

Subject: Response to Monica Craver's letter sent Oct 13 2004

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From: "Eric Pettit" <eric@dongurneyarchitect.com>

To: <mecraver@shaw.ca>, <rwalton@dnv.org>, <mmckeonholmes@dnv.org>, <lmuri@dnv.org>, <ecrist@dnv.org>, <anixon@dnv.org>, <council@dnv.org>, <James_ridge@dnv.org>, <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <kost@fonvca.org>, <cagebc@yahoo.com>, <m.bragg@shaw.ca>, "Sharon Bader" <bader@alumni.sfu.ca>, <Richard_Boase@dnv.org>

Hello Monica, and all listed above.

My name is Eric Pettit, I'm a 38 year old Architect and live at Yorkwood Hills near the access to Mountain View Park where I voluntarily maintain existing mountain bike trails and assist in the sustainability of the park lands in collaboration with the North Shore Mountain Bike Association (NSMBA). I use the nickname "King of E-Ville" on the North Shore Mountain Biking.com (NSMB) bulletin board as a long-standing joke with other board members that should not be misinterpreted in a negative manner. If you read the remainder of the text associated with that name, you will see it says "Welcome to E-Ville, Population: Me". I'm married with two children aged one and four, and we've all spent a lot of time over the past five years hiking and riding the trails near the park. Over these five years I've noticed considerable erosion and deterioration of the hiking and biking trails and have decided to take an active role in rejuvenating and maintaining this Area.

I am an avid Cyclist, and absolutely love the mountain biking available to the North Shore Mountains. I could go on at great length about the positive aspects that mountain biking in this area brings to the community, the District and the City. Also, the talent that is being developed here on the Shore allows BC athletes to compete and win in the world scene. I've ridden many of the Shore's famous trails for almost 14 years now, and have always appreciated the hard work that the volunteer trail builders do to maintain these trails for us. It is an incredible amount of back-breaking work, moving large boulders and logs by hand, and I felt I that I owed the mountain bike community for all the great years of riding and enjoying the area in which we live. I made the decision to get involved with trail maintenance when I saw the deterioration of the Lower Griffen trail section. The trail needs help, it is very close to my house, and it is also a beginner type mountain bike trail where I can teach my kids to ride. I wanted something for my kids and I to do on weekends that is fun, active, in the woods and teaches them about the forest, about hard work, and builds a sense of pride for doing something positive for nature and the community. My four year old daughter loves coming into the forest with me and fixing the trail. Every time a hiker or cyclist passes us, they thank us for the hard work and comment on how nice the section is looking. She feels great pride in this, and makes sure that she tells them that she's doing it too. I hope my son will someday be as excited about this as she is. Currently, I take him up in a jogging stroller and he just watches and gets his hands dirty.

To clarify the specific trail area in which I focus my energy, for those of you who may not know where I am working, the Lower Griffen switchbacks are an approximately 600 – 700 foot section of the Lower Griffen hiking/biking trail that traverse a very steep bluff. The vertical difference in elevation of this section is approx 100 feet; Thus, this particular section of trail zig-zags back and forth across the bluff about 9 times over the 100 foot drop. The relative hydrology of Fromme Mountain is such that rain water that does not run off on the surface collects and seeps into the ground, this subterranean water then flows below grade until it meets an impervious material (rock or clay) and then it seeps back up from the sub-surface due to the pressures from the water above. This is the case with the upper switchbacks on this section of the trail. The water seeps out of the cut for one of the tighter upper switchbacks, and then it rushes down the trail and washes with it the soils that effectively hold everything together. Each year this multi-use trail erodes more and more and if it's not dealt with in an appropriate manner it will be unusable by both biker and hikers.

I have worked a lot on this trail section of the trail over the summer with permission from the DNV and NSMBA. During a spring walk-through with representatives from both groups, they were very clear about what could and could not be done in this area, and I have obeyed these wishes. Both groups stressed the multi-use of this trail and the fact that it is to be a beginner trail for folks learning to ride, so they requested that no stunts be built and that the trail is just as easy and safe to hike as it is to ride.

The hard work is paying off, the trail is looking great and many of the affected areas have been built in with rocks to make the trail more durable to wear and tear and easier to both hike up and ride down. I'm also in the process of building a large retaining wall with the indigenous materials to retain a section of the trail that is on the verge of collapsing down the hill. The heavy rains in September have washed away some of the trail work and I believe that the cause of this problem, as stated previously, is the sub-surface water seeping out near the top. My proposal is to dig a drainage trough or 'ditch' on the uphill side of the trail to catch the water running below the surface and redirect and distribute it away from the trail. I intend to line this trough with landscape fabric, fill it with rocks and bury it under the corner of the trail when I'm finished. I hope to make a below grade chase that this seeping water can travel freely in, instead of being forced up to the surface. The trough would be about 1 foot wide, 3 feet deep and maybe 12 feet long in total, but once finished, you will not even know it is there.

This particular section of the Lower Griffen trail is a significant distance away from the ecologically sensitive wetland area of which you claim that park users are destroying. In addition it should be noted that within the past few months the District of North Vancouver (DNV) in collaboration with the volunteers of the NSMB, took measures to redirect hiker and biker traffic around the sensitive wetland area to which you refer with the construction of a well built multi-use path.

The "ditch" which you refer to, will not damage the wetlands and will not be built for "the pursuit of a very selfish sport". In fact, the work is selfless and actually improves the trail and surrounding area without damaging the wetlands and provides access for hikers as well. Please take notice that that I'm careful to relocate any plant life that is affected by this trail maintenance as well, and have even created a nursery area to collect and maintain these plants for future relocation along the trails edge once the hard-scaping is completed

For your future reference Monica, I would appreciate it if you refrain from vilifying me and my fellow riders / trail-builders to the DNV council before researching the facts with the DNV Parks and Recreation, the NSMB or myself. I'd appreciate the opportunity to inform neighbors and trail users as to the status of the trails and surrounding park area and can be easily reached by phone and email. I hope that this letter has clarified my point of view on this situation and please feel free to contact me at any time by phone at 604 984 7722 or at eric@dongurneyarchitect.com

Here is my home phone number as well,

604 988-7788

Thank you.

The King of E-Ville

Welcome to E-Ville, Population: Me

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