



a green corridor

Stretching from historic Johnson Street Bridge to the old-growth temperate rain forest near Goldstream Provincial Park, the Esquimalt and Nanaimo (E&N) Rail Trail promises to be a vibrant, 'green' pathway connecting downtown Victoria with the West Shore. Built within the existing E&N rail corridor, the 'Rail-with-Trail' will meander through developing communities and urban settings; and over salmon-filled streams while allowing rail service to continue on the rail line itself. Along the way, it will connect with the popular Galloping Goose Regional Trail.

With the City of Victoria, Township of Esquimalt, Town of View Royal and the City of Langford along the E&N corridor, the trail is expected to become a healthy alternate means of moving through the communities it serves: one that offers residents and tourists more than a walking and cycling route. Under the management of CRD Parks, the E&N Rail Trail will restore and protect the ecological integrity of the corridor.

the E&N railway

Incorporated in September 1883 by Victoria Coal Baron Sir Robert Dunsmuir, the Esquimalt and Nanaimo (E&N) Railway played a vital role in supporting British Columbia's early coal and lumber industry, as well as the Royal Navy Base in Esquimalt.

Initially traveling 115 kilometres from Esquimalt to Nanaimo, the railway was extended to the City of Victoria in 1888. Over the years, it continued to grow, boasting 89 stations at its peak. Today, the E&N maintains 25 stations between Victoria and Courtenay, although not all of them are in use.

Owned and operated at various times by the Canadian Pacific Railway, ViaRail and Rail America, the E&N Railway is now wholly owned by the Island Corridor Foundation, a partnership between First Nations and municipal governments of communities along the E&N rail corridor.

Get involved

We have created this newsletter to inform you about the E&N Rail Trail Initiative, a 'Rail-with-Trail' project managed by CRD Parks.

We encourage you to participate in the public process of developing a plan for this regional trail. As the initiative gets underway, we will be holding a series of public meetings. To find out when and where these meetings will take place, watch for postings on the CRD website and advertisements in local newspapers. In the meantime, you can share your feedback, questions or concerns, or receive information on our progress to date, by contacting CRD Parks.

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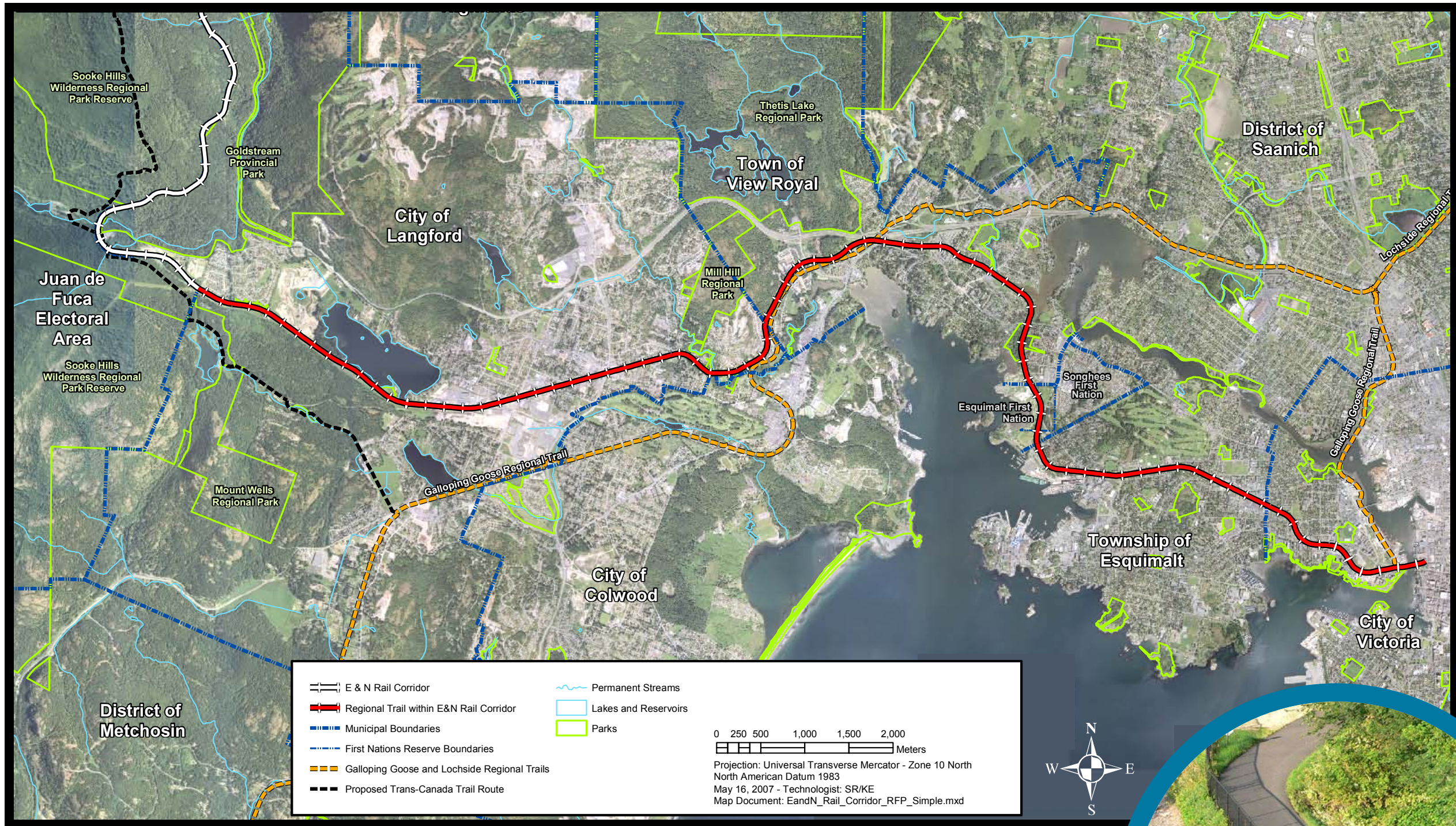
What is a 'Rail-with-Trail' initiative?

