

06 Bowen Island



Bowen Island has a very small selection of trails for mountain biking, in fact there are only a small number of trails and they service all users from hiker, biker and horse.

Unsanctioned trail building has been prevalent on the island providing opportunity for expert riders but leaving only rough service trails and a clearing area for the local riders accessible by main road. A previous attempt by a informal group of cycling enthusiasts was made to create a mountain bike complex in this area but never made it past the concept phase and so this uncontrolled area soon became the building area for rough gap jumps and shady technical features complete with used splintered off cuts and wood piles with exposed nails.

For a couple of years Hoots has been working with the Bowen Rec centre in youth riding programs and was approached by Collene Huskisson, Bowen Parks and Rec supervisor regarding the formalization of a Skills park. Realizing the need for the park to give the community a great riding area it was also very important to provide a park that would teach riding skills in hopes of preparing riders before they ventured into unsanctioned trails.



In late 2005 Collene initiated dialogue with Hoots to develop a Skills Park and started the wheels of progress by creating the Bicycle Task Force, a volunteer panel that included concerned residents, previous park advocates and riders including local rider/builder Dangerous Dan. The Task Force agenda was to work with the Municipality and Hoots to provide a sounding board and direction for design of the park and create terms of reference for the future of mountain biking on Bowen.

The area that the proposed park was set to be built on is owned by GVRD and was the first GVRD bicycle skills park project. Partnerships were created between the municipality and the GVRD which extended to both Hoots and the Task Force. The insurance for the park is held by the municipality carrier which has previous experience with other parks that have been built.



Local contractors stepped up and donated 'in kind' services which provided roughly four days of equipment usage to get the park from rough to spit polish. All of these guys were awesome and came out in full force with great enthusiasm staying late and doing it took to get the park completed.





The Task Force stepped up to all challenges and in the end created their version of design that only needed to be massaged for Risk management purposes ensuring that all features areas be built lending progression from a dedicated beginner/confidence areas. Features like balance skinny rides and teeter totters were all incorporated with great care adjacent to two very progressive jump sets. Jump sets are not only progressive but offer a lot of ride diversity and challenge for riders of all levels, separating beginner and advanced sides to either side of the park.



Once major equipment was removed from site, regular visits from members of the community were plentiful. During the three advertised volunteer days many excited youth and local residents came out in full force to help build. There were even riders and trail builders from The North Shore who came out to offer a days work! Local business donated food and beverages and the Task Force kept on top of the entire build.



Bowen bike park is only a 20 min bicycle ride from the ferry and well worth the cost and efforts to get to.



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