

ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT



PUBLIC
INPUT

Feb 8
to
Mar 16
2018

SUMMARY



BENSON CREEK FALLS
REGIONAL PARK
Access Improvements Project



Benson Creek Falls Regional Park is becoming an increasingly popular destination to enjoy hiking and spectacular natural scenery, including Ammonite Falls.

BENSON CREEK FALLS REGIONAL PARK

Access Improvements Projects - Public Input

BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) developed a **Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan** to identify future park improvements. Two key capital recommendations from the plan included development of an improved crossing over Benson Creek and improved access to the base of Ammonite Falls. The **Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Access Improvements Project** is intended to identify and evaluate potential options for each of these improvements.

As part of the options development and review process, an online public engagement process was completed to inform members of the public about these future improvements and obtain input on their preferred directions.

This summary documents the public input received for consideration during the evaluation of the access improvement options and the selection of a preferred direction

PROCESS

The public engagement process was an opportunity for participants to review **two potential crossing options for Benson Creek** and **three potential descent options to Ammonite Falls**. The options consider viable potential solutions that would fit access and cost objectives for the park.

Herold Engineering Ltd. prepared preliminary engineering design for each of the options, including structures, trail routing, and trail improvements. Preliminary order-of-magnitude construction cost estimates for each option were completed to allow participants to compare costs during their evaluations. Lanarc developed illustrative summaries of the concepts to support community understanding of the general look, feel, and experience of each option and worked with the RDN to prepare background information on the project.

Details about the project and summary information on the options were posted on the RDN's **Get Involved** website, along with a questionnaire to gather participant responses.

The public feedback period ran from Thursday, February 8 through Friday, March 16, 2018.

The following outreach was undertaken to inform people about the opportunity to participate:

- **Get Involved Website:** Project page at www.getinvolved.rdn.ca
- **Facebook:** Five posts on the RDN's Facebook page.
- **Twitter:** Four posts on the RDN's Twitter account.
- **Radio:** One week of advertising on local radio (102.3 the Wave and 106.9 the Wolf).
- **Emails:** Targeted emails to approximately 20 local interest groups with requests for sharing the invitation across their networks.
- **Project Park Signs:** Posters at the main park trailheads to inform park users about the project.

The following sections summarize participation in the process and the participant preferences received.

Why is a formal Benson Creek crossing being developed?

Benson Creek runs through the centre of the park and there are well-used trails on both the north and south sides of the creek. Now, visitors use a fallen log to cross the creek, which is not safe and has the potential to become dislodged in the future. The fallen log is not a feasible public recreational crossing. A bridge will provide a better alternative, strengthening the trail network in the park.

Why are improvements needed for access to the base of Ammonite Falls?

Today, people descend a steep ravine to reach the base of Ammonite Falls, one of the most sought-after views in the park. Over the past several years, awareness and popularity of the falls has grown and has resulted in significant erosion of the ravine bank and the addition of unauthorized ropes to assist with the climb. An improved access will address environmental impacts and provide a safer, more manageable access for park visitors.

WHO PARTICIPATED?

815

Visited the project page on
www.getinvolved.rdn.ca

164

Completed the
online questionnaire

HOW DID THEY FIND OUT?

84

FACEBOOK

41

EMAIL

22

WORD OF MOUTH

8

GETINVOLVED WEBSITE

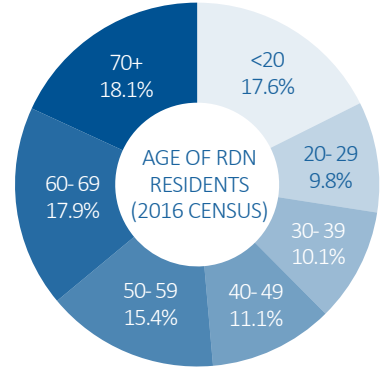
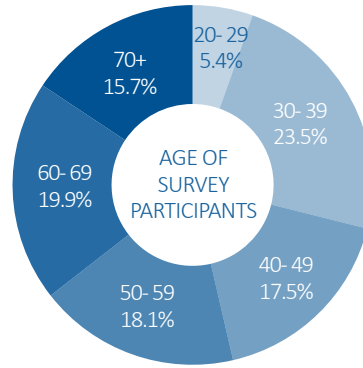
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RDN WEBSITE

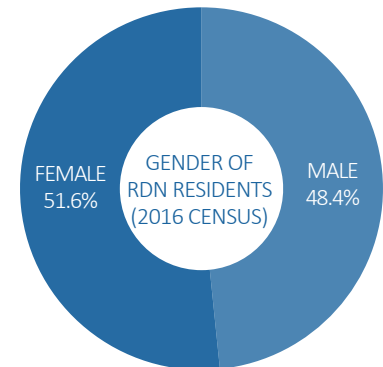
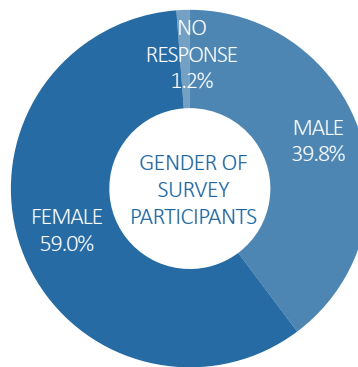
23

OTHER

WHAT WAS THEIR AGE?



WHAT WAS THEIR GENDER?



WHERE WERE THEY FROM?



BENSON CREEK CROSSING SITE

Benson Creek runs through the centre of the park and there are well-used trails on both sides of the creek. A new bridge over the creek is proposed to connect these trails, uniting the park and providing access to Ammonite Falls from the north side of the park (Weigles Road entrance). Two bridge concepts are being evaluated to determine which best fits in the park.



