



Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust AGM
10 October 2022
Chair Report to 30 June 2022

The Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust priorities for the 2021/22 year have been:

- Continuing to connect up and extend Tasman's Great Taste Trail, with the completion of a bridge over the Baton River and opening of the section of trail from Tapawera via the Baton to Woodstock, and planning for off-road trail from Pokororo to Ngatimoti
- Trail construction through the Nelson Golf Course to Parkers Rd to improve the connection from Nelson airport to the Tahunanui beach trail
- Renewal of the Coppermine Trail section between Windy Point and Coppermine Saddle
- Submissions to NCC and TDC on cycle related matters
- Engagement with NRDA on their Destination Management Plan, and Food and Beverage and Arts Tourism Strategies
- Appointment of a new Trail Manager with Nick Ross departing due to flooding of his house in the July 2021 floods
- Proactive maintenance and upgrading of sections of the Great Taste Trail
- Development of a TGTT Experience Development Plan and Waimea Inlet Enhancement Plan

Trail construction & maintenance

Great Taste Trail

The cycle bridge over the Baton River was constructed and opened to the public in April to provide an alternative to riding the road over Stanley Brook Hill. This construction was supported by funding from Tasman District Council, and the Ministry of Business, Employment and Innovation (MBIE) Great Rides Fund. A big thank you to landowners Richard and Fiona Lublow who have allowed access across their land to the bridge, Edifice Structures who built the bridge and Wenham Construction for trail work. This provides a more cycle friendly option to complete the full loop ride and 200 km of Tasman's Great Taste Trail.

At the other end of the Great Taste Trail, work has progressed with the Nelson Golf Club and Nelson City Council to link off road trail from Nelson Airport through the golf course to the trail along the Tahunanui back beach.

We have also been revisiting the possibility of putting the trail along the Wai-iti River between Hoult Valley Rd and the Wai-iti Reserve. With some changes in land ownership, we are hopeful we will be able to replace the road-side section of trail with an off-road route.

We continue to provide input to Waka Kotahi/NZTA, WSP and Nelson City Council on plans for upgrade of the trail that forms part of the GTT along the Waimea Estuary beside Whakatu Drive.

Maintenance and upgrading the trail with resurfacing, weed control and improving drainage is ongoing. MBIE MGR funding has been approved for an upgrade of the trail from Harley Rd to the shade sail at the top of Tasman View Rd, and to install some shelters along the trail.

Coppermine Trail

The renewal project between Windy Point and Coppermine Saddle has been completed, with excellent work from Easy Trail Services. The trail from Coppermine Saddle down to the Maitai Valley is deteriorating, despite a significant upgrade in 2019-20. We are exploring solutions to ongoing maintenance. The slip above the pipeline section of the track continues to be active, requiring ongoing monitoring and periodic closures following heavy rain events.