Rail with trail initiatives have become quite abundant since the 1960s with thousands of kilometres being constructed across North America. Unlike the more familiar 'Rail-to-Trail' projects (like the Galloping Goose Regional Trail), which are established on decommissioned rail lines, these multi-use paths feature trails that run along active rail corridors.

Due to the flat or gentle grade of most rails, such trails are ideally suited for cycling and walking. They have also proven to be an effective means of restoring or preserving the natural environment and celebrating cultural features in urban, suburban and rural landscapes.

The entire community benefits:

- Increased safety for trail users due to appropriate crossings and well-designed trails
- Greater awareness of 'green', healthy options for traveling through communities
- Natural area preservation and protection of wildlife corridors
- Enhanced tourism and recreational opportunities
- Increased value of adjacent properties
- Reduced petty crime, trespassing, dumping and vandalism



Trail Vision

The E&N Rail Trail will feature well-designed pathways and appropriate crossings. Since the width of the corridor itself ranges from 15-to 30-metres wide, we envisage a three- to four-metre trail. Where the corridor is wide enough, there will be a natural separation between the trail and rail operations. Where the corridor is narrower, we will construct physical barriers to separate the two uses.

The E&N Rail Trail is a multi-use path connecting the City of Victoria, Township of Esquimalt, Town of View Royal and the City of Langford. Residents and tourists who set out on the trail will encounter a wide range of terrain as they travel through rural, urban and suburban environments. They may also follow the path to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, where it parallels with the E&N Rail Trail at Burnside Road West near Six Mile Road. The trail also joins the Trans Canada Trail near Humpback Road in Langford.



Typical rail trail.

Our Partners

Island Corridor Foundation
City of Victoria
Township of Esquimalt
Town of View Royal
City of Colwood
City of Langford
Esquimalt Nation
Songhees Nation
BC Transit

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origins and completion of the E&N rail trail

The E&N Rail Trail project is now underway. First identified in the CRD Parks Master Plan as a potential regional trail stretching from the Johnson Street Bridge in downtown Victoria to the Old Island Highway in View Royal, the vision was later extended westward to the City of Langford under the direction of the Board.

Phase One:

The initiative gained Board approval in October 2006 at which time a Call for Proposals for the detailed engineering and design of the trail was sent out. The contract was awarded in August 2007. CRD Parks has established a working group and secured the trail license. The Island Corridor Foundation, the sole owner of the property required, has agreed to license the land to the CRD for the development of a trail within the E&N rail corridor. CRD Parks will manage the project in cooperation with our partners. Some initial funding has been secured and future funding is anticipated.

Phase Two:

During the second phase of development, CRD Parks will oversee the design and consultation process; identify pilot projects; and identify priorities and phasing. This phase is expected to last from September 2007 to April 2008.

Phase Three:

Once a design has been approved, construction of the E&N Rail Trail can begin. This phase could take anywhere from six months to 18 months to complete. Pilot projects identified in the design phase may be built in the fall of 2008.

The 17-kilometre trail is expected to be completed prior to the Winter Olympics in 2010.



E & N
rail trail
project