



Dawson's Path Management Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of Dawson's Path Management Plan is to establish objectives and strategies for the long-term management of the trail for the next 15 to 20 years. It is intended to provide strategic direction and guidance for the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK), community associations and stewards of the trail.

The primary function of the trail is to provide a safe route for cyclists and pedestrians.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Trail Overview

The 2.4 km trail along the Jaffray-Baynes Lake Road was constructed in memory of a young Jaffray boy who was killed in a tragic collision. The trail was constructed to provide for safer pedestrian travel along the road. The gravel trail begins in the community of Jaffray and parallels the east side of the Jaffray-Baynes Lake Road until it reaches Sand Creek.

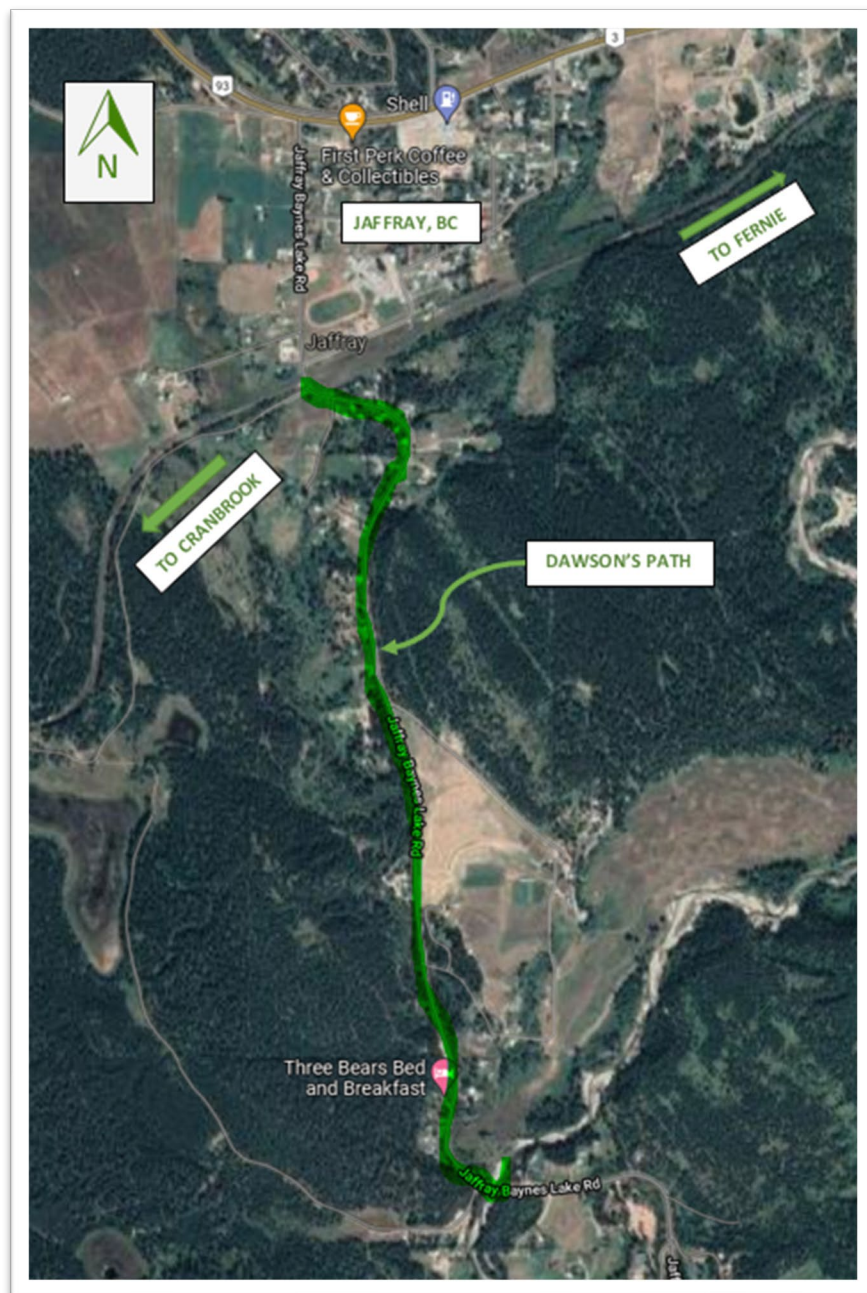


FIGURE 1: LOCATION PLAN

1.2 Establishment of Regional Parks

1.2.1 Background

The provincial government granted the RDEK authority to establish a regional park function by Supplementary Letters Patent in 1966. The RDEK now operates regional parks and trails under the authority of the *Local Government Act*.

In the 1970's, the RDEK began development of its regional parks system after having acquired crown lands at Wycliffe and Tie Lake for park facilities. In 1975 a major study of potential regional park sites was undertaken by the RDEK; however, no formal park plan was adopted. In 1980, the Elk Valley Regional Park was included in the regional parks system.

