding the charges, Ronald Kraal in January told The Province his wife had become a recluse due to all the publicity.

"She is too nervous to go to court," he said. "All she did was try to protect herself and her dogs, and hopefully get these mountain bikers to slow down."

North Vancouver RCMP Cpl. Richard De Jong said at the time of the charges that police acted after they were provided with video footage of trails being sabotaged in the Lower Skull and Quarry Court trail areas.

According to De Jong, the two trails had been vandalized from August to December 2014.

"It was endangerment to the public," he said of the vandalism.

North Shore Mountain Bike Association president Vince Beasse said at the time his group had ongoing concerns about someone getting seriously hurt because of the significant trail tampering.

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