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## PUBLIC STATEMENT:

Updated: May 14, 2024

# RAIL TRAIL CROSSINGS FOR FARMERS ALONG THE SICAMOUS TO ARMSTRONG RAIL TRAIL

In 2017, Splatsin, CSR and RDNO (the “rail trail owners”) partnered to develop the former Sicamous to Armstrong CP rail corridor as a continuous non-motorized greenway for hiking and cycling (Rail Trail). Approximately 35km of the Rail Trail is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Authorization for farm vehicles and equipment to cross over the Rail Trail have been a key concern for a select few of the adjacent farmland owners. There are 28 known existing crossings, none of which were subject to any formal authorization when the railroad was in operation.

The rail trail owners have conducted extensive planning and ongoing consultation sessions with farmers and other stakeholders since 2019. Throughout the consultations the rail trail owners recognized that the ability to move farm vehicles and equipment across the Rail Trail was vital.

The Rail Trail brings a change for farmers in the area, and rail trail owners understand that change can bring uncertainties. The rail trail owners also understand the importance of property access; consequently, developed Crossing Permits to address farmer concerns. Crossing Permits are offered at no cost; are non-expiring; are assignable to future owners; and contain minimal liability insurance requirements. To date, 16 of the 28 known crossings have Crossing Permits in place. All outstanding crossings will be incorporated into the Rail Trail construction and farmers will be allowed to cross regardless of whether a Crossing Permit is in place or not; however, a few farmers still prefer to have an easement.

As required by law, the rail trail owners applied to the ALC seeking permission to alter the status of the rail corridor from railway usage to rail trail/recreational usage.

Decisions on what can happen within the ALR rest with the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). The issue of whether Crossing Permits or easements are required is before the ALC - a final decision has yet to be handed down.

To stay updated on the progress of the rail trail, visit [www.shuswapnorthokanaganrailtrail.ca](http://www.shuswapnorthokanaganrailtrail.ca).

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