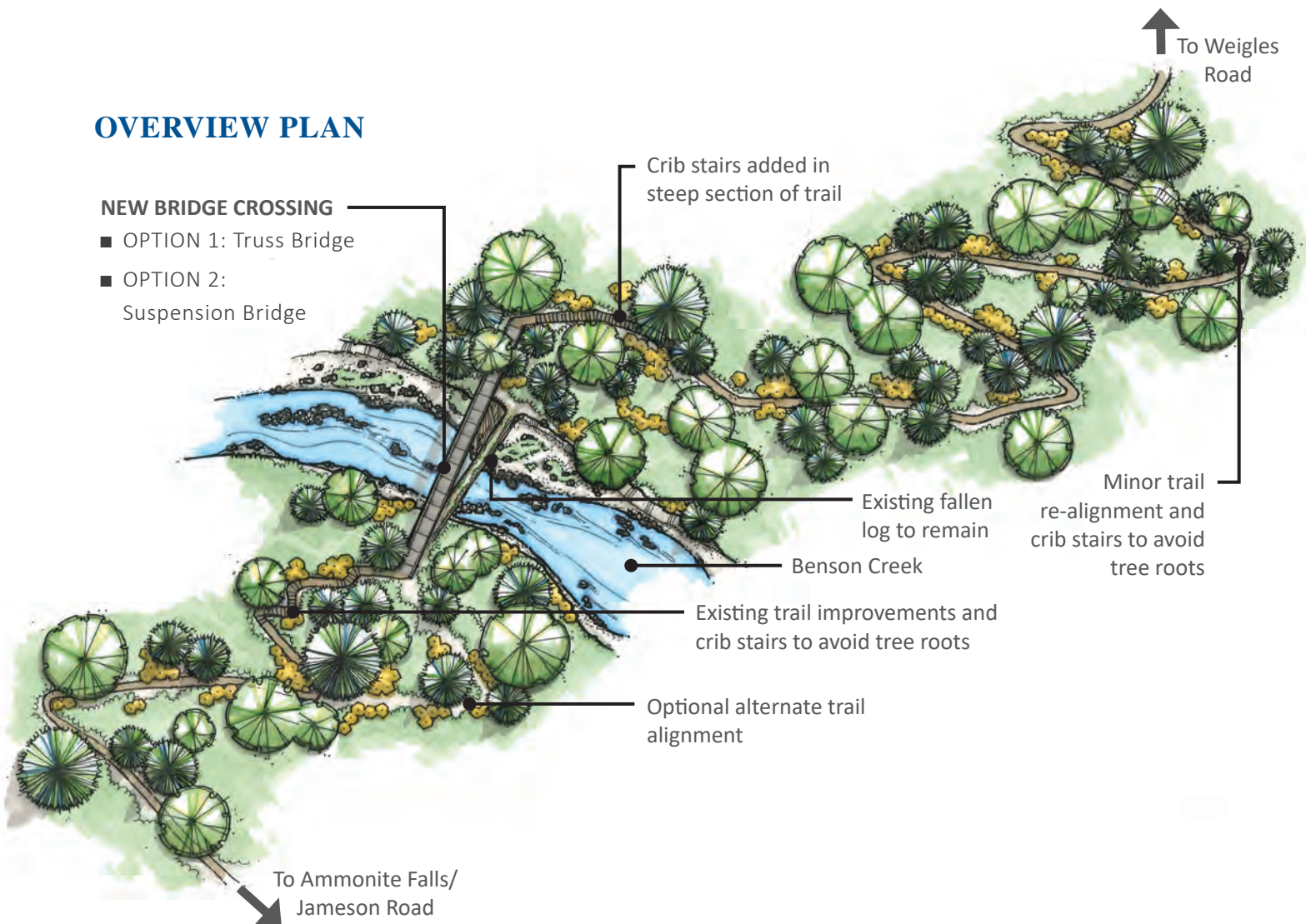


At the same time as developing a bridge crossing, trail improvements will address overly steep sections or eroded areas with improved alignment or crib stairs.



There are no current plans to remove the existing fallen log, although trail access to the log will be decommissioned once the bridge crossing is in place.

OVERVIEW PLAN



OPTION 1 TRUSS BRIDGE

A truss bridge made of lightweight aluminum with timber accents would be developed near the fallen log

+ STRENGTHS

- Potential to be primarily constructed off-site, then assembled in the park, minimizing disruption
- Slightly lower cost

- CHALLENGES

- Heavier appearance due to more cross-bracing
- Potential for some limited movement when the truss bridge has weight on it

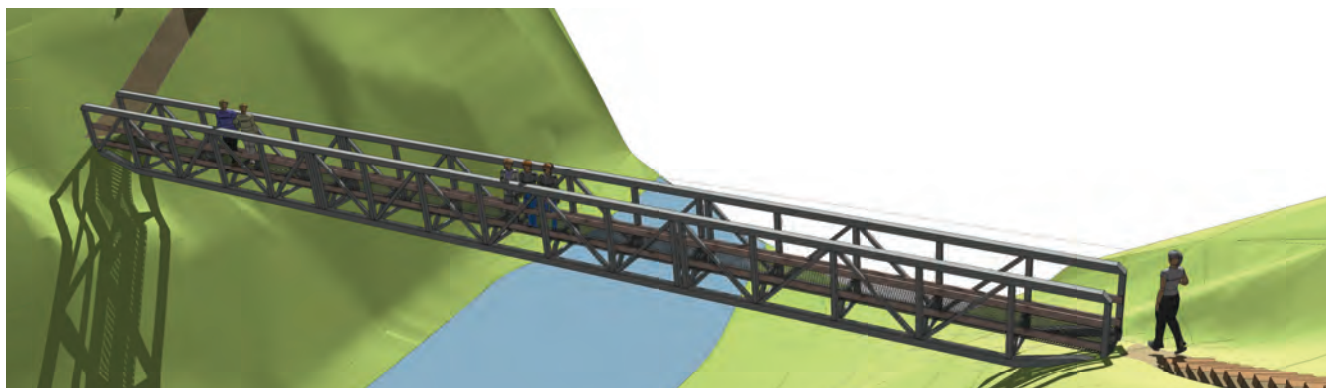
\$ ESTIMATED COST*

- \$210,000 (Class D)

** Costs estimates are for construction only, not including detailed design, geotechnical work, or engineering constructions services. Costs are +/- 30% based on conceptual design and are for planning and budgeting purposes only. Updated cost estimating to be completed prior to implementation.*



CONTEXT
SKETCH



BRIDGE
CONCEPT
MODEL

OPTION 2 SUSPENSION BRIDGE

A suspension bridge made of steel cable and aluminum structure would be developed near the fallen log

+ STRENGTHS

- Light, more discreet appearance due to lightweight design
- Enhanced visual interest

- CHALLENGES

- More construction done on-site, potentially resulting in longer closure of the area
- The suspension bridge will move when in use
- Slightly higher cost

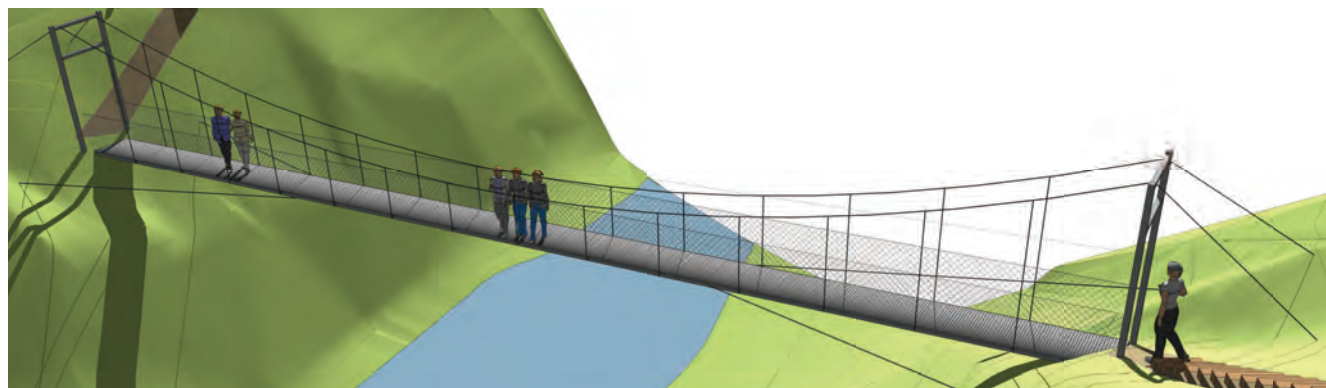
\$ ESTIMATED COST*

- \$220,000 (Class D)

