



GFATV.CA
THE GRAND FORKS ATV CLUB
TRACKS TO THE FUTURE OF ATVING



April 1st Ride: At the 1st Tunnel



April 1 Ride: We didn't make it to Eholt

The start of the Columbia Western Rail Trail is in Nelson but the tracks are still active so the new recognized start for the CWRT will be Castlegar. The CWRT is also referred to as the Boundary Subdivision. It is 126 miles from Castlegar to Midway. During its three year construction (1898 to 1900) steam engines dominated the Rail. Due to this use of steam power many of the structures alongside of the rail were built to accommodate the steam engines need for water and coal. Stations were located approximately every 15 miles. These had water towers and in some cases coal bins. Some were built where sidings were located. Many had worker families located nearby and a post office and even a corner store. Travelling by rail was as common then as vehicle travel is today. You had the opportunity to catch a train from Midway to Castlegar three times per day.

When constructing the line the engineers used creeks whenever they could, building water towers in these locations. There was an explosion resulting in death attributed to the lack of water. Water was most critical in the production of power for a steam locomotive. In 1954 dieselization of engines was the latest technology to hit the rails and with this technology steam engines were recycled. Many of the stations now represented a liability to the CP, many were burned.

Now 116 years later steward of the CWRT are hoping to recognize these historical structures that helped build our region. The GFATV Club is working with the stewards to help locate the historical infrastructure and recognize work needed to be done on the CWRT.

On April 1 2016 the GFATV Club met with GFCTS President, Chris Moslin, on the section of shared Columbia Western Rail Trail, west of Grand Forks. This shared trail section starts 1 km west of the current GF Station Pub, the

original Grand Forks station. Westend Station was located at this spot. It seems CP and City of Grand Forks were at odds and CP was not allowed into GF. There was a coal chute in the Westend Station location. Coalshute Road is tied to this location. The condition of this section is a concern to all users, neighbours, and RDKB, area D. It has been 25 years since the rails were lifted and the Ministry of Lands Forests and Natural Recourses Operation took control of the Rail Trail. The top tread (surface) of the trail is in poor condition. One concern is when building took place in 1898-1900 the ballast material used was from close sources. In some cases, sand, gravel, dirt, and/or rock, any material close was used. With the change in use there is a need to control dust where neighbours are close, stop water from running down the grade and stop rutting from happening. In other words there is a need to create a tread that is suitable for all users.

With this in mind the GFATV Club used the attached map to try and locate all the identified historical locations, note the conditions on the trail, work required, and suggest some options. Starting at 0 from Westend Station, we traveled west for 19 km finding many of the historical sites (of course the tunnels were easy). Thanks to Bruce and Patti, Hank and Pat, Jeff, Ken, Bob, Rob, Gary, Doug for doing this. It was a fun day!

Upcoming Events

May 7: GFATV AGM meeting at 10:am at Community Futures: Pat will be retiring so please let us know if you are interested in being Secretary

May 13, 14 or 15: Maintenance run to 6 rec sites

May 20 & 21: Bluejoint area - fun day and moonlight ride

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