



NEWS RELEASE

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SPLATSIN SEEKS FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT RAIL TRAIL PROJECT

A \$12.5 million Infrastructure Canada Federal Active Transportation Grant application to develop 42.6 kilometres of the Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail has been championed by Splatsin leadership, in partnership with the Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) and the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSR D).

Should the grant application be successful, the funding would cover trail development within Splatsin te Secwépemc territory from Kilometre 0 at the Bruhn Bridge in Sicamous to Kilometre 42.6 near Stepney Road in the Township of Spallumcheen.

This non-motorized recreational pathway would create an active transportation corridor for walking and bicycling between Sicamous and the Township of Spallumcheen. The project will create new tourism and transportation benefits for the region – including the eventual linkage with the recently opened Okanagan Rail Trail and 200km south to Osoyoos.

Splatsin's efforts to lead this initiative are founded on the understanding that the trail forms part of their unceded Secwépemc territorial lands.

"Splatsin strives to assume the role of caretaker of their traditional lands on behalf of the Splatsin people and the Secwépemc Nation for the benefit and use of the Secwépemc people and its neighbours now and in the future," says Kukpi7 Doug Thomas.

"The economic and land management benefits are the tip of the iceberg. The rail trail will promote a healthy lifestyle and exercise, family outings, the appreciation of nature and knowledge of the land, as well as an improved understanding of the Secwépemc values and culture," Thomas adds.

Both the CSR D and RDNO Board of Directors issued formal letters of support for the Splatsin's funding application.

Plans for the project include conducting archeological impact assessments, trail clearing, site preparation and construction with a gravel-based surface, parking areas, fencing, shoreline protection, as well as signage and drainage improvements.

The total length of the Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail is 50 kilometres, however, the final 7.4-kilometre section near Armstrong is not a part of this application. It will be considered for other grant applications in the future.

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Photo caption: A section of the Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail within Splat-sin te Secwépemc territory with a view of the Enderby Cliffs in the background. (Shuswap Trail Alliance photo)

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