

May 15/12

Take a Break

No work party tomorrow. You knocked yourselves out spiffing up the trail and providing traffic control for last Saturday's big event.

Michael

May 7/12

Spiffing Up 'Take It Easy'

9 AM Wednesday at the parking lot.

As per your requests, we will be re-leveling and compacting the HC Trail in advance of Saturday's big event. Ideally we can use two people in the lead with leaf rakes to clean the litter from the trail, switching to metal rakes to loosen the top inch or so of crusher dust which will be levelled by a third worker with a custom wide rake.

Fourth worker will follow with the compactor. We'll start at the parking lot and head up the hill. Tool up appropriately. Weather looks to be outstanding.

Michael

May 1/12

Off Again, On Again

Strippers needed!

It appears that I was a bit hasty in cancelling tomorrow's work party. The pour today went well and now we need to strip the bracing and fill the footing holes tomorrow. I have other tasks as well, so don't worry about not enough to do.

9am tomorrow at the parking lot.

Michael

April 30/12

Concrete Comes Tomorrow

No work party on Wednesday.

Instead, we will be pouring the Kiosk forms at noon tomorrow.

We can use extra bodies

besides Ken and myself

in case we have to use buckets instead of the chute. Please

bring extra 5 gallon buckets with strong handles if you have them.

Michael

April 24/12

Dig and Tidy Up

My apologies for the last minute email.

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

We have 1 1/2 Kiosk footing holes left to dig as well as general clean up of branches, etc., in the parking lot area in anticipation of the big event on May 12. I'll bring the utility trailer.

Michael

April 18/12

Timberrr!

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

I'll arrive early to start falling the small Alders near the Kiosk site.

I'll bring my trailer for taking all the branches to the landfill.

Firewood is up for grabs.

Loppers, hearing protection and a leaf rake or two.

Hopefully I will have batter

boards up for the Kiosk

foundation in a few days at

which point I will be

asking for help in the digging.

Michael

April 3/12

Rocks and ferns

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

We'll be extending the low rock retaining wall where the Handicap Trail meets the parking lot.

We'll also transplant ferns from deeper in the woods to cover the bare spots.

One lucky volunteer gets to go with me around the Red Trail to clear the 3 trees across it.

Michael

March 24/12

Back in the Saddle

I'll be taking delivery on the

tracked Bobcat tomorrow

morning at 8:45. I'll spend

Saturday building up the low areas with the pile of native soil.

Sunday and Monday will be

spent delivering the rest of the

crusher dust for the crew to work their magic on. There's no need to finish forming the trail immediately but I want to finish delivering material as quickly as possible to cut down on rental costs and stay ahead of the rain. Since you've done such a good job organizing yourselves previously I'll stay away from that task. I could use one person tomorrow to help pick out big rocks and sticks as I spread the loads of fill.
Michael

March 21/12

No work party tomorrow
No work party tomorrow am.
Ken and I will be picking up the newly milled Kiosk roof 2 x 6's tomorrow afternoon.
Michael

March 14/12

Take a Pass
No work party tomorrow - I have to attend a meeting with the Indian Band at 9:15 plus the forecast is for wind and rain.
Gertrude's opening is tomorrow evening from 5 - 8 pm at the Arts Centre. Free coffee and goodies. Hope to see some of you there.
Michael

March 7/12

Ivy Pulling
9 am tomorrow morning at the parking lot.
This will be a light day with few tools. I checked out the Red Trail yesterday and realized that we never got rid of the ivy patch along the trail - Northwest corner. We need to pull it out by the roots and lay it out on a tarp to thoroughly die before it can be returned to the forest floor. We also have the option of taking it to the landfill which would be a lot more work.
Gloves and clippers, I'll bring a tarp.
Michael

Feb 29/12

Thursday Workparty

Tomorrow morning looks to be too wet for working.

Thursday is supposed to be dry so let's meet at 9 am at the parking lot.

Sparky has suggested redoing the first part of the trail where it leaves the terminus in order to match your later standards.

Detail edges to a uniform width with native soil beyond and touch up any low spots with shovel fulls from a wheelbarrow full of crusher dust as needed. I also have a few small tasks to do with trail preparation once the tractor is fixed [it's been a saga].

Michael

Feb 22/12

Calling a Halt

Congratulations! - you've successfully worked yourselves out of a job [for now].

I paced off the remaining trail and we are at the 70% completion mark.

Until the tractor is repaired and I can spread more crusher dust, all work parties and sign ups are suspended.

