

PRESENTED BY
The GREATER VICTORIA CYCLING COALITION
and BIKE TO WORK SOCIETY



Discovery
RIDES

MAY - AUGUST 2020

GREATER VICTORIA
CYCLING
COALITION

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BIKE  WORK
SOCIETY

<https://gvcc.bc.ca/theme-rides>



About this

May - August 2020

Discovery
RIDES

Welcome Discovery Riders!

Welcome to the Highlands Discovery Ride! Enjoy a trek through rural winding roads beginning on West Saanich Road and ending on the Galloping Goose.

Note: These roads can be challenging for less experienced cyclists, as they include large hill climbs and winding roads. Ensure your bike, and your brakes especially, are in good working order before taking part in one of our longer Discovery Rides in this rural gem of Greater Victoria.

This Discovery Ride will be released on June 19th. Until June 30th, you are invited to explore the 'points of interest' outlined in each ride package and send us a photo, story, or video telling us about your experience, or something you discovered, on your Discovery Ride. **Submissions can be sent to us by filling out the short 'experience reflection form' on the GVCC website under 'themed rides', or via Facebook and Instagram by tagging us at @biketoworkvic or #yyjbike!** With every submission, you will be entered into a draw for a chance to win a gift card for take-out food from a local restaurant or bike shop.

How do I win a prize?

Along your ride, take note of the things you see at each 'point of interest' and create a story with the photos, video, or drawings you create from your ride. Prizes will be granted to those who submit content that tell us about their experience or something they discovered on their ride in a creative and thoughtful way. Entries will be randomly selected. **Prizes will awarded and available for pick up at the restaurant/bike shop on June 30th.**

What to bring:

You will need a bicycle, helmet, water bottle, snack, sunglasses, a camera of some kind, and Google maps downloaded on your cellphone. These Discovery Rides are organized like self-guided tours: the routes are downloaded on your phone that highlight points of interest along a route. Each ride is designed to get you exploring new places while physical-distancing; taking between 1-6 hours to complete. Enjoy the adventure! *Remember to allow space for others to pass on trails and roads when necessary to maintain 2m physical-distancing.

Why ride right now?

Studies have shown that cycling helps to reduce stress, boost the immune system, and stay physically active. Cycling is also a great way to get to know your neighbourhood and city during this time of physical-distancing.



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Activities are designed with adult supervision in mind. Before undertaking any outdoor activities, please be sure to follow the latest COVID-19 Provincial Support and Information.



Highlands

Points of Interest

Explore the 'points of interest' outlined in each ride package and send us a photo, story, or video telling us about your experience or something you discovered on your Discovery Ride.

Photos, videos, drawings, and other media can be sent to us by filling out the short 'experience reflection form' on the GVCC website under 'themed rides', or via Facebook and Instagram by tagging us at @biketoworkvic or #yyjbike!

See prize details on the "About this" page above.

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1. Dominion Astrophysical Observatory

Background:

Our ride begins at the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory. This world renowned facility was inaugurated in 1918, and was, at the time, the largest telescope in the world at 1.83 metres. Astronomer John Stanley Plaskett, who became its first director, designed the observatory and made such discoveries there such as a massive binary star systems and the direction of the Milky Way galaxies rotation.



Action item

take a photo at the foot of Observatory Hill. Since regular public access to the observatory is currently closed due to Covid-19, you can avoid having to bike up the hill.

Highlands

Points of Interest

2. Prospect Lake

Background:

Take your first rest stop at Whitehead Park, an access point to the lovely Prospect Lake. A popular fishing destination, Prospect Lake is stocked with between 1,000 and 5,000 Rainbow Trout annually.



Action item

Action Item: Snap a photo at Whitehead Park, pictured above.

Highlands

Points of Interest

3. Tod Creek Flats/Interurban Rail Trail

Background:

Leaving Prospect Lake, continue north along the Interurban Rail Trail, which follows the route operated by the British Columbia Electric Railway Company between 1913 and 1924. Continue until you reach the marker for Tod Creek Flats, pictured below. 16,000 years ago, an 850-metre thick sheet of ice covered Tod Flats. The receding glacier left decaying organic matter to settle on the lake floor creating a rich wetland which was used for a variety of things by local first nations. **WSÁNEĆ** (Saanich) peoples hunted waterfowl, used bulrush stems create woven baskets, and stems of the Red-Osier Dogwood for medicines. As we continue up Wallace Drive, we will arrive at our next stop, the **WSÁNEĆ** village site at Tod Inlet.



