



Bike Ride June 28, 2020, Report

Bike trip to visit potential community connections across the Deltaport rail transportation corridor

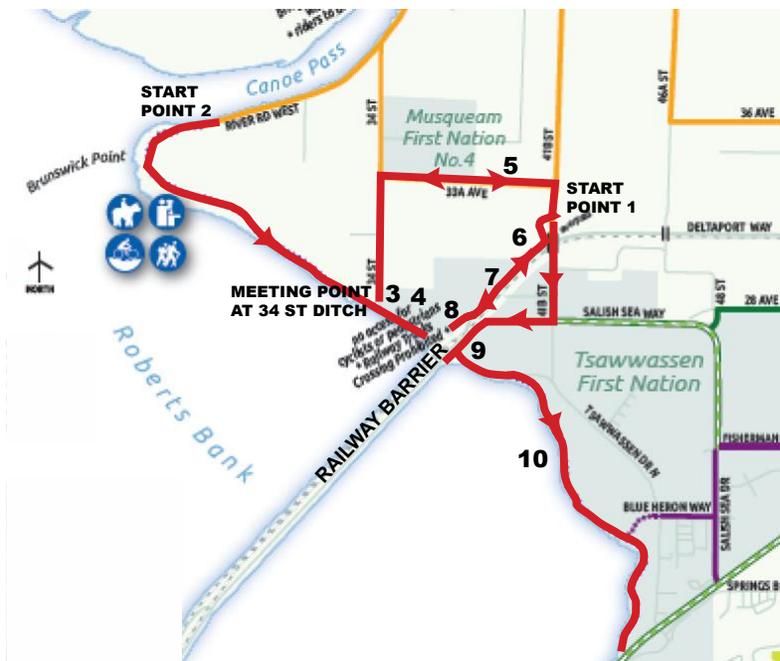
Organized by HUB Cycling Tsawwassen Delta

We thank Elder Ruth Adams for her welcome to Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) and enabling permission to travel through TFN lands today. TFN Chief and Executive Council support the Great Blue Heron Way (GBHW) project. Due to Delta Port development, a direct coastal trail path between Canoe Pass and Tsawwassen has been severed; this bike ride looks at the Delta Port railway barrier and potential alternative routes.

Attendees: Roel Schootman, Elder Ruth Adams, Léon Lebrun, Carol Vignale, Neil Pope, Heather Liebscher, Sandra Jones, Bill Fernihough, Jennifer Greenstien, Stacey Greenstien, Paul Janzen, Matthias Heinzeman, Barb Hinson, Pauline Joly de Lotbiniere, Ron McKenzie Regrets: David Grigg, Ruth Grigg, Hilary Cole

Red line = bike ride

Map base is the
Delta Routes Map
Found at this web link:
<http://delta.ca/parks-recreation/parks-trails/trails-cycling>



Start Points:

1. 10:00 am at the Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) Welcome Poles near Amazon.

A **Welcome Ceremony** officiated by Elder Ruth Adams took place here. Everyone was welcomed to the lands of TFN with blessings, prayer, historic reminiscing and visions of the Great Blue Heron Way.





2. 10:10 am at the Canoe Pass / Brunswick Point trail head, River Road West (near a TFN 10-year Treaty Pole raised in 1919)



Bike ride to 34 St ditch at dike

- From Amazon: 41 B St overpass north, 33A Ave west, 34 St south
- From Canoe Pass: dike top via Brunswick Point

Meeting Place:

3. 34 St ditch





Dike top at 34 St ditch looking north



34 St and ditch



Observation

- At this location 34 St is a boundary between TFN and the City of Delta (see map on page 1)
- Users of the dike between Canoe Pass and Delta Port include – walking and cycling families, dog walkers, local and provincial government workers for dike maintenance and foreshore habitat management, research students, geocachers (who have caches both sides of the ditch), first responders (see below under Additional information)
- Make-shift access across a deep ditch has been created, using wooden boards. People want to cross, make-shift planks are put here every year.
- The dike side of the ditch is a steep incline that may need steps
- A built bridge structure from dike to 34 St would need to be at least 40 ft long
- A large diameter culvert pipe could be placed in the ditch and be built on top

Additional information

- July 1. Bill spoke with Delta Firefighter First Responders who were on the dike top dealing with an emergency, they had to carry their equipment across this ditch. The Delta firefighter's opinion is that properly-built access across the ditch would be a significant safety improvement, for themselves and dike users.



