



# THE WOODLOT COMMUNICATOR



www.woodlot.bc.ca

Summer 2022



Riding the restored, world class Upper Fine China Trail, part of the iconic Doumont Trail on Rick Heikkila's Woodlot Licence 0012, Nanaimo.

## SOCIAL LICENCE AT ITS BEST

### Logging and Cycling on a Vancouver Island Woodlot Licence

By SARA GRADY

Anyone who holds a timber licence on Vancouver Island is well versed in the notions of “public engagement” and “interface” – Crown land is at a premium, and there’s a great deal of competition when it comes to using the land.

For the most part, Islanders understand that forestry is a key economic contributor. However, the relationship between people wanting to enjoy the great outdoors and the industries needing to log for their livelihood can sometimes be acrimonious.

Not so with Woodlot Licensee Rick Heikkila. He has successfully built bridges between outdoor enthusiasts and Recreation Sites and Trails BC, a relatively new branch within the Ministry of Forests. His approach to managing Woodlot Licence 0012 exemplifies the standards set by the woodlot program.

The level of admiration and trust Rick enjoys was beautifully illustrated when Luke Clarke, with Recreation Sites and Trails BC took time to circulate a letter of praise to his colleagues at the Ministry of Forests.

*“Rick had gone well above and beyond with his restoration efforts on a popular mountain biking trail” and Luke felt it was important to shine a spotlight on those efforts.*

So what was so special about this particular restoration?

According to Luke, and Ryan Smith of the Nanaimo Mountain Bike Club (NMBC), Rick has always taken pains to keep both government and the club informed of all his logging activities – over and above those required under his



Rebuilding the Fine China Trail after harvesting on Woodlot Licence 0012.

licence. And, he’s made a point of attending community meetings to better understand the uses for his woodlot beyond his harvesting plans.

Ryan was pleasantly surprised when Rick attended the NMBC’s annual general meeting to field questions and get information. He even drove from Langford to Nanaimo to meet Ryan in person and show him where he planned to put in his logging access roads.

The ongoing dialogue has fostered a positive relationship with the 10,000 mountain bikers who call Rick’s woodlot their recreational home.

So, it was no surprise to the locals when Rick’s logging operations were slated to impact the Fine China Trail in the iconic Doumont Trail network. Given that it’s a Section 56 Trail under the Ministry of Trails & Recreation, Rick had to file for authorization to harvest under Section 16. Having fulfilled that requirement, he worked closely with NMBC to build signage warning of the pending logging activity and safety hazards.

Once harvesting was complete, his dedication

to stewardship and community were put on display.

***Although he was only obligated to remove any debris that impacted safety of the trail after harvesting operations, Rick went the extra mile. He donated aggregate to rebuild the trail bed, and covered the costs of the machinery needed to rehabilitate both Fine China and Finer China – to the tune of \$15,000.***

From Luke’s perspective, Rick’s conduct on his woodlot is textbook. He is: constantly striving to ensure public safety for all his harvesting activities; actively engaging in rehabilitation efforts beyond restocking standards; and, successfully upholding his stewardship obligations with the Regional District of Nanaimo, the Ministry of Forests,

and his community.

In Luke’s words:

***“Rick is setting a wonderful example how commercial forestry can be compatible with recreation and how forest harvesting can directly support world class trails and recreation in British Columbia which have immeasurable social and economic benefits for our coastal communities.”***

We’re grateful for woodlot licensees like Rick who show the very best of what the Woodlot Licence program has to offer.

**Registration Open!**

**FBCWA and WPDC Conference & AGM**

**October 14 – 16, 2022  
Abbotsford, BC.**

**REGISTER**



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