Action item: Take a picture either along the Interurban Rail Trail or with the Tod Creek Flats in the background.

Highlands

Points of Interest

4. SNIDÇEŁ

Background:

Dismounting your bike, head into Tod Inlet for incredible views and history. This was the site of the **W̱SÁNEĆ** village **SNIDÇEŁ** (pronounced sngheet-kwith), which means “place of the blue grouse.” Signs of this history remain in the Culturally Modified Trees that dot the trails; cedar trees with sections of bark carefully peeled off for use by indigenous peoples. The site’s industrial history is even more apparent, as cement foundations, dams, and buildings, remind us of Robert Butchart’s Vancouver Portland Cement Company, which operated from 1904 until the land was quickly exhausted in 1912.



Graffiti in on the ruins of the old cement factory.

Action item

See if you can locate the following items in the nearby trails of the park.

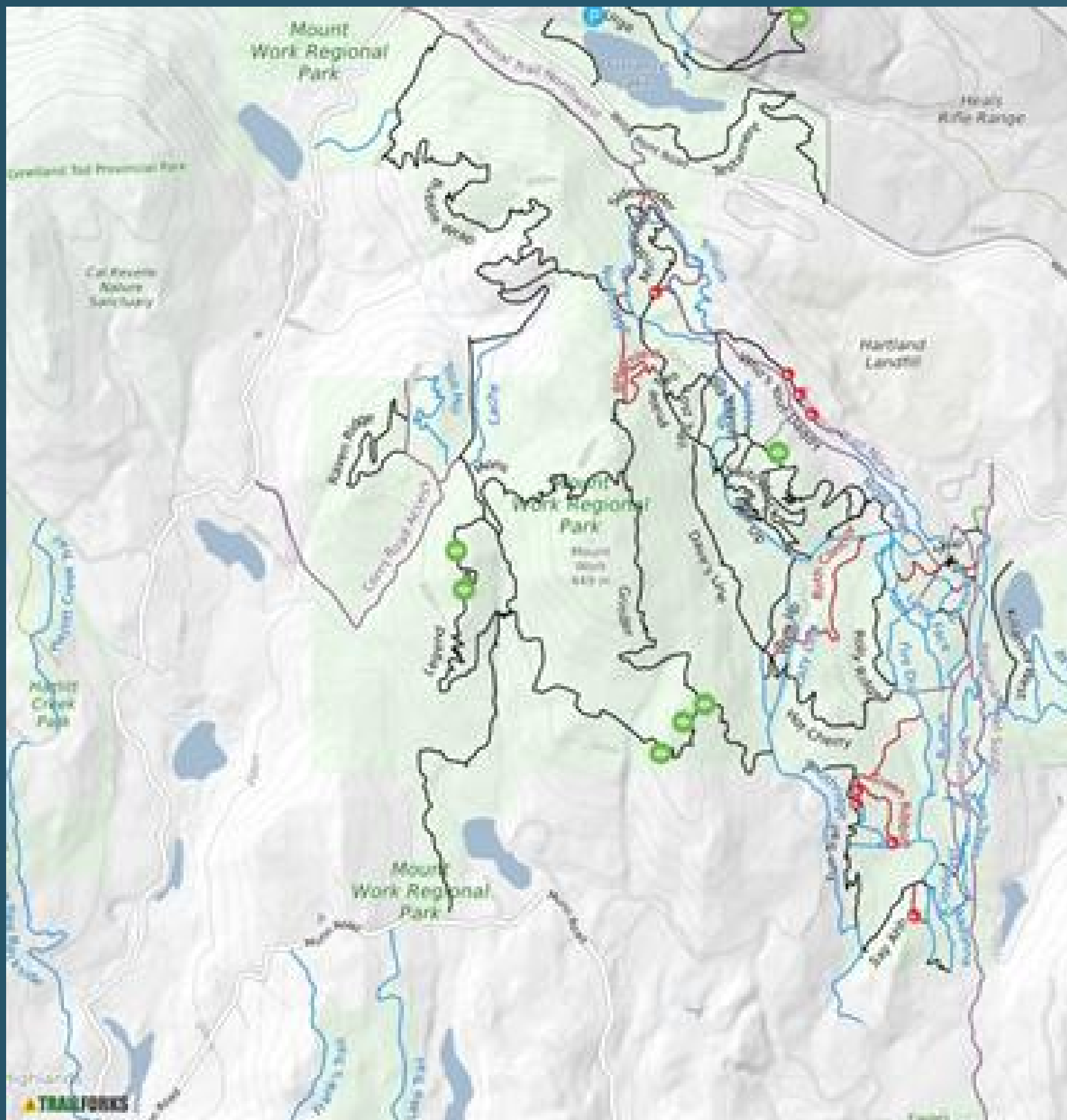
1. Remaining signs of the old cement factory.
2. Culturally Modified Cedar Trees
3. “Fathom”, “Hype”, and “Trek” Graffitied onto a low wall.
4. A giant maple tree by the ocean inlet with a seating pavilion around it.

