

Subject: [Fwd: What a Shame!]

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 2005 12:47:19 -0800

From: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>

To: Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

Subject: What a Shame!

Date: Mon, 07 Feb 2005 22:17:36 -0800

From: David Berkowitz <DBerkowitz@ventureswest.com>

To: jharris@dnv.org

CC: crist@dnv.org, mmckeonholmes@dnv.org, lmuri@dnv.org, anixon@dnv.org, rwalton@dnv.org, jcuthbert@dnv.org, fonvca@fonvca.org, editor@nsnews.com, Cam@nsmb.com

Dear Mayor Harris,

I've read with concern the recent developments in North Vancouver regarding Mountain Biking.

I live in West Vancouver and often ride the trails in NorthVan at Mt. Fromme and Mt. Seymour.

For context, I am a 37 year old father of two. I am a Partner at a well respected venture capital firm. And most importantly, I am an environmentalist, sitting on the Boards of a variety of fuel cell companies (including a startup based in North Vancouver).

Quite simply, the North Shore is the center of the universe when it comes to mountain biking. We are fortunate to be blessed with the trails and the young people who are leading this fast growing sport. I travel around the world in my work, and when cyclists hear that I'm from BC, they ask if I've ridden the "Shore." When they hear I live on the North Shore, they are amazed at my luck. Our trail network is one of the many reasons that the North Shore is the best place to live on the planet, and in my opinion, one of the reasons our real estate values continue to soar.

Despite the marketing rhetoric of the mountain bike companies, this is not a sport of the disenfranchised. The average mountain biker comes from a relatively well-off, well-educated household. Most of the riders I meet on the Shore are like me, responsible adults, respectful of the environment and the citizens of North Vancouver. And the kids are great – they are so excited to be in the woods rather than playing Xbox in front of the tube. The people I've met contribute back to the community by volunteering their time to build the incredible network of trails. I recently decided to resign my membership at a golf club, in part because I felt that Mountain Biking was healthier for me and better for the environment than golf. Further, it is an activity I could do with my kids, rather than watch from the sidelines on a Saturday morning as they played soccer. Mountain Biking teaches kids to respect the environment, respect themselves, and respect the others who use the trail network. I have never seen teenagers drinking, smoking drugs or vandalizing while they are riding.

When I hear of people claiming that mountain biking is bad for the environment, I shake my head in disbelief. If we allow development of ski hills, golf courses, and new residences with multi-car garages, we would be hypocritical to blame mountain biking for the destruction of our environment.

I am certain you are under pressure from many vocal special interests. But please remember, our mountain biking trail network is what sets us apart from the blandness of suburbia. We are truly blessed.

I hope the Council can find a way for Mountain Biking to continue to flourish in North Van. For our kids. For our economy. And for our environment.

Sincerely,

David Berkowitz

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