



Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust AGM
16 October 2023
Chair Report to 30 June 2023

The Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust priorities for the 2022/23 year have been:

- Trail repairs to both the GTT and Coppermine following the August 2022 and May 2023 weather events
- Continuing to connect up and extend Tasman's Great Taste Trail, with a focus on off-road trail from Pokororo to Ngatimoti and Wai-iti Reserve to Hoult Valley
- Trail construction through the Nelson Golf Course to Parkers Rd to improve the connection (spoke trail) from Nelson airport to the Tahunanui beach trail
- Renewal of the Coppermine Trail section in Codgers Mountain Bike Park
- Submissions to NCC and TDC on cycle related matters and the upcoming LTP and RLTP processes
- Ongoing engagement with NRDA on promotional activities for trail riding in Nelson-Tasman
- Appointment of a new Trail Manager with Jasmin Foxlee leaving us to return to Australia
- Proactive maintenance and upgrading of sections of the Great Taste Trail

Trail construction & maintenance

Great Taste Trail.

Weather event damage. The August 2022 weather event and a heavy rain in the Wai-iti catchment in May 2023 caused significant damage to the trail, particularly from the Waimea River between lower Queen St and Redwood Rd and the Wai-iti River between Wakefield and Hoult Valley. Our trail team did a great job of getting the trail back open and subsequently making some resilience improvements to the trail. Support from TDC and funding from the MBIE Great Rides fund has been critical to this work.

Pokororo to Ngatimoti – Construction began on this section of off-road trail on the east bank of the Motueka valley, along with consultation with iwi to review any concerns they had and explore the opportunity to tell their stories associated with the Motueka Valley.

Nelson Golf Course Trail - A spoke trail through the Nelson Golf Club to link off road trail from Nelson Airport through the golf course to the trail along the Tahunanui back beach is near complete. Trail opening is awaiting the completion by NCC of work on the water infrastructure on Awatea Place and Parkers Road.

Wai-iti Reserve to Hoult Valley - We have engaged with landowners along the Wai-iti River between Hoult Valley Rd and the Wai-iti Reserve. With some changes in land ownership, we have agreement in principle and easement negotiations underway for access to put trail along the Wai-iti River to replace the road-side section of trail.

Whakatu Drive - We continued 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.

Tasman View Rd – improvements to this section of trail have included more off-road trail to take riders off the unmaintained gravel road that is shared with trail bikes and 4WD vehicles hence becomes rutted and pot-holed, and plantings alongside the trail.

Waimea Estuary - Design work is complete for a screening fence along the front of the NPD yard. This is the first of several Waimea Estuary enhancement projects we would like to undertake. Funding for these will be a challenge.

Coppermine Trail

Recovery from the August 2022 weather events has been a big task and taken longer than we would have liked. Two significant slips between Four Corners and Third House took time to get affordable repair options and had construction challenges. As of writing time for this report the trail is now fully open, including the pipeline section of the track in the Maitai Valley with a cycle/walking bridge alongside the new pipeline structure where a slip in the weather event took out a section of the pipeline, and trail has been reinstated where logging had taken place. After several years of close monitoring of the earlier pipeline slip with no significant further rock movement, the monitoring and closure guidelines have been revised to a less stringent requirement so there should be fewer closures of that section.

With purchase and arrival of Judith the Rock Crusher and her helicopter ride onto the descent trail into the Maitai, upgrade and resilience work on this section of trail is programmed for the next 6 to 9 months.

Construction funding

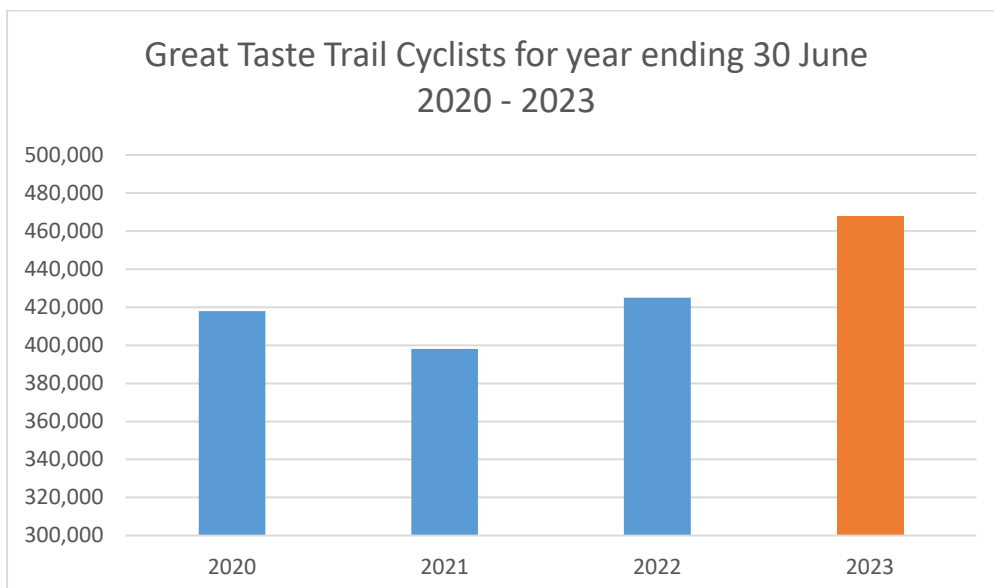
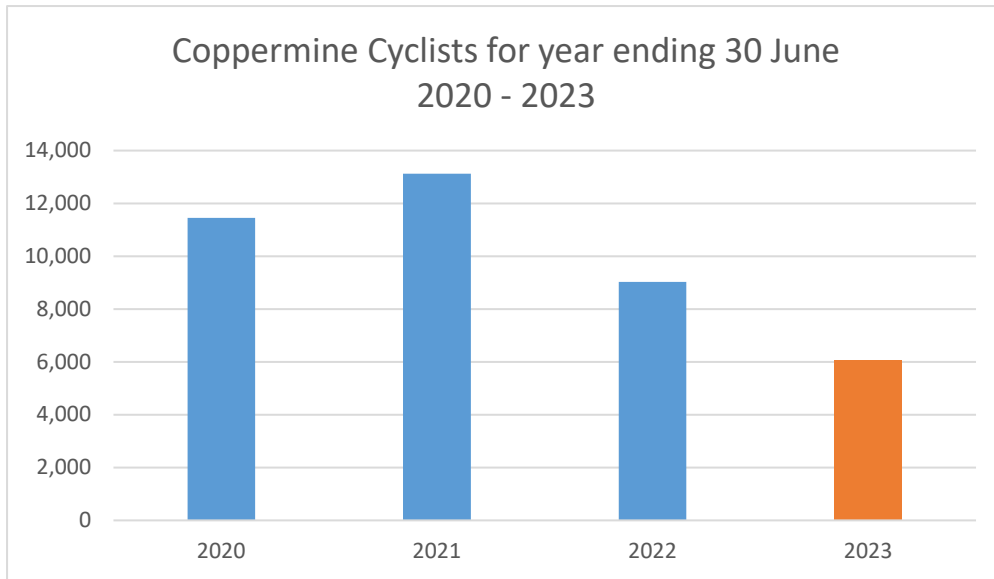
The support from Central Government and from both Tasman District and Nelson City Councils has been essential to the development and maintenance of the two Great Rides. The MBIE Great Rides funding fully funds extreme weather recovery work. The widespread nature of extreme weather impacts across the country has put significant pressure on the Great Rides funding and there are currently no funds available for new work. This will be a challenge for funding some of our proposed trail improvement plans, including Hoult Valley to Wai-iti off-road trail.

