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Cyclist decries work on North Shore Fisherman's Trail

Upgrades include new bridges, wider pathway

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Twin Bridges crosses Seymour River near a section of Fisherman's Trail that meanders through the trees alongside the river. Photo Terry Peters, North Shore News

One North Vancouver cyclist received a shock recently when his favourite twisting, turning trail didn't turn or twist.

Fisherman's Trail, which runs along Seymour River in the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve, has been closed several times during weekdays recently to allow crews to replace pedestrian bridges and undo some of the damage caused by frequent slides.

While cyclist Scott Gale has noted erosion in the area, widening the winding trail to approximately four metres struck him as "a little over the top."

"I think they could have done it less obtrusively," he said.

Crews dropped piles of fill on the trail and "bulldozed everything," according to Gale.

"It's basically converting a nice trail into a road," he said. "It spoiled the feel of it."

The work is essential to combat an increase in landslides, according to Lower Seymour

Conservation Reserve supervisor Mike Mayers.

"In order to get to those areas to fix up the trail ... we need to get access there," Mayers explained.

The upgrade is designed to provide workers with a clear path to the trail, making it easier to fix inevitable slides.

The trail's dilapidated bridges were also in need of replacement, with some of them threatening to buckle under the weight of a hiker, according to Mayers.

"The five pedestrian bridges that were in place ... had reached their life span," Mayers said.

The new pedestrian bridges should last 50 years, according to Mayers.

The installation of a new bridge at Mikey Creek - tentatively scheduled for early September - will likely result in a trail closure of two to four days, according to Mayers.

Once the work is complete, Metro Vancouver plans to add some vegetation, let the salmonberry grow back and have the trail return to a smaller, more natural look.

Crews are also scheduled to replace culverts and work on the nearby Spur 4 trail.

For Scott Gale, who suggested the trail be renamed Blunder Wonder or The Latest (as in The Latest Waste of My Tax Dollars), the trail is a long way from what it was.

"I think in 10 or 15 years it'll start to grow back in, but that's a long way down the line."

The trail was established in 1908 as a service road for water mains before being abandoned in the 1940s, according to Mayers.

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