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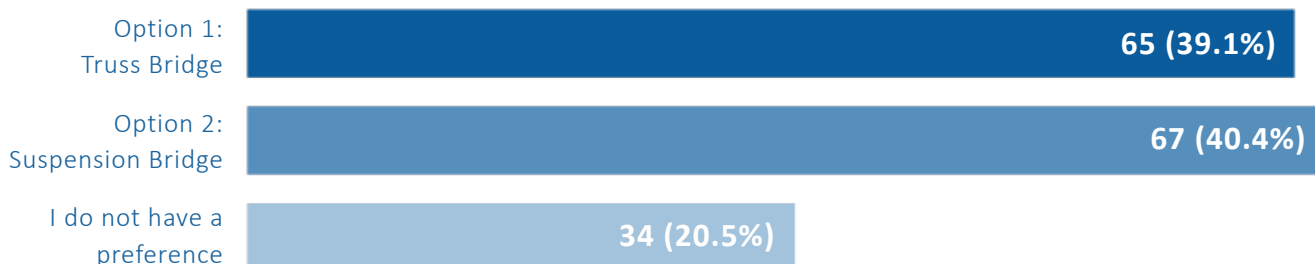


CONTEXT SKETCH



BRIDGE CONCEPT MODEL

WHICH OPTION DID PARTICIPANTS PREFER?



WHY?

OPTION 1 TRUSS BRIDGE

- Lower cost
- Perceived to last longer/require less maintenance
- May provide better all-season access
- More accessible to a range of users (people of all ages, dogs, horses, cyclists)
- Less movement/feels safer
- Prefer design/character
- Less disruption during construction
- Perceived to have fewer environmental impacts
- Provides function without becoming a “tourist-attraction”

OPTION 2 SUSPENSION BRIDGE

- Prefer design/character
- Looks lighter/more elegant
- Less visual impact/blends better with the forest
- Provides a “fun” experience
- More marketable/potential to attract tourism to the region
- Have enjoyed other suspension bridges and would like to have more in the region

See **Appendix A** to view all submitted comments

OTHER COMMENTS/IDEAS

Participants also shared general comments about the Benson Creek Falls site. Themes included:

- Support for any option to improve access
- Non-support for any improvements/desire to leave it “as is”
- Concerns about increasing park use impacting environment and wildlife
- Desire to ensure any improvements are designed to minimize environmental impacts
- Other suggestions: improved parking at Weigles Road, additional trail makers/signs/park map, addition of garbage cans at the trailhead, mountain biking improvements

CONCLUSIONS

Public input showed an equal split in preference between the Benson Creek crossing options. Many comments indicated support for either option that improve access. Key public values that could help inform option selection include:

- Low Initial cost
- Ease of construction
- Longest life span and lowest maintenance costs
- Best accessibility
- Fewest environmental impacts

AMMONITE FALLS DESCENT SITE

Today, people descend a steep ravine to reach the base of Ammonite Falls, which is one of the most sought-after views in the park. Over the past several years, awareness of Ammonite Falls has grown and the number of people climbing down to the base continues to increase. This foot traffic has contributed to erosion of the ravine bank and the addition of unauthorized ropes to assist with the climb. Three trail concepts are being evaluated to address environmental impacts and provide a more sustainable access route.



OVERVIEW PLAN

OPTION 1

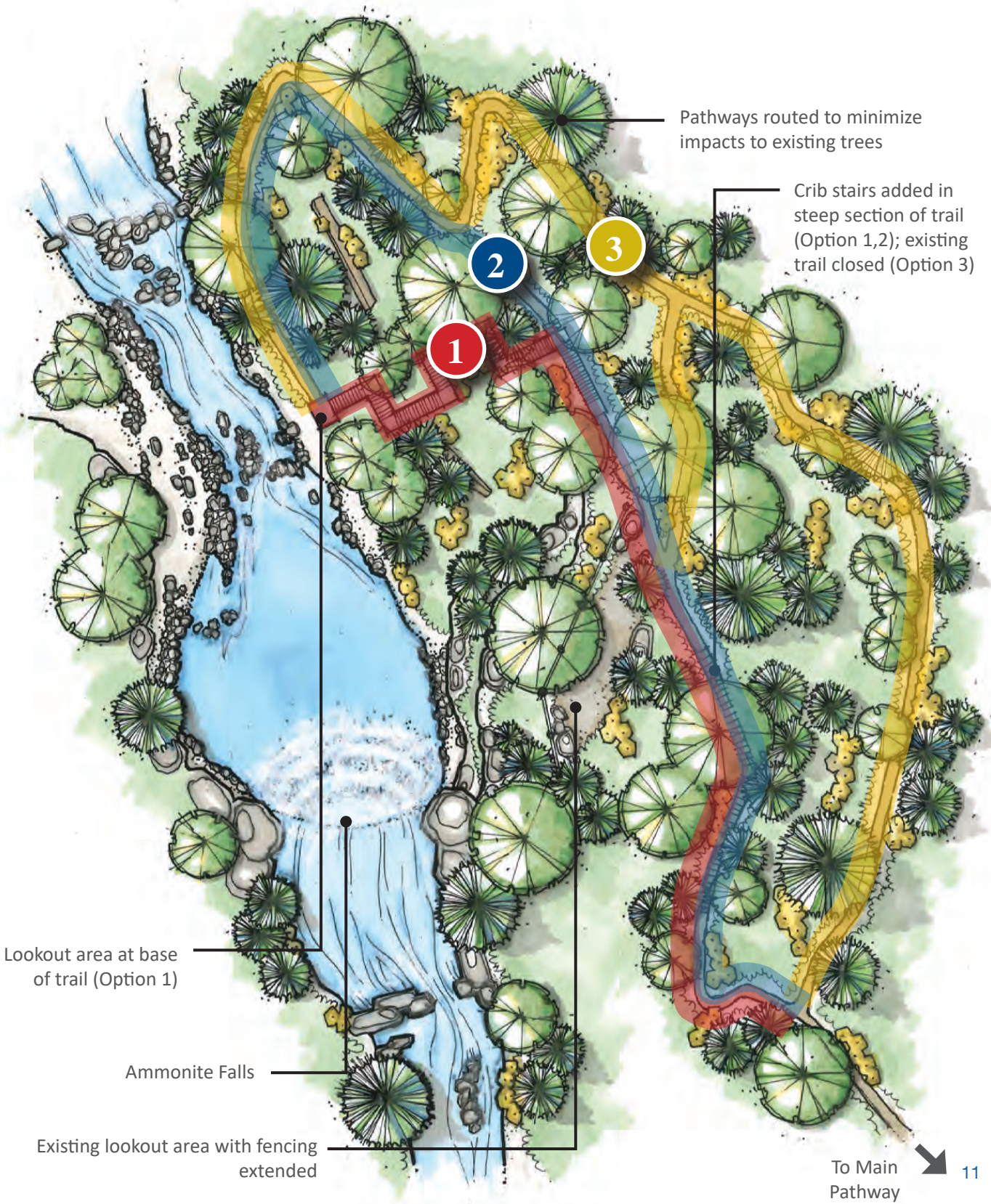
- Improvements to existing upper trail
- New staircase at site of existing descent