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 over 1200 volunteer hours were contributed to the Trust, and in maintenance/construction work during 2022/23. We resumed membership fees to Official Partners in March 2023. 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. Coppermine has seen lower numbers in 2023 as the trail was closed for a long time following the August 2022 floods, and when reopened several sections were still in need of repair/upgrade work. GTT numbers increased. Internationals returned and there seems to have been renewed local interest with the new Baton Valley trail. (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 which is not included in these numbers.



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.

Last year we revised the GTT trail brochure to present 4 trail sections - Town & Country, Sparkling Coastline, Rural Tasman, and Back & Beyond, and refreshed the website to reflect and tell the story of each section. We have updated the brochure for 2023/24 reflecting changes in Official Partners and facilities/attractions along the trail. Signs to the "tastes" along the trail were a priority in our Experience Development Plan, and we've been working with OPs close to the trail, NCC and TDC to get some signage in place.

We continue to work with the Nelson Regional Development Agency (NRDA) on cycle trail related destination marketing, including a video on the Great Taste Trail.

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

Other activities

Council Long Term Plans & Regional Land Transport Plan

Both Councils are working on their LTPs and the RLTP for the next 5-10 years. We have presented to the combined NCC/TDC Land Transport Committee and to the TDC Operations Committee a concept plan for linked cycleways across Te Taihū – Cycleways 6 and 60, to match the State Highways. This incorporates upgrading the Maungatapu, linkages in Golden Bay, trail on the old railway embankment from Glenhope to the Gowan River (the Tapawera to Murchison Heartland ride), and supporting the upgrade of the path alongside Whakatu Drive and the proposed shared Rocks Rd path. Our aim is to get the concept into Council & Waka Kotahi thinking, while we acknowledge some may be long term projects.

New Zealand Cycle Trails Inc (NZCT) and Great Rides funding. - 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.

As noted above, the impact of widespread extreme weather across the country has put significant pressure on the MBIE Great Rides funds.

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.

279 people completed the on-line GTT survey over the 12 month period to 30 June 2023, with an average satisfaction score of 8.6/10. Of those who completed the survey, 61% were visitors who spent an average of 8.7 nights in the region, 81% were aged over 50,. The Coppermine statistics were 109 surveys completed, satisfaction score 8.0, 7.3% visitors staying for an average of 5.9 nights, 31% aged over 50

The surveys show a significant increase in e-bikes on both trails over the last three years - from 21% in 2019/20 to 48% in 2022/23 for the GTT, and from 15% to 36% for the Coppermine.

Financials

The Trust is in a sound financial position, with cash reserves at 30 June 2023 of \$1,017,719 and net assets of \$924,283. This enables an operating buffer and is a key factor in being able to respond promptly to adverse weather trail damage. The balance of funds is raised for and committed to construction costs for the completion of the GTT, trail renewal and other priority cycle projects.

Trustees

We have ten Trustees with a range of expertise across construction, marketing, finance, legal, consenting and operating on the trail. 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

Jasmine Foxlee left us at the end of 2022 to move back to Australia. We have been very fortunate in having Belinda Crisp, previously the manager for the Nelson Mountain Bike Club, join us this year as Trail Manager. Thank you to Jasmine and Belinda for their great work, and to Steve Johnstone who oversees maintenance on the GTT. It is a mark of their dedication and expertise that we have managed to repair trails from extreme weather effects and progress a number of other projects on both the GTT and Coppermine. We also have some great trail building and maintenance expertise in our contractors, in particular Wenham Construction, Easy Trail Services, Motueka Track and Trail and Contract Worx

Administration

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

NCC & TDC

The Nelson Great Rides would not exist without the support – financial and operational from both the local Councils. A particular thank you to Mike van Enter and Jamie McPherson at TDC and Paul Harrington and Joel MacMillan at NCC.

Gillian Wratt

Chair

Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust

12 October 2023