

Subject: [Fwd: Mountain biking on the North Shore]
From: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>
Date: Thu, 03 Aug 2006 22:24:12 -0700
To: Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

Subject: Mountain biking on the North Shore
From: John Sharpe <johnsharpe@shaw.ca>
Date: Thu, 03 Aug 2006 21:12:45 -0700
To: fonvca <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Dear Fonvca,

F.Y.I. I have sent this letter to the NS Outlook.

Yours truly,

John Sharpe

-- Original Message -----

From: [John Sharpe](#)
To: [NS Outlook](#)
Sent: Thursday, August 03, 2006 7:38 PM
Subject: Mountain biking on the North Shore

Dear Editor,

With reference to 'Two extreme sports' (North Shore Outlook July 27). Monica Cravers letter seeks to find a solution or compromise between safety and the environmental damage versus the activity of mountain biking has upon it. She may very well have found the solution; isolate it like any other sport such as her example of skate boarding. Some may then argue that you then must isolate the other activities in our forests such as hiking since; if hikers can use the trails why can't we sort of argument. Maybe, but I [know](#) hiking has a negligible affect on flora and fauna.

I love mountain biking, it is my favourite outdoor activity, it is fun, very social, exhilarating not to mention the health benefits.

My fellow mountain bikers may hate me for writing this but during my 12 yrs of XC mtn biking local hills I have definitely seen first hand environmental damage and serious erosion problems on the forest floor due to bad riding skills from skidding tires. Make no mistake about it.

Case in point is the trail, 'Ned's Atomic Dust Bin' on Seymour Mountain. When I first rode this trail in 1994 with a few local riding bros. it was a wonderful, narrow, windey singletrack all the way down to Mystery Creek. Twelve years later it is mostly a concoction of man made ladders, bridges and jump ramps. Alot of it not for the faint of heart. The natural trail left is mostly eroded beyond reognition from twelve years ago.

Dirt biking (Motorcycles) have been banned in many forested areas such as the UBC endowment lands and other areas for safety and environmental reasons. I can tell you that many of the 'mountain bike downhill rigs' are little more than a motorcycle without an engine so make your own conclusions.

In Marin county California, arguably the birthplace of mtn biking in the early 1970s, the trails were completely closed in the mid 90s because of environmental damage and safety reasons. All the mtn bikers who use our forests to ride here

must appreciate what we have when you think of the zero tolerance mtn. biking received in Marin county and other area in the US.

Banning the sport here I would not want to see but a more comprehensive management of it is definitely in order when there are environmental and safety concerns. If this means certain trails need to be closed then so be it because the environment comes first. Immediately determine what trails are causing unsustainable damage to the forest and close them indefinitely!

Please don't misunderstand me, I know that the N.S.M.B.A puts many painstaking hours of volunteer trail maintenance and improvements and I applaud them for it but it's almost impossible for it to be anything but 'too little too late'. N.V.District council seems to bow to pressure from mtn biker lobbyists when it comes to election time but does this serve the best interests of the community as a whole? Why is there so much area on our mountains put aside and supported by district council for so few relative users. It's has been like a free-for-all where the mtn bikers have claimed all the trails. Makes you think its a way of getting votes doesn't it? And most know Mayor Walton is an avid mountain biker as well.

Grouse Mountain Resorts and the GVRD should put their money where there mouths are with regard to the coveted and illusive "Alpine Plan" but so far they are not and so the district taxpayer end up with the bill due to leniency and favoritism from NVDistrict council. God forbid we should implement a fee or user permit for riders to use the trails like they do for golf greens, ski runs, and swimming pools. We could use these fee monies for trail maintenance and mitigate further damage to the forests.

We need a strict plan in place for local mountain biking including strict maintenance of the trails we decide to keep open.

The party at the expense of the forests is definitely over!

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