



2022 Annual Report



Photo taken on Swuq'us (Mt. Prevost).

It is with great respect and gratitude that we acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Quw'utsun Peoples. For thousands of years the Cowichan have been living an ancient culture. We are committed to understanding the true history of the Indigenous Peoples of this land and we take this moment to honor them.

Huychq'u – Thank you.

President's Report

Rick Martinson

The Cowichan Trails budget has tripled in three years. Rapid growth can overwhelm an organization or it can energize it. The board of directors took actions to get CTSS structurally ready to capitalize on growth. It started with a strategic plan, then annual goal setting, staff performance reviews and mandate letters. Energy is contagious; it's lots of fun to manage a motivated group of directors, staff and volunteers.

The ongoing support of the Municipality of North Cowichan has been key to the successes highlighted in this report. The municipality not only supports us with the majority of our funding, but Shaun Mason of Forestry and Neil Pukesh of Parks and Recreation provide valuable guidance to our management team and Council backs our work plans.

2022 had plenty of organizational and operational highlights.

Trail Operations

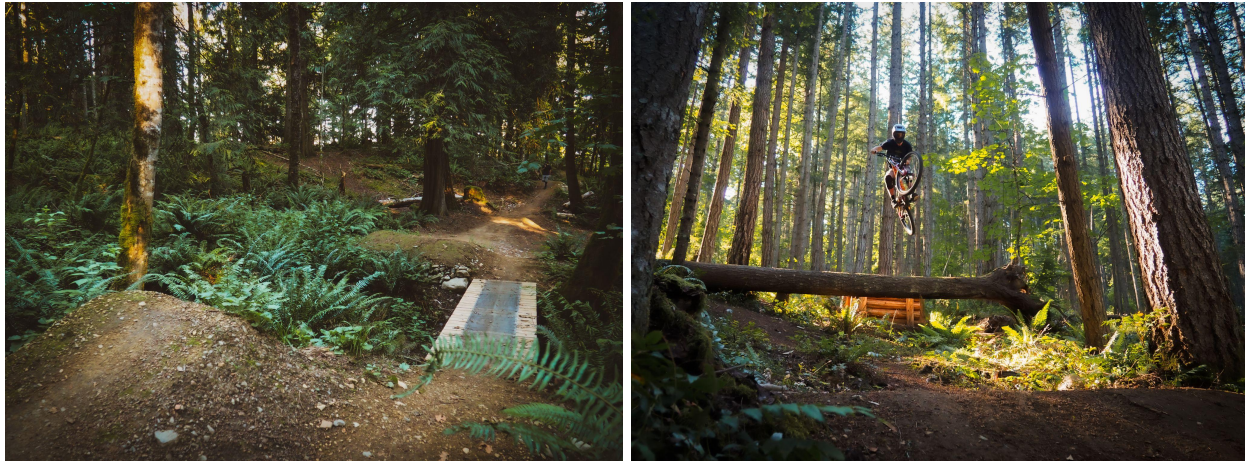
We welcomed Brendan Gauthier and Lorrie Mansey to the staff early in 2022. Both have been key to the society's operations. 4,359 man hours were paid for in 2022. We increased our capacity with part-time staff - Aravan Eagleheart, Vance Shaw and Ian Macey; and short-term staff – Tobin Bergman. The Board of Directors contributed 725 hours to society governance and 300 hours to trails and events. The public and membership contributed 834 hours to the trails.



Left to right: Ian Macey, Lorrie Mansey, Brendan Gauthier

For trail construction, 2022 had 3 major highlights.

First, North Cowichan contracted CTSS to sanction 10 trails on Mt Prevost and provided us with sufficient budget to get this done. This project is partly funded through the Tourism Dependent Community Fund from the Government of BC. The project kicked off with a weekend volunteer dig event that attracted people from as far away as California. With Mark Wallace's help we negotiated an extension of the network to the area below the lower forest service road, including the Adrenaline jump line. Milner Group Ventures offered an incredibly generous donation of machine time, and Daniel Fleury and Dillan Butcher stepped up to build these jumps at a bargain price. Without their offer we could not have completed the jumps within budget.



Left to right: Mt. Prevost Patch 5, Mt. Prevost Daisy Duke jump line.

Second, the Bumblebee connector and realignment of Bumblebee was the first new trail construction since Phloem in 2019. An amazing volunteer crew of 60 completed the connector in 2 hours. This event was sponsored by Dirt Groms and Cycle Therapy. Thanks to North Cowichan and the Province of BC for providing the funding that allowed us to make Bumblebee a must-ride trail for all those cyclists who seek flow.



Left to right: Bumblebee Connector dig day, CTSS trail crew on the New Bumblebee reroute.

The third highlight was the Specialized Soil Searching day. 80 volunteers rebuilt Loam Line from top to bottom. The day was capped off with a barbecue at Experience Cycling. Specialized filmed a 5 minute highlight video of the day that we have used in many presentations to introduce our audiences to what we do. Specialized also gave us the proceeds from the auction of a limited-edition e-mountain bike. This amounted to \$15,000 – which we invested into trail maintenance.

[VIDEO: Soil Searching: Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society](#)



Experience Cycling presenting CTSS with a \$15,000 e-bike raffle donation on behalf of Specialized Canada.

We have also been awarded some small contracts that will have a big impact on the reach of Cowichan Trails. We negotiated a contract to sanction the Firehall Trails and make them rideable for adaptive cyclists (e.g. Bowheads, 3-wheel bikes). We rebuilt bridges on Story Trail, Phloem and Solar Coaster on Maple to be adaptive. We did this in close communication with representatives of the adaptive riding community, and followed the Kootenay Adaptive Standards.