The hairpin looks great.

Michael

Feb 22/12

Test the Waters

I know everyone is chafing at the bit to get back to the trail so give it a go today.

Because of all the rain in the past 24 hours the crusher dust may still be too wet use the wide rakes or compact but tomorrow's forecast is for more precipitation.

Gertrude and I both have other commitments this morning so no visit from the Coffee Goddess.

Michael

Feb 21/12
Too Wet!
No work party today.
Tomorrow may be drier and Wed
is supposed to be sunny.
At this point it looks like there are
only enough piles left for one
more session until
the tractor is fixed.
Michael

Feb 20/12
Iffy
The weather looks OK now but
could turn before 9 AM
Gertrude has generously offered
to bring coffee if you let her know
it's on.
Michael

Feb 19/12
It's a Go!
As of 7 AM it looks to be a
relatively dry morning for
trailbuilding.
Monday is also looking better
than previously forecast. I'll be in
Vancouver all day Monday so
carry on without me. I return the
Bobcat tomorrow AM and the
tractor won't be ready until later
in
the week so what ever piles are
left at the end of today is what
you
have to work with for now.
Michael

Feb 18/12
Rain Days
After watching Damien, Rupert,
Ken and his nephew Jason
slogging it out in the rain this
morning I've decided to amend
the rain or shine policy when it
comes to the H.C. Trail. The
crusher dust was so wet that
they couldn't even use the wide
rakes, let alone the compactor.
From now on I'd like to wait until
the morning of your scheduled
day to decide on whether to
proceed. I'll send an email before

8:30 AM based on the latest forecast for the morning. At the moment, tomorrow looks relatively good, Monday and Tuesday not so good [rain]. Beyond that the forecasts tend to be unreliable. If your shift gets cancelled please feel free to sign up for a future one.
Michael

Feb 18/12
Sign up Sheet Extended
In order to complete the trail we have extended the sign up page on the SGS website to the end of the month. We will post the March calendar [if needed] when the time comes.
Michael

Feb 16/12
Third Persons Needed
We now have slots on the sign up page for a third Volunteer which haven't been filled yet. Ken thinks we could even use a fourth and both he and Mike Lane are going to ask around for more helpers. Today the crew was like a well oiled machine with the new forming system and a lot of trail was put down.
Michael

Feb 15/12
Threesome Anyone?
Word from the morning shift is that they can use a third volunteer.
Lou has a new system for placing and levelling the crusher dust which makes for a precise and beautiful trail. I have stockpiled quite a bit of material on the trail so a third person would not have to worry about lack of things to do.
Bob has once again rejiggered the website to allow for 3 volunteers to sign up, so feel free. I'll be fine by myself on the afternoon shift.

Thanks again for the grit and determination shown in everyone's commitment to complete this lengthy task. The results so far are a huge motivator for me.
Michael

Feb 11/12
Machine #4, Meter's Running
We now have a tracked Bobcat loader which is 10" narrower on the total tread width and supposedly has a 'softer' footprint.
Bob is reactivating the signup page on the website for 2 person morning shifts beginning tomorrow morning and running through Sunday, Feb 19th. Any previous commitments to certain shifts have been wiped clean. I may go to afternoon shifts as well as the mornings once we get closer, depending on the turnaround time with the new machine.
Our latest rental is almost twice the rate of the wheeled version so I am trying to finish in a week or so to stay within budget.
Many thanks to all of you who have helped thus far.
Michael

Feb 9/12
Misery Loves Company
Have I mentioned that we've run into a few wrinkles concerning the machines?
With the Tractor and Nissan dumper both dead in the water I have rented a wheeled Bobcat front end loader. After dumping a half dozen loads at trail's end, the wide/heavy machine is really tearing up the corners and tight curves. We will probably trade it in for the more expensive but less damaging tracked version. But before we send back the one we have I want to spread 3/4" crushed rock in the worst ruts on top of 16" geotextile

strips. I plan to fill the Bobcat bucket with the crushed rock and follow behind 2 volunteers who will lay down the geotextile strips and fill up the ruts with shovelful's of rock as we work our way up the trail.

For the time being the, current sign up calendar is no longer in effect. Bob will be reworking it yet again once I iron out the machine issues. If you have put your name down already, consider yourself a free man now. By popular request we will be going to 2 man teams once we have the delivery system worked out rather than the single volunteer. I seemed to have overlooked the fact that most of you signed up because you wanted to work with others, not stand around in the rain by yourself. There's also a safety factor, since none of us are exactly spring chickens.