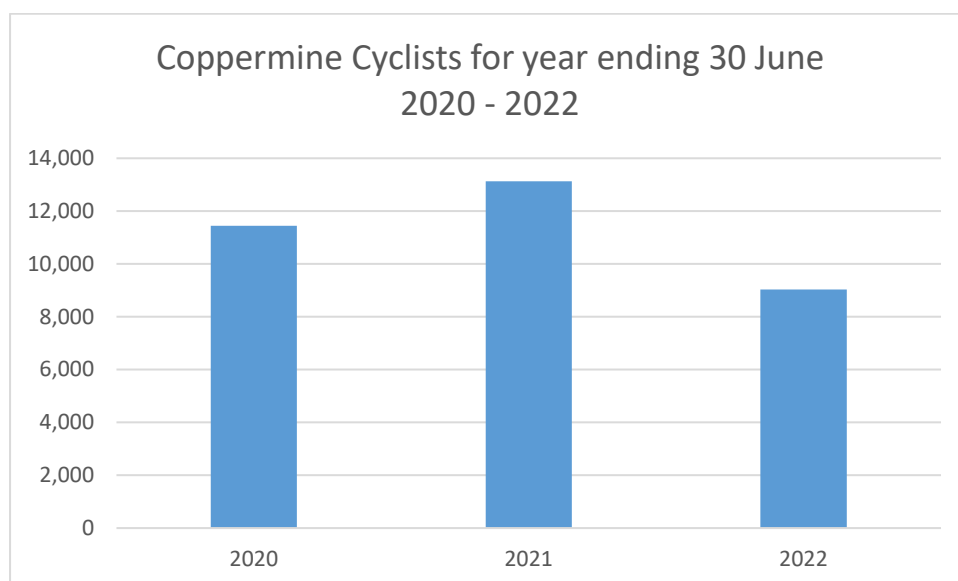
Construction funding

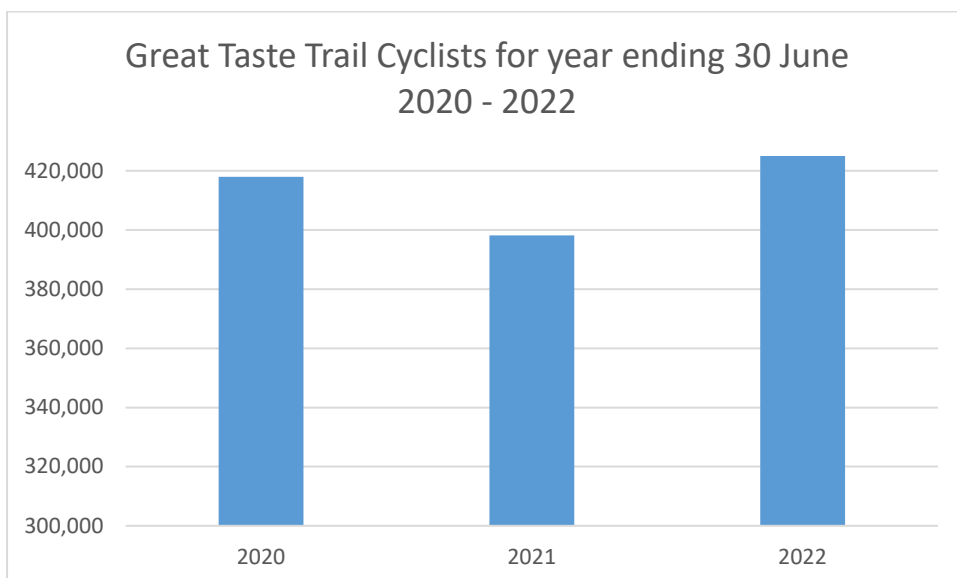
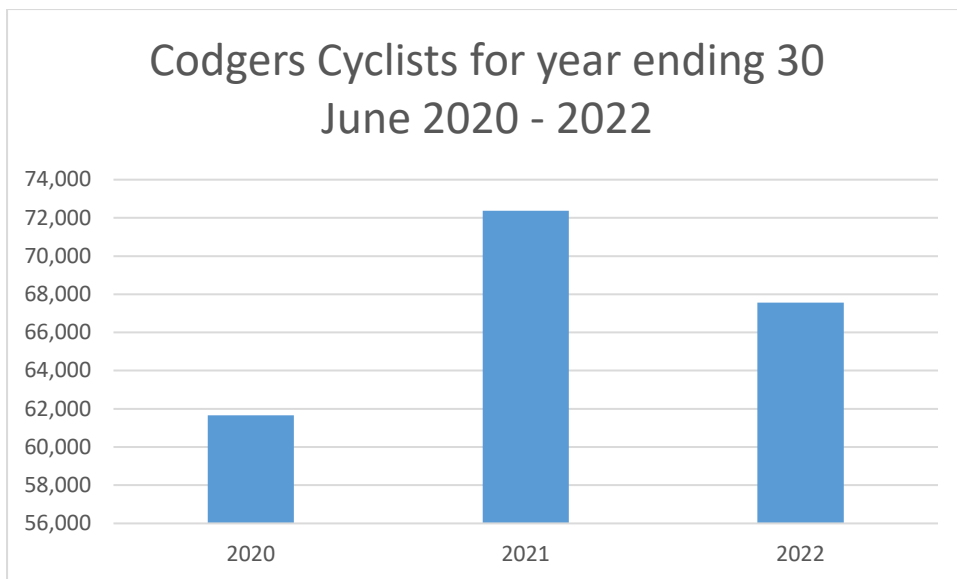
The support from Central Government and from both Tasman District and Nelson City Councils has been essential to the development for the two Great Rides.

Support from a range of other individuals and organisations is also important, with a mix of donations, mate's rates and volunteer labour enabling central and local government funding to go further. It is estimated that around 1100 volunteer hours were contributed to the Trust, and in maintenance/construction work during 2021/22. We gave a further membership fee-free year to around 80 Official Partners and Business Supporters in consideration of the continued impacts of Covid 19 on many businesses. Fortunately the Trust reserves were sufficient to cover the costs of an Administrator to provide support for volunteer Trustees, trail promotion and other operational costs for the year.

Trail usage and benefits

The GTT and Coppermine continue to be significant community and visitor assets. User numbers as illustrated below have stayed high, despite Covid impacting overseas visitors to the region. Usage of the GTT increased in the 12 months to June 2022, but lockdown closures of the Coppermine Trail resulted in a reduction in numbers. (Note these numbers are totals past all counters, so some riders will have been counted more than once, and some not at all - where there is no counter.) There is also significant use of both trails by walkers and runners.