Community Development

The world is divided into those who get the work done and those who take credit for it. CTSS has focused on the former. Community development focuses on the latter. The trail network is an asset for Cowichan businesses, as well as the community and tourists. Largely, the general public and businesses do not know who maintains the trails. Community development will result in public recognition and organizational growth for CTSS.

We made a delegation appearance at North Cowichan Council in August to establish to the elected officials who we are and what value we provide to the municipality. We also took the opportunity to bring them up to speed on the Mt. Prevost project and the reach it will have within the mountain biking community.

We also made presentations to two Rotary Clubs and the Chamber of Commerce to build awareness of Cowichan Trails and present opportunities for collaboration with business organizations. We have met with Tourism Cowichan, equestrian groups and hiking groups to work on cooperative projects.

The exclusion of mountain biking from Mt. Richards has been an issue since the Parks and Trails Master Plan was published in 2017. As development and sanctioning of the Mt. Richards network was imminent, we developed a position paper to argue the benefits of amending the PTMP to include mountain biking on Mt. Richards. We followed this with a delegation to North Cowichan Council and a rebuttal to opposition points. Council has forwarded our position paper to their Economic Development Committee for further study.

The outreach has resulted in organizations contacting us with potential projects, funding and collaboration. Expansion will continue in 2023.



Left to right: CTSS presenting to the Duncan Chamber of Commerce, CTSS at VIU.

Membership

Membership growth has been good. We now have 250 members, however this is short of our goal of 500 members. We have sufficient new members signing up every month to reach the goal. Our downfall is renewal of expiring memberships. Our strategy to resolve this is to increase awareness and the value of membership. We offer member only events such as fiver races; and discounts for members at some corporate sponsors. In 2023 we will introduce more tactics to raise the profile of membership



Left to right: CTSS Maple Mountain XC Fiver Race, CTSS Halloween Group Ride.

Finances

The 2022 budget increased by more than 50% from 2021. We managed to keep administration costs to under 15% of total expenses and, thereby, direct as much money as possible to the trails. As the size of the trail crew has increased, we have likewise invested money into new tools and equipment.

For 2023 CTSS is a registered charitable organization. This means we can issue tax deductible charitable donation receipts to our supporters.



Left to right: CTSS trail crew brushing on Xylem, volunteers building on Phloem (Maple Mountain).

Last Words

With the imminent completion of the Municipal Forest Review the door will reopen for trail development and other recreational projects in the forests of North Cowichan. We are expecting 2023 to be another year full of highlights.

Thank you to the Municipality of North Cowichan and the Province of BC for their ongoing support.

Thank you to the volunteer board members: Rick Martinson, President; Kelly Dougan and McKay Vezina, Vice Presidents; Mike Evans, Treasurer; and board members Matt Grossnickle, Chris Istace, Dan Berard, Pete Stevenson, Ryan Jordan, Dan Johnson, Mark Wallace, Michele Carr and Monica Watt.



2022 FINANCIALS

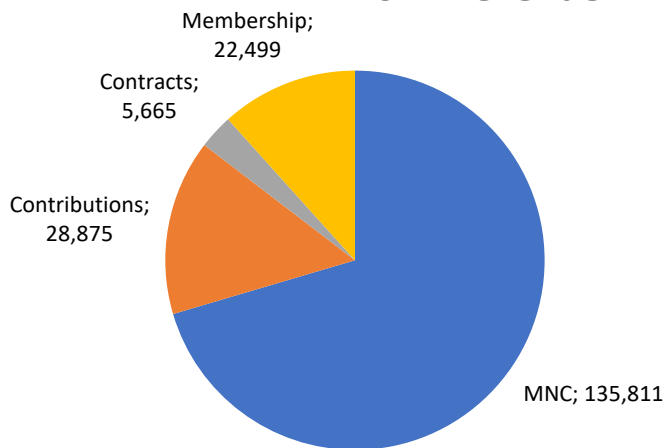
Balance Sheet

	2021	2020
Current Assets	59,434	49,721
Equipment	7,506	2,979
Current Liabilities	16,038	7,348
Net Assets	50,902	45,352

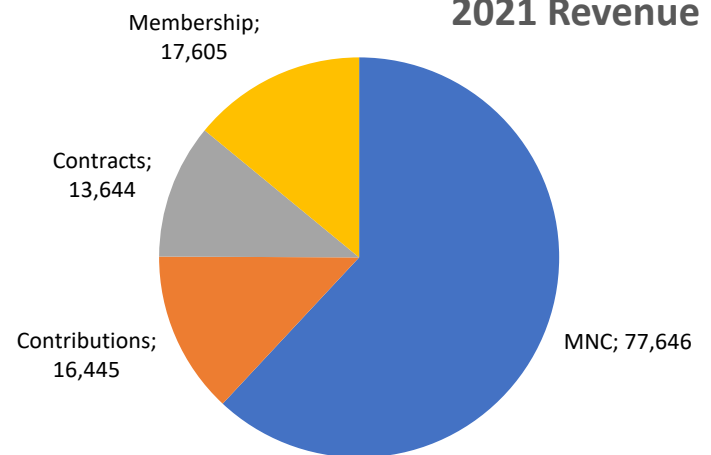
Income Statement

Revenues	192,850	125,340
Expenses	186,875	123,686
Revenue Over Expenses	5,975	1,654

2022 Revenue



2021 Revenue



2022 Expenses



2021 Expenses