OPTION 2

- Improvements to existing upper trail
- New short section of staircase at top of existing descent
- New trail to base

OPTION 3

- Completely new trail with switchbacks to base
- No stairs
- Close and restore existing descent route



Lookout area at base of trail (Option 1)

Ammonite Falls

Existing lookout area with fencing extended

Pathways routed to minimize impacts to existing trees

Crib stairs added in steep section of trail (Option 1,2); existing trail closed (Option 3)

OPTION 1 STAIRCASE

An aluminum staircase with timber accents would be built at the end of the trail where people currently scramble down the slope

+ STRENGTHS

- Most direct descent
- Maintains construction footprint within area previously affected by foot traffic
- Potential to incorporate small viewpoints and/or a lookout area at the base of the stairs

- CHALLENGES

- More visual impacts than other options
- Staircase built on-site, requiring trail closures during construction
- Higher construction cost
- Higher maintenance requirements

\$ ESTIMATED COST*

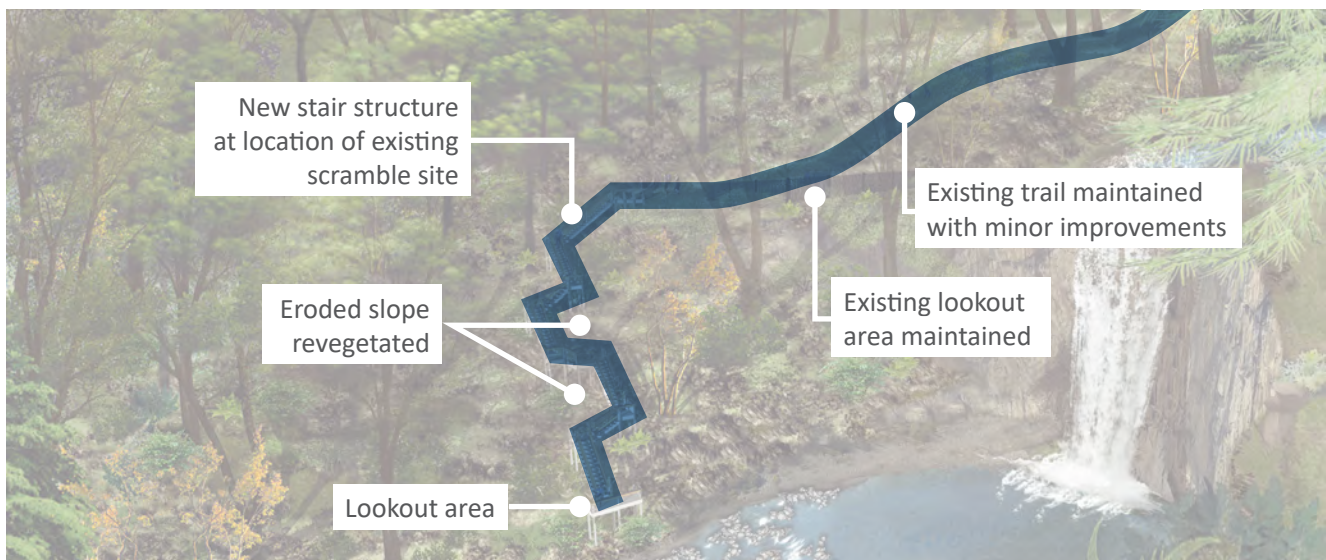
- \$250,000 (Class D)

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CONTEXT
SKETCH



ROUTE &
FEATURES
SUMMARY



OPTION 2 STAIRCASE/TRAIL

A short staircase would be developed where people currently start the scramble down the slope, connecting to a new trail with a more gradual descent to the falls

+ STRENGTHS

- Less structure and construction cost than a full staircase
- Maintains existing upper trail route
- Views to the falls during the descent
- Moderate maintenance requirements

- CHALLENGES

- Staircase built on-site, requiring trail closures during construction
- Less direct access than a full staircase
- Moderate maintenance requirements

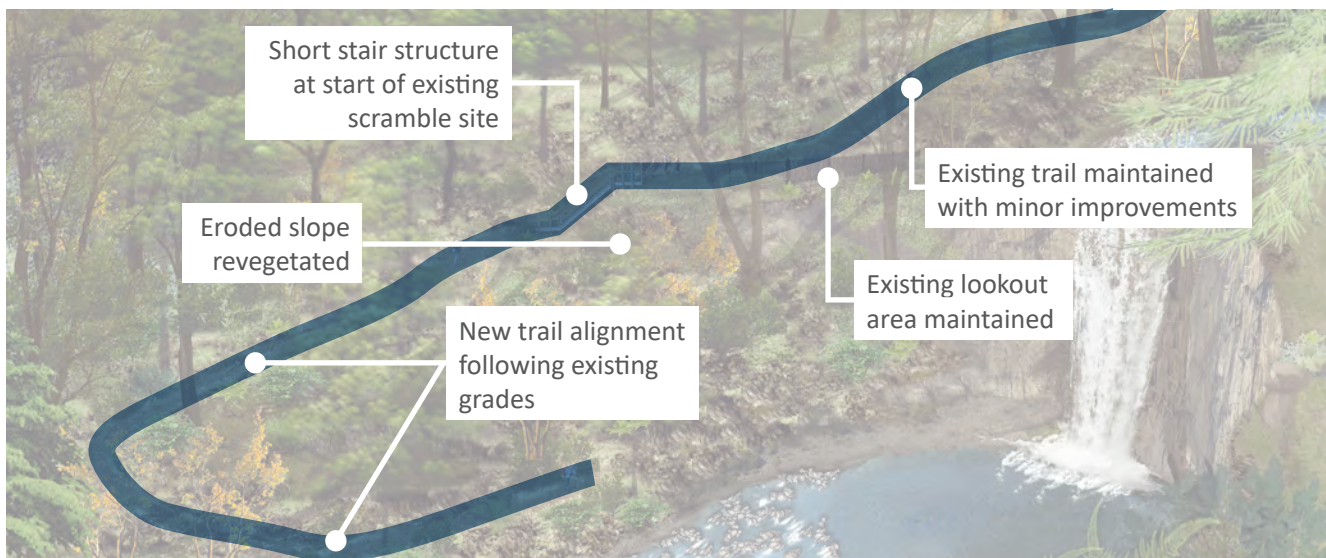
\$ ESTIMATED COST*

- \$115,000 (Class D)