In 1990, Extended Service (Regional Parks) Area Establishment Bylaw No. 933 was adopted. This bylaw converted the regional parks function to an extended service to enable the RDEK to recover annual operating and servicing costs of parks from taxes levied on properties within the Regional District.

In 2002, the RDEK added the Old Coach Greenway (Columbia Valley Regional Trail) to its services to address the absence of a regional park in the Columbia Valley subregion. In 2004, the RDEK adopted Electoral Area Regional Parks and Trails Service Area Establishment Bylaws and the Regional Park Plan to simplify the financing of parks and trails and to administer the expanding parks system.

With the regulatory tools in place to administer an expanding park system, a Regional Parks Plan followed. The focus of the Regional Parks Plan is to provide policies to guide the expansion, administration, and financing of the regional parks system.

In 2019, the Parks and Trails Regulation and Fee Bylaw No. 2833 was adopted and outlines regulations and fees related to the use and management of all parks within the RDEK.

1.2.2 Dawson's Path Management Plan Planning Process

The RDEK operates regional parks and trails under the authority of the *Local Government Act*.

As per the RDEK Regional Parks Plan, separate management plans may be prepared for regional parks and trails on an as required basis. Management plans should address topics such as land acquisition, site planning, facility development, recreation, user groups, access management, public safety, maintenance, control of invasive plants, threat from wildfire and funding and partnership agreements.

Each management plan will be approved by the General Manager of Operations and adopted by Board resolution.

Consultation on the proposed management plan was undertaken in November 2021. The proposed plan was advertised and an RDEK Engage Page was created. The community was provided a draft plan to review and was requested to participate by commenting on the Engage Page or contacting the RDEK office. In total, 64 responses were received. The majority of respondents have used the trail and spoke to the importance of the history of the trail and the need for safety along the roadway. Respondents indicated support for potential future improvements to the trail including paving the trail to increase usage and provide easier access and extension the trail to the community of Jaffray.

1.3 Existing Infrastructure & Current Uses

1.3.1 *Existing Infrastructure*

The existing infrastructure is a 2.4 km gravel trail.

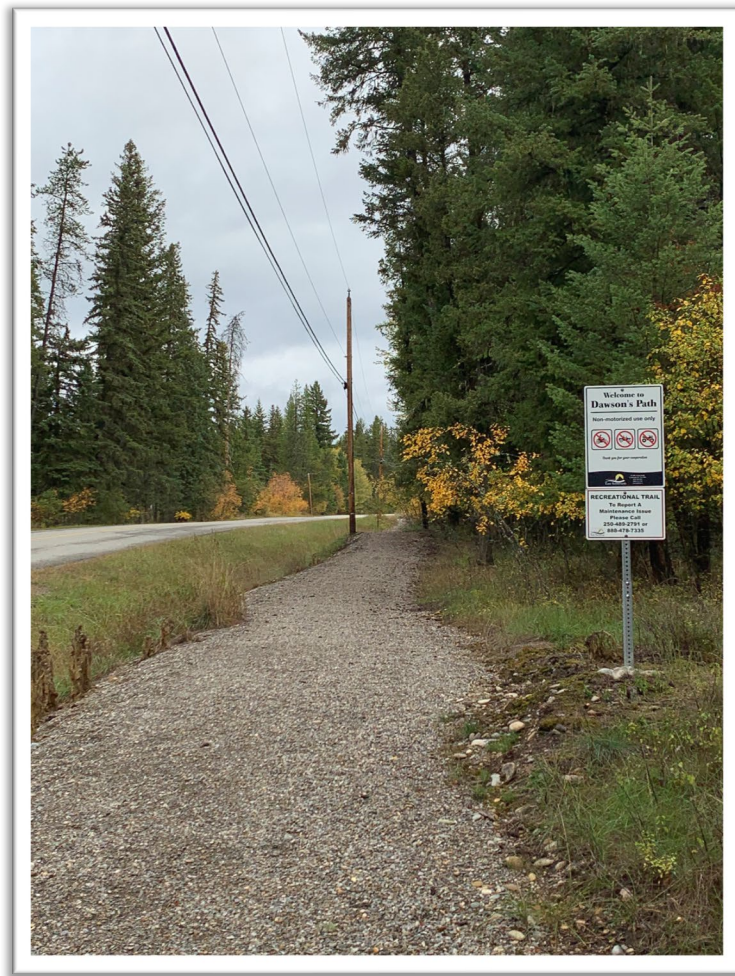
1.3.2 *Current Uses*

The trail is used for walking and cycling.

2 CULTURAL HERITAGE OVERVIEW

The people of the Ktunaxa Nation have had traditional territory in the plan area for more than 10,000 years. Historically, the Ktunaxa people seasonally migrated throughout their territory. European settlement in the late 1800s led to the establishment of the current Indian Bands. The Yaqitʔa·knuqlíʔit First Nation and Tobacco Plains Indian Reserve (ʔakinkumʔasnuqʔiʔit) is located south of the Jaffray area along Highway 93 adjacent to the border.