4. End-of-dike barrier at north side of BC Hydro substation

View north from barrier gate at substation on dike top



View south on dike towards Deltaport Way overpass and BC Rail tracks from barrier gate at substation



Observation

- The dike and land around the BC Hydro substation property is within TFN land. (see map on page 1)
- Fences prevent access into or around the substation site
- Access into and around the substation does not require a ditch bridge
- The substation isn't operating (eagles sit on top of its high structures)

Additional information

Bill (retired BC Hydro employee) spoke to a contact after this bike trip visit. The Substation is still in use as a pumping station but the main use of the substation, that as part of the DC system is defunct. Bill's contact was quite open to developing a biking and walking route around the substation if there is room within the BC Hydro property boundary. (See page 6 for further information).



5. Bike ride 34 St, 33A Ave, 41B St to Deltaport Way

- Quiet farm roads
- Broken blacktop surface



6. Bike ride Deltaport Way to Service Road

- Wide shoulder on smooth surface



Access to Service Road.

To bike in direction of traffic means crossing Deltaport Way at service road entrance (no traffic signal).
The return journey is on the service road side so can cross at the light on Deltaport Way by 41B St.





7. Bike ride Service Road to Substation

Rough gravel surface. Ride under Deltaport Way overpass to end of road at BC Railway.



Before the end of the road, on a still quiet stretch of the service road, is the substation - BC Hydro property, and farmers field - TFN property.



8. Substation

- Service road leads to the substation property. The east side is quiet, adjacent to a farmer's field. Substation is BC Hydro, Farmer's field is TFN land. Not everyone is aware of this. (See map on page 1, the Delta Routes Map for hikers and cyclists has always shown TFN land both sides of Deltaport Way).
- Past the substation, the service road turns south towards the rail tracks
- Around the last road curve is BCR warning signage / no trespassing at rail tracks
- There is extensive train movement on multiple rail tracks. Spoke with BCR security person. Dangerous place. Agree cyclists require a safe route to connect between the TFN breakwater path and the dike top to Canoe Pass and Ladner.
- Learned from this BC Railway staff person that this substation is decommissioned and is due for demolition. This offers an opportunity, access to the dike towards Canoe Pass and Ladner, without need to build a ditch crossing as the substation access road is already there between substation property and dike top. This could be made a safe and short distance access for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- BC Hydro has an Indigenous Relations department
- Follow-up on land jurisdiction is being facilitated by Elder Ruth Adams



Cyclists who rode the Service Road. Yay! Pictured in front of the BC Hydro sub-station. (photo by Heather)



Bike ride return on Service Road to 41B St overpass.

Observed where we used to be able to 'cross with caution' under the Deltaport Way when there was one set of rail tracks. Crossing the rail tracks is now prohibited. Discussed potential tunnel option.



Bike ride on Service Road and Deltaport Way east to traffic signal, to take 41B St bike lanes south. West on 27B Ave there are new paths, a south-side path almost reaches the breakwater path entrance.





9. TFN breakwater path entrance at 27B Ave Deltaport Way off-ramp (one-way truck traffic)



Observation

- Use of the Deltaport Way overpass by cyclists would be a much quicker route across the rail tracks to the substation service road than a route via 41 B St overpass.
- This is Sunday. There is Port truck traffic during the week. Would need safe crossing of road ramp where vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians could be seen well (potentially on the highest point of ramp).
- Both ends of the Deltaport Way overpass would need safety mitigation and very clear wayfinding
- This would be the most economic (structure is built) and most direct, rail track crossing option
- The bike lanes on the Deltaport Way overpass may be comparable to those on the 41B St overpass
- Workers have been seen walking on the shoulders across this Deltaport Way overpass

Addition information. Since our bike ride Léon Lebrun (Southwest Regional Director of Trails BC) has drawn up a detail plan for using the Deltaport Way overpass, Service Road and Substation property. Length of this route is 1.3 km (as opposed to a 0.4 km direct crossing, or an extra 4 km using the 34 St ditch route), and this route takes in the maximum amount of the dike.

10. Bike ride on TFN breakwater path to Highway 17 at BC Ferries Causeway



- Special permission has been granted by TFN to use this path during Covid 19
- Ride goes past the wooden boardwalk, a BikeBC / TFN / Aquilini funded structure that leads into TFN village. Outside of Covid 19 this would normally be used to access Tsawwassen Mills and Tsawwassen Commons shopping and restaurant sites along multiuse paths through TFN. (see map on Page 1)

This Bike Ride report has been prepared by: Sandra Jones, GBHW Team Communications; and Roel Schootman, Chair Great Blue Heron Way (GBHW) Team, Co-chair HUB Cycling Tsawwassen Delta.

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With thanks to: Elder Ruth Adams, TFN, GBHW Team Lead; and Neil Pope, Co-chair, HUB Cycling Tsawwassen Delta (delta@bikehub.ca)