Once I get the load of 3/4 crush I'll call whoever is available to help mend the ruts.

Michael

Feb 6/12

Back to the Drawing Board

It just keeps getting better! The Nissan dumper isn't going to cut it. Michel's tractor wouldn't start this afternoon so Ken and Sparky

hand loaded the dumper and we started up the trail. At about 2/3 the way to the end it overheated and stalled. Ken and Sparky had to hand bomb all the crusher dust out of the dumper. We might be able to lighten the load or go in compound low but it would be a painfully slow method of moving material.

I'm going back to my original plan of using a Bobcat with a 1/2 yard bucket. It arrives tomorrow. My plan is to eliminate the afternoon volunteer shift so that I can stockpile loads along the

trail for the morning shift to spread and compact. I will also deliver loads in the morning shift and hopefully the volunteer won't have to spend too much time waiting on material.

I will call all of you who have signed up for afternoon shifts - thanks for your enthusiasm.

Michael

Feb 5/12

Don't Be Shy

Having worked through some starting issues with the tracked dumper, we are now ready to rock 'n roll on the Handicap Trail.

I encourage all those interested in spreading and compacting crusher dust to fill in your dance card now:

Michael

Feb 1/12

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

We will be clearing a better route for the machines for their daily commute from their night time nest at the top of Sandy Hook Rd. to the handicap parking area.

Loppers, picks and shovels etc. Also rakes for clearing branches and other forest duff from the Handicap Trail so that the machines don't grind it in.

If we have time we will also clear a larger 'landing pad' at the far end of the trail since we will be starting there and working our way back. I'll explain the logistics more in a separate email.

Michael

Jan 31/12

The Rubber Finally Hits the Road

The time has finally come to line up volunteers for helping to spread the crusher dust on the Handicap Trail. The professional advice I have received is to begin at the far end and work our way back to the parking lot. This avoids tearing up the new surface in the tighter turns by the loaded Nissan tracked dumper as well as by the Kubota tractor and belly dumper trailer.

The idea is to have teams of 3 volunteers [one of which would always be myself] :

Me on the tractor, loading both Nissan and trailer as well as rough spreading after dumping
Someone on the Nissan going back and forth [I think it's slower than the tractor]

A third person at the dumping spot on the trail with a rake and flat plate compactor.

Although we may decide to change things a bit after we work the bugs out of the process, my initial plan is to have a morning shift from 9 to 12 and an afternoon shift from 1 to 4. If it proves to be too long a stretch in the wet and cold we could end the shifts at 11:30 and 3:30. Rain gear, snowmobile suits, warm gloves and hearing protection are highly recommended.

I will have Bob post a calendar sign up page on the website with the shifts blocked out so that you can see what slots are open and fill in the blanks. We would take Sundays off.

You can have a look at the machines tomorrow and give me your feedback on the above plan.

Michael

Jan 31/12

The Eagles Have Landed

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

We will be clearing a better route for the machines for their daily commute from

their night time nest at the top of Sandy Hook Rd. to the handicap parking area.

Loppers, picks and shovels etc. Also rakes for clearing branches and other forest

duff from the Handicap Trail so that the machines don't grind it in.

If we have time we will also clear a larger 'landing pad' at the far end of the trail

since we will be starting there
and working our way back. I'll
explain the logistics
more in a separate email.
Michael

Jan 25/12

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

We'll be working on the beginning of
the Red Trail just North of #6. This
was our first serious trail building
effort and we've learned a lot since
then. It needs a lot more sand/gravel
to cover roots and rocks.

We'll also try to address the mud
hole just North of #8 on the same
trail.

Michael

Jan 18/12

Baby, It's Cold Outside

No work party on account of the
frozen ground.

Gather round the woodstove and
count your blessings.

Michael

Jan 11/12

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

We'll finish the last section of the
Green Trail above the ledge. If time
permits we'll also fix up a muddy
dip on the Red Loop just north of
#8.

Michael

Jan 4/12

9 am tomorrow at the parking lot.

Mineral Mike says that there's only about
100 metres of trail left until we hook up
with

previous work on the Green Trail coming
from the other direction.

When we finish, it will be a milestone of
sorts in that this is the last of the existing
trails

to be upgraded. Then it will be on to virgin
trails until we get interrupted of course.

I understand Sparky is back in town, unfor-
tunately because of health problems with
Sonny.

Michael