MBIE this year released an independent insights report into the NZ Great Rides. This report estimated \$951m was spent across the 22 Great Rides in the year ended June 2021, with over \$11m in health benefits resulting from the trails.

Trail promotion and visitor experience

The Trust's main promotion focus is on providing information through our web site (www.heartofbiking.org.nz), information boards on the trails, and trail brochures on the "tastes" of Nelson-Tasman accessible on and from the GTT, and the uniqueness of the Coppermine Trail. We also profile Official Partner Businesses and the services they provide, and the website has links to information on other cycling opportunities in the region.

This year we have developed an Experience Development Plan for the Great Taste Trail and revised the trail brochure to present 4 trail sections - Town & Country, Sparkling Coastline, Rural Tasman, and Back & Beyond. The trail brochure and website have been refreshed to reflect and tell the story of each section.

We have also developed an enhancement plan for the Waimea Estuary section of trail which we are now working through with Tasman District Council and other stakeholders.

We continue to work with the Nelson Regional Development Agency (NRDA) on cycle trail related destination marketing. Cycling and the Great Taste Trail feature in the NRDA Destination Management Plan, and in the Food and Beverage and Arts Tourism Strategies. The Great Taste Trail, in particular, provides opportunity to promote and tell food, beverage and arts sector stories across the region.

Communications to the public and partners have included Official Partner updates, press releases and publicity in hard copy and social media.

Other activities

Maungatapu Track - Potential routes have been developed and provided to Nelson City Council for a Maungatapu Cycle Trail along a similar route to the Maungatapu Track, and for a trail from Maungatapu Saddle to connect with the downhill trail from Coppermine Saddle. These provide exciting options for an improved cycle route from Marlborough to Nelson, and extension of the Coppermine Trail. We are working with the Council on processes for consent applications. Funding options are still to be explored

Heartland Rides – These are linking, on–road scenic routes across NZ and between the Great Rides, designated by Waka Kotahi. The Tadmores Saddle Rd from Tapawera to Highway 6, then via the Gowan Valley, Lake Rotoroa and the Braeburn Track to Murchison was designated a Heartland Ride following the completion of the GTT trail between Kohatu and Tapawera. Last year we provided Waka Kotahi with a potential cycle trail route following the old railway reserve from Glenhope to the Gowan Valley that would take cyclists off the highway. We have not been able to progress this any further, but will keep trying.

New Zealand Cycle Trails Inc (NZCT) - a stand-alone national agency for the 22 “NZ Great Rides “ was established in 2013. TDC and NCC are NZCT members for the GTT and the Coppermine Trail, respectively. The Trust provides an additional contact for NZCT for both rides, and attends NZCT AGMs and the NZCT annual Forum. NZCT has been instrumental in continued central government funding for the Great Rides and for advocacy and promotion of the Great Ride network.

Trail surveys - There is a link to an NZCT survey on the website that we encourage trail users to complete. NZCT/MBIE have set a target of 300 surveys per trail per annum.

285 people completed the on-line GTT survey over the 12 month period to 30 June 2022, with an average satisfaction score of 8.6/10. 45% were visitors who spent an average of 6 nights in the region, 10.4% were walkers/runners, 81% were aged over 50,. The Coppermine statistics were 175 surveys completed, satisfaction score 8.6, 21% visitors staying for an average of 5.3 nights, 5.1% walkers/runners, 54% aged over 50

The surveys show a significant increase in e-bikes on both trails - a 23% increase over the two years from 2019/20 (21%) to 2021/22 (44%) for the GTT, and a 10% increase (15% to 25%) for the Coppermine.

Administration – Thank you to our Trust Administrator, Elizabeth Bean. Her support is essential to our effective operation as a volunteer Trust.

Financials

The Trust is in a sound financial position, with cash reserves at 30 June 2020 of \$841,507 and net assets of \$827,479. This enables an operating buffer, with the balance of funds raised for and committed to construction costs for the completion of the GTT, trail renewal and other priority cycle projects.

Trustees

We were joined during the year by new Trustee Michelle Byczkow, and Jasmine Foxlee resigned as Trustee to take on the Trail Manager role.

Thank you to all the Trustees who contribute volunteer time to developing a wonderful community and visitor resource for the Nelson-Tasman region.

Trail Manager

Nick Ross left us at the end of 2021 after only a year in the role, due to flood damage to his house requiring his full time attention. Ross Maley stepped into the Trail Manager role to fill the gap while Nick decided on his ongoing availability, and subsequently Jasmine Foxlee took on the Trail Manager role in February 2022. Thank you to Nick, Ross and Jasmine, and to Steve Johnstone who oversees maintenance on the GTT.

Gillian Wratt

Chair

Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust

1 October 2022