

**Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust AGM**

**29 October 2018**

**Chair Report to 30 June 2018**

The Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust priorities for the 2017/18 year have been:

* Access and funding to complete the Great Taste Trail (GTT) loop from Wakefield to Kohatu, Tapawera and down the Motueka Valley
* Great Taste Trail repair and resilience work after extensive storm damage early in November 2017 and February 2018
* Dun Mountain Trail (DMT) assessments to improve trail resilience, in particular the Coppermine Saddle to Maitai River section.
* Continuing engagement with NRDA on their regional identity work and profiling of cycling in regional marketing
* Submissions to Tasman District Council (TDC) and Nelson City Council (NCC) Long Term Plans and working with staff from both Councils on cycle related matters
* Initiating review of the Trust marketing strategy and engagement with Official Partners

**Trail construction & maintenance**

New Trail Manager, Josh Aldridge began working with the Trust in September 2017, just in time to manage the response to the 8 November storm that significantly impacted coastal sections of the GTT, followed closely by the even more destructive Cyclone Fehi on 1 February. Storm recovery work was a massive task and took up a major part of Josh’s initial few months in the role. Timely repair and re-opening of the trail owe much to his energy and commitment, as well as the support of TDC and various local businesses who helped out when there was pressure from other storm damage across the region. Thanks also to Josh for a great job progressing other maintenance, construction and access projects over the year.

We have been fortunate to be able to access the central government (MBIE) Maintaining the Great Rides (MGR) fund to cover much of the cost of the storm repair work, including some additional work to improve the resilience of the coastal sections of the GTT to future storm events. This work is now close to completion.

The Trust and some of the operators on the GTT met in March and developed an emergency response plan learning from the lessons of these storms.

An additional 1.4m section of trail on the GTT has been completed – alongside the road south of Wakefield from Hoult Valley Rd to the Waiiti Domain. We have been unable to secure land owner agreement for access for an off-road route along this section. NZTA supported the widening of the shoulder and creation of a cycle path on this section. Access agreements have now been signed for off-road trail from Wakefield to Hoult Valley Rd and construction of this section will begin shortly. Construction of trail from Norris Gully to Kohatu is underway, as are route/access discussions for Kohatu to Tapawera.

There have been two slips on the Dun Mountain Trail that have caused partial closures. Work is underway (October 2018) on the slip between the Brook and 3rd House, and options are being considered for stabilising the slope above the pipeline section of track on the Maitai and re-opening this section. The Trust has also been working with Nelson City Council on proposals for improvements to the DMT from Coppermine down to the Maitai Valley, with funding support from the MGR fund.

At the Nelson end of the GTT we are working with Nelson City Council on a route from the Airport to Tahunanui, and it is great to see the cycle path now completed along Haven Road.

**Fund raising**

The exciting achievement this year has been the successful application to the MBIE Great Rides Extension and Enhancement Fund (E&E Fund) for matched funding to complete the full GTT loop. $2.4 million of MBIE E&E funding will be matched by contributions from TDC, NCC, work in kind from Nelson Forests/Taylors and Trust reserves. We have been working on funding for this for several years. Thanks are due to retiring Trustee Elizabeth Bean for her persistence in working up the proposal documentation.

The Trust thanks a number of organisations for continued funding and in-kind support, in particular:

* TDC, NCC, Nelson Forests, Ewing Poultry and Rotary
* The NZ Cycle Trail Trust/MBIE Maintaining the Great Rides (MGR) Fund
* Around 90 Official Partners and Trail Supporter businesses

A range of other individuals and organisations have supported the GTT build with a mix of donations, mate’s rates and volunteer labour. It is estimated that more than 900 volunteer hours were contributed to the Trust and in maintenance/construction work during 2017/18.

**Marketing and business development**

This was the fourth year of the Trust’s arrangement with Nelson Regional Development Agency (NRDA) to put resources into cycle trail related destination marketing. We are pleased to see the consideration NRDA has given to cycling in their destination marketing work, including the installation of a cycle hub map at the Nelson i-site.

Communications to the public and partners have included Official Partner updates and forums, press releases and publicity in hard copy and social media. We continue to use the Trust website to provide information on the two Great Rides – the GTT and DMT, as well as links to other websites that have information on other off-road cycling opportunities in Nelson-Tasman.

We have initiated a process to review the Trust’s marketing strategy, how we work in future with NRDA and local cycle/tourism operators, and the information on the Trust website.

**Other activities**

***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 Dun Mountain Trail, respectively. The Trust provides an additional contact for NZCT for both rides, and was represented at the NZCT AGM and Forum in August.

***Trail counters and surveys*** *–* the Trust has counters on seven locations on the TGTT. An average of 188,000 people per annum were counted on sections across the trail over the 4 calendar years to December 2017.

Katrina Marwick of Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology, Trustee Jo Leyland, TDC engineering student interns Harry Woodyear-Smith and Hugh Knight, and several other volunteer surveyors carried out the fifth year of a survey of GTT users. Of the 656 riders surveyed over two days in early January, 65% were Nelson-Tasman residents, 25% were visitors from elsewhere in NZ and 8% were international visitors. Thank you to Katrina for again organising the survey.

***Administration*** – thank you to the Trust’s Administrator, Marika Kingan. As a volunteer Trust, the efficient and effective support provided by Marika is essential to our success. Thank you also to Chelsea Pannett and Milnes Beatson in Motueka for providing accounting support for the Trust.

**Financials**

The Trust is in a sound financial position, with cash reserves at 30 June 2018 of $312,633. This enables an operating buffer, with the balance of funds raised for and committed to construction costs for the completion of the GTT.

Gillian Wratt

Chair

Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust

23rd October 2018