



REGIONAL  
DISTRICT  
OF NANAIMO

**BENSON VIEW REGIONAL TRAIL AND AMMONITE REGIONAL TRAIL – RECREATION SITES  
AND TRAILS BC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT RENEWAL 2023**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the renewal of the 10-year Partnership Agreement with Recreation Sites and Trails BC for those portions of the Benson View Regional Trail and Ammonite Falls Regional Trail that are situated on Crown land in Electoral Area C, be approved.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2010, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) established the Witchcraft Lake Regional Trail to formalize recreational trail access to Mount Benson Regional Park. Witchcraft Regional Trail included approvals from the Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) for the designated route through the adjacent VIU Crown Woodlot and the undeveloped road allowance on the south side of Witchcraft Lake, known as Harrow Road. The trail also passed through City of Nanaimo (CoN) owned lands.

With growing popularity of Mount Benson Regional Park and the need for additional parking, the RDN acquired land and constructed a new paved parking lot on Benson View Road in 2019. With the completion of the new parking lot, the primary formal trail to Mount Benson Regional Park shifted to the Benson View Regional Trail (see attached maps). In early 2020, access via the original Witchcraft Lake Regional Trail was decommissioned. The 5-year Licence of Use Agreement for the trail between the CoN and the RDN was recently renewed (2022-2027) and updated to reflect the new route.

The first Partnership Agreement (Agreement) with RSTBC for the trail was from (2013-2023) and was amended in 2019 to reflect the new route from the parking lot up to the Regional Park. The Agreement expired January 2023. Staff have been working with RSTBC to renew the Agreement. The renewal of the Partnership Agreement (Renewal Agreement) with RSTBC (Attachment 3) has been updated to include Ammonite Falls Regional Trail. Ammonite Falls Regional Trail runs from the end of Jameson Road to Benson Creek Falls Regional Park. The RDN holds a Section 56 (Forest and Range Practices Act) tenure for the Ammonite Falls Regional Trail which was granted in 2014. This is a popular public access route to Benson Creek Falls Regional Park.

The Renewal Agreement introduces additional safety inspections and annual reporting requirements for the RDN. Staff have reviewed the Renewal Agreement with RSTBC and recommend it be approved as presented.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Term of the Renewal Agreement with Recreation Sites and Trails BC is for ten years (July 2023- July 2033). There is no fee associated with the Partnership Agreement.

The existing trails, trail structures and signage are inspected and maintained by the RDN and funded through the Mount Benson Regional Park and Benson Creek Falls Regional Park operating budgets.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**

People and Partnerships - Seek opportunities to partner with the provincial and federal governments, other government agencies, and community stakeholder groups in order to advance strategic plan goals and objectives.

### **REVIEWED BY:**

- B. Legg, Superintendent, Park Operations
- A. Gore, Superintendent, Park Planning, Research and Development
- R. Daykin, Manager, Parks Services
- T. Moore, Chief Financial Officer
- T. Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks
- D. Holmes, Chief Administrative Officer

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Location Map -Benson View Regional Trail 11 Sept 2023
2. Location Map Ammonite Regional Trail 11 Sept 2023
3. Partnership Agreement 2023-2033