Highlands

Points of Interest

5. Mountain Biking Trails

Background: Turning onto Ross Durance Road an access point for both Mount Work, and the extensive system of Hartland mountain biking trails, is available on the left. Affectionately known as “the dump” because of their proximity to the Hartland Landfill, these trails provide great mountain biking opportunities just outside of the city. Consider getting involved with the South Island Mountain Bike Society (SIMBS) who maintain the trails to experience mountain biking in addition to road biking! They usually hold work parties on the third Sunday of each month.



A map of the trail network, available on TrailForks.com.

Action item

Snap a picture as you pass the Mt. Work Parking Lot and begin your journey down the narrow and winding Ross Durance Road.

Highlands

Points of Interest

6. Second Lake Dam

Background:

Background: As Ross Durance Road continues into Millstream Lake Road, you will pass above the old Second Lake Dam, which regulates outflow from Second Lake. Though easy to miss from the road, the Dam is in a beautiful location as seen from the forest below. Built at least before 1889, the dam was constructed to bring water to the earliest homestead settlers of the Highlands.



Action item: Take a picture on top of the dam. Hopefully yours is less blurry than this one!

Highlands

Points of Interest

7. Caleb Pike Heritage Park

Background:

Background: This heritage park is a true gem of the Highlands, featuring many different historical buildings. The Old School house was in use between 1893 and 1941 and was the only school ever built in the Highlands District. The adjacent "Teacherage" building allowed teachers a place of their own to stay (previously they had to board with local families). Construction of the small Teacherage was likely an attempt to retain teachers, who would normally leave the school after only six months.



The Old School House and Teacherage.



Caleb Pike House.

Caleb Pike House, a log house constructed in 1883, and the dairy building next to it, are also found at the park. While the School House was moved here in 1997, and the Teacherage replica reconstructed soon after, Caleb Pike House, one of the regions earliest homesteads, stands in its original spot.

Action item: Take a photo at your favourite locale in the Heritage Park!

Highlands

Points of Interest

8. Francis/King Regional Park

Background:

For those heading back into the city at the end of this Discovery Ride, Munn Road is a fantastic place to bike. Just make sure your brakes are in good working order for the descent after Mount Work! On Munn Road you will find Francis/King Regional Park, with trails extending to Thetis Lake Park as well as an accessible cedar boardwalk trail. The park also features Heritage Grove, where one can see old-growth douglas fir trees, some approximately 500 years old.



Action item

Take a picture of a spot you find naturally beautiful at the park, either stopping for a quick photo riding by or exploring the nearby trails if your legs are not too tired yet.

Congratulations! You have completed the Highlands Discovery Ride. Thank you for taking part. We hope you enjoyed your bike through the hills and forests of the area while learning a thing or two about local history history.

The suggested route for this Discovery Ride ends at the Galloping Goose Trail to make it easy for you to find your way back home.