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CONTEXT
SKETCH



ROUTE &
FEATURES
SUMMARY

OPTION 3 STAIRCASE

A new trail alignment would be developed to provide a more gradual descent starting from the main trail. The new trail would be routed to avoid existing trees and excessively steep slopes wherever possible

+ STRENGTHS

- No structures required and lowest construction cost
- Potential for existing routes to remain open during construction
- Lowest maintenance requirements

- CHALLENGES

- Longest route
- Trail length increases potential for impacts to undisturbed natural areas
- An additional trail is required to connect back to the existing lookout
- Less direct views to the falls during descent

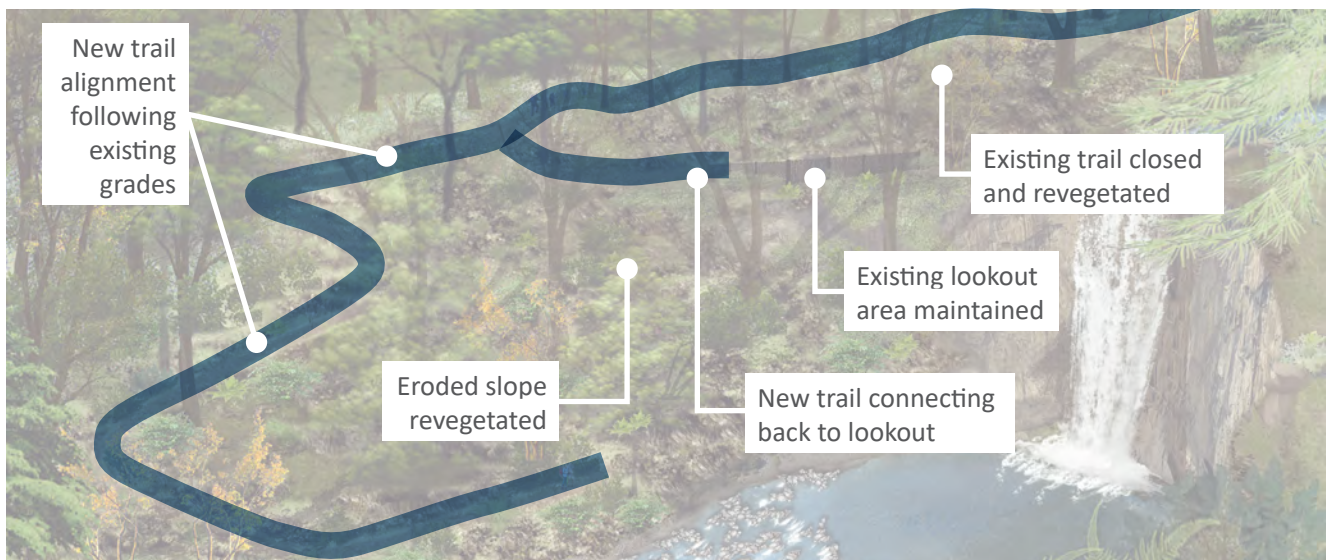
\$ ESTIMATED COST*

- \$80,000 (Class D)

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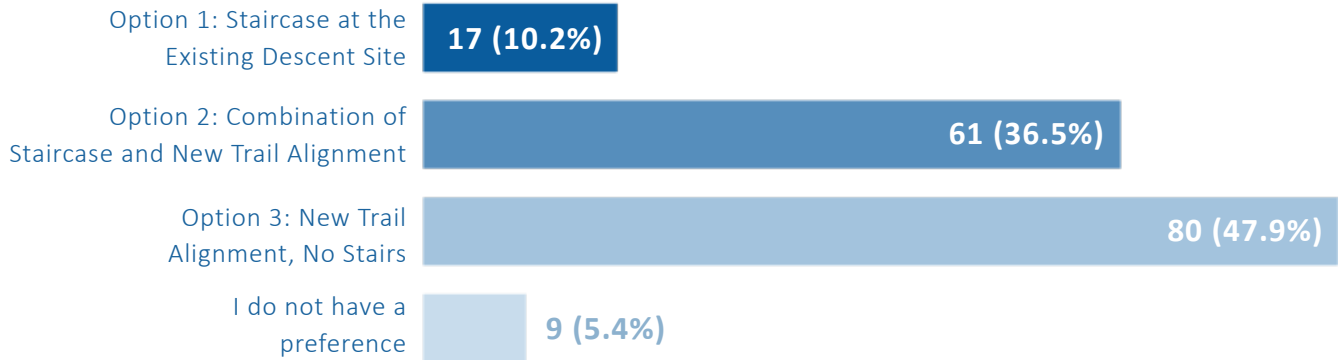


CONTEXT SKETCH



ROUTE & FEATURES SUMMARY

WHICH OPTION DID PARTICIPANTS PREFER?



WHY?

OPTION 1: STAIRCASE AT THE EXISTING DESCENT SITE

- Perceived as safer and more accessible
- Reduces potential for shortcutting
- Retains some challenge
- Follows existing trail, minimizing vegetation impacts
- Provides multiple viewpoints to falls

OPTION 2: COMBINATION OF STAIRCASE AND NEW TRAIL ALIGNMENT

- Good compromise/more natural, but still fairly direct
- Considered accessible for range of abilities
- Moderate construction and maintenance costs
- Reduces potential for shortcutting
- Provides some viewpoints to falls
- Follows existing trail, limiting vegetation impacts

OPTION 3: NEW TRAIL ALIGNMENT, NO STAIRS

- Lowest construction and maintenance costs
- Better/more natural experience/less visual impact
- Gentlest grade for most of the trail (existing trail sections are very steep)
- Perceived as safest and most accessible for widest range of users

See **Appendix A** to view all submitted comments

OTHER COMMENTS/IDEAS

Participants also shared general comments about the Ammonite Falls Descent site. Themes included:

- Support for any option to improve access
- Non-support for any improvements/desire to leave it “as is”
- Desire for remediation of existing erosion
- Desire to maintain physical access to the water from the trail
- Safety concerns about existing descent
- Desire to keep a ropes descent “option”
- Other suggestions: improved parking at Jameson Road and Galloway Gulch, seating

CONCLUSIONS

Public input suggests the public would prefer an extended trail option over a direct staircase descent. Both Options 2 and 3 received strong public support and warrant consideration. Key public values that could help inform selection of an option include:

- How potential shortcutting and remediation of eroded areas is managed
- Best accessibility
- Fewest environmental impacts

OTHER COMMENTS

In addition to specific questions about the Access Improvements Project, participants were also invited to share general comments they had about Benson Creek Falls Regional Park. Themes included:

- Signage improvements, notably from the Weigles Road trailhead
- Support for addressing safety and access concerns
- Concerns about park changes affecting the natural quality and experience of the park
- Concerns about impacts from more people visiting the park
- Suggestions to integrate park trails with existing mountain bike network, including the existing bridge above the falls
- Desire to keep costs as low as possible
- Parking improvements, notably at Weigles Road and Allsop/Burton Road
- Consideration for trash receptacles, washroom facilities
- Consideration for horse access

PROJECT TIMELINE



Park Management Plan Approved in 2014

This step for planning at Benson Creek Falls Regional Park is complete. The management plan can be reviewed on the RDN's Parks website at rdn.bc.ca/parks-services to learn more about the park and the background on this project.



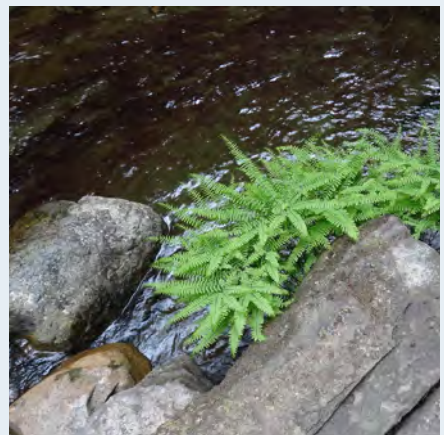
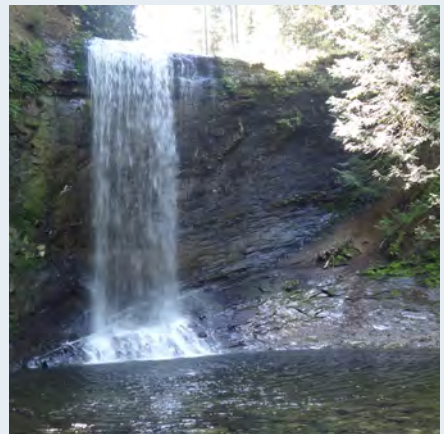
Concept Design of Bridge and Stairs

Access improvements to Ammonite Falls and across Benson Creek are being explored. Public input on options was received from February 8 through March 16, 2018 and will be considered during evaluation of the options and selection of recommended concepts.



Detailed Design & Construction

Once a concept has been selected for each site, detailed designs will be prepared. The Regional Board will consider approval of project construction in 2019.



BENSON CREEK CROSSING OPTIONS

QUESTION: Can you explain in a few words why you selected this option?

PARTICIPANTS WHO SELECTED OPTION 1: TRUSS BRIDGE

- I believe a truss bridge design holds out best in all weather. Not everyone likes suspension bridges and some refuse to go near them, especially those with hearing issues or vertigo. Also it is less invasive of trail closure.
- Cost
- The only reason I would prefer a truss bridge is for walking a dog across. Suspension bridges can be scary when they move and the decking hard for a dog to walk on.
- Least expensive option.
- Visual appeal is not enough reason to shut down the park and it is also cheaper.
- Less disruption to the park. Less movement when in use. Potentially more accessible for people with physical challenges
- Less disruption to area
- I don't see much different expect for cost so I choose #1 for a less expensive option
- A truss style bridge should have less impact on the surrounding area. I.e. a footing style end support vs a large counterweight to support the cables.
- Classic look for a low elevation crossing. Suspension bridge is more appropriate for high elevation like Haslam Creek.
- Cheaper
- Looks more solid to me and would last longer.
- Selfish reasons. I think the suspension bridge looks better, but as a local resident, I don't want to see more traffic and I think the suspension bridge would potentially bring in more traffic.
- Minimized impact to trail use and lower cost
- Horse access
- Looks safer
- Less money and easier maintained over time
- Not a fan of chain-link suspension bridges (like Haslam Creek or Top Bridge). I'd prefer a bridge with a better view.
- Cost, less movement on bridge, less damage to surrounding area.
- Seems more aesthetically pleasing
- The less disruption that can be done to the forest and trails, the better. The benefits of the suspension bridge are optical and convenient for humans but more disruptive to nature. I also don't like that it moves. I walk my dog here and that would make him nervous to use the bridge.
- Lower cost but equally usable.
- Looks more natural
- Appears to blend in better with natural surroundings.
- Many people do not like swaying bridges
- Better for cyclists
- Cost
- Faster install, less money
- Less movement of the bridge
- Appearance and cost
- It's great to have access to this park. Often hike in this area.
- There are quite a few people that get nervous when crossing a suspension bridge a more stable foundation may encourage more people to use the trail.
- It blends better with the natural environment. I like how rustic the park is already and I don't want it to get overdeveloped.
- Cheaper, sturdier and much more functional. Will require less maintenance. As for the suspension bridge, it is located in the middle of a forest with a limited amount of foot traffic. Why does lightweight design and visual interest matter in this location?

PARTICIPANTS WHO SELECTED OPTION 2: SUSPENSION BRIDGE

- More appealing design and fun to use.
- It's more marketable for tourism
- I like suspension bridges
- Better aesthetics
- Lighter looking
- More attractive appearance, visual interest
- Have been on the one over Haslam Creek on the Trans Canada Trail. Love the slight bounce and the "see thru" look to it
- If I'm stuck on choosing between two hikes I usually choose the one with the suspension bridge
- Suspension bridge blends in more and I like swinging bridges, although I can see people with a fear of heights not liking that.
- Looks more natural. Less disturbances to the forest.
- I am familiar with the suspension bridges at Englishman River, Haslam Creek and Elk Falls, and they provide very impressive views compared to ordinary bridges, so if the expense is not that different, I prefer this option. However, the truss bridge would not be a bad option either in my opinion- I just have a slight preference.
- More visually pleasing
- More visually appealing. Look at the success and attention Top Bridge has got since the suspension bridge. It's also more natural looking and hidden within the woods.
- I find it visually appealing and frankly, more fun!
- More discreet appearance and visually more appealing
- I like both options, but the suspension bridge seems to be less intrusive and might be a bit more interesting.
- Something elegant about the design. Fun to access.
- Am familiar with construction, as I have been on a similar bridge. If its the company I'm thinking of, I give them my support for this project, based on their other projects. Delightful to walk on. Aesthetics.
- More of an attraction.
- Suspension bridge is nicer looking and more interesting. Look at the 2 major suspension bridges on the north shore, cap and lynn, both tourist attractions. Why not?!?!?

PARTICIPANTS WHO SELECTED "I DO NOT HAVE A PREFERENCE"

- Access needed to improve regardless. At its present state I can not bring students down to the base of fall is safely manor therefore I do not. If we want our youth or anyone else to value of green space, they need to experience it. Thanks
- I think a bridge is a good idea. What ever is the safest and most cost effective is my preference.
- Id like the option to be what is best for the environment.
- Because I prefer you just leave it be. That should be an option! I've heard 3 people complain that 'leave it be' isn't even an option.
- Whatever is safer and will have longer life
- Think anything would be fantastic
- Just a way to cross is good.
- Whatever is easier to construct, cheaper and have the longest lifespan
- As stated costs could fluctuate 30%. I bet double so go for the gold plated one.
- Either option is acceptable. Maintenance may determine final choice.
- Is there consideration for another bridge at upstream crossing from existing Drunken Logger trail?
- The cost difference is close. There is no indication for expected life span of either bridge, it would be best to see the longest lasting solution
- I would select the option with the lowest maintenance costs

QUESTION: Do you have suggestions or other comments you'd like to share about the Benson Creek Crossing site?

- Selected neither because with putting in this bridge truly amazing almost untouched fossils and area will be exposed to vandalism
- Please do it right the first time, even if it costs a bit more. It needed to be accessible year-round
- Potentially put garbage cans at the entrances of the trails, although wildlife will likely get into it. I have packed out garbage from the trail as of recent.
- I would like the trail to be marked better
- See above. I vote for nothing.
- Yes. Leave it.
- Improved parking required at Weigles Rd. access.
- It is good to see that improvements are being made. It is unfortunate that the bike trails have not been taken into account with this project. There is another bridge crossing up stream from this one that is in need of replacement as well.
- Thanks for the much-needed upgrades in this area
- Don't start tromping through there scaring the wildlife.
- Looking forward to it.
- More signage of course (once done).
- I haven't been there because the hikers I go out with have considered it too difficult a crossing to date. I gather there is no need to improve the trail to the bridge on the Jameson Rd side as there are no plans included. I am glad there are plans to improve access from the Weigles Rd side.
- I haven't yet hiked to this particular location (probably due to the lack of a decent crossing). Looking forward to the time I can!
- Better signage from Weigles Rd access.
- Stairs from Jameson Rd. access.
- Where will people be parking to hike/access this bridge? Will it be the parking lot on Creekside? Just concerned about traffic, otherwise very cool.
- Leave it the way it is
- This is a great idea and I appreciate the invitation to provide feedback! I'm very scared of heights and haven't been able to climb down to the base of the falls...this will change that :)
- Minimize any damage to the creek and riparian zones
- Better signage and a map at the Weigles Rd Parking lot for getting to the Falls once the bridge is in.

AMMONITE FALLS DESCENT OPTIONS

QUESTION: Can you explain in a few words why you selected this option?

PARTICIPANTS WHO SELECTED OPTION 1: STAIRCASE AT THE EXISTING DESCENT SITE

- Safer
- The lowest maintenance option seems like the most logical. Unfortunately the biggest challenge will be the potential for people shortcutting the old routes or creating new ones which in turn will create more maintenance. In the end It's probably best to go with the stairs. Tough decision!
- Keep it steep. If it is made too easy more and more people will use it. Keep some of the challenge/difficulties
- Stairs are easier for me
- Possibly more accessible for older folks, and less impact on the environment. Would likely bring more people to the area. Viewpoints of the falls. If the other options were considered, there may be more people wandering off trail and damaging the environment.
- Less damage to current vegetation
- Even though this is the most expensive option I do like the ability to take pictures the whole way down and without stairs replacing the existing option, I worry people would still take the more treacherous path.

PARTICIPANTS WHO SELECTED OPTION 2: COMBINATION OF STAIRCASE AND NEW TRAIL ALIGNMENT

- The way it is now makes it impossible for some people to get to this great spot. Not every parent can carry the children on their back while holding the rope descending or ascending
- The cost is less and it has less impact than Option 1
- I like the idea of maintaining the existing trail and providing access to the base of the falls in a way that causes less trail erosion.
- That slope needs to be revegetated.
- A new trail would allow better access a stairway is needed so all can enjoy.
- Less stuff in the way for photographs, looks more natural. I would be happy with any of them, but this one seems like a happy medium. Some construction and some restoration.
- People will not like option 1 due to the lookout at the bottom. They will walk around it to get to the creek. Option 3 will never work as people will continue to walk down the original path and put up ropes which will always be a risk management problem. Option 2 gives people the quick and easy and accessible route for a price that isn't high or to low.
- This option seems to have the least amount of impact on the environment.
- I like the views as you descend down and I hope to have minimal environmental changes to that beautiful area.
- I think option 2 is a good compromise. I like the idea of maintaining the views, but stairs can be hard to maintain. The switchbacks going down would be nicer to walk on and might be easier for people.
- Although I like option 3, I think the lack of view of the falls from the trail will cause folks to leave the trail to catch views. I think option 2 will result in the least amount of informal trails being created.
- Option one doesn't work because people will not be able to get off the platform to actually access the falls. We need to minimize our impact on the area but still provide safe access to the falls.
- This option will be minimally invasive while leaving easy access to the original viewpoint and potentially allowing more views as descending.
- I find this the least intrusive while still addressing the steep decline. It looks more natural and appealing to the eye and will feel less man made. It also has only moderate maintenance costs.
- Good compromise
- Less "built" feeling but still direct. Gradual slope is easier for the area's aging population to navigate than purely stairs (difficult on knees/joints).
- Less disturbance to environment and cost
- Seems to be keeping still like a hiking trail

