



# NEWS RELEASE

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February 23, 2024

## **RAIL TRAIL CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN SOUTH OF SICAMOUS**

Construction of the Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail will be proceeding this spring beginning at Kilometre 1.5 and moving southwards along Mara Lake.

The section between Kilometre 0 and Kilometre 1.5 is located within the boundaries of the District of Sicamous, immediately upland of the Sicamous Narrows foreshore. That land is currently zoned residential use. District of Sicamous Zoning Amendment Bylaw 1044 proposed to change the residential zoning to parkland, which would authorize the use of the Sicamous section for recreational purposes.

On February 14, 2024, a public hearing was held for three proposed zoning amendments. After hearing from participants, the vote by District of Sicamous Council members to approve Zoning Amendment Bylaw 1044 was defeated four to three.

Consequently, the rail trail ownership partners, which include the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSR D), Splatšín té Secwépemc and the Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO), will not undertake any immediate construction activities within the Sicamous section.

Construction activities will now start at Kilometre 1.5 and the rail trail partners will be considering alternative trailhead parking options.

The collaborative rail trail partnership was formed to purchase the 50.25-kilometres of the former CP Rail Corridor to construct the Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail, a non-motorized corridor for recreational walking and cycling. The three ownership partners remain unanimous in their continued support to see the rail trail project reach a successful conclusion.

The ownership partners are pleased with the financial support provided to this project from the Federal and Provincial governments, including the pending \$12.5 million Infrastructure Canada Active Transportation Grant, which will fund the development of 42.6 kilometres of the trail.

Prior to the purchase of the rail trail lands, many private property owners located upland from the Sicamous section installed docks that partially encroach within the 30-metre wide rail trail corridor.

Initially, the RDNO and CSR D offered these private property owners the opportunity to validate their encroachments. To date, the private property owners have not obtained authorization to legitimize



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their foreshore use, which leaves the three ownership jurisdictions in a position to advise the Province of BC that these dock owners do not own land upland of the foreshore.

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