The BC Southern Railroad was completed through the Jaffray and Cranbrook area in the late 1800's and the community of Jaffray was settled in the early 1900s. Early settlers established the East Kootenay Lumber Company, a post office and general store. A small community developed around these economic drivers. The early years saw a booming community which included Rosen's General Store, a new school, a hotel, and a tavern. Like many small western towns, Jaffray was struck by fire and the rapidly changing railway, agriculture and logging industries dictated the fate of the town.



3 RELATIONSHIP TO RDEK GUIDING DOCUMENTS

3.1 Regional Sustainability Strategy

The Regional Sustainability Strategy (RSS) provides the RDEK with a wide-ranging, long-term planning tool. It equips the region with a sustainability lens to guide and evaluate operations and decision-making. The RSS was adopted by the Board on October 3, 2014.

During the RSS public consultation process, it was evident that the environment is a primary concern for the region's residents. The protection of the natural environment is consistently ranked as one of the most important considerations when decisions are made about development and economic activities. The natural environment is also integral to both the quality of life of individuals for recreational purposes and the provision of economic opportunities for many businesses.

3.2 Regional Parks Plan

The purpose of the Regional Parks Plan is to determine the goals and objectives of the RDEK's regional park and trails system, to set criteria for additions to the regional parks and trail system, to establish policy for the RDEK's administration of park land or cash-in-lieu from a developer at time of subdivision, to initiate standards for the regulation, administration and operation of park and trail facilities and to identify existing park and trail services and their funding mechanism.

3.3 Jaffray, Tie Lake, Rosen Lake Land Use and Floodplain Management Bylaw

The Land Use Bylaw was adopted in 1999 and is the regulatory tool used by the RDEK to establish development provisions for individual parcels of land. The land use bylaw establishes permitted uses, development density and parcel size, and other development controls such as building setbacks, building height and parking. The Land Use Bylaw also provides policies and guidelines to direct the RDEK in future decision making.

Dawson's Path is located within the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) right of way along Jaffray-Baynes Lake Road. A permit to construct, use and maintain works within a MOTT right of way was granted to the RDEK in 2009. As per the Land Use Bylaw, parks are a permitted use in all zones.

3.4 Parks and Trails Regulation and Fee Bylaw

Adopted in 2019, the Parks and Trails Regulation and Fee Bylaw outlines regulations and fees related to the use and management of all parks within the RDEK and acts as an enforcement tool if required.

4 ECOSYSTEM & HABITAT

4.1 Invasive Plants

Invasive plants are typically non-native plants that have been introduced to British Columbia without the insect predators and plant pathogens that help keep them in check in their native habitats. For this reason and because of their aggressive growth, these alien plants can be highly destructive, competitive, and difficult to control.

The Ministry of Forests administers the *BC Weed Control Act*. As stated in the *Weed Control Act*, all landowners and occupiers in the Province of BC have a legal responsibility to control provincially and regionally listed invasive plants. The *Weed Control Act* is enforced within the East Kootenay through RDEK Bylaw No. 2711.

The RDEK is responsible for control of invasive plants along Dawson's Path.

4.2 Wildlife

The trail consists of limited infrastructure and alteration of the natural environment.

4.3 Natural Hazards

4.3.1 *Alluvial Fans and Flooding*

The trail is not within an alluvial fan or flood hazard area.

4.3.2 *Wildfire*

Dawson's Path is within moderate to high wildfire hazard areas.

5 PARK VISION

5.1 Goal

To provide a safe walking and cycling trail for the public.

5.2 Key Management Issues

The trail is located with the Jaffray-Baynes Lake Road right of way. The management priority is the seasonal (spring to fall) maintenance of the trail.

Noxious invasive weed management is an ongoing priority for all RDEK facilities.

5.3 Public Safety

The RDEK prides itself on the quality of services provided to the public including the condition of RDEK parks and trails in relation to public safety. To reduce the risk of liability associated with trail use by the public, the RDEK has developed a detailed trail inspection policy which includes frequency and content of inspections and encompasses all aspects of the trail use in relation to public safety.



6 PRIORITY ACTIONS & COST ESTIMATE

The following is a list of potential improvements to the trail. It is a guideline and does not commit the RDEK to any particular course of action or investment in trail infrastructure. The proposed timeframe for the improvements may change depending on future funding, human resource capacity and community involvement. The improvements could be funded through allocating funds through the annual budgeting process. Should a community or stewardship group be interested in performing trail maintenance or enhancement, alternative funding mechanisms could include community fundraising efforts. The plan will be periodically reviewed by the RDEK. The plan will also be considered during the preparation of five-year financial plans.

Basic operational and maintenance items such as removing danger trees and invasive plant control are not included in the following list as they are considered to be regular maintenance items included in the annual operating budget.

<u>Possible Future Improvements</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Bench replacement	\$2500
Gravel / erosion repairs	\$5000
TOTAL	\$7500