PARTICIPANTS WHO SELECTED OPTION 2: COMBINATION OF STAIRCASE AND NEW TRAIL ALIGNMENT

- Cost effective and less impact on the trees.
- Easier to maintain. Less cost to tax payers.
- Fix the trails if you want but leave the rest alone
- Cheapest, no stairs and less maintenance.
- Less money, less maintenance, better experience of falls as no staircase in view
- I believe any type of structure will take away from the Natural beauty of this spot. It is a unique area and should remain as such. We need to stop over developing nature, what next stairs up Mt Benson or maybe a gondola?
- Do both 1&3
- It feels like you're more in nature when there aren't any man-made stairs
- There's less maintenance if you just make a trail
- I belong to several groups (including Bastion City Wanderers) who do have or would like to have walks/hikes to Ammonite Falls, and I have gone partway down to the falls myself. The existing trail even as far as the fence is not that easy. Option 3 would make the bottom of the falls the most accessible as well as being less expensive. Quite a lot of people would not be able to or would not choose to go down to the bottom if the #1 stairs option were chosen.
- Less expensive and lower maintenance for lower costs in the long term.
- Prefer trail over stairs. More natural.
- Less money and upkeep as well as extending the trail is good.
- End result is the same. Less encroachment on the wild area.
- Cost
- Option 3 appears to be the safest for families with children and animals (and strollers!) and maintains the concept of a relatively natural hiking trail without a large amount of fabricated elements.
- Lowest cost, more accessible than stairways
- More to enjoy and less cost
- I hike here often and used to ride my horse here back in the 1970's. I like the idea of no stairs, making the location accessible to more people. I personally don't venture to the bottom of the falls now because I don't like using the ropes and the slope is often slippery. Stairs and viewing platform, as shown on the drawing restrict the number of people that can be there at one time. If some boardwalk is needed, I'm all in favour of that.
- Least expensive option.
- Not everyone is comfortable walking so many stairs.
- It seems like this is a good area for cost savings so you can put it into other areas of the trail. Plus it will make the trail a little longer and a better hike.
- Because of lower maintenance costs and lower overall costs
- Horse access
- I live nearby and have a young child and an old dog. We much prefer trails to stairs.
- I like the idea of no stairs and a longer hiking trail. This would potentially eliminate bottlenecks of sightseers on staircases. One of the worst things about the existing trail is the erosion and disruption of plant life, I like the idea of revegetation.
- Less visual intrusion into falls area. Better access for those not capable with stair climbing. Slow reveal of the falls as you come upstream on new trail. Cost.
- It's cheaper and requires no structures; hence, more natural. I don't think that it's longer is a problem.
- This option keeps everything as natural as possible
- Better and easier access for elderly people, children.
- Cost and trail remains open less maintenance
- Less stairs in the bush the better. Less money
- Lower cost but more important it avoids steep areas, better safety less accidents
- More natural. Cheapest to build and maintain
- Don't care. Just needed to be done well.

PARTICIPANTS WHO SELECTED “I DO NOT HAVE A PREFERENCE”

- Any of the options would work to get to the falls and time and costs should be considered.
- Again leave it. More money flushed. More access means more people means more garbage.
- All of the options have their selling features. I do prefer one but the cost is higher than three. Any improvement to allow more to access this amazing natural aspect of our region is worthwhile.

QUESTION: Do you have suggestions or other comments you’d like to share about the Ammonite Falls Descent?

- Leave it as is
- Part of the experience/challenge is using the ropes and getting muddy. My kids love the adventure.
- I do not like option three as I feel trail closures do not work well in this area and the current trail would continue to be used
- I love the idea of making the end of the trail looping back to the lower viewpoint
- Include seating
- It’s dangerous!
- It’s too bad you’re taking away the ropes to get down as that’s almost my favorite part of using that park.
- I like the ropes it’s part of the charm. However, I do have to say the last few times I have gone there with friends who have bad backs, knees or fear of heights won’t repel down with me :(
- Less visual impact when at the bottom of falls. More assessable to all.
- Improved parking required at Jameson Rd. and Galloway Gulch access.
- Cut the ropes.
- Many like to access the pool at the base of the falls and access the creek bed in summer to see the ammonites. Will there be further access from the Lookout down to the pool and creek?
- The ropes are fun
- Again, leaving the nature alone
- Option number 2 would be my second choice as it would be the second most accessible option.
- Keep the ropes as well. It is thrilling and a major reason people love the trek. Those who want to walk can but don’t take them out.
- Beautiful area
- I’m excited that this will be happening. This is a jewel in the RDN and making it more accessible will add value. Thank you.
- Would like to have the rope descent option still available. This is what makes this trail unique, different and fun. If we could keep this option for those who want to use it and stabilize the slope at the same time would be fantastic.
- Completely close off the steep area.

GENERAL COMMENTS

QUESTION: Do you have any other comments you'd like to share about Benson Creek Falls Regional Park?

- It would be great to investigate other options with the bridge site as there is another crossing for bikes just above the falls. This bridge is in terrible condition and needs replacement as well. Do we need two bridges (one foot only and one multi use)? Or is it possible for a single strategically placed multi use one? It would be great if this can be assessed.
- Better signage from the Weigles Rd side (if it hasn't already been added) Have tried twice from that side and didn't know where to go. Much better signage from the Jameson side. Also, keep the ropes!!
- Better signage on the trails is an absolute must.
- Thank you for trying to improve this park. It's a great park, but the descent to the falls and the log crossing can be dangerous. So I'm glad you are addressing them to make the park safer.
- So glad this is going ahead! We live near Jameson, and we are finding this trail is getting so much use now.
- I think these improvements will make the trails safer and more accessible to more people.
- I think the improvements will be money well spent!
- Thank you for including the public in this survey. Parks and natural landscapes are of the utmost importance to me. I appreciate your bridge ideas as it will probably save the stream from further damage.
- Don't build the bridge please.
- Love it and have loved it for years. Let's get more people down there enjoying it too.
- Please don't change it too much. It's good the way it is.
- Access and parking from trailhead as noted previously Consider also further lookout viewing from north bank at the Falls.
- Leave it natural!
- If any structures are built you will ruin a beautiful natural environment.
- Improved signage as most people seem to get confused back there as to where they are
- It used to be a hidden gem and now is very busy especially on weekends. Please don't take out the ropes!
- I love this trail but I also love lower taxes. Choose the most cost effective options.
- Parking needs to be improved from the Allsop/ Burton Road access. This is the access I most often use.
- Get both projects done ASAP.
- Leave it as natural as possible. I started going there when I moved to Doumont Rd. in 1982. Back then you never ran into another person. Sadly it's no longer a beautiful secret. Making more accessible will destroy it with garbage, cigarettes, and dogs. Unfortunately that is what we humans tend to do.
- Parking and trash receptacles should be included the overall master plan for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park.
- Horse access
- I'm glad this park is getting upgraded. What about a washroom facility?
- Keep a tight control on any changes or development in the park. It is a real gem and needs to be kept that way for future generations.
- Parking is a huge issue.
- Better signage and maps in the park.
- It is a great idea to fix up the area.
- Be nice to have it completed. Been a long time.
- Also prepare for more car traffic.
- Leave it alone.
- Better access is a great idea.

BENSON CREEK FALLS REGIONAL PARK



BENSON CREEK FALLS
REGIONAL PARK